

Chapter 9

A Death Too Strange

The carriage was not huge, just big enough to carry four people. The horses that were pulling the carriage were very well trained, even though the carriage was traveling on a mud road, it was very stable. Ma Xiu Zheng and Shi Xiu Yun sat on one side with Sun Xiu Qing and Yie Xiu Zhu sitting opposite of them.

The carriage had been traveling for a long time, Shi Xiu Yun suddenly noticed that everyone was staring at her. She pretended not to notice, but at last could not help but pout her lips and challenge everyone.

“Why are you guys all staring at me? Did a flower suddenly sprout on my face?”

“Even if a flower did sprout on your face,” Sun Xiu Qing laughed and replied, “it would have been picked just then.”

Her eyes were big and her lips were thin, it was obvious to anyone she meets that she was the kind of girl who would never hold anything back when making fun of someone.

She did not let Shi Xiu Yun reply before continuing.

“The weird thing is, girl here always claims that any kind of flower would never be as good as a vegetable, so how come suddenly she says flower this and flower that as soon as she opens her mouth?”

Amazingly, Shi Xiu Yun did not blush, instead she casually replied: “Nothing weird about that at all, it's because his surname is Hua, flower, so of course I'm going to say flower this and flower that.”

“He?” Sun Xiu Qing laughed a little. “Who's he?”

“His surname is Hua, Hua Man Lou.”

“How do you already know his name?”

“He just told me.”

“How come I didn't hear it?”

“We were talking about our stuff, why must we let you hear everything? Besides, you were probably thinking of Lu Xiao Feng at that moment anyways.”

“I was thinking of Lu Xiao Feng?” Sun Xiu Qing almost screamed. “Who said I was thinking about him?”

“Me,” Shi Xiu Yun answered. “While he was sitting in the bath tub, you couldn't take your eyes off of him, I noticed it the entire time, you can't deny that now.”

Sun Xiu Qing was laughing and throwing a fit at the same time.

“Can you guys believe how crazy this girl is? Everything that comes out of her mouth is a lie.” She scolded, with a smile on her face.

“That girl really is a bit crazy,” Ma Xiu Zheng casually answered. “But your eyes was on Lu Xiao Feng the entire time.”

“Thank you, Eldest Martial Sister, for being fair,” Shi Xiu Yun laughed, waving her hands.

Sun Xiu Qing's eyes twirled around for a bit before she suddenly sighed.

“She was being fair, but there was a tinge of sourness in what she said.”

“Sourness?” Now it's Ma Xiu Zheng's look up astonished. “What sourness?”

“A kind of sourness somewhat like vinegar.”

“Are you saying that I'm eating vinegar¹⁹, that I'm jealous of you?” Now Ma Xiu Zheng was starting to yell as well.

“I didn't say it,” Sun Xiu Qing replied. “You just said it yourself.”

With much effort, she suppressed her laughter and continued, not letting others responde. “All these people say that Lu Xiao Feng is so smooth and so suave and so charming and so this and so that. But when I saw him today, sitting in the bath tub like that, he was just like a retard or something, nothing compared to that Xi Men Chui Xue.”

“What are you saying?” Shi Xiu Yun yelled in shock.

“What I'm saying, is that if I had to pick a man, I would definitely pick Xi Men Chui Xue. Now there is a real man there, better than 10 Lu Xiao Feng's.”

Shi Xiu Yun sighed.

¹⁹ In everyday Chinese, the expression “chi cu”, or “eating vinegar”, is often used to describe that tinge of jealousy that one feels in matters of the heart are involved.

“From here, it looks like you are the one that's crazy. Even if all the men in the world died, I would never pick that arrogant and conceited living corpse.”

“You don't like it, I do. This is called 'cabbages and carrots, to each her own!'.”

Ma Xiu Zheng could not stop herself from laughing anymore.

“From the looks of you two, it seems like you guys have already partitioned out the cabbages and carrots.”

“And the one we partition to you is that big carrot, Lu Xiao Feng!” Sun Xiu Qing said, trying to hold back her laughter.

