

Chapter 46

The Heroic and the Ambitious

Li XunHuan looked at Guo SongYang's body, sighed, and said, "You're right. I was a step too late."

LingLing said, "If he's already dead, then what can he tell you? ...Are you saying that dead people can talk too?"

Li XunHuan said, "Even though his message was not expressed in words, I can still hear him."

LingLing said, "But... but I can't hear anything."

She's totally lost, and became scared.

People tend to be scared of things they don't understand.

Li XunHuan paused for a moment, then said, "You want to know what he said?"

LingLing nodded.

Li XunHuan said, "Actually he had given you the message too. It's just that you weren't listening. To be honest, the words of dead people tend to be the most precious ones, because these are words they used their lives to obtain. If you can learn to hear dead people's words, you can learn a lot of things."

LingLing asked, "But how do I listen to dead people?"

Li XunHuan said, "Obviously, it's not easy to understand the words of a dead person. But if you want to live a few years longer, and live happily, you should learn."

His tone was very serious, with no hints of joking.

LingLing said, "But how do I learn? Will you teach me?"

Li XunHuan said, "Why don't you listen more closely?"

LingLing closed her eyes.

She tried her best to listen, but could not hear anything.

Li XunHuan said, "You should not only use your ears to listen, but also your eyes."

LingLing opened her eyes.

Only to see Guo SongYang's clothing filled with sword wounds, very apparent after being cleansed by water.

His body is now gray, because all blood had left his body.

After a long time, Li XunHuan asked, "So what did you see, what have you heard?"

LingLing said, "I... I see that there are many wounds on his body, nineteen total."

Li XunHuan asked, "What else?"

LingLing said, "Because his wounds are all very short, and very shallow, one can see that they're made by the tip of a sharp sword."

Li XunHuan asked, "Why must it be a sword?"

LingLing said, "Neither saber nor spear can make such delicate wounds with their tips."

Li XunHuan said, "Very good. You've learnt a lot already."

LingLing smiled, said, "Therefore, the person who killed him must be Jin WuMing, because ShangGuan JinHong uses Dragon & Phoenix Rings, not sword. ShangGuan JinHong perhaps didn't even come."

Li XunHuan said, "Perhaps he was here, but did not attack."

LingLing nodded, said, "These wounds are all made diagonally, deeper on the bottom end, shallower on the top end."

Li XunHuan said, "That's correct."

LingLing said, "Therefore, we can see that each sword stroke struck upward. This is indeed a strange style of sword art. I've often heard that Jin

WuMing's sword art is swift and tricky, a very rare style in the martial world. I finally believed this today."

Li XunHuan said, "You're right. Not only is his sword art very mysterious, his strikes all come from awkward angles, so that his opponents could never tell where he was attacking from."

He pointed at one of the wounds on Guo SongYang's body, said, "Look at this wound. It would have been ordinary had this attack came downward, but based on his wound, you can see that this strike came upward. His sword art is therefore the opposite of traditional sword moves."

LingLing said, "You're right."

Li XunHuan said, "Therefore, Jin WuMing's strikes all started from below the waist, utilizing much wrist power. If I hadn't seen these wounds, I would've never expected anyone to attack in this manner."

LingLing nodded.

Li XunHuan said, "You only saw his front side. There are seven more wounds on his back. Considering Guo SongYang's martial arts, there is no way he should've been wounded from behind."

LingLing said, "That's right. If I were to fight someone, I would never turn my back to him."

Li XunHuan said, "Therefore, these wounds must have been made when they passed by each other. Only if Jin WuMing struck from his flank could he have wounded his opponent."

He sighed, and continued, "Anyone who can attack from the flank practices a very unusual type of sword art. What's even more extraordinary is, these attacks also were struck upward, which meant that Jin WuMing must've changed the way he held his sword at the moment their body passed each other. This ability alone makes him an incredibly dangerous fighter!"

LingLing listened in a daze.

After a long time, she sighed, and said, "So that's what he wanted to tell you."

Li XunHuan said, "Otherwise, there was no way he could've suffered so many wounds."

