

Chapter 40

Boundless Evil

Feng San was engaged in a fierce battle with eighth squire Fu and another seven martial artists. That roar of Mr. Dongguo struck fear into the hearts of these people, however such a roar would be useless against martial artists like these it will only reveal to your adversaries that you are attacking.

Nonetheless most of those martial arts experts started to run away, which was the intention of Mr. Dongguo, the fame of Mr. Dongguo sent these men running.

The name of the sack of universal mystery, the preceptor of the sack was imposing enough to scare these lot away. Also the group lead by master Nu were also running away now. But only eighth squire Fu and master Nu remained to fight, because with their reputation they could not afford to be scared away by a mere roar.

At this time Mr. Dongguo descended but the power of his ephemeral form dexterity was already released and came crashing down on eighth squire Fu.

He had no choice and gathered all the energy in him to block that blow, when the two forces met eighth squire Fu was flung about seven metres away.

This way Feng San was relieved from his dire position and Dongguo Gao had only one adversary that was master Nu.

A voice behind Mr. Dongguo shouted angrily: "Take this old Dongguo!"

Two figures attacked Mr. Dongguo again on the left was Yu Duhe on the right it was Ji Beiqing.

Yu Duhe generated his full power to that palm, it was doom or die here at this point and backing him up was Ji Beiqing.

Mr. Dongguo looked serious and generated his ephemeral form dexterity to accept the combined blows of Ji Beiqing and Yu Duhe.

A loud bammm could be heard, when the three forces collided small whirlwinds were created in mid-air.

Mr. Dongguo staggered back with five paces, he felt nauseous and looked pale now.

The combined attack of Yu Duhe and Ji Beiqing is needless to say powerful, furthermore they gainen a strong advantage by crashing down on Mr. Dongguo in mid-air. But they still they were unable to injure Mr. Dongguo, eighth squire Fu was still lying on the ground and judging by his state he suffered from heavy interal injuries.

Yu Duhe wanted to attack again now, but Ji Beiqing told him to stop.

Ji Beiqing coldly looked at Mr. Dongguo and said: "For the past 40 years no one has dared to insult me."

Mr. Dongguo replied: "It pleases me that I am the first one."

Ji Beiqing said: "We are enemies and we will settle our scores some day. But not today."

Mr. Dongguo laughed: "It is not that you don't want to, but you don't have the ability."

Ji Beiqing said: "Say whatever you want! But inform young master Yu that within three days he should receive his trial set according to Wulin standards."

Mr. Dongguo asked: "What if he doesn't show?"

Ji Beiqing said: "That is up to him, but unfortunately a pretty young life will be wasted."

Mr. Dongguo looked confused and asked: "What do you mean?"

Ji Beiqing said: "Don't you understand? Zhu Lei'Er has fallen into our hands."

Feng San anxiously shouted: "What have you done to her?"

Ji Beiqing laughed casually: "Don't worry! She is being guarded by a shade, she will be fine for the next three days."

She now nodded towards Yu Duhe and he helped up eighth squire Fu and the two of them left. Just about when Ji Beiqing wanted to leave she felt a powerful force welling up to her, she returned the blow with her pre-heaven seraphic energy Feng San was forced back with three large paces.

She sneered: "Do you still want to fight?"

Feng San angrilly roared: "If you don't hand over Lei'Er, you will not leave!"

Ji Beiqing said coldly: "I fear that you do not have such an ability, however with Mr. Dongguo on your side that is a different matter. However I should warn you."

Feng San angrily asked: "Warn us about what?"

Ji Beiqing said: "The Shades are trained by me, I created them. We share a powerful bond with each other and they know how I think. If my will desires, they will kill Zhu Lei'Er right now."

Feng San roared: "You dare!"

Ji Beiqing laughed: "To see whether I have the courage to back up my words is quite easy, strike your palms towards me now."

Feng San twirled his palms and was about to strike but he suddenly retracted his energy and gave Ji Beiqing an angry stare.

Ji Beiqing laughed, she felt very conceited at the moment.

She added: "Master Feng San is a very clever man. Please inform young master Yu, that we will await his esteemed arrival in three days."

She elegantly but swiftly left this place, leaving behind master Nu who was still battling Dongguo Gao fiercely.

His palms were twirling about and his roaring fighting sounds also continued.

Suddenly from the corners of his eyes he noticed that another two men were standing close to him, Feng San and Mr. Dongguo.