Shi Xiu Yun blinked.

“Then doesn't Third Sister Yie get nothing?”

Yie Xiu Zhu's face was already blushing furiously.

“Will you look at yourselves?” Yie Xiu Zhu said, still blushing. “You have only met them once and it looks like you girls are going mad thinking of them, it's not like you girls have never met other men in your lives before is it?”

“We have never met any men like them,” Sun Xiu Qing sighed.

She shot a look at Yie Xiu Zhu out of the corner of her eye and continued.

“To be honest, any of the three men that we met today is pretty good, even though you won't admit it, you probably like all three of them don't you?”

“You... you must be crazy.” Yie Xiu Zhu was so distraught that somehow her face got even redder.

“Number Two Sun over there always have this problem, and that is that she loves to bully honest people.”

“Her? Honest?” Sun Xiu Qing pouted her lips. “She looks honest on the surface, but of us four, I guarantee that she'll be the first to marry.”

“What... what makes you say that?” Yie Xiu Zhu asked.

“Because she knows that she won't be the first one to marry,” Shi Xiu Yun jumped in before Sun Xiu Qing could answer. “Forget about men with four eyebrows, even men with four times his courage won't dare to marry her.”

“That sounds about right,” Ma Xiu Zheng concurred. “Anyone who marries a woman like her would surely be killed by a brain tumor from listening to her talk.”

“Maybe if she finds a deaf then....” Shi Xiu Yun added, trying to hold back her laughter, and failing miserably.

Sun Xiu Qing had already stood up by now and was yelling: “Oh I see how it is, all three of you are ganging up against me. Well ok, I'll let you three have the three men, there, satisfied?”

“Let us have them?” Shi Xiu Yun replied. “Are these three men yours or something?”

“This girls knows a heck of a lot,” Ma Xiu Zheng sighed, “but she sure doesn't know any shame.”

Sun Xiu Qing stared at them before suddenly shouting at the top of her lungs: “I'm starving!”

Ma Xiu Zheng stared at her in shock, as if she was looking at a truly insane person.

Sun Xiu Qing could not help but laugh at herself either.

“Whenever I get mad, I get hungry. Now that I'm mad, I have got to find a place to eat.”

When four girls get together, it would almost impossible to get them not to talk about men. Just like if four men got together, to make them not talk about women would be equally impossible.

But Lu Xiao Feng and Hua Man Lou were not discussing women, they were not in the mood. They were discussing Xi Men Chui Xue.

“I only hope that he hasn't found Du Gu Yi He yet.” Lu Xiao Feng observed.

“You don't think he is a match for Du Gu Yi He?” Hua Man Lou asked.

“His sword techniques are quick and lethal, not one bit of compassion in them, just like the person that he is, it never leaves any choice for his foes.”

Hua Man Lou slowly nodded.

“If a man leaves no choices for his foes, it is the same as not leaving himself any choices.” He observed.

“That is why, once his sword is unsheathed, if it can't injure others, then he has consigned himself to death!”

“But he isn't dead.”

“That's only because he hasn't met a foe like Du Gu Yi He until now.”

Lu Xiao Feng paused momentarily before continuing.

“Du Gu's sword techniques carry behind them a nastiness, with great inner strength, devastating offensives and an even more devastating defense, add to that the

fact that his experience in fighting is something that Xi Men could not match. That's why if Xi Men can't succeed by the 30th move, then he would undoubtedly die under Du Gu's sword."

"And you think that there is no chance of him succeeding within 30 moves?"

"Nobody can take Du Gu's life within 30 moves, that applies to Xi Men Chui Xue as well!" Lu Xiao Feng sighed.

Hua Man Lou was silent for a long time before letting out a sigh of his own.

"You were the one who asked him to get into this."

"And that is why I am hoping that he hasn't found Du Gu yet."

They have already passed the quiet and peaceful road and made it to a little river just outside of the Pearl and Diamond Pavilion.

Under the bright and clear waxing moon, the water shimmered like a shattered piece of silver. A person stood by the river, clothing as white as the snow.

