

Chapter 72

Human Nature is Neither Good nor Evil

Although neither of them had raised a single finger, Lin XianEr and Sun XiaoHong had already went through two exchanges.

This was a battle of wits, not a battle of brawn.

Lin XianEr had won the first exchange.

Because she understood the weaknesses of women and she knew how to take advantage of them as well.

In the second exchange, Sun XiaoHong was the victor.

She won because of the very same reason.

She knew that women are always suspicious, and suspicious of everything.

Because this suspicion exists, fear will come to be.

If Sun XiaoHong was a man, she would have just killed Lin XianEr.

If Lin XianEr was a man, despite anything that Sun XiaoHong said, she would have left a long time ago.

It is because the two of them are women that the situation had come to where it was at now.

When men and women attempt to do the same thing, no matter what it is, their methods will always be different, and the results will always be different.

The same case applies to duels.

When women duel, it will never be as heavy, intense, or exciting as when men duel. But compared to men, their duels are far more subtle, complex, and interesting.

Because there are bound to be many surprises and variations.

The changes and variations in their duels are not like those in martial arts. In fact, compared to martial arts, they happen much faster and are much more complicated.

It is a pity that their variations cannot be seen by the naked eye.

If someone could actually see the subtle and complex variations in a women's mind, they would realize that duels among women are much more interesting than duels among men.

Women will be women, they will always be different than men.

Anyone who denies this is a fool.

The idea is not only logical but simple as well.

The strange thing is, there are still people in this world who don't comprehend this.

Sun XiaoHong pulled Li XunHuan ahead.

Lin XianEr followed them from behind.

"We're going our way, you go yours, why are you following us for?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"I... I want to go see Ah Fei too." Lin XianEr said.

"What do you still want to see him for? You still haven't hurt him enough?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"I just want to..." Lin XianEr said.

"We won't let you see him, it's pointless for you to come." Sun XiaoHong said.

"I will look at him from afar, whether he is willing to see me or not is up to him." Lin XianEr said.

"The decision is yours, if you are really set on following us, there's nothing we can do. Except... since you chose to follow us, just don't regret it later." Sun XiaoHong said coldly.

"I never regret anything I do." Lin XianEr said.

Sun XiaoHong suddenly laughed and said, "Look, didn't I tell you that she would follow us, my guesses were exactly correct."

This was directed at Li XunHuan.

"You wanted her to follow us all along." Li XunHuan said with a smile.

"Of course." Sun XiaoHong said.

"Why?" Li XunHuan said.

"I didn't have a way to deal with her before, all I can do is to wait for another chance. If she doesn't follow along with us, how will I have that chance?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"You didn't have to wait, you should have just attacked her before. No matter what she said you could have ignored her." Li XunHuan said.

"Men have a saying, 'A promise is worth thousands in gold', you think women can just break promises like they pass gas?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"But how did you know that she would follow us?" Li XunHuan said.

"Because she wants our protection. She knows that by following Li TanHua, no matter who it is that wants to kill her would have to think twice." Sun XiaoHong said.

Sun XiaoHong smiled and continued, "This is what they call, 'A fox pretending to be a tiger', or another way of saying it is 'dogs hiding behind humans'."

"None of those two phrases sound very pleasant." Li XunHuan said.

"If you chose to do something like this, no matter how bad it sounds, all you can do is listen." Sun XiaoHong said.

Obviously Lin XianEr heard everything they said.

Sun XiaoHong purposely let her hear them.

But Lin XianEr pretended to not have heard anything at all. She did not say anything either.

It was as if she suddenly went deaf and dumb.

Pretending to be deaf and dumb is definitely not an easy thing to do.

Sun XiaoHong suddenly changed the subject and said, "Do you know about what happened between Long Xiao4Yun and ShangGuan JinHong?"

"I have heard about it... you and your grandfather came because of that incident." Li XunHuan said.

"Right, because we knew that we would be able to see a lot of people there." Sun XiaoHong said.

She turned to look at Li XunHuan and said, "But most importantly, I knew that you would show up."