He ceased his attack and paced backwards, he held a defensive position now.

Mr. Dongguo was laughing friendly: "Old Taoist, since when have you become a slave of Ji Beiqing?"

Master Nu looked back at Mr. Dongguo with his fierce eyes and said: "Who says I am her slave? I am not infatuated with that woman."

Mr. Dongguo said: "Oh, so you are working for the chancellor of Wulin."

Master Nu looked even fiercer now and said: "No such thing! Master Nu is not the kind of man to sway in front of the powerful!"

Mr. Dongguo said: "You leave me puzzled, why are you still here battling with everything you have."

Master Nu said: "Why should you even ask? That little brat openly exposed the book of debts to everyone, all of my embarrassing past is now revealed."

Mr. Dongguo looked pensive for a moment before saying: "Yes, I remember that part about you. Something about when you were young and that you knelt in front of Lady Zhu of the Palace of Enchantment and proposed to her, right?"

Master Nu said: "Yes!"

Mr. Dongguo said: "Because of that little trivial matter you are battling to the death!"

Master Nu said: "It is the most humiliating thing in my life, my reputation is my second life."

Mr. Dongguo said: "I think it is not worth fighting for. I was once in love with a Buddhist nun."

Master Nu was stunned and said: "I... I never thought you were that straightforward."

Mr. Dongguo said: "Let me open with you one more time, I was the one, on behalf of young master Yu, who exposed the contents of the book of debts."

Master Nu was even more shocked and stunned and said: "But I don't understand your actions, that way your humiliating incident will be exposed too."

Mr. Dongguo said: "My reasoning is simple, I want to restore the balance in Wulin."

Master Nu said: "Does that have to include exposing people's private embarrassing moments?"

Mr. Dongguo said: "Yes, it does. Because this way we change that bad, dirty and hypocritical atmosphere in the realm of martial arts. With the book being exposed everyone has a new chance to redeem oneself and it will serve as an example to the younger generation to be more careful in their actions. We hope that by doing this we can avoid a lot of unnecessary bloodshed in Wulin."

Master Nu said: "But my reputation... "

Mr. Dongguo said: "Who doesn't have a few amorous escapades in their youth."

Master Nu lowered his head and muttered softly to himself: "That does make a lot of sense."

Mr. Dongguo said: "One group of people are beyond redemption, they should be severely punished for their past crimes."

Master Nu said: "Do you mean those lot?"

Mr. Dongguo asked: "Do you know the truth about the chancellor of Wulin, Yu Fanghe?"

Master Nu answered: "Of course, it was written clearly in the book of debts."

Mr. Dongguo said: "Very good! But I hope you can repeat what you've heard about him."

Master Nu said: "He was a rogue of the north with the nickname elusive cloud, he has committed numerous of unforgivable crimes. After he met Ji Beiqing, she altered his appearances to look like his older brother Yu Fanghe and his working together with Ji Beiqing now."

Mr. Dongguo said: "Good! Could you also perhaps tell me what they are planning to do, in your opinion?"

Master Nu replied: "To rule Wulin, of course!"

Mr. Dongguo said: "It is good that you understand that. What will happen if Ji Kuqing and Ji Beiqing actually ruled over the realm? What will the outcome be of Wulin if sick and maniacal people like them ruled Wulin."

Master Nu shook his head and said: "Too horrible for words!"

Mr. Dongguo said: "Exposing the contents of the book of debts is targeted towards those people. But there are people like you who are helping them in doing evil for trivial matters in the past. Don't you feel ashamed of yourself?"

Master Nu was silenced, he really did not know what to say.

Mr. Dongguo said: "I have explained what we did, whatever your attitude and actions are is really up to you now. We won't trouble you anymore tonight, till we meet again."

Master Nu's face turned red of embarrassment and quickly left.

Thus a fierce battle was concluded, but because Zhu Lei'Er was captured by Ji Beiqing Feng San was most worried.

Mr. Dongguo said: "Don't worry! That little girl will not be harmed for the next three days, I can guarantee that."

Feng San said: "Don't forget she is in the hands of the Shade, how are we going to deal with a strange monster like that in three days."

Mr. Dongguo said: "Yes, that is quite troublesome indeed..."

Dongguo Gao said: "Everything in the world has something to counter it, we just have to carefully analyse what the weak points are of the Shade."

Feng San said: "You can't even say he is human, he is not even a thing. He is just a phantom a real shade."