When Lu Xiao Feng saw him, he saw Lu Xiao Feng as well.

"I'm not dead yet." He suddenly said.

Lu Xiao Feng laughed.

"You really don't look much like a dead person."

"The one who died is Du Gu Yi He." Xi Men Chui Xue replied.

Lu Xiao Feng stopped laughing.

"You can't figure out why?"

Lu Xiao Feng admitted it, he did not want to.

But now Xi Men Chui Xue let out a little laugh, a very strange and peculiar laugh. "I can't figure out why either." He said.

"Oh?"

"When Su Shao Ying made his 21 moves, I have already seen three openings."

"So you thought that you had at least three opportunities to kill Du Gu Yi He?"

Xi Men Chui Xue nodded.

"Usually, I only need one opportunity, but when I was fighting him, I could not grasp any one of the opportunities at all."

"Why?"

“Even though his techniques had openings, as soon as I start to make my move with my sword, he would immediately compensate for the openings. I have never met anyone who knows where the openings of his very own techniques are, but he knew.”

“All the sword skills in the world have openings, but there really isn't that many who knows where the openings of his own sword skills are.” Lu Xiao Feng agreed.

“I made my move three times, all three times they were fended off, by then I knew I couldn't kill him. If you couldn't kill with a sword technique that only kills, then it is you who are to die.”

“Although you are conceited, at least you know your own weaknesses.” Lu Xiao Feng sighed. “That is why you are still alive!”

“I am still alive only because after 30 moves, his techniques suddenly turned chaotic.”

“A master like him, if his techniques suddenly turn chaotic, there can only be two reasons.”

Xi Men Chui Xue waited for further explanation.

“If his heart and mind was in turmoil, then his sword techniques must as well.”

“His heart and mind was not in turmoil.”

“Could it be that his inner strength was running out?”

Without strength, sword techniques would turn chaotic as well.

“With his inner strength and skill, how could he have completely used up his inner strength after just 30 exchanges?” Lu Xiao Feng wondered.

“I said it myself, I can't figure out why either.”

Lu Xiao Feng thought silently.

“Could it be that before he fought with you, someone else had made him use up a lot of his inner strength? Maybe someone had already fought with him before you?”

“He didn't say, so I wouldn't know,” Xi Men Chui Xue coldly replied. “Had I known, then I would not have forced him to fight.”

“When you force other people to fight, when was the last time you gave your foes an opportunity to speak?” Lu Xiao Feng said with a pathetic smile.

Although there was no expression on Xi Men Chui Xue's face, shades of shadowes seemed to have crept into his eyes.

“He said something strange just before he died.” He slowly said, after a long long silence.

“What did he say?”

“He said he....”

When the sword was pulled out, there was still blood on the blade.

When Du Gu Yi He saw that the other person's sword had his blood on it, saw his blood being gently blown off drop by drop, there was no pain or anger or horror on his face. On the contrary, he suddenly shouted: “I understand now, I understand now....”

“He said he understood now!”

“What did he understand?” Lu Xiao Feng frowned.

The shades of shadows inside Xi Men Chui Xue's eyes darkened even more as he actually let out a prolonged sigh.

“Maybe he understood that life is short, like the morning dew. Maybe he understood that the fame and power he gave up everything for, in the end was nothing....”

Lu Xiao Feng thought deeply.

“Precisely because life is short, you can't live it for nothing,” he slowly said. “What did he really understand? Or is it didn't understand? What did he really want to say?”

Xi Men Chui Xue stared at the horizon for a long time before suddenly uttering a very unexpected phrase of his own.

“I'm hungry.”

“You are hungry?” Lu Xiao Feng looked at him in shock.

“I always get hungry after I kill,” Xi Men Chui Xue coldly replied.



This small little wine shop should have been closed by now, residing as it did on the outskirts of a thick and dense white mulberry grove.

There were several households inside the woods, there were also several households outside the woods, mostly small little families making a living raising silkworms.

This particular little house was somewhat close to the road, so they built a little small hut with windows on all four sides out in the front and bought some simple wine and food for the passerbys. When the Four Beauties of E'Mei found this place, the owner was just about to go to bed, but then again how could anyone refuse four beautiful girls like them?

