

Chapter 10

Problem of 18 years ago

Li Xun Huan took a deep breath, then said, "I taught you way too much. You are also learning way too fast."

He suddenly released his hands, got up and straightened his clothes, then said while staring at the window, "Today's show is over. If you still haven't seen enough, then please come back tomorrow morning."

A laugh suddenly came from outside the window. A person said, "Your techniques really are quite excellent. Hopefully, your dagger is just as good."

After he finished the last sentence, he's already gone.

Lin Xian Er's expression changed, "It's You Long Sheng."

Li Xun Huan said, "You're afraid that he might be jealous?"

Lin Xian Er's eyes showed a venomous expression, laughing coldly, she said. "What right does he have to be jealous? I can't believe a supposed righteous character in the martial world would also do something like this. Don't think I'll ever talk to him again."

Li Xun Huan said with a smile, "You're not afraid that he'll take the Hidden Fish Sword back?"

Lin Xian Er said, "Even if I throw the sword in front of his face, he still would not dare touch it."

"Really!"

Lin Xian Er smiled deviously, "I told you already. These people are like dogs. The more you yell and kick them, the more closely they follow you, wagging their tail."

Li Xun Huan said, "It's not bad having a dog wagging its tail in front of you."

Lin Xian Er grabbed his hand, said, "You really are leaving? Why not sit a bit longer?"

Li Xun Huan said with a smile, "If I sit any longer, waiting for a dog to bite me, then things will no longer be interesting."

Lin Xian Er said viciously, "Humph. He wouldn't dare..."

Before she could finish, they heard You Long Seng say from a far off distance, "That show's over, but another show is just starting. Do you wish to watch?"

Li Xun Huan said, "See. I told you he wouldn't let me sit any longer."

Lin Xian Er again said viciously, "Annoying little bastard."

She suddenly smiled again, holding Li Xun Huan's hand saying, "But there's still tomorrow.. Please come earlier tomorrow."

Just as Li Xun Huan left the forest, he heard two people yelling at each other.

He already realizes that one of them is the driver. He then used 'Sparrow Three Touches of Water', touched the ground three times, before reaching the scene.

At this time two people are fighting. With such powerful palm and fist attacks, snow started to fly around them.

Only to hear the driver said, "Qin, you make yourself look all virtuous, but in reality you're worthless. So what if your son is beyond help. It's no one else's fault. Why do you have to try to kill him?"

The person fighting him is Qin Xiao Yi. At this time he just snickered, "Who the hell do you think you are? Look at your own place for a moment. How do you dare interfere with my business. Fine, I'll cripple you too."

Long Xiao4 Yun tried to break them up, but You Long Sheng just stood there.

As Li Xun Huan arrived, Long Xiao4 Yun went up to him, saying, "Brother. Try to calm them down. Even before the Plum Flower Bandit arrives, we're already fighting each other. This... this really..."

You Long Sheng coldly laughed, then said, "This is called 'There are no weak soldiers under a powerful General'. I never thought Li Xun Huan's servant is this powerful. Really is vicious, vicious..."

Li Xun Huan said, "That's right. He is quite vicious. But only if someone angered him."

He didn't give You Long Sheng a chance to respond, immediately turned to Long Xiao4 Yun asking, "What's going on here?"

Long Xiao4 Yun said, "Because Qin Zhong's injuries are so severe he's beyond help, brother Qin..."

Li Xun Huan said, "So he blamed it all on Mr. Mei Er, right?"

Long Xiao4 Yun laughed bitterly, “The father-son relationship is very close, so it’s not unexpected that brother Qin became so angry. He accidentally injured Mr. Mei Er, but it’s not serious.”

Li Xun Huan chuckled a bit, not bothering to add anything.

Long Xiao Yun said, “Please stop him. I know he only listens to you.”

Li Xun Huan responded in a cold voice, “Why should I stop him? If he isn’t doing this already, then I would’ve instead.”

Long Xiao4 Yun froze for a moment, not knowing what to say.

Only to see the driver’s fist filled with power, each fist is an all-out attack, although the moves aren’t very elaborate, the killer energy behind it is quite shocking.

Qin Xiao Yi looks as if he can’t even breathe.

You Long Sheng coldly laughed. “A servant with this type of kung fu, really is rare.”

Li Xun Huan asked, “Really?”

You Long Sheng said, “Each time he makes a move, it’s as if he’s ready to get hit also. This type of fist really makes observers hard to understand.”

Li Xun Huan said, “This is because he can easily withstand his opponent’s attacks, but if he lands a hit on the opponent, then that person would have serious problems.”