Li XunHuan looked back at her. He suddenly felt a warmth in his heart, like he had just drunk a cup of wine.

He had never felt this way in a very long time.

Sun XiaoHong felt like she was in paradise knowing that Li XunHuan was staring back into her eyes.

After a while, Li XunHuan said, "If it weren't for you and your grandfather, I might have already..."

She cut him off and said, "ShangGuan JinHong would have ended up inside that casket."

Li XunHuan let out a laugh and did not continue on.

He knew that sooner or later he would have to face ShangGuan JinHong, but he did not like to talk about it.

He did not like to think about it too much, because if he did, he'd have worries, if he had worries, he'd be distracted, and his chances of winning would be very slim.

"When dealing with people like ShangGuan JinHong, there's no need to be concerned with honor. If you had attacked him when he saw ShangGuan Fei's corpse, then you definitely could have killed him." Sun XiaoHong said.

"Not definitely." Li XunHuan said.

"No? You don't think that he'd be distracted by seeing his own dead son?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"Blood is thicker than water. ShangGuan JinHong definitely still has a shred of humanity in him." Li XunHuan said.

"Then why didn't you make a move? You should know that he won't necessarily repay your honor and fairness." Sun XiaoHong said.

"Him and I already can't coexist in this world, of course there's no need for honor between the two of us." Li XunHuan said.

"Then you..." Sun XiaoHong said.

Li XunHuan interrupted her with a laugh, "I didn't attack because I was still waiting for the right opportunity."

"I think that was the best opportunity that you could ever want." Sun XiaoHong said.

"You are wrong." Li XunHuan said.

"Huh?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"Even though seeing your own son dead can be a great distraction, you will still feel a surge of incredible sadness and anger. If I had attacked, he would have released all that anger and sadness on me!" Li XunHuan said.

He sighed and continued, "When someone is in deep sadness, not only will their strength be greater than normal, their courage will be greater than normal as well. If

ShangGuan JinHong would have struck at me then, I don't have confidence at all that I could have blocked his attack."

Sun XiaoHong smiled at him and said, "So you are not as honorable as I had thought. You can even be quite schemy."

Li XunHuan smiled and said, "If I really was as noble and honorable as everyone thinks, I would have died at least eighty times already."

"If ShangGuan JinHong knew of your intentions back then, he would have regretted drinking that cup of wine with you." Sun XiaoHong said.

"He would never regret it." Li XunHuan said.

"Why?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"Because he understood my intentions perfectly well." Li XunHuan said.

"Then why did he still drink to you?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"He drank to me not because of honor or fairness, in his eyes honorable and just people are idiots." Li XunHuan said.

"Then what was his reason?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"Because he understood my intentions, he knew that I wasn't an idiot." Li XunHuan said.

"He knew that you were like him, in that you could wait, wait for the right chance, and wait for the perfect opportune moment. That's why he drank to you?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"Yes." Li XunHuan said.

"He felt that you two were the same kind of people, so he admired you. We admire most the people who resemble ourselves, because deep down inside, we admire ourselves the most." Sun XiaoHong said.

"Very well said. I am amazed that you can understand something like this at your age." Li XunHuan said.

"But are you and him really the same kind of person?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"In certain ways, yes we are. It is because we grew up in different environments, and we encountered different people and events, that we ended up as two different people." Li XunHuan said.

He sighed and continued, "Some people say that human nature is good, others say that human nature is evil. I say that we aren't born good nor evil. Who we are and whether we are good or evil depends only on what we do in our lives."

"It looks like you not only understand others very well, you understand yourself very well also." Sun XiaoHong said.

"To fully understand oneself is not an easy thing to do at all." Li XunHuan said.

His expression turned slightly gloomy and a glimmer of pain and sadness filled his eyes.

Sun XiaoHong sighed and said, "If someone wants to truly understand themselves, they must first go through a lot of sadness and suffering, don't they?"

"That is correct." Li XunHuan said.

"If that is the case, then I don't ever want to understand myself. The more I understand myself, the more pain I'd have to go through. If I did not understand myself at all, then I'd be the happiest." Sun XiaoHong said.

