

## Chapter 1

### Flying Dagger vs. Quick Sword

The cold wind act as a knife, using the ground as the cutting board, and people as fish meat.

The snowstorm extends for thousands of miles, making everything seem like bright white silver.

In this cold winter snowstorm, a horse carriage came from the north. Its wheels shattered the snow on the ground, but cannot shatter loneliness in the world.

Li Xun Huan yawned, trying to stretch his legs. The inside of the carriage might be quite comfortable, but this trip is just way too long, too lonely. He feels not only exhausted, but also irritated. He feels that loneliness is the biggest annoyance in his life, yet loneliness frequently accompanies him.

A person's life is usually filled with contradictions. No one can do anything about this.

Li Xun Huan sighed and took out a wine bottle. As he's drinking the wine, he also begins to cough. His continuous coughing made his pale face appear very sick, as if fire from Hell is burning his flesh and soul.

The wine bottle is empty now, so he grabbed a little dagger and start to carve a wooden human figure. The dagger is thin and sharp, his hand is long and powerful.

The figure is that of a woman, so beautiful and warm under his masterful carving, looking so full of life.

He not only gave her a striking look, but also gave her life and soul, only because his life and soul is already quietly disappearing under the tip of the dagger.

He's no longer young.

Wrinkles filled the corners of his eyes, every wrinkle filled with all the joy and sadness in his life. Only his eyes are young.

This is a strange pair of eyes, a shade of green, similar to the Spring wind blowing on the Willow leaves, warm and flexible. Or similar to the sea water under the Summer sun's light, filled with energy.

Maybe it's only because of this pair of eyes that allowed him to live till today.

The wooden figure is finally finished. He mindlessly stared at this figure, not knowing for how long, and then pushed the carriage door open, jumping out.

The carriage driver immediately stopped the horses.

This carriage driver's eyes are sharp like a eagle, but as those eyes looked at Li Xun Huan, they immediately became warm, filled with loyalty and sympathy. Like a beast looking at its master.

Li Xun Huan dug a hole on the ground, burying the figure he just carved into that hole. Then he just mindlessly stared at the pile of snow where he buried the figure.

His fingers have now been frozen, his face red from the cold, and snowflakes covered his whole body. Yet he does not feel the cold. The item buried under the snow is like the most important person in his life. As he buried "her", his own life also became filled with emptiness.

Any other person would find this event to be quite strange, yet the carriage driver is already used to all this. He only said, "It's almost dark. We still have a long road ahead. Please come back onto the carriage, young master."

Li Xun Huan turned around, finding that there is one set of footprints besides the carriage, coming alone from the far north, going ahead alone.

The footprints are quite deep, showing that this person has walked very much, is very fatigued, yet still would not stop to rest.

Li Xun Huan took a deep breath, said, "I can't believe there's someone who will travel in a place like this in this kind of weather. I think he must be a very lonely, very sorrowful person.

The carriage driver didn't say anything, only sighing in his heart, thinking, "Aren't you also a very lonely, sorrowful person? Why do you only sympathize for other people, but forget yourself?"

There's a lot more Pine wood under the carriage seat, so Li Xun Huan began to carve yet again. His technique is now excellent with so much practice, because what he's carving will forever be that one single person.

This person not only filled all of his heart, but also all of his body.

The snowstorm finally stopped, but the coldness only got heavier, the loneliness thicker. Good thing the wind also carried the sound of a person's footsteps.

Although this sound is much softer than the horses, it is the sound Li Xun Huan has been searching for. So no matter how soft it is, it cannot escape Li Xun Huan's ears.

As he pulled up the drapes of the carriage's window, he saw the shadow of that lonely person walking in front.

This person walks very slowly, yet does not stop. Although he heard the horses, he still does not turn around to look. He has neither an umbrella nor a hat. The melted ice and snow dropped from his face to his neck. He only has a single piece of thin clothing.

Yet he still held his head high, as if he's made of steel. Snow, coldness, exhaustion, fatigue, hunger, all cannot conquer him.

Nothing can conquer him.

It's only as the carriage passed him that Li Xun Huan saw his face.

His eyebrows are thick, eyes very big, thin tight lips made a line, a straight nose that also made his face look even thinner.

This face reminds one very easily of stones in a flower pot, strong, rigid, cold, as if nothing matters, not even himself.

Yet this is also the most handsome face Li Xun Huan has ever seen in his life, although it's a bit young, a bit immature, it also already contains a very magnetic personality.

