

Chapter 1

A Sudden Calamity

In a dark shady courtyard, there is an old man in a green robe standing under an old tree. His hair, eyebrows and beard are colored greenish by the light. He looks very tranquil and carefree, his hands are folded behind his back as he watches the young man, who sits in front of him, writing.

The young man is kneeling in front of a small table, in his hand he is holding a brush. It is as thick as the arm of a baby in diameter and it is about 7 meters long.

The young man is writing the final characters on his essay.

The young man puts down his brush and raises his head and says: “All the heroes in the realm wouldn't miss out on The Gathering at Lake Huang. Aren't you going, father?”

The old man smiles and says: “You ask me this question after copying the scriptures of Nanhua¹ it seems that your cultivation has improved. However should you be asking this question altogether? After all this time haven't you been able to pass beyond the word ‘hero?’”

The young man looks up and ponders for awhile and replies: “Yes, you're right.”

A gentle breeze was blowing, the leaves rustled, suddenly a black figure came down from the tree tops. In an instant he ascended and came down without any noise.

The man is rather short and skinny man in a black robe. The robe is very tight revealing his trained muscles and every part of his body is maintaining a sharp vigilance.

The old and young man are not startled and just look at him casually, it seems like to them that this man was standing there the entire time.

The man laughed and said: “The Old Man of Mount Yue, Yu Fanghe has indeed great self- control. It's even more surprising that young master Yu has the same self-control. I, Hei Gezi², am deeply impressed.”

¹ a Taoist codex written by the Taoist philosopher Chuang Tzu 369-286 B.C.

² Black Pigeon

Yu FangHe smiled: "Oh, you're Master Hei one of the 7 Heroes whose art of levitation is famous throughout the realm."

Hei Gezi replied: "Old master should know that I am the weakest and most useless one of the "Seven Birds of Wulin". I'm unworthy of becoming a robber or even an armed guard. I just rely on my fast legs and my tight mouth to deliver messages."

Yu Fanghe happily said: " Brother Hei does not take money that is not honestly earned and that earns my deep respects. But I'm wondering which old friend has asked you to deliver a letter."

Hei Gezi replied: "If that person does not want to reveal his identity I'm obliged to keep his/her identity a secret. That is my professional code, I also know that you wouldn't force me to reveal his/her identity. But I know this letter concerns a important secret of old master Yu." After saying this he takes out a letter and gives it to Yu.

Yu Fanghe was hesitating for a minute and returned the letter to Hei Gezi and said: "Would you mind opening this letter and loudly read out the contents?"

Hei Gezi said: "But this letter concerns a secret of you... "

Yu Fanghe smiles: "Because of that, I would like you to read it because I have no secrets. And everything in this letter I am not afraid to let anyone know."

Hei Gezi was deeply impressed and smiled: "No secrets at all! Except for you who can say he has no secrets."

Hei Gezi opened the letter and found the pages in it. The pages are stuck together and Hei Gezi wetted his fingers with saliva and separated the pages.

He started to read the letter out loud: "Dear brother... "

Suddenly he fell down with convulsions, Yu Fanghe was startled and quickly rushed over to help. After feeling his pulse he knew that Hei Gezi was soon to die and quickly asked: "Who gave you this letter?" Who?"

Hei Gezi opened his mouth and wanted to say something but couldn't produce a syllable.

Yu saw the colour of Hei's face turn to green from white to from white to red and from red to black. In a matter of seconds the colour of Hei's face shifted 4 times and the flesh of his face disappeared mysteriously leaving behind a black skeleton.

The young man was feeling very frightened by this and exclaimed: "Goodnes! What a deadly poison!"

Out of the robe of Hei Gezi rolled out an ingot of gold, that was the price of the letter also the price of his life.

Yu Fanghe looked at that ingot of gold for some time and picked up the letter.

The young man was startled and said: "What are you going to do, father?"

Yu Fanghe returned to his calm self and said: "This man died because of me, furthermore whoever tried to ambush me will try again and who knows who will be the next innocent victim. It is best that I should die, instead staying alive feeling remorseful of the deaths that are to follow."

The young man said: "But... but, father who wants to harm you? You have never had any grudges with anyone in your life. Who would..."

Suddenly they heard a great explosion, the ingot of gold exploded the force of the explosion was so loud that all the leaves of the tree fell down.

It seemed like Yu Fanghe never moved but in fact during the explosion he retreated for about 11 metres away and returned to the same position after the explosion.

His normal very tranquil eyes were now filled with anger and he made a fist and said: "What a vicious person! This person does not only want to kill me but also wants to kill the messenger. He also calculated that the ingot would explode after delivering the letter."

The young man was also angry and said: "Who can this person be? Not only does he have an evil heart but also a pair of crafty hands. If this person is not stopped,..."

Yu Fanghe interrupted him with a sigh: "Actually we cannot blame this person. If this person really hates me that much and really wants to kill me with that much passion, I must have done something to this person."

The young man had tears in his eyes and said: "Father, you cannot have done anything wrong in your life! The way you treat others, how can people still want to harm you? Is there no more justice in the realm?"

Yu Fanghe said: "Peiyu, don't be upset. And don't say there isn't any justice in the world. Every person is bound to make a few mistakes in his life, even I. But at this moment I cannot remember what I did wrong."