Before You Long Sheng can respond, someone else came yelling, “What a bold servant dog, even dare to attack someone above you. Watch as I take care of you.”

As he spoke, Zhao Zheng Yi arrived at the scene.

Just as he’s about to join the fight, he heard Li Xun Huan said coldly, “If someone wants to fight two against one, winning through numbers, then I’m afraid I’ll have to release my dagger!”

Zhao Zheng Yi immediately stopped, afraid to step forward. He yelled angrily, “You brought a servant who dare to attack a person above him. Not only do you not discipline him, you even protect him? You think there’s no justice in the martial world?”

Li Xun Huan said calmly, “What justice? Is it justice to fight two against one?”

Zhao Zheng Yi responded loudly, “You should know that this is not fighting, but rather disciplining a servant!”

Li Xun Huan said, "He never needed disciplining. But if the venerable Zhao wants to fight him, go ahead and get the venerable Qin back here, then fight him yourself."

Zhao Zheng Yi said, "What kind of a thing* does he think he is? He's not worthy of fighting me."

*[the word 'dong xi', translated as 'item' or 'thing' is commonly used to put someone down. I kept the original wording because of the text that follows.]

Li Xun Huan said calmly, "It's true that he really isn't any 'thing'. He's a person."

He then looked at Zhao Zheng Yi with a smile. "So venerable Zhao, are you a 'thing'?"

[Gu Long reuse this little joke all time in his books. It really is quite funny in Chinese. Maybe someday I can rack my brains come up with a suitable humorous translation.]

Zhao Zheng Yi became so mad his face turned all yellow.

At a time like this, even Long Xiao4 Yun don't know what to say either. But suddenly, with a loud noise, two fist attacked at the same time. But where's Qin Xiao Yi? It's as if he flew out after getting hit, then fell to the ground with a loud thud.

You Long Sheng again laughed coldly. "Looks like not only can a master not discipline a servant, but it's actually the other way around."

Only to see Qin Xiao Yi whisper something into Zhao Zheng Yi's ear. Zhao Zheng Yi got up and stared at the driver, saying, "I can't believe you actually have such good kung fu. Even I did not notice. No wonder when third brother lowered his guard, you were able to use some sneaky means of defeating him."

The driver laughed coldly. "If you people lose, then the other person must have used some devious method. If I were to lose, then it's because I have lesser skills. I'm quite familiar with this idea. You don't have to repeat it."

Zhao Zheng Yi said angrily, "I originally thought you were a brave man, so I wanted to protect you. Don't anger me."

The driver responded, "I already lived till today without your protection. I guess I was just beginning to dislike my life, so if you have something up sleeve, just go ahead and use it."

Zhao Zheng Yi stared at him, fire came out of his eyes, then showed a nasty grinned. "Very Good..."

He said 'very good' five or six times. Then picked up Qin Xiao Yi and left.

Long Xiao4 Yun went up and said with a smile, "If there's a misunderstanding we can talk. Why..."

Qin Xiao Yi chuckled, "After all that has happened to my son and I, you think there's still room for talking?"

Long Xiao4 Yun stepped back, and watched Qin Xiao Yi and Zhao Zheng Yi leave.

Li Xun Huan took a deep breath, then said, "Big brother, I just came back and already caused so many problems. If... I knew..."

Long Xiao4 Yun suddenly laughed loudly, "Brother. Don't ever say these things. Since when have we worried about problems?"

Li Xun Huan forced a smile. "Brother, but... I know I've made things hard for you..."

Long Xiao4 Yun said, "Brother. Don't worry about me. No matter what you do, I'll always be by your side."

Li Xun Huan almost cannot keep tears of joy from coming out eyes.

Long Xiao4 Yun looked at that driver, as if wanting to say something. But he suddenly changed his words, "It's almost dawn. Looks like the Plum Flower Bandit will not show up today. You've traveled quite a bit. Why don't you rest here?"

"Ok."

Long Xiao4 Yun said, "I already furnished a room for you. But if you still want to live in your old place, then I can ask Lin Xian Er to move out."

Li Xun Huan said, "That's not necessary."

The driver just sat there, deep in thought. After a long time, he bit his teeth, as if he's about to make a painful decision. Then he said, "Young master, it looks like I have to go now."

"You're leaving? You're also leaving?"

The driver said, "You're my savior, so I originally planned to serve you all my life, but now..."

They suddenly heard sound of horses in this middle of the night.