Within Li Xun Huan's eyes seems to exist a smile. He opened the carriage door, saying, "Come into the carriage. I'll take you on the next part of your journey."

His words has always been short and simple, filled with energy, in this seemingly endless snowfield, no one in the world would reject his offer.

Who could've possibly imagine that this youngster would not even look at him, his footsteps not even slowed down, as if he never even heard him talking.

Li Xun Huan asks, "Are you deaf?"

The youngster's hand suddenly grabbed the sword from his waist. Although his hand is already frozen, his movement is still quick and fluid.

Li Xun Huan laughed, saying, "I guess you're not deaf after all. Then come in and have a drink. A sip of wine will not hurt anyone!"

The youngster quickly replied, "I can't afford it."

He could actually say something like this! Even the wrinkles on the side of Li Xun Huan's eyes seem to have a smile on them, but he did not smile, instead said, "I'm inviting you for some wine, not selling you wine."

The youngster responded, "If it's not something I bought with my own money, I'll never take it. If it's not wine that I bought with my own money, I'll never drink it. Have I made myself clear enough?"

Li Xun Huan said, "Clear enough."

The youngster said, "Good, you can go now."

Li Xun Huan thought for a while, suddenly said with a smile, "Ok. I'll go, but when you can afford to buy wine, will you invite me for a drink?"

The youngster stared at him a bit, then said, "Alright, I'll invite you."

Li Xun Huan started to laugh as his horse carriage sped away, until it can no longer see the youngster. Li Xun Huan laughingly asked, "Have you see such a strange kid before? I thought he must be a wise person, yet his words are just so innocent, so honest."

The carriage driver responded, "He's just a very strong-willed kid, that's all."

Li Xun Huan asked, "Did you see that sword on his waist?"

A hint of a smile also appeared on the driver's face. "That can even be considered a sword?"

In the strictest sense, that really cannot be considered a sword, it's just a one meter long strip of metal. It contains no sharp tip, no sword cover, just two pieces of wood nailed onto a metal, which can be considered the handle.

The driver continued with a smile, "The way I see it, it's just a child's toy."

This time not only did Li Xun Huan not smile, he even sighed, saying, "The way I see it, this toy is incredibly dangerous. It's best to not play with it."

The hotel in this little town is not big, but is full of people trapped by the heavy snowstorm, making the place incredibly crowded.

In the courtyard are numerous empty carriages of escort service. On the east side is the escort service's flag, flapping loudly as the wind whistles by, making people unable to make out whether the design is that of a tiger or a lion.

At the little restaurant in the hotel, a big man with a sheepskin coat constantly went in and out. Sometimes after a few drinks, he'd take off his coat, showing that he's not afraid of the cold.

As Li Xun Huan arrived, there were no more empty tables at the restaurant. Yet he's not anxious at all, because he knows that there aren't that many items in this world that can't be bought with money, so he was able to find a table on the corner of the restaurant, asked for some wine, and started to drink slowly.

He does not drink very fast, but he can drink for several days and nights without stopping. He constantly drinks, constantly coughs, and the day gradually became dark.

The driver came in, standing behind him saying, "The room on the south side is empty now, they've cleaned it up, young master can rest at any time now."

Li Xun Huan just nodded. After a while, that driver suddenly added, "The Golden Lion Escort Agency also has people here, as if they are escorting something from the border area.

Li Xun Huan asked, "Really! Who's the main escort?"

The driver answered, "It's the 'Sudden Wind Sword' Zhu Ge Lei."

Li Xun Huan raised his eyebrows, laughingly said, "This geezer actually lived till today? Not bad at all."

Although he kept talking about the man behind him, his eyes are staring at the front door, as if waiting for someone.

The driver said, "That kid's not walking very fast. You probably have to wait until midnight before he arrives."

Li Xun Huan laughed, saying, "I don't think it's that he's walking slowly, but that rather he wants to conserve energy. Have you seen a wolf walking around on the snowfield? If there's no prey in front and no enemies in the back, it's definitely not going to walk very fast. Because it feels that exhausting energy on the road is quite a waste."

The driver also laughed, saying, "But that kid is not a wolf."

Li Xun Huan did not say anything, because at this time, he started coughing again.

Then, he saw three people coming in from the back door, all talking loudly about a story in the martial world, as if they're afraid people won't know they're important people in the Golden Lion Escort Agency.