At this moment they could hear people from far away shouting: "Where is Yu Fanghe?..."

Where is Yu Fanghe?..."

The shouting, cursing become louder and louder, there were voices of shock and the noise of breaking down of doors. It seems that the servants of the Yu residence couldn't stop these trespassers.

The young man Yu Peiyu was surprised and said: "Who would dare to invade our home?"

Yu Fanghe gently said: "We shouldn't stop visitors from entering, furthermore when they have already entered our home why should you bother going outside to greet them..." Yu Fanghe turned around and smiled: "Do come in."

There were 5 smartly dressed men standing in the courtyard now. They all looked very fierce and ready to kill, however when they saw that father and son Yu were still very much tranquil they were rather shocked. The first man holding a large broad sabre laughed arrogantly: "Yu Fanghe, you despicable fiend! I finally found you!"

During his arrogant laughter he raised his sabre and hacked at Yu Fanghe, the power of the sabre forced the leaves down but Yu Fanghe just stood there not moving seeminly he just wanted to be hacked.

Yu Peiyu didn't even raise his head his finger just moved and everyone heard "Ping" and the man couldn't hold on to his sabre.

One part of his body felt numb and his ears were still humming, the colour of his face changed and stared at this young man. He didn't dare to attack but didn't retreat either.

Yu Fanghe called out: "Peiyu, do not harm them."

Indeed Yu Peiyu now stood still and didn't advance. The man laughed arrogantly again and said: "Of course, Yu Fanghe wants to keep his reputation as a benevolent man, he will never harm anyone. But I want to kill you old fiend, and if you wound me just a bit you're a hypocrite!"

This man was so incredibly unreasonable and said this in vigorous way, Yu Fanghe was not impressed and smiled: "In that case all of you want to take my life."

The man laughed and said: "You're absolutely right!"

And grabbed his sabre again and called out to the other 4 men: "Brothers, attack!"

A nine ringed sabre, a mourning sword, tiger-headed hook, a judge's brush, a chain spear, 5 weapons were aimed at Yu Fanghe.

At this point someone laughed: "With your abilities you can never harm old master Yu!"

A shadow passed by and dashed towards the 5 weapons, first the sabre flew away and was stuck in a tree, the sword was broken into 2 halves. Judge's brush flew up too, the hook ripped open the abdomen of the sword user and the chained spear was wrapped round the neck of the hook user.

The person was extremely fast and his techniques were like lightning even father and son Yu were impressed.

Now they saw that this person was a handsome young man in a purple robe, his eyes were bright and shining but he looked emotionless. He knelt down and said: "On my way here I overheard these men plotting something against old master Yu. So I decided to follow them and saw that old master Yu was still very polite to your own aggressors and these ruffians were too rude for words. In my anger I might have used too much force, so please forgive me for using force on your premises."

He helped out but did not claim credit but asked to be forgiven.

Yu Fanghe sighed deeply: "No matter what you did it because of me. How can I blame you? Don't ever say things like forgive and so. These 5 men... (*sigh)... I don't know what I've done to them but it has lead to their deaths here."

After awhile he smiled again and turned to this young man and held his hands wanting him to stand up: "You're not only young but also very handsome if you are the son of an old friend that would be most fortunate."

The young man wouldn't get up and said: "Although you don't recognize me, but my life was saved by old master Yu. Old master Yu, you have done numerous benevolent deeds in your life how can you remember a small child that you once saved."

Yu Fanghe held his hands and said: "Now that child has grown up and even saved my life. It seems... "

Yu Fanghe suddenly stretched his arms and flung that young man away and stepped back three paces. His body was shaking and said in a crackling voice: "Who... who are you?"

The young man landed elegantly on the ground and laughed: "Old man Yu, your palms have contracted my deadly "Instant Ruthless Depraving Needle". Not even an immortal can save you now and you'll never know who I am..."

Yu Peiyu is standing next to his father already, and saw that the hands of his father are swollen twice the normal size and were entirely black now. His father looked dead pale and was shaking and couldn't speak anymore.

Yu Peiyu was devastated and shouted: "What grudges do we have? Why do you use such vicious tricks against us!"

The young man laughed, but remained emotionless: "I have no grudge with you or your father. I just want your lives."

Yu Peiyu looked at the bodies of the 5 dead men and hatefully gritted his teeth: "This is also one of your traps."

The young man replied: "Yes, it is. In order to take your lives not only did we have to sacrifice these 6 men..."

Suddenly he whistled and 20 odd men leapt from the walls holding swords and sabres. Judging by the steps they were all experts but all their faces were veiled with a purple cloth. They were afraid that people might recognize them.

The young man laughed arrogantly: "Yu, surrender now resistance is useless. We were afraid of old Yu's invincible "Golden Silk Palms" but now he is useless. What do you hope to accomplish."

Yu Peiyu looked around and saw that these 20 odd men were quite strong. His heart was filled with grief, pain, anger and also shock.

Any other person would have gone mad or would have attacked his aggressors without any reason anymore. But not him he was different from anyone else. He carried his father on his back and picked up that long brush.

The attackers were advancing forward, they were all a bit surprised by the tranquility shown by Yu Peiyu.