LingLing asked, "Why?"

Li XunHuan said, "When top fighters fight, winning and losing almost always come down to a single exchange. For if one side showed even the slightest flaw in his move, his opponent would immediately take advantage of it."

LingLing said, "I understand."

Li XunHuan said, "Think about it. Solar-Apex Iron Sword has been renowned in the martial world for twenty years now. Guo SongYang is the top one or two sword user in the world. There's absolutely no way he could've revealed twenty-six flaws, and be wounded twenty-six times."

LingLing said, "You mean he purposely revealed them... but is he not afraid that Jin WuMing would kill him?"

Li XunHuan said, "But because he purposely revealed these flaws, he was able to dodge the killing blow each time. It's also why his wounds are so superficial."

LingLing became totally lost. She asked, "Why would he do this?"

Li XunHuan sighed, said, "He did this to tell me exactly what Jin WuMing's sword art is like!"

LingLing froze.

After a while, tears came down her eyes. She said, "I've always thought that there are no kind people in this world, that friendship simply meant using each other for one's own benefit. That's why if someone wants to live well, one must learn to use others, trick others. Never should one be honorable or caring, or would suffer greatly."

Li XunHuan said, "I take it these ideals are taught to you by Lin XianEr."

LingLing nodded, said, "But now I know that there are good people in this world. There really are people who value honor and friendship above their own lives."

She suddenly kneeled in front of Guo SongYang and said, "Mr. Guo, although you died, you managed to help out your friend, and taught me a valuable lesson in life. Hopefully, you can rest peacefully now."



On a dirt road outside the mountain, two people walked. The setting sun shined on their robes, which gave off a mysterious, golden glitter.

They did not walk very fast nor very slow, but quite serenely. They did not speak, nor made any irregular gestures.

But their body gave off an invisible aura of murder. Before they even entered the forest, all the birds inside the forest had flown away, scared off by this dark aura.

Life is very important to them.

They would not let any form of life lie on top of their heads!

It's very dim inside the forest.

When they got here, the person walking in the front suddenly stopped. At almost the exact moment, the person behind him also stopped.

The person in the front is ShangGuan JinHong. He asked, "How was Guo SongYang's sword art?"

Jin WuMing said, "Good!"

ShangGuan JinHong asked, "Very good?"

Jin WuMing said, "Very good, better than the leaders of the seven major sword sects."

ShangGuan JinHong said, "But when he fought you, he revealed over twenty-six flaws in his movements."

Jin WuMing said, "Twenty-nine. I did not attack the other three times."

ShangGuan JinHong nodded, said, "You're right. You did not attack those three times. Why?"

Jin WuMing said, "Because had I attacked at those three moments, I would've killed him!"

ShangGuan JinHong said, "You saw that he revealed those flaws on purpose?"

Jin WuMing said, "Correct, which is why I didn't want him to die so quickly. I wanted to use him to practice my sword!"

ShangGuan JinHong said, "But do you know why he revealed all those weaknesses?"

Jin WuMing said, "No. I never thought about that."

Other than killing people, he does not like to think about anything else.

ShangGuan JinHong said, "He revealed those flaws so you could wound him."

Jin WuMing said, "Huh?"

ShangGuan JinHong said, "He knew that he could not defeat us, which is why he did this, so Li XunHuan could see the location of your strikes from his wounds."

He raised his head, and continued, "Therefore, he must've known that Li XunHuan would follow him. If we return right now, we would surely find Li XunHuan there!"

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Li XunHuan went to Ah Fei's house to find a shovel, so he could make a grave. Most people in the martial world tends be buried at the place where they died.

LingLing looked on this whole time. Li XunHuan didn't want her to interfere. Digging this grave is his prerogative. No one else should get in the way.

At this moment LingLing said, "Are you really going to bury him here?"

Li XunHuan nodded.

LingLing said, "If a man dies an honorable death, then it really doesn't matter where he's buried, right?"

Li XunHuan said, "Yes."

LingLing said, "In that case, you should not bury him here."

Li XunHuan said, "If not here, then where?"