He continued, “Zhao Zheng Yi already knows my identity. He’s probably contacting my enemies right now. I never cared much for my life, so I don’t worry about them. But...”

“But you don’t want to get me involved, right?”

The driver said, “I know young master you’re not afraid of trouble. But the defendant in the case of eighteen years ago was me. I don’t want young master you also being yelled at with me.”

Li Xun Huan thought for a second, then said, “That was an accident. In the past eighteen years, you’ve more than made up for your mistakes.”

The driver said, “But they won’t care. Blood debts in the martial world can only be repaid by blood!” He didn’t wait for Li Xun Huan to cut in before continuing, “Besides, I want to see Mr. Mei Er. After his injuries, I’m not sure how far he went. No matter what, he only came because of us.”

Li Xun Huan just sat there for a long time, then asked, “So where do you plan to go?”

The driver sighed, responds, “Right now even I don’t know that answer. But...”

He suddenly smiled, “I won’t go very far. When there’s a calm night with a bright moon, I might be back to drink with young master.”

Li Xun Huan suddenly stood, saying, “You sure?”

“Definitely!”

When their eyes met, tears came out. So they were forced to look away. When heroes part, they sometimes act mushier than little girls. This is because although they care so much for each other, they would never speak of them.

Li Xun Huan only said, “If you’re really leaving, at least let me escort you out.”

The street is very quiet. Even sound of Li Xun Huan’s cough isn’t enough to break the eeriness.

The driver suddenly stopped. “We have to part sometime. Young master... you should go back.”

Li Xun Huan walked a few more step, but finally stopped. After staring mindlessly at a tree at the end of the street for a long time, he turned his head, “Fine. I’ll go back now. Take care of yourself.”

The driver nodded, then said, “Young master, please take care too.”

He no longer looked at Li Xun Huan, simply walked past him. After walking a few more feet, he then added, "If young master doesn't have anything else to do, then you should just stay here. No matter what, master Long is a good friend."

He added, "If that's the case, then maybe I'll be back looking for young master in the near future."

Li Xun Huan said, "Maybe I will stay here. It's not like I have anywhere else to go."

He still smiling, but what is he smiling about?

The driver bit his teeth as he walked away.

He now must resume this life of hiding. He already hid with Li Xun Huan for ten years, no one knows what this life is like. It's like a never-ending dream.

But for the past ten years, at least he had Li Xun Huan to accompany him.

Now he is alone.

If he were a coward, then maybe he wouldn't have escaped. Because he knows that hiding by yourself is more painful than even death.

But he must escape. He just saw that Li Xun Huan might be settling down again. He must leave. Only by leaving can Li Xun Huan live in peace.

He should have first thought out everything before going. But he can't calm himself enough to think. He just knows that he needs to go to a crowded place. After walking for some time, he came to a food market. He felt pretty funny about this.

In this life, he has been to countless places. He's been to huge mansions and broken down shacks. He's seen girls of very high places, while been to the cheapest brothels. He's been in the cold, a place where noses might be frozen off, He Long Jiang [a river in the very northern part of China]. He's been to places so hot you can cook an egg on the ground.

He's seen sunrise from the tall mountain peaks. He's seen sunset on the ocean beach. He's even ate raw meat with local tribes in the uncivilized areas.

But this is the first time he's been to a food market.

On a winter morning, only the food market has so many people, such big crowds. No matter who comes here will no not feel lonely.

Here are mothers holding their babies. Old man with crutches, cooks filled with oil.

All kinds of people, holding their baskets to buy food, arguing with the meat and vegetable sellers over small amounts of money.

Here there are the smell of raw fish, oily smell from fried food, and even stink from chickens and ducks.

Suddenly he heard someone in front yell, "We sell meat here. Fresh meat..."

Then the voice stopped.

The people in front then all stepped back, their faces very pale.

Only to hear someone from behind ask, "What's going on?"

The person in front said, "Someone's selling meat."

"There are over a dozen people here selling meat, what's problem?"

"But this person is selling a different kind of meat. He's selling human meat."

The driver raised his eyebrows, then split the crowd to take a look.

When he got close he became more shocked than everyone else.

The meat seller has a sign that says, "Yellow Cow, White Sheep. Kill now Sell now."

Behind the counter is a tall, large, fat one-eyed woman. Her hand holding a regular butcher knife.

But on the counter is a live person!

This person's clothes have been torn, showing a thin white body. Every single muscle shaking.

The one-eyed woman's left hand holds his neck, her right hand holds the knife. Her eyes filled with murderous rage.