At this point the swords and sabres hacked towards Yu, his entire surroundings were encircled by metallic light. A gush of wind horizontally swept out, the long iron brush made contact with the swords and sabres. Some were broken, bended or flung aside, the men were pushed back and felt numbness in their shoulders and couldn't raise their arms for awhile.

No one believed that this handsome, gentle young man had such tremendous strength.

Now another group advanced forward but they did not dare to make contact with the brush.

More than 20 men surrounded Yu Peiyu, none of them could penetrate the powerful wind created by the brush, although the force of the brush is very powerful but it was also very stressful after 20 stances Yu Peiyu began to sweat.

The purple robed young man laughed: "Good, tire him out! The rats are trapped and have no place to hide."

Although Yu Peiyu was fighting against those 20 men his eyes were focused on that young vicious man and his hands with the poisonous needles.

Peiyu heard his father's breathing become weaker and weaker, and the enemies are closing in now. He was heart-broken and tired and yelled out: "Enough!"

He also knew if he got away now it will be very difficult to find out who the mastermind is behind this entire plot.

He flung the long brush towards the chest of one the men, this man was terrified and quickly rolled on the ground to avoid being hit. The brush was stuck in the ground and Yu Peiyu used to catapult him and his father over their attackers.

The vicious young man called out: "Chase them, quickly!"

By the time they went outside they couldn't find a trace of them, the young man ordered them to spread and search. However in fact Peiyu hid under a bridge nearby, because he was carrying his father on his back and he exhausted he knew he couldn't outrun them anymore.

One man said: "Should we check under the bridge to... "

The young man angrily said: "Yu is not an idiot, do you think he will stay under the bridge till we find him."

Peiyu stayed hidden for some time and after he felt that the attackers were gone he quickly carried his father back to their house. He put his father on the bed and quickly took out some medicine out of the cupboard. He gave his father some pills, these pills were made by Yu Fanghe and saved many lifes how ironic that these pills cannot save his own.

At this time Yu Peiyu burst out in tears, Yu Fanghe's face was black and he opened his mouth and said weakly: "Am I wrong? What... what have I done wrong?"

Yu Peiyu cried out: "Father, you have done nothing wrong in your life!"

Yu Fanghe wanted to smile but the muscles in his face have hardened and he was unable to smile again. With extreme difficulty he uttered his last words: "I did nothing wrong, you must remember my teachings. Always be tolerant and forgiving... tolerant... and forgiving... "

His voice slowly died out.

Peiyu knelt down and cried for hours on end, the sun had already set.

It was now dark and quiet, but after awhile there were footsteps and judging by the sound this person was walking towards the Yu residence.

Finally, the door was pushed open and this person entered with extreme caution, at this time Yu Peiyu stood up.

The person was startled and called out: "Who are you?"

It should have been Yu Peiyu that should have asked that question, judging by her shadow and figure this intruder was a young, gracious woman.

The girl started shouting angrily: "You fiend, how dare you commit such crime and stay here!"

She drew her sword and stabbed 7 times, her swordsmanship was swift and vicious Peiyu outmaneuvered her 7 deadly stances and said: "The Flowered Chestnut Swordsmanship?"

The girl scoffed: "You recognize the sword skills of the Lin family. You..."

Yu Peiyu sighed and said: "I am Yu Peiyu."

The girl was stunned and dropped her sword and said in a trembling voice: "Brother Yu, is uncle..."

She looked at the bed and suddenly she knelt down and started crying: "I can't believe it... it is impossible..."

Yu Peiyu stared at her, she cried ever so sad and suddenly she raised her head and said: "I've cried enough, tell me what happened."

Yu Peiyu lighted a lamp and saw that the girl wore mourning clothes and was shocked and asked: "Is uncle Lim...?"

"My father was murdered 6 days ago."

Yu Peiyu asked: "Do you know who the killer was?"

The girl said: "I don't know." The light shone on her pretty face, although she looked somewhat sickly her face was still full of character.

She continued: "You must think it is strange that I don't know who killed my father. That particular day I went out by the time I got back my father was dead and nobody else was around anymore."

Yu Peiyu was feeling sad and was also surprised that a young girl like her was so so strong after going through a disaster herself.

The girl spoke again: "I've cried enough on my way here I cried 5 times."

Yu Peiyu asked: "5 times?"

The girl explained: "Yes, 5 times. Not only are our fathers dead but also uncles Wang, Shen and XiMen."

Yu Peiyu was shocked and said: "Uncle Wang of Taihu uses a pair of golden scissors and is said to be undefeated in his life. Uncles Shen and Ximen both have extraordinary martial arts how can they be killed."

The girl asked softly: "How about Golden Silk Palms and Flowered Chestnut Swordsmanship?"

Yu Peiyu lowered his head and said: "You're right, but... but could it be that they were all murdered by the same person?" Who could this person be?"

The girl said: "However I haven't seen their bodies."

Yu Peiyu raised his head and asked: "How do you know that they are dead."

The girl replied: "The homes were deserted no one was around. Everyone was gone. The situations were similar to your home and my home."

Yu Peiyu softly said to himself: "Home?... I don't have a home anymore."

The girl watched him and asked: "Where are you going?"

Yu Peiyu replied: "Everything is one big conspiracy. I have to investigate and found out the truth. Let me ask you this if you were the mastermind behind this diabolic conspiracy what would you do to me?"

The girl replied: "Stamp out the source of the problem?"