LingLing said, "You should hang him at the geyser over there."

Li XunHuan did not respond.

LingLing said, "ShangGuan JinHong and Jin WuMing would surely realize Mr. Guo's intentions after a while, right?"

Li XunHuan said, "Yes."

LingLing said, "Jin WuMing obviously would not want you to know his sword art. So once he realize this, he'll come back, right?"

Li XunHuan said, "Right."

LingLing said, "If they found Mr. Guo's body in a different place upon returning, they'd know that you've been here, right?"

Li XunHuan nodded.

LingLing said, "In that case, should you ever come into blows with them, Jin WuMing would change his sword style, right?"

Li XunHuan said, "Correct."

LingLing said, "If that's the case, then wouldn't Mr. Guo's message be useless?"

Li XunHuan said, "I've already thought about the things you've said."

LingLing said, "Then why do you still intend on burying him here?"

Li XunHuan said, "I can't do that, because he died for me, while I..."

LingLing said, "Exactly because he died for you, you should return him to where you found him. Otherwise, wouldn't his death be in vain?"

Li XunHuan thought for a long time, before he said, "I'd bet anything that ShangGuan JinHong and Jin WuMing would not return!"

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Jin WuMing turned around.

ShangGuan JinHong said, "You want to return?"

Jin WuMing said, "Yes."

ShangGuan JinHong said, "I know you've long wanted to duel with Little Li's Flying Dagger, but now is not the time!"

Jin WuMing asked, "Why?"

ShangGuan JinHong said, "If you return now, you will certainly lose!"

Jin WuMing's hand gripped his sword tightly, his voice turned a bit coarse, asked, "Why would I certainly lose?"

ShangGuan JinHong said, "You've already killed Guo SongYang. Your killer instinct has dissipated. Li XunHuan currently has extra strength from his sadness. If you return now, you're going to be at a severe disadvantage."

Jin WuMing said, "But you..."

ShangGuan JinHong said, "Together, we can surely kill him. But... how can you be so sure that Li XunHuan went alone? What if Old Man Sun is with him?"

Jin WuMing said, "Even together, it's not certain that..."

ShangGuan JinHong cut him off, and said clearly, "I've already told you. During our visit to the martial world this time, we can only win, not lose. If

we're not a hundred and twenty percent certain of victory, then we will not engage the enemy!"

Jin WuMing remained silent.

ShangGuan JinHong, "Besides, sentimentality has crept into your mind."

Jin WuMing said, "Sentiment?"

ShangGuan JinHong said, "The reason you can win is because you are utterly ruthless, but now that you're a bit sentimental, your strength has decreased."

ShangGuan JinHong then said, "You've never been sentimental before, what happened? Who did this to you?"

Jin WuMing suddenly turned away, and said, "No one."

ShangGuan JinHong said, "I don't really want to ask who this person is. But if you want to win, want to defeat Li XunHuan, then you must return to your previous level of ruthlessness. If you want to return to that level, then you must kill the woman that moved your heart!"

As he spoke, he turned around and entered the forest.



It's the middle of the night.

Li XunHuan's heart is just as heavy as his footsteps.

Guo SongYang's finally buried. This famous swordsman's final fate did not differ from anyone else, occupying just a small part of the ground.

But did he die a more important death than most other people?

Li XunHuan did not know the answer. He only knew that Guo SongYang did not have to die. If a person who did not have to die... died, then wasn't his death a bit silly?

Perhaps all heroes throughout history had been somewhat crazy.

Even he himself is quite crazy.

LingLing followed him closely, suddenly asked, "How do you know ShangGuan JinHong and the others won't be back?"

Li XunHuan said, "Because ShangGuan JinHong is incredibly ambitious. Ambitious people do not act like normal people."

LingLing asked, "What's so different about them?"

Li XunHuan said, "If they attack, no matter success or failure, they'd retreat safely afterwards, then wait for the next chance to attack. Ambitious people never do things that's not safe."

He sighed, said, "Ambitious people are never crazy, which is why they're different from heroes."

LingLing asked, "So heroes are very crazy?"