Inside the little wineshop was just three tables, but they were kept very clean and neat. The little dishes made to go down with the wine were simple yet refreshing and the light tasting wine was just the flavor that the girls liked, so they were having a great time.

When girls are having a great time, they would always talk much more.

They were gossiping left and right, laughing, just like a group of happy little hens.

“That guy with the surname of Hua,” Sun Xiu Qing suddenly observed, “he seemed to have a bit of a south-of-the-river accent, could he be from that Hua family?”

“Which Hua family?” Shi Xiu Yun asked.

“That Hua family from south-of-the-river. Rumors say that you could take a horse and gallop at full speed for an entire day and still be inside their land.”

“I know about this family as well,” Ma Xiu Zheng cut in. “But I don't think Hua Man Lou is of that family.”

“Why not?” Sun Xiu Qing asked.

“I heard that this family led the most extravagant of lives, and is very particular about what they drink, eat, and wear, even their staple man looked like a millionaire walking around about town. But that Hua Man Lou looked like a very simple man. Not only that, I have never heard anything about one of their disciples being blind.”

Shi Xiu Yun immediately snickered.

“What's the big deal about being blind? Even though he is blind, but he could see so much more than the four of us who have eyes could see put together.”

Ma Xiu Zheng did not know if she should say this, so she changed gear a bit and smiled.

“His kungfu skills are really pretty good, even I didn't think that he could just casually catch your sword in between his fingers like that.”

“That maybe because this little girl here was already smitten with him by then.” Sun Xiu Qing joked.

Shi Xiu Yun shot her an angry look.

“If you feel up to it, you can give him a try next time if you want. I'm not bragging for him or anything, but there aren't that many in this world who could match that move of his.”

“How about Xi Men Chui Xue? Was that move of his shabby?” Sun Xiu Qing replied.

Shi Xiu Yun did not reply, because she could not but admit that move by Xi Men Chui Xue was truly frightening.

“I heard that not only is Xi Men Chui Xue's sword skills without peers, his family is quite well off as well, Thousand Plums Mansion's extravagance and wealth is definitely not any levels under the Huas.” Ma Xiu Zheng chipped in.

Sun Xiu Qing's eyes shone.

“I like him, not because of his wealth or family, even if he was a penniless pauper, I would still like him.”

“From head to toe, I really can't see a single attractive feature about him.” Shi Xiu Yun casually observed.

“Why must be able to see his attractive points? As long as I...”

She suddenly stopped talking, her face suddenly flushed to a blood red, red to the very roots of her ears.

Because at this moment a man walked in from outside, clothing as white as the snow, none other than Xi Men Chui Xue.

Shi Xiu Yun could not say anything more either, all four gossiping girls suddenly all stopped.

Not only did they see Xi Men Chui Xue, but also Hua Man Lou and Lu Xiao Feng.

With a pair of piercing eyes like daggers, Xi Men Chui Xue stared at them. He suddenly walked up to them.

“Not only did I kill Su Shao Ying,” he coldly announced, “but I also killed Du Gu Yi He.”

The colors on all four girls' faces changed, especially Sun Xiu Qing's face, which turned as white as a sheet, without the slightest trace of blood.

In a young girl's heart, hate is very easily replaced with the feeling of love. Besides, Su Shao Ying always was a little too conceited, thinking that his four martial sisters should all be fighting over him, hence he was not well liked by any of them. But the killing of master was a completely different matter.

“What... what did you say?” Sun Xiu Qing had to ask again.

“I killed Du Gu Yi He.”

Shi Xiu Yun suddenly jumped up from her seat and began to shout.

“My Second Martial Sister likes you that much, how... how... how could you go and do something like that!”

Nobody could have expected her to say something like that, even Xi Men Chui Xue seemed somewhat taken aback.

Sun Xiu Qing's face was alternately green and red. Suddenly, grinding her teeth together, the two swords inside of her sleeves shot out, the glow of the swords flashed as they fiercely flew towards Xi Men Chui Xue's chest.