Yu Peiyu smiled wryly: "You're right and if you were me what would you do?"

The girl replied: "I would run but to where?"

Yu Peiyu: "Anywhere safe."

The girl said: "Safe... We don't know who our enemy is. He could standing next to us and we don't even know he's our nemesis. What is a safe place?"

Yu Peiyu: "There is one place."

"Where?" the girl asked.

Yu Peiyu replied: "Lake Huang, all the heroes in the world will gather there. This mastermind wouldn't dare to harm us if we're there."

The girl nodded and said coldly: "You've thought everything through. You can go if you want to. Don't worry about me."

And she started walking away, Yu Peiyu didn't stop her but followed her. However after a steps the girl fell down, Yu Peiyu knew that the exhaustion of travelling here and the overwhelming events were too much for her to bear.

Yu Peiyu lifted her up and said some comforting words to her. The girl was feeling better after hearing Yu PeiYu's consoling voice and pouted why he didn't ask for her name.

Yu Peiyu said, he already knew her name for a very long time.

Suddenly they heard an old voice: "Young master! Young master!"

Yu Peiyu recognized the voice and knew it was Yu Zhong, the old servant of their house.

The girl said: "When I entered the house I didn't see anyone."

Yu Peiyu replied: "Perhaps he hid during the commotion."

Yu Zhong said: "Young master, Master Wang of Moling has arrived and is waiting in the hall."

Yu PeiYu asked: "Is that Righteous Wang Yuluo second uncle Wang?"

Yu Zhong said it was.

Yu PeiYu quickly went to meet him and saw an elderly distinguished man with a long beard. That was the famous Wang YuLuo.

Yu Peiyu knelt down and sobbed: "Uncle Wang, you're just too late. My father..."

Wang YuLuo sighed: "I know what happened to you and your father. Why did such a thing happen?"

Yu Peiyu sadly wanted to relate what happened: "I..."

Suddenly he raised his head and asked: "How did you know what happened?"

Wang YuLuo smiled: "It was your father that told me everything. My good old brother Yu."

Yu Peiyu was flabbergasted and stammered: "My father... he... he... when...?"

Wang smiled and said: "When I saw him he was very upset and ignored completely. Although I don't know why the 2 of you argued but in all these 40 years that I've known your father I've never seen him this upset before. I've asked your third uncle Yun to accompany him and to prevent you and your father to have an argument again."

Yu PeiYu was so shocked and blurted out: "My father ... he was just... killed."

Wang was a bit angered by this remark and chided: "Don't talk nonsense! It's not right to say such a thing even in a fight with your father."

Yu PeiYu yelled out: "But my father is dead, he..."

Wang was now angry and scolded: "Enough already! Silence!"

Yu Peiyu said: "My father's body is right there. Please follow me!"

Wang angrily said: "Alright show me."

Yu lead Wang to his father's room but the bed was empty the body of Yu FangHe was gone.

Wang asked: "Where is this body?"

Yu Peiyu shouted out and rushed into the courtyard and all the 6 corpses were gone and everything was tidied up.

Yu Peiyu was feeling shocked, confused and scared.

Wang angrily said: "What do you have to say now?"

Yu PeiYu stammered: "I... I..."

He saw the girl standing watching them and thought that she could help him out and said: "She saw my father's body, she is Lin Daiyu ,the daughter of Master Lin the Flowered Chestnut Sword."

Wang Yuluo sternly looked at Lin Daiyu and asked: "Is that true what he said?"

Lin Daiyu stuttered: "I... I just..."

At this point 4 men walked in. The first man laughed and said: "When did you arrive brother Wang?"

A handsome, elderly gentleman walked in carrying a magnificent sword. Lin Daiyu was shaking when she saw these 4 men. Yu Peiyu has turned pale and looked like if he saw a ghost.

He managed to speak and asked: "Uncle Lin, aren't you... dead?"

These 4 men were

The Dragonking of lake Taihu, Silver Spear Shen, Ximen Feng of Mount Mao and The Flowered Chestnut Sword Lin Shoujuan.

Before Lin Shoujuan could answer, Ximen Feng laughed: "Peiyu how could you say that your future father-in-law is dead? This joke is a bit too much."

Yu Peiyu turned around and looked at Lin Daiyu and said: "You told me... Why did you lie to me?"

Lin Daiyu raised her head and said with her beautiful eyes staring at Peiyu: "Did I say that? When did I say that?"

Yu Peiyu felt the world has gone crazy and backed 5 paces backwards and felt his head spinning.

These 5 Wulin seniors were looking at him coldly, there was some compassion and shock in their eyes.

The old servant Yu Zhong smiled and said: "Young master why don't you accompany the guests for some tea."

Yu Peiyu rushed forward and grabbed him: "Talk! Tell everyone what happened earlier!"

Yu Zhong was a bit surprised and asked: "What happened earlier?"

Yu Peiyu turned even paler, Wang Yuluo asked Yu Zhong: "Did someone else come by today besides us?"

Yu Zhong shook his head and said: "No one came by today."

Yu Peiyu let Yu Zhong go and took a few steps backward and said: "Why do you say that?"

Yu Zhong looked at Yu PeiYu with a lot of compassion in his eyes and said: "Lately young master has been very occupied with his homework so it could be that he..."