The one-eyed woman looked at the driver a bit, then smiled, asking, "Are you here to buy meat?"

The driver look like he's frozen, and didn't hear what she said.

The one-eyed woman chuckled. "I knew for quite a while now that only you would buy this piece of meat. So I've been waiting for you."

Only then did the driver let out sigh. He smiled bitterly. "It's been years. Sister-in-law you..."

The one-eyed woman suddenly spit on the driver's face, then said angrily, "Sister-in-law? Who's your sister-in-law? If you call me that again, I'll cut out your tongue!"

For some reason, the driver would not respond.

The one-eyed woman continued. "You betrayed Weng Tian Jie. I bet you've become filthy rich by now, right? So how come you would even hesitate to buy some meat?"

She suddenly grabbed that person's hair, asking, "Are you buying or not? If not, I guess I'll just kill him and feed him to the dogs."

The driver looked, said with a shock, "Mr. Mei Er, it's you!"

The person on the counter on had a blank look on his face. He just kept drooling, unable to talk. The driver then said, "Fine. I'll buy him."

The woman said, "If you want to buy him, then you have to follow me."

The driver bit his teeth, then said, "Fine. I'll go with you."

The woman then stared at him a bit more, said, "You're smart to agree. I've been searching for you for seventeen years now. Do you honestly think I'll let you escape?" The driver sighed. "Since you've found me, then I obviously have no intention of escaping."

At the bottom of the hill is a small house by the graveyard.

Inside is a person who has lived here for a long time. He just sat there, staring at a bowl strangely.

His eyes showed pain and anger. But it's not clear what he's thinking. The ground is already frozen, but he didn't seem to notice. After a while, sound came from outside.

This person suddenly grabbed an axe, asking, "Who?"

Outside the house that one-eyed woman responded, "It's me!"

This person suddenly became nervous, asking, "Is he really in town?"

The one-eyed woman said, "The Old Turtle's information really is quite good. I already brought him back!"

He suddenly turned around and kneeled. His eyes filled with tears. He would not get up again for a long time.

Suddenly another set of steps came.

The one-eyed woman asked, "Who?"

Someone outside answered, "It's seventh brother and myself."

One man is a freckled, muscular man. His shoulder carrying lots of cabbage. The other is small and skinny. He's a stinky-tofu seller.

At this moment both stared viciously at the driver. The cabbage seller grabbed him, spoke loudly, "Tie bastard['Tie' is the driver's last name], what more do you have to say?"

The one-eyed woman said, "Release him. If you have something to say, wait til everyone arrives first."

The freckled man bit his teeth, but finally released him. Then bowed three times to the bowl on the table. His eyes also filled with tears.

In the next hour, three more people came in. One carried a medicine box, obviously a doctor. One carried wine, chicken and some cups. One is a blind fortune teller.

When these three people saw the driver, they're all filled with hate. All seven people just sat there. All with serious expressions. They look like they're ghosts, coming out of the underworld to seek revenge.

The driver is still expressionless, not saying a word.

The one-eyed woman suddenly asked, "Fifth brother, when can the third brother arrive?"

That wine-seller fat guy said, "He will be here. I have received his letter."

The one-eyed woman asks, "If so, then why is he still not here?"

The blind fortune-teller sighed, then said, "We've waited for seventeen years. Why does it matter to wait another hour or two?"

The one-eyed woman also sighed, saying, "Seventeen years, seventeen years..."

She must've said it seven or eight times, each time more dejected.

These seventeen years must have been hard on them. Countless bitterness must've surrounded this time, so much blood and tears!

That blind fortune-teller said, "In the past seventeen years, I've wanted to see Mr. Tie every single moment. Unfortunately now..."

He then asked, "What does he look like now? Fourth brother, tell me please."

The doctor said, "He looks about the same as seventeen years ago, except his beard is longer, his body a bit fatter?"

The blind man said, “Great. Great. Tie bastard, do you realize that in these seventeen years, I’ve prayed night and day for you to be healthy. Looks like Heaven has answered my prayers.”

The one-eyed woman said while biting her teeth, “He betrayed Weng Tian Jie, so he’s obviously a very rich man by now. How could he possibly be living our filthy lives?”

She pointed at that wine-seller. “Mr. An Le, fifth brother Zhang, is now selling wine. Second brother Yi is now blind. I bet you don’t know these things, right?”

The driver would not say a word. He’s afraid that if he opened his mouth, tears would follow.

Yet who could possibly understand the suffering he went through?

Suddenly someone yelled outside, “Sister-in-law. I have great news...”