But Xi Men Chui Xue did not responde, instead, he gently flicked his sleeves up and his body smoothly slid back, slid back two or three meters.

“I'm going to kill you!” Sun Xiu Qing shrieked, her eyes already a teary red.

Twirling her swords around, jaws clenched, she dove towards Xi Men Chui Xue. The moves of her weapons were based upon quickness and sudden changes, the flashes of swords blinds one's eyes as if they were water droplets from a huge splash as she, in a blink of an eye, attacked seven times.

Her sisters' swords were also out.

“This is a matter between us and Xi Men Chui Xue, other people better not interfere.” Shi Xiu Yun loudly declared.

She obviously meant that for Hua Man Lou. In reality, Hua Man Lou could not interfere even if he wanted to.

But how could he just stand there and let these four innocent girls die under the sword of Xi Men Chui Xue?

At this precise moment, a long “bang” could be heard as Xi Men Chui Xue suddenly reached out and flicked Sun Xiu Qing's wrist, hitting the sword in her left hand into the one in her right hand.

When the two swords met, she felt her wrist temporarily go numb, before she knew it, the two swords were suddenly in Xi Men Chui Xue's hands.

“Stand back, or else I will unsheath my sword!” Xi Men Chui Xue coldly ordered.

His voice was cold, but his eyes were not, that was why Sun Xiu Qing was still alive.

He was still human, still a man, how could he bring himself to kill a beautiful girl with feelings towards himself.

Sun Xiu Qing's face was even whiter as her eyes filled with tears.

“I already said I'm going to kill you, if I can't kill you, then... then I will die in front of you!” She said, still clenching her jaw.

“Dying won't do a thing, if you want revenge, then go back and get everybody from all 108 buildings of Green Shirt Pavilion.” Xi Men Chui Xue coldly sneered.

Sun Xiu Qing looked surprised and caught completely off guard.

“What did you say?” She uttered.

“Since Du Gu Yi He is the Helmsman of the Green Shirt Pavilion, then....”

Sun Xiu Qing did not let him finish.

“You say my master is a member of the Green Shirt Pavilion? Are you crazy?” She demanded, with fury in her voice and her eyes. “This entire trip here happened because my master received some information that the First Pavilion of the Green Shirt Pavilion is at....”

Suddenly, a “twang” came from outside the back window as a flash of black streak came shooting through the window and hit Sun Xiu Qing in the back.

Sun Xiu Qing's body twitched quickly and fell towards Xi Men Chui Xue.

Shi Xiu Yun was the closest to the back window. With an angry shout, she turned around and dove towards the window. But at that precise moment, another black streak came flashing through the window at her with such ferocity and speed that she could not get out of the way.

She screamed, the swords in her hand flew out, but her body fell.

By now, Sun Xiu Qing had fallen into Xi Men Chui Xue's arms. Suddenly, Xi Men Chui Xue grabbed her around the waist with one hand and unsheathed his sword with the other; with a flash of the sword, his body literally became one with the sword flash and flew out of the window.

Lu Xiao Feng, on the other hand, had long jumped out using another window. Ma Xiu Zheng and Yie Xiu Zhu shouted in anger and came chasing out as well.

In the middle of the night, the night wind breezed through the little garden outside the windows, not a trace of human shade could be seen.

Beyond the mulberry grove, there came the sounds of hounds howling. The flashes of Xi Men Chui Xue had entered the grove.

Without any regards toward their own safety, Ma Xiu Zheng and Yie Xiu Zhu ran in as well.

The families that lived inside the woods had already gone to sleep, there was no light to be seen, not even the flash of Xi Men Chui Xue's sword.

“Let's go!” Ma Xiu Zheng said. “No matter what, we have to get her back!”

Before she even finished, the two of them disappeared.

A yellow dog ran howling towards a small road in the back of the grove.

Lu Xiao Feng had stopped chasing, he suddenly stopped underneath a tree, bent over, and pick something up....

The owner of the wine shop was curled up in the corner, not a trace of blood was left on his face.