Yu Peiyu yelled out: "IT COULD BE THAT I HAVE GONE MAD! RIGHT? THE WAY ALL OF YOU ARE LOOKING AT ME, ALL OF YOU THINK THAT I'VE GONE INSANE!"

Lin Shoujuan sighed: "Perhaps his father was too strict with him. And he has been pushed beyond his limits."

Yu Peiyu screamed out: "YES, I'VE BEEN PUSHED BEYOND MY LIMITS!"

After saying that he punched a deep hole in the wall. At this point Ximen Feng, Wang Yulou and Shen Yinqiang rushed over and grabbed him. Lin Shoujuan took out a small bottle and said: "Listen to me Peiyu take this pill and after a goodnight sleep everything will be just fine."

He wanted to put the pill in Yu's mouth, but Peiyu refused to open his mouth.

Ximen Feng said: "Peiyu, why have changed that much. Do you really think your future father-in-law will harm you."

Suddenly Yu Peiyu pushed out his arms with all his might breaking free from the grip of 3 martial arts experts. The 3 of them were surprised that a young man like him had such extraordinary strength. Yu Peiyu stormed out using his art of levitation.

Ximen Feng exclaimed: "Not even Yu Fanghe had such strenght in his younger days."

Wang Yuluo sighed: "It's a shame he has gone mad. Truly a shame."

Lin Daiyu knelt down and started crying.

It was a clear night, Yu Peiyu was looking at the stars. He felt that the stars were laughing at him too.

Suddenly he heard someone crying. Yu Peiyu saw someone standing near a tall tree. It was a short, skinny old man with a long beard. He was standing on a rock and had a rope tied around his neck. He was planning to commit suicide. Yu Peiyu stopped the old man. The old man sobbed: "Please let me die!... I'm the most unfortunate man in the world. Why did you save me? I have nothing to live for anyway."

Yu Peiyu sighed: "Are you certain that there isn't anyone more unfortunate than you. Today I lost my family and home, no one believes me. I can trust no one. The people I look up too and respect are now plotting against me, the people that are close to me have turned against me. In merely a day my closest friends and relatives want to take my life or turn me into a madman. I think I'm the most unfortunate man on the world."

The old man was stunned for a moment and looked at Yu Peiyu and said: "Compared to you my problems aren't that big. You should be the one to commit suicide." After saying that he gave Yu Peiyu the noose and happily laughed and left this place.

Yu Peiyu looked at the back of this strange old man and tried the noose on and was thinking to himself: "This is very easy, after I'm dead there will be no more problems and worries. Should I really die?"

After thinking that he laughed heartily and said: "Well, I've died once now."

He removed the noose and set course for Lake Huang.

Because he didn't have any money he often had to rely on the generosity of other people. Fortunately the generous people he met on the way were women, young women who were very happy to share their food with this extremely handsome young man.

But the only thing Yu PeiYu had on his mind was: "Patience... patience!"

His clothes were worn out and he looked very much like a beggar when he entered the Henan province³.

He saw many Wulin people walking about in these parts. Nobody paid any attention to this young beggar.

The gathering at Lake Huang was nearing and Yu Peiyu was pondering outside one night about what Lin Shoujuan and the others were planning, why did they say that Yu Fanghe wasn't dead.

Suddenly another young beggar came up to him and smiled and asked: "I take it you don't belong to our Beggars Association?"

Yu Peiyu shook his head.

The young beggar laughed: "If you're not a beggar you shouldn't be hogging the places of true beggars."

Yu Peiyu smiled and apologized and stood up.

Yu was gazing at the stars, the young beggar stared at him for awhile. It seemed that he found this young man quite interesting and tapped on Yu's shoulder and asked: "Judging by your accent you should be from the Su province."

Yu Peiyu said he was from the Su province.

The young beggar asked for his name.

Yu Peiyu observed him for an instant and he felt the the beggar had no hostile intentions and told him: "My name is Yu Peiyu."

The young beggar said: "My name is Lian Honger."

Yu Peiyu said: "Brother Lian."

Lian Honger smiled and said: "You're a good person, you're willing to call a man brother who cannot even pay for his own food."

Yu PeiYu smiled wryly and said: "I'm no much better than you."

Lian Honger observed Yu and said: "It seems that your martial arts foundation is quite good, if I'm not mistaken you must be a member of a Wulin family. But why are you disguised like this?"

Yu PeiYu was surprised and said: "I'm... not... disguised. I do... not know any martial arts."

Lian Honger was a bit annoyed and scoffed: "You dare to deceive me."

³ Lake Huang is located in this province

He raised his bamboo cane and aimed for Yu's "Lingxu" acupoint. The cane moved very quickly, although the beggar aimed for the Lingxu acupoint the force of the cane was pressing towards the 18 major acupoints.

Yu Peiyu suffered from a huge calamity and believed that almost anyone could be in cahoots with this mysterious "mastermind."

He swiftly evaded the attack, but Liang Honger withdrew his attack.

He looked at Yu Peiyu and said coldly: "Telling lies at such a young age, what will become of you when you grow up."

Yu Peiyu looked down and said: "I have my reasons."

Lian Honger asked: "Could you tell me, perhaps?"

Yu Peiyu replied: "If you have your reasons would you reveal your reasons to someone you don't even know?"

Lian Honger stared at him for a moment and smiled: "Although you look very polite but this was a very sharp answer."