Li Xun Huan also recognizes that the red-faced fat guy is 'Sudden Wind Sword', but doesn't seem to want that person to recognize him, so he just lowered his head to carve that wooden figure.

Good thing Zhu Ge Lei never looked closely at anybody in this little town. They quickly ordered some food and wine, and began to eat.

Unfortunately, the food and the wine did not shut their mouths. After a few drinks, Zhu Ge Le became even more arrogant, laughing loudly. "Number two, do you remember that time under Tai Xing mountain when we met 'The Four Tigers of Tai Xing'?"

The other guy smiled. "How can I forget? That time 'The Four Tigers of Tai Xing' were brave enough to come take our escorted items, even said something like 'If you Zhu Ge Lei just crawl on the floor, we'll let you pass. Otherwise not only do you leave the items, but also your head.' "

The third person also laughed loudly. "Who would've thought that while their sabers haven't finished the strike, big brother you has already cut off their heads."

The second person said, "He's not trying to brag. When it comes to the power of palms, the best is obviously the head of our agency, 'Golden Lion Palm'. But when it comes to sword skill, there's probably no one better than our big brother here."

Zhu Ge Lei laughs as he raised his cup, but suddenly his laugh stopped, as the cover of the baggage besides him suddenly was blown by the wind.

Two human shadows appeared.

These two people both have bright red capes with a peculiar mask unique to people living outside the borders. The two people seem to have the same physic, the same height.

The masses might not see their faces, but from their lightness kung fu and outfit, they all unintentionally began to stare at them.

Only Li Xun Huan's eyes are still staring at the door, because as the wind starts to blow the door again, he saw that youngster.

That youngster just stood outside the door, and seems as if he's stood there for a long time, as if he were a savage beast. Although he is yearning for the warmth inside the hotel and does not want to leave, he's afraid of entering the world of man.

Li Xun Huan gave a light sigh, and only now transferred his attention to those two men. Only to see that these two people have taken off their masks, revealing two ugly faces.



Their ears are small, but noses are big, as if it covered one-third the face, making the eyes and ears seem really far apart.

But their eyes revealed evil, like the eyes of a rattlesnake.

Then, they took off their capes, revealing a black shirt. It seems as if their body also resembles that of a snake, thin and long, and can strike at any moment. Making people not only scared, but also disgusted.

These two people looked very similar, except one face looks white, while the other looks black. Their movements are slow, taking off their cape, folding it, and walked slowly to the counter. Then they walked in front of Zhu Ge Lei.

It became so quiet in the restaurant that people can even hear Li Xun Huan carving the figure.

Zhu Ge Lei pretended that he didn't see these two people, but failed.

Those two people also stared at him, those eyes like an oil brush, brushing Zhu Ge Lei from top to bottom.

Zhu Ge Lei can only stand and ask, "May I ask the names of the two gentleman, please? Excuse me for not recognizing."

The white faced man suddenly said, "So you're 'Sudden Wind Sword' Zhu Ge Lei?"

His voice is sharp, and there seems to be a resonance, like that of a rattlesnake. Zhu Ge Lei is scared out of his wits just listening to the voices. "Y...yes."

The black-faced man laughed coldly. "You deserve to be called 'Sudden Wind Sword'?"

His hand shook, a long, thin, black sword suddenly appeared in his hand.

As the sword pointed at Zhu Ge Lei, he said, "Just leave what you are carrying, and I'll spare your life."

The second guy sitting there suddenly stood up, and said with a smile, "The two gentleman must've made a mistake. On this trip, we escorted our items out to the borders, not back in. Our carriages are empty."

Before he can even finish his speech, the sword in the black-faced man entered his neck. With a light flip, the head popped right off.

Everyone is just plain shocked now. Their legs trembling under the tables.

However, since Zhu Ge Lei can live till today, obviously has some real skills. He took out the package under his arms and put it on the table. "Your

information is correct. We truly did bring something from the borders. But the two of you, unfortunately, do not have the skills to take it away."

The black-faced man laughed. "What do you want to do?"

Zhu Ge Lei responded, "The two gentleman should at least leave some martial skills here, so I can have an excuse when I get back."

Even as he speaks, his foot has retreated seven steps. The sword came out. And everyone figured he's going to fight to the death.

No one expected him to instead flip a table to his side. The dish is filled with shrimp balls, which went into the air.

After only hearing the 'Si Si' sounds of the sword, seeing the bright light of the sword turning, over ten shrimp balls have all been cut in half.