Hua Man Lou bent over and, gently as he could, brought Shi Xiu Yun up in his arms. Her heart was still beating, but beating very weakly.

A deathly gray color had frighteningly appeared on her beautiful face. Slowly, her eyes opened and stared at Hua Man Lou.

“Why... why haven't you left.” She lightly said.

“I'm not leaving,” Hua Man Lou gently replied. “I'm staying here with you.”

A strange expression appeared in Shi Xiu Yun's eyes, seemingly comfort, also seemingly sadness.

“I didn't think you would still recognize me.” She said, barely able to sum up enough strength to smile.

“I will always recognize you.”

Shi Xiu Yun smiled again, a sad and lonely smile.

“Even though I didn't become a mute, I'm about to die. Dead people can't talk either can they?”

“You... you won't die, I'm sure of it.”

“You don't need to comfort me, I know. I'm hit by poison needles.”

“Poison?” Hua Man Lou's expression changed noticeably.

“Because I feel as if my entire body is numb, that's probably the poison acting up, why don't you... you feel my wound, it's probably very hot.”

She suddenly grabbed Hua Man Lou's hand and placed it on her wound.

Her wound was right over her heart, her chest was soft, smooth, and warm. As she pressed Hua Man Lou's ice cold hands onto her soft chest, her heart suddenly started beating much faster.

Hua Man Lou's heart was beating as well. At this moment, he heard Lu Xiao Feng's voice from outside the window.

“What was she hit with?”

“Poison needles.”

A long silence.

“You stay there with her, I'm going to go find a person.”

By the time Lu Xiao Feng finished his sentence, his voice seemed to be coming from very far away.

“You really haven't gone,” Shi Xiu Yun said, trying to breath. “You are really here with me!”

“Close your eyes, let me... suck the poison needles out.”

Shi Xiu Yun's deathly white face gained a hint of red as her eyes glowed in the dark.

“You are really willing to do that?”

“As long as you are willing....” Hua Man Lou seriously replied.

“I'm willing to do whatever, but I don't want to close my eyes, because I want to see your face.”

Her voice got weaker and weaker, until at the end the smile on her face suddenly froze and that glow in her eyes suddenly disappeared.

Death. Suddenly and silently it had stolen her from inside Hua Man Lou's arms.

But her eyes seemed as if they were still staring at Hua Man Lou, staring at him forever....

Darkness. But all that was in front of Hua Man Lou's eyes was darkness.

He suddenly hated himself for being blind, hated himself for even being able to look at her one final time.

She was so young, but her vivacious and young body had suddenly turned cold and stiff.

Gently, Hua Man Lou removed his hand, tears had already started to flow down from inside his eyes.

He did not leave, nor did he move. For the first time, he felt the harshness and cruelty of life.

Wind blew in from the windows, wind blew in from the door, the warm April wind felt to him like the bitter cold winds of Winter.

He suddenly discovered that the wind carried with it wave of wave of a flowery fragrance. Suddenly the back window crackled. He snapped his head around and was prepared to jump up.

But instead a sweet and warm voice came from outside the window

“Don't be frightened, it's me!” the voice gently said to him.

This voice was just the one that he was familiar with, this person, also was just the one that he had been thinking about the entire time.

“Fei Yan?” He could not help but utter in a slight shout despite of himself.

“Yes, it's me. Didn't think you could still recognize my voice.”

A person lightly floated in from the back window, her voice carried with it a tinge of jealousy and envy.

“I thought that you had forgotten all about me.” She coolly said.

Hua Man Lou stood there, as if he was dumbstruck, only after a long time did he recover from the surprise.

“How... how did you suddenly get here?”

“Are you saying that I shouldn't have come?”

“No, it's just that I didn't expect it,” Hua Man Lou shook his head and sighed. “I thought you were already....”

“Did you think I was already dead?”

Hua Man Lou was at a lost as to what to say.

Shang Guan Fei Yan coolly sighed again.

“If I'm to die, then I would have to die like her, in your arms.”

She slowly walked up to just in front of Hua Man Lou.