He continued: "I'm afraid you have come in vain, you can't go to the gathering at Lake Huang."

Yu Peiyu was startled and asked: "How do you know?"

Lian Honger: "My eyes are like a magic mirror, one look and I know what the intentions are of the other person."

Yu Peiyu stared at him in awe.

Lian Honger said: "Without an invitation you cannot attend the gathering or you have to be a disciple of the 13 Great martial arts schools."

Yu Peiyu said: "I don't have an invitation and I don't belong to the 13 great martial arts schools."

Lian Honger nodded and said: "It's best for you to leave."

Yu asked: "Does the Beggars Association belong to the 13 Great Schools?"

Lian Honger replied: "Yes, of course. Although Shaolin has been elected to be the chancellor of Wulin for the past 40 years but without the support of us. The position as chancellor was taken over by Wudang or Kunlun years ago."

Yu Peiyu said: "Well, if I mingled with the other disciples of the Beggars Association, I could..."

Lian Honger laughed: "You've thought it out, have you?"

Yu PeiYu knelt down and asked: "Could you perhaps help me? If you would ask you leader on behalf of me if I could attend the gathering."

Liang Honger smiled: "Why should I help you, I hardly know you."

Yu Peiyu got up and said: "Because... because..."

Yu Peiyu sighed and left, Liang Honger smilingly looked at him.

After walking for awhile Yu PeiYu saw torches burning in front of him and people clapping and singing.

It was a group of beggars, Yu Peiyu didn't want to see anyone and wanted to walk the other way.

An old beggar walked towards him and said: "Young master Yu, our leader knew you would come therefore..."

Yu Peiyu said loudly: "I don't know your leader."

The old beggar smiled: "Although you don't know our leader. But he has heard of you and has instructed us to welcome you and to give you something."

Yu Peiyu readied his fists and scoffed: "Bring it on!"

The old beggar laughed: "You're mistaken, young master Yu. We have no hostile intentions."

The old beggar took out a yellow envelope and respectfully handed it over to Yu.

Yu Peiyu took the letter but didn't open it, he remembered the letter of death. And gave the letter back to the old beggar and said you open it and lick the envelope first.

The old beggar smiled: "Young master Yu is a very cautious person."

The beggar did what he was instructed and handed the letter to Yu.

Yu Peiyu felt a bit embarrassed and saw it was an invitation to the gathering at Lake Huang. He was startled and when he looked up the beggars were gone.

Yu Peiyu was really confused the past events he encountered were all very strange.

And why did the leader of the Beggars Association give him an invitation?

He stood there not moving for quite some time when he heard some people walking over here.

"Don't move!" a voice said.

Yu Peiyu sighed and turned around and saw 7 men standing there. 2 of them were Taoists, 1 was a monk and 1 young woman.

All 7 of them were quite young and had a very good martial arts foundation.

A young man in a black robe asked: "What are you doing here?"

Yu Peiyu scoffed at this man's rude tone: "You're not even allowed to stand here?"

The monk said politely: "Benefactor, I'm Songshui of Shaolin. These are martial arts brothers and sisters of Wudang, Kunlun, Huashan, Diancang and Kongtong. Because the gathering of Lake Huang is soon to be held here the 13 masters of the Great Schools are afraid that some misfits might come here and wreak havoc. That's why disciples of the 13 schools are instructed to keep watch here."

Yu Peiyu exclaimed: "You're disciples of the 13 Great Schools?... "

"Is this your invitation?" the young man in the black robe asked rudely.

Yu Peiyu replied: "Yes, it is."

Suddenly this young man drew his sword with incredible speed, this young man was indeed worthy of being a disciple of the 13 Great Schools. Yu Peiyu was taken by surprise and avoided this sudden attack with everything he got. He almost got his ear cut off. He was angered and yelled out: "What are you doing! Is this invitation a fake!"

The young man scoffed: "It is not a fake."

And continued his attack, Yu Peiyu avoided his 17 stances and shouted: "What is going on here?"

The young woman coldly said: "We can fight after we've asked a few questions."

The young man listened and stopped his attack and fiercely asked: "Tell us, where you got this invitation?"

Yu Peiyu said: "Someone gave it to me."

The young man laughed: "Did you hear that everyone? Someone gave it to him."

Yu Peiyu was very annoyed and said: "What is so funny about that?"

The Shaolin monk Songshui put up a serious face and said: Benefactor, this invitation is... too real. Seven different types of invitations were issued for this gathering. Your invitation is yellow, this is only given to leaders of martial arts

schools or famous, respected Wulin seniors. Also only the 13 leaders are allowed to give away these invitations. And benefactor, you are neither... ”

The young man finished the sentence for Songshui and said coldly: “By the looks of it you're not befriended with the 13 masters, so you must have gotten this invitation by fraudulent means.”

After saying this, the young man drew his sword again and the 7 of them surrounded Yu Peiyu. Even the young woman didn't speak anymore.

Yu Peiyu knew this was a misunderstanding and was resenting that wicked leader of the Beggars Association. Could it be that the leader of the Beggars Association did this on purpose?

The young man didn't back away and used the genuine Diancang swordsmanship, the famous “Descending Petals and Flying Flower Sword.”

This type of sword techniques was famous for being fast and vicious and not easily avoided.