Zhu Ge Lei said, "If you can do the same thing, I'll immediately hand over the package. Otherwise, please leave."

This sword skill is definitely quite excellent, the words are also very pretty, but Li Xun began to laugh silently. By doing this, his opponents can only slice shrimp balls, not his head. So no matter win or lose, he'll keep his life."

The black-faced man started to laugh. "This can only be considered a chef's specialty. Do you really think it's also martial arts?"

When he said this, he took a deep breath, made the sliced shrimp balls on the floor bounce up again. Then, with only the sight of a black light, the shrimp balls all suddenly disappeared. Apparently, they all got stuck on his sword. Even those with no kung fu realizes how hard it is to slice shrimp balls, but to capture them on a sword is much harder.

Zhu Ge Lei's face suddenly went very pale, because he saw this sword skill, and quietly retreated a few more steps. Saying, "I assume that the two gentlemen are 'The Blood-Stained Twin Snakes'?"

As he heard those words, the third person sitting at the table suddenly got scared out of his wits, quietly trying to crawl away.

Even the carriage driver by Li Xun Huan raised his eyebrows, because he knows that in the past years, very few robbers in the Yellow River area can match these two people in terms of skill or ruthlessness. It is rumored that their red capes were stained by the blood of their victims.

But he still has not heard much. Because of the people who actually know what 'The Blood-Stained Twin Snakes' has done, 9 out of 10 had their heads relocated."



Only to hear the black snake laughed, saying, "You can actually recognize us? At least your eyes aren't blind."

Zhu Ge Lei bit his teeth, saying, "Since the two want this package, I guess I can't do anything about it. Just take it and leave."

The white snake suddenly said, "If you're willing to crawl on the floor, we'll let your live. Otherwise, not only do you have to leave your package, but also your head."

This just happens to be the words Zhu Ge Lei said earlier when he was gloating. This time as it comes out of the white-faced man's mouth, every word seem to be cutting like a knife.

Zhu Ge Lei's face turned green, then turned white, then suddenly dropped onto the floor, crawling around his table once.

It's at this moment that Li Xun Huan let out a deep sigh, saying to himself, "I see that this person's personality has changed, no wonder he can live this long."

Although he spoke very softly, the Twin snakes still heard him and turned to look. Yet Li Xun Huan didn't seem to see this, instead concentrating on his human figure.

White snake laughed, "Looks like there's a top kung fu expert here, my brother and I unfortunately did not see it." Black snake said, "This package was given to us out of his own free will. If there's someone whose sword is even faster than ours, we'll also freely give our package to that person."

White snake's hand suddenly shook, and another sword appeared, except this sword is white, saying, "If there's someone sword faster than us, not only will we give up this package, but also our heads."

Their eyes are staring at Li Xun Huan as they spoke. Yet Li Xun Huan simply concentrated on his carving. As if he heard nothing.

Yet someone outside suddenly yelled, "How much is your head worth?"

When he heard this, Li Xun Huan suddenly felt quite surprised, but also very happy. He raised his head, finally seeing the youngster walking into the room.

His clothing are still not fully dry. Some areas even turned into ice, yet he's still standing straight as a spear.

His eyes still look that lonely, that proud.

His eyes contain that wild look which cannot be tamed, as if it can fight at any time, making it hard for people to get close to him.

But everyone's attention is focused on that sword on his waist. When he saw this sword, the white snake suddenly began to laugh. "Were those words spoken by you?"

The youngster responded, "Yes."

White snake said, "You want to buy my head?"

The youngster responded, "I just want to know how much it's worth, because I want to sell it to you."

White snake gathered himself, saying, "Selling me my own head?"

The youngster said, "Exactly, because not only do I not want this package, but I also do not want your head."

White snake said, "It seems that you simply want to challenge me, then."  
"Yes."

White snake looked closely at him, then looked at his sword, and suddenly began to laugh hysterically. He's never seen anything so funny in his life.

The youngster just stood there quietly, as if he has no idea what this person's laughing about. He just thought that there's nothing funny about what he just said.

The carriage driver sighed, as if he thought this child must be mad, Zhu Ge Lei also thinks that there's something wrong with the youngster's head.

Only to hear white snake said, "Thousand taels of gold would have a hard time buying my head."

The youngster said, "A thousand taels of gold is way too much, I'll only need 50 taels."

White snake suddenly stopped laughing, because he found that the youngster's neither mad nor joking.

He then saw that sword again, and started to laugh uncontrollably again. "Ok, if you just do exactly as I do, I'll give you 50 taels."