This time Li XunHuan was the one who changed the subject.

"When ShangGuan JinHong toasted to me, you and your grandfather were still around?" Li XunHuan asked.

"No we had already left. I heard about it from other people." Sun XiaoHong said.

She smiled and continued, "You and ShangGuan JinHong are incredibly famous people now. Your every move and action is considered big news. In this city alone, I bet there are about a hundred thousand people discussing you right now, would you believe me?"

"This is why I admire your grandfather. His actions are like drifting clouds and his thoughts are like flowing water. He is free to do whatever he wishes and never has any worries to burden him. This type of person is truly incredible." Li XunHuan said.

"He really can see past everything." Sun XiaoHong said.

She changed the subject again and asked, "Do you know who sent that casket?"

"I can't really guess who it is." Li XunHuan said.

"Do you think it was the same person who killed ShangGuan Fei?" Sun XiaoHong asked.

She was aware of who had killed ShangGuan Fei.

But Lin XianEr had no idea who this person was. She kept quiet the entire time but was attentively listening to their conversation, hoping that one of them would say the killer's name.

"It is probably the same person, because only a few people knew where ShangGuan Fei's corpse was buried." Li XunHuan said.

"Why do you think that person did this for...?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"Because that person wants to scare ShangGuan JinHong." Li XunHuan said.

"That person hates ShangGuan JinHong too?" Sun XiaoHong said.

Li XunHuan fell silent for a while, then said, "It's possible that the person doesn't hate ShangGuan JinHong. The person probably only did so to come to ShangGuan JinHong's aid after he has fallen."

"I don't understand, if the person wants to help ShangGuan JinHong, why scare him in the first place?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"Or it could be that the person wants ShangGuan JinHong to regret his decision." Li XunHuan said.

Sun XiaoHong sighed and said, "People's motivations are harder to comprehend than anything else in this world."

"Right. People's minds and human nature are the two most complicated things in this world, much more complicated than even the most powerful martial arts." Li XunHuan said.

He suddenly added, "But if you don't understand human nature, you can never reach the pinnacle of martial arts. Because everything is related to human nature in one way or another, even martial arts."

These wise words were far too deep for Sun XiaoHong to really grasp.

It wasn't clear whether she understood much of what he said, but she was quiet for some time, before finally saying, "I don't care if I can't understand anything at all, I only want to understand you."

Her eyes were stuck on him. In her eyes were not only the looks of appreciation but also trust and faith, as if trying to tell him that he was the only person she could ever open her heart to.

Li XunHuan suddenly felt his heart swell up with warmth again. He couldn't resist reaching out to caress her adorable face.

But of course he did not do such a thing.

He just couldn't.

He slowly turned his head away, and started coughing lightly.

Sun XiaoHong was staring at him, waiting for a reply, but slowly seemed to lose the look of hope in her eyes. She said, "But it seems like you are scared of letting anyone understand you, so you are constantly trying to prevent it from happening."

"Scared? Scared of what?" Li XunHuan said.

"Scared of having someone else fall in love with you." Sun XiaoHong said. "Because anyone who truly understood you would not be able to help but fall in love with you. You would rather someone hate you than fall in love with you, isn't that right?"

"The times have really changed. Young girls back then would never say the word 'love'." Li XunHuan said with a laugh.

"And perhaps young girls now don't either. But I don't care what time period I was born into, whether it is several hundred years ago or whatever. If I feel something in my heart, I won't restrain myself from saying it with my mouth." Sun XiaoHong said.

No matter what time period, there will always be people just like her.

These people aren't afraid to speak, to act, to love, and to hate.

Maybe because they are ahead of their time that everyone else thinks of them as a little bit crazy and a little bit strange.

But they would never be bothered by it at all. No matter what anyone thinks of them, they would never take it to heart.

It is a foggy night.

Although it is still Winter, the foggy mist makes it look like Spring.

Sun XiaoHong hoped that this foggy path would never end.

Li XunHuan was originally very anxious to see Ah Fei, but now it did not seem as urgent.

These couple of years his mood had become very heavy, as if there were invisible shackles locking down on him, such that he couldn't even breathe.