Yu Peiyu couldn't counter-attack and was really having a difficult time now.

The young woman said: “Surrender now, or do you really want to... ”

Before she could finish her sentence everyone heard a loud laughter and everyone looked up and saw a shadow moving by with incredible speed. In an instant the figure also disappeared only red flower petals descended from the sky.

The young man exclaimed: “A red lotus!”

The Shaolin monk Songshui said: “Benefactor, you're a close friend of Master Hong Lian. Please forgive me for being rude.”

The young man smiled wryly and said: “You... sir, why didn't you tell us that you were befriended with master Hong Lian.”

Yu Peiyu was stunned and said: “I don't know Hong Lianhua⁴.”

The young man respectfully said: “Again please forgive me for being rude.”

Yu Peiyu just stood there smiling wryly, the young woman gazed at Yu Peiyu with her pretty eyes and said: “My name is Zhong Jing of Huashan, our school has organized a place to welcome our distinguished guests just ahead. Since sir is a good friend of master Hong Lian, you're also a good friend of Huashan. Please honor us by attending our reception.”

⁴ Red lotus

The young man applauded and said: "That is a good idea and tomorrow our school will prepare a carriage to take sir to the gathering."

Yu Peiyu thought for awhile and complied.

Yu Peiyu was brought to a rather nice looking place and was very puzzled who this Hong Lianhua was and was thinking what this Hong's motives could be.

Suddenly he saw 14 portraits hanging on a wall, he saw Taoists priests, Buddhist monks, women, beggars although different in ages. But their expressions were all very impressive and stern.

Zhong Jing smiled: "These are the 14 portraits of the founders of the Gathering at Lake Huang, 70 years ago Wulin faced great calamities. But ever since the first gathering the lives of Wulin people has become more peaceful. These efforts of these 14 seniors are indeed great."

Yu Peiyu just stared at the final portrait, the portrait was of an elderly distinguished man looking very tranquil.

Zhong Jing smiled: "Sir, you must be surprised, why there isn't a painting of abbot Fanyin of Shaolin or reverend Tiejian of Wudang. This is old master Yu, he was the first senior that organized the Gathering of Lake Huang, Xiantian Wuji⁵ school was at that time very famous and not inferior to Shaolin and Wudang."

Yu Peiyu sighed softly and said: "I know."

Zhong Jing continued: "Old master Yu lead the Gathering 3 times, and was a very much respected member of the gatherings. 30 years ago "Old Man Fanghe" became the leader of the Xiantian Wuji School and retreated out of the gatherings. My teacher and the masters of Shaolin and Wudang several tried to persuade him to stay but he declined. Senior Yu was a person who did not like these matters and retired from Wulin at the age of 30. Meaning there are only 13 Schools left."

This beautiful and young Huashan disciple kept her eyes on Yu Peiyu the entire time when she narrated this Wulin history. Yu Peiyu felt sad and didn't speak. He couldn't sleep the entire night and the next morning he heard Zhong Jing outside his room saying sweetly: "Sir, are you awake, Diancang brother Yang JunBi has come to pick you up."

Zhong Jing was still looking as charming as ever and the Diancang disciple Yang Junbi was also very respectful.

Yang spoke: "Sir, my leading martial arts brother is waiting outside, in the carriage."

⁵ Congenital No Extreme

Yu Peiyu thanked him and walked outside.

It was a big carriage and already 9 people were inside, all quite young. One young man wore a purple robe and a young pretty girl wore a yellow dress. They were “The young master of the divine sabre” and Jin Yanzi⁶, two Taoist priests, and another young man in a yellow robe and a sword. Yu didn't see his face, this man stuck his head out of the window and was talking to a friend.

Yu Peiyu just gave these people a quick glance and remained silent. He didn't want to talk and didn't wanted people talking to him.

Zhong Jing said: “Sir, we'll see each other during the gathering.”

The doors of the carriage were closed and the the young man in the yellow robe turned around and smiled: “Who is the friend of Hong Lianhua?”

He had a pair of bright shining eyes and looked quite pale. He was the one who ambushed the father of Yu Peiyu, Yu Fanghe.

Yu Peiyu was trembling, when everyone heard he was the friend of Hong Lianhua everyone admired him. He just stared at that yellow robed young man.

The young man spoke and smiled lightly: “My name is Xie Tianbi, I am also an old friend of master Hong Lian. May I ask what your name is?”

Yu Peiyu yelled out: “You... you do not recognize me, but I recognize you!”

He aimed his fists towards that Xie Tianbi, the force was incredible everyone in the carriage felt a strong wind coming towards them.

Xie Tianbi was taken by surprise and could avoid those 2 blows with difficulty and shouted: “What are you doing?”

Yu Peiyu continued his attack and said: “You will not escape today, I have looked for you high and low.”

Xie Tianbi was angered and surprised and fortunately for him the carriage was big enough for him to maneuver around and avoided another 7 fists and said angrily: “I have never met you before in my life. Why do you atta...”

Yu Peiyu shouted: “Six days ago you killed my father, now you will die!”

He stretched his left fist and his right fist pushed out, this stance was called “Earth-Shattering and Heaven-Battering.”

⁶ Golden Swallow

Xie Tianbi couldn't avoid this stance anymore, he too pushed out a fist and countered Yu's attack. But during the exchange of fists Xie was pushed against the door of the carriage.