“I was watching you two earlier, I... I felt terrible, if it wasn't for the fact that she's dead, I might have killed her.”

Hua Man Lou was silent.

“I heard you sing once.” He suddenly said after a long time.

“Was it outside of Thousand Plums Mansion, from inside an abandoned shrine?” She enquired in a heavy voice.

“Mmm.”

This time it was Shang Guan Fei Yan who was quiet.

“But by the time you found the place, I had already left.” She quietly said.

“Why did you leave?”

Her voice got even quieter.

“You should know better than anyone that I didn't want to leave.”

“Someone forced you to leave?”

“I was forced to sing that song as well, I didn't know why at the time, but then I realized that they wanted to lure you to that shrine.”

“They? Who are they?”

Shang Guan Fei Yan did not answer this question, but her voice suddenly began to shake, as if she was frightened.

“Did you already fall into their hands?”

“It's best if you don't know too much, or else... else...” Her voice was shaking badly.

“Or else what?” Hua Man Lou could not help but ask.

Shang Guan Fei Yan was quiet for a long time again.

“They lured you there to warn you about interfering in this matter, they wanted you tell you that I had already fallen into their hands.” She did not let Hua Man Lou interrupt her and continued. “The reason why they wanted me to come here today was also to talk you out of interfering with this matter again. Else... else they would make me kill you!”

“They want you to come and kill me?” Hua Man Lou was startled.

“Yes, because they know that you would never expect me to harm you and would never guard against me. But they didn't realize that I could never bring myself to harm you in anyway.”

She suddenly lounged forward and put her arms tightly around Hua Man Lou.

“By now you probably realize who they are,” she said in a shaky voice. “But you could never imagine just how frightening powerful they really are....”

Yan Tie Shan and Du Gu Yi He were both dead, the only person who could want to stop this was Huo Xiu.

“No matter how frightening their power is, you don't need to be afraid....” Hua Man Lou said in a heavy voice.

“But I really am scared, not for myself, but for you. If it wasn't for me, you guys would not have been dragged into this, if something should happen to you, how could I go on living like that?”

She was holding on to him as tight as she could, but her body was still shaking. Her breath carried with it a sweet and tender fragrance.

Hua Man Lou held his arm out and wanted to hold her tight too.

But at his side still laid the body of Shi Xiu Yun, a young girl filled with such passion and love, who had just died within these two arms of his, how could he possibly use those same two arms to hold another?

His heart was filled with pain and conflict, he wanted to control his own emotions and feelings, but just could not.

When his thoughts returned to holding her, however, she suddenly pushed away.

“You probably understand what I'm saying now.”

“No, I don't understand.”

“No matter if you understand or not, I... I have to leave now.”

“Leave?” Hua Man Lou could not help but sound desperate. “Why must you leave?”

“I don't want to go either, but I must!” Her voice filled with sadness and apprehension. “If you have any feelings for me in you, then please don't ask me why anymore, or drag my hands, else not only will you harm yourself, but me as well!”

“But I... I....”

“Let me go, as long as I know that you are alive and well, I'll be happy and satisfied. Even if you are to wrong me....”

Her voice was more and more distance, and suddenly vanished. Darkness. Hua Man Lou suddenly found himself trapped inside a boundless darkness and loneliness. I knew that there must be circumstances beyond her control that forced her to leave.

But all he could do was stand here like an idiot, he could not help her, he could not free her from her troubles, he could not even comfort her, just like a little before when all he could do was let Shi Xiu Yun die in his arms.

“What kind of a man am I? What am I?” There seemed to be a voice laughing at him by his side. “You are nothing but a blind man, a useless blind man!”

A blind man's life, is supposed to be filled with darkness, a hopeless darkness.

His fists were clenched as he stood in the April night breeze. He suddenly discovered that life was not as perfect as he had imagined it to be. Life was filled with many unavoidable sorrow and pain.

He did not know of any way to escape it all.

April was supposed to be the season when swallows returned home, but his little swallow had just flown away, flown away like the best years of our lives, never to return. He slowly walked onto the grass outside the door, they were already dripping wet from the dew.