It was only the several days that he was with Sun XiaoHong that he felt at ease.

He began to realize that she really understood him, much more than he could ever imagine.

To be able to spend time with someone who truly understands you, these are definitely the times in our lives that we treasure the most.

But Li XunHuan already wanted to run away.

"You would rather someone hate you than fall in love with you, isn't that right?"

Li XunHuan's heart started to ache.

It wasn't that he would rather not, it was that he simply could not.

Everyone has their own emotional barriers. No one can help them get over it except themselves.

Such is the case for Li XunHuan. And such is the case for Ah Fei.

Will those emotional barriers stay up forever? Will they carry those painful memories forever even into the grave?

Sun XiaoHong suddenly stopped wailing and said, "We are here."

The road led to the middle of nowhere. There was a small hut at the side of the road. Lantern light shown through a small window from the inside.

The light that shown through was exceptionally brilliant. Such a small house normally would never have such bright lanterns.

Sun XiaoHong turned to Lin XianEr and said, "You recognize this place, right?"

Of course she recognized this house, this was her and Ah Fei's 'home'.

She bit her lip, nodded her head, and walked timidly down the road.

"Ah Fei has returned here?" Lin XianEr said.

"Do you still want to go inside and see him?" Sun XiaoHong said.

"Can... can I go in?" Lin XianEr said.

"This was your house, if you wanted to go in, you don't need to ask anyone." Sun XiaoHong said.

Lin XianEr lowered her head and said, "But now..."

"But now of course it is not the same. You should know yourself whose fault it is that things are as they are now." Sun XiaoHong smiled coldly and continued, "You could have lived a peaceful and happy life here, but you weren't willing. This home wasn't good enough for you, and that person wasn't good enough for you."

Lin XianEr hung her head and said, "I know now that I was wrong. The only reason I was able to survive was because he protected me for so long. If it weren't for him I would have been killed long ago."

"Do you think he will still protect you like before?" Sun XiaoHong said coldly.

Lin XianEr started tearing, and said, "I don't know, I wouldn't blame him..."

She raised her head and said boldly, "I only want to see him and say two things and then I will leave. This isn't too much to ask, can you two promise me this?"

"It's not that I don't want to promise you, it is just that your words are very hard to trust." Sun XiaoHong said.

"If I don't leave after my two sentences, you can chase me away." Lin XianEr said.

Sun XiaoHong fell silent, then looked At Li XunHuan.

Li XunHuan had been standing quietly the whole time, with not a single expression on his face.

But his mind was in total disarray.

His biggest weakness was that he was always too forgiving. Although sometimes he is certain that he shouldn't give in, he can't help but feel sympathetic inside.

A lot of people know of this weakness. And a lot of people take advantage of him because of this weakness.

He even knows this himself, but for some reason he can't change.

Even if someone wrongs him ten thousand times, he is still unwilling to do even one wrong thing back. Sometimes he even knows that a person is deceiving him, yet he still lets himself be deceived.

Because he believes that if just once, someone is truthful to him, then his sacrifice will be worth it.

Li XunHuan is that kind of a person. You can call him a true gentleman, or you can call him an idiot. At the very least you have to admit that he is one of a kind.

At the very least, you should realize that he never has had any regrets.

He rarely causes people to sweat, and rarely causes people to bleed. He would rather the sweat and blood be his own.

But the things he does always causes people to shed tears.

They are tears of admiration and tears of gratitude.

Sun XiaoHong sighed on the inside.

She knew that he couldn't bear to turn her down. He has probably never turned down anyone before in his life.

"This is the last time I will ever see him. If he finds out that you two won't even let me see him one last time, he will hate you for the rest of his life." Lin XianEr said.

Sun XiaoHong bit down on her lips and said, "You are only going to say two sentences to him? Once you are down you will leave immediately?"

"Would I really overstay my welcome? Would I really want you two to chase me out? Please just promise me this and I can die without any regrets." Lin XianEr said with a smile.

Li XunHuan suddenly sighed and said, "Just let her in, two sentences can't harm him."