Yu Peiyu advanced forward, 3, 4 voices called out: "Cease and desist!"

Yu saw knew that 3 swords were aimed at his back, 2 hooks were aimed for his neck and a short, sharp sabre was aimed towards his chest. The sabre was a good weapon, before actually making contact with Yu, Yu felt the coldness of the blade.

Xie Tianbi was looking very pale and angrily asked: "What are you talking about? Who is your father? I don't know what you're talking about?"

Yu Peiyu calmly said: "You know."

Yu leant towards the left and landed in the chest of a taoist priest using a hook and pushed him down, with his right hand Yu diverted the other hook to block the 2 swords. With his elbow he hit the third person using the sword, the man was hit in his waist. He cried out in pain.

However the young man using the sabre had his weapon still aimed at Yu's chest.

This young man was the young master of the divine sabre. He coldly spoke: "You have remarkable abilities, but I suggest you would sit down and discuss this slowly."

He moved his sabre slightly and Yu's robe was sliced open and the sharp tip pointed at his chest. He had no choice but to sit down. At this time the man who was hit in his waist got up and looked very wryly.

Everyone in the carriage was in awe now, this unknown young man was able to push the famous young leader of the Diancang School back, and with one stance was able to strike down a renowned wielder of the "Touring Dragon Swordsmanship" Wu Tao. Although Yu had the element of surprise but what he did was still remarkable.

A big fellow spoke: "You have good martial arts but you are truly to rash. Why do attack brother Xie? Could it be that you have mistaken him for someone else."

Yu said: "Even if he turned to dust I will recognize him, 6 days ago he used a dispicable and lowly trick to kill my father in the city of Moling."

Xie Tianbi said: "You must be dreaming, I just arrived from Mount Diancang. On my way never stopping I've never even been to the city of Moling or even near that place."

Yu angrily called out: "You've never been there?"

One of the Taoist priest said seriously: "I can vowe for master Xie."

Yu Peiyu said: "Why should I believe you."

The Taoist priest scoffed: "The Two Friends of Immortal Mists" never tell a lie."

Yu Peiyu was stunned he has heard of "The Two Friends of Immortal Mists" before and knew that the 2 of them didn't have any extraordinary skills but were famous for their chivalry and good reputation. And knew their words are to be trusted but can he deny what he saw with his own eyes?

The young master of the divine sabre said: "Now, what have you to say?"

Yu Peiyu ground his teeth.

Wu Tao could finally stand up straight now and said: "We cannot let him go. The gathering is about to start and he attacked brother Xie. He must have received orders from someone and must have other plans up his sleeve."

The pretty young woman Jin Yanzi remained silent and looked at the situation with an aloof stare now coldly said: "Of course, master Wu wants to pay back that blow on the waist."

Wu Tao's faced turned red and wanted to speak but he saw the sword stuck on Jin Yanzi waist and the Jade Dragon sabre the young master of the divine sabre held.

Xie Tianbi spoke now and asked: "Miss Jin, what do you suggest?"

Jin Yanzi not looking at Yu said: "I think this person must be a madman, just let him go."

The young master said: "No! Even if we are to let him go we should interrogate him thoroughly."

Jin Yanzi scoffed and turned her head away.

Wu Tao agreed with the young master.

The young master coldy said to Wu Tao: "I do not need your help."

The carriage stopped now and everyone could hear voices outside. They must have arrived at a city.

Yu Peiyu didn't speak anymore, he didn't know what to say at this point.

Xie Tianbi said: "I'm very busy at the moment, if brother Sima wants to take over this affair I'm too happy. But what about master Hong Lian."

Before he could finish, someone called out: "Master Xie are you in the carriage? Is young master Yu with you?"

The speaker put his head through the window of the carriage, Yu recognized him as the old beggar who gave him the invitation.

One of “Two Friends of Immortal Mists” spoke happily: “Mei Simang, I haven't seen you for years. Are you still that busy?”

The old beggar, Mei Simang laughed: “I have some matters at hand today. Our leader has instructed me to invite young master Yu for a meeting. Afterwards I will drink to a heart's contend with you 2 false Taoist priests?”

Mei ignored the young masters' sabre and held Yu's arm and pulled him out of the carriage and smiled: “Young master Yu, do you know that the most righteous and friendly Wulin association is the Beggars Association, the most wealthy Wulin school is Diancang. Young master is indeed fortunate to sit in such a luxurious carriage. Master Xie, our leader will invite for a drink after this.”

The young master of the divine sabre looked very unhappy about this situation but didn't speak.

Xie Tianbi smiled: “Tell master Hong Lian, I will be too happy to drink with him.”

There was a lot of commotion outside, but Yu was also very confused.

This Xie Tianbi was obviously the killer of my father, but what is going on here? And who is this master Hong Lian? And why does he help me?

He heard Mei Simang whisper to him: “Don't stand just stand here, look around.”

Yu turned around and saw a pair of clear, beautiful eyes looking at him. Coldly but yet full of love.

Mei Simang tapped on the shoulder of Yu and softly laughed: “This little swallow is full of sharp needles, watch out. Also the green-eyed monster is lurking besides her with the Jade Dragon Sabre. One look is enough. I think the interesting commotion ahead is much more peaceful.”