Within his laughs, he suddenly struck at the candle on the counter. Yet nothing happened to the candle. Everyone was surprised, wondering what's going on. It's at this time that white snake blew at the candle, only to see it split into seven pieces. The sword moved again yet again. Those 7 pieces then got caught up on his sword. Amazingly enough, the fire on the top piece didn't even go out!

White snake arrogantly said, "So do you think my sword is fast enough?"

The youngster's face seems to contain absolutely no emotions, answering, "Very fast."

White snake laughed, "How about you?"

The youngster responded, "My sword is not for cutting candles.

"Then what is your piece of scrap metal for?"

The youngster's hand held the sword, said one word at a time, "My Sword Is For Killing People."

White Snake smiled. "Killing people? Who can you kill?"

The youngster said, "YOU!"

Just as the word 'you' came out of his mouth, he struck with his sword!

The sword was originally at the youngster's waist, everyone saw this sword.

Yet in an instant, this sword has already entered the throat of white snake. Everyone saw that this meter long sword cut through white snake's throat.

Yet no one saw just how his sword entered white snake's throat!

There's no blood, because blood hasn't come out yet.

The youngster stared at White Snake, saying, "So is your sword faster, or my sword is faster?"

White snake gave out a 'ge ge' noise. The muscles on his face all trembling. Suddenly his mouth opened, his tongue came out.

Blood came out of his mouth.

Black snake raised his sword, yet dare not to strike. Sweat dropped from his head continuously. His hand trembling.

Only to see the youngster suddenly take out the sword, and blood spilled from the throat of white snake. White snake yelled loudly, "You...".

Afterwards, he fell on the floor.

The youngster turned to black snake, saying, "He lost. Where's my 50 taels?"

He is still that serious. Serious like an innocent child.

Yet this time no one dared to laugh at him.

As he trembled, Black snake said, "So you really killed him for 50 taels of silver?"

"That's correct."

Black snake doesn't know whether to laugh or cry. He suddenly grabbed his own hair, shredded his own cloths as silver came out. He then threw all that silver towards that youngster. "Here, take it. Take all of it!"

He then ran out the door like a mad person.

Not only did that youngster not follow him, he's not even angry. Instead, he simply bent down to pick up the silvers, then took them to the manager of the hotel, asking, "Do you think this is 50 taels?"

That manager was already crawling behind the table. Unable to speak. Only nodding his head furiously.

It's only at this time that Li Xun Huan turned his head to the carriage driver, laughing. "I was correct, wasn't I?"

The driver can only sigh. "You're definitely correct. That toy is way too dangerous."

He saw that youngster walking towards them, but couldn't see Zhu Ge Lei. Zhu Ge Lei never got out from under the table.

It's at this time that he finally came out, and he suddenly begin to strike at that youngster from the back!.

His sword is not slow. The youngster also never figured Zhu Ge Lei would try to kill him. He killed White snake. Zhu Ge Lei should be thankful to him. Why kill him?

Just as everyone thought this sword would penetrate the youngster's heart, Zhu Ge Lei suddenly give a loud yell, his sword left his hand, stuck on the ceiling.

As the sword still springs back and forth on the ceiling, Zhu Ge Lei's hands are already grabbing his own throat. But his eyes are on Li Xun Huan, the eyeballs almost popping out.

Li Xun Huan at this moment is no longer carving. Because the dagger he used to carve the figure is no longer in his hand.

Blood trickled from Zhu Ge Lei's back.

He stared at Li Xun Huan, his throat also giving off a 'ge ge' sound. It's only at this time that people began to understand that Li Xun Huan's carving dagger made its way to Zhu Ge Lei's throat.

Yet no one saw how this dagger got to his throat.

Sweat poured down from Zhu Ge Lei, his face full of pain. Suddenly he bit his teeth, and pulled that dagger out of his throat. Then stared at Li Xun Huan, yelling, "I should've recognized that it was you!"

Li Xun Huan sighed. "Unfortunately, you only found out now, or you never would've attempted to do such a disgraceful act."

Zhu Ge Lei did not hear these words. He'll never be able to hear ever again.

The youngster also turned to take a look, his face full of wonder, as if he'd never understand why this person would to kill him.

But he only looked for an instant, then walked up to Li Xun Huan. Beneath his wild and savage exterior seems to exist a hint of warmth and smile.

He only said one sentence. "I want to invite you for a drink."