Dongguo Gao said softly: "Even so, he is just an object trained by Ji Beiqing and obeys her every command. There must be a way to counter it."

Mr. Dongguo said: "My brother is right, we will think of a way to deal with them. But let us not drop our guards, for all we know Ji Beiqing could come back right away."

Feng San and Dongguo Gao nodded and went back to guard the waterfall again.

It was dawn now, Yu Peiyu had now studied the ephemeral form dexterity for three days now. According to Mr. Dongguo he needed seven days to master this skill, so Yu Peiyu needs another four days to complete his cultivation. But the three days Ji Beiqing gave him only two days now remained.

The question is: Could Yu Peiyu come out in time to meet Ji Beiqing.

Feng San was the one who was most worried about this. Yu Peiyu was his younger brother and if he could not meet up with the three days limit, Zhu Lei'Er's life would be in peril.

Feng San asked Mr. Dongguo: "Do you think that it is possible that my younger brother will be able to finish his cultivation early?"

Mr. Dongguo replied: "Unlikely. Unless there is some strange occurrence I overlooked in my calculation."

Feng San asked: "How can one have a so-called [strange occurrence]?"

Mr. Dongguo looked a bit confused and said: "Well, there is no explaining that. One can only say it is something that happens randomly and cannot be achieved through hard work."

Feng San became even more gloomy when he heard that.

The three of them entered the waterfall and observed Yu Peiyu again from afar.

Yu Peiyu was still the same, he had his eyes closed and looked very dignified and tranquil. However there was something different about him compared to yesterday. His facial expression looked radiant and bright.

Mr. Dongguo exclaimed with surprise: "That is most strange!"

Feng San asked: "Why are you flustered all of a sudden?"

Mr. Dongguo said: "Let us not disturb him, we will talk outside."

Outside the waterfall, three of them sat at the pile of stones.

Dongguo Gao asked: "Elder brother, what was strange? Are you referring to the bright and radiant facial expression of young master Yu?"

Mr. Dongguo nodded and said: "That was a most odd characteristic."

Feng San anxiously asked: "Is that good or bad?"

Mr. Dongguo said: "Of course, it's good. That is the final stage of mastering the ephemeral form dexterity, he is three days earlier than I anticipated."

Feng San was very happy and said: "Three days? That means he will be finished contemplating tomorrow."

Mr. Dongguo said: "Now, I am looking for answers. This is the so-called strange occurrence we talked about earlier, but I don't understand."

Dongguo Gao said: "I do. Young master Yu has profound and stable foundation, due to his excellent level in the martial arts of the Xiantian Wuji School. Which makes him only needing half the time to master the ephemeral form dexterity."

Mr. Dongguo was very pleased and said: "You're right, little brother. I forgot about that."

He turned to Feng San and said: "Now, you can rest assured. We can face Ji Beiqing and her entourage one day early too."

Feng San's worries were gone, nonetheless he said: "It seems Lei'Er is destined to live, but... "

Dongguo Gao said: "Why you are still worried about the Shade, aren't you?"

Feng San nodded and said: "Yes."

Dongguo Gao said: "I think I have a plan to deal with those shades, it shouldn't be too difficult."

Feng San quickly asked: "What is this plan of yours?"

Dongguo Gao said: "To deal with those shades we have to deal with Ji Beiqing first. These shades are created, trained by her sick, twisted character. If we can overpower Ji Beiqing, the shades will lose their direction."

Mr. Dongguo clapped his hands in unison and added: "Right! That is the way to do it, if we want to save Lei'Er we have to capture Ji Beiqing first."

Feng San said: "Alright, I'm going now."

Mr. Dongguo asked with surprise: "Where are you going?"

Feng San said: "I am going to spy on Ji Beiqing, to prevent her from sneaking away from us."

Mr. Dongguo said: "Can't you wait one more day? By tonight the boy will have mastered the ephemeral form dexterity and the three of us will accompany him to face Ji Beiqing. That way we will make a grand entrance."

Feng San said: "But a lot can happen in one day, I am dying with anxiety now. I have to see for myself now."

Dongguo Gao said: "Very well, but don't engage them alone and take any actions yet. It will only make things more dangerous if you started to act alone."

Feng San said: "I understand, I will wait you for you there."

He turned around was gone in a few moments.

It was dusk now, the day passed very slow for Mr. Dongguo and Dongguo Gao. Fortunately Ji Beiqing and Yu Duhe did not lead another attack against them and they passed the day talking to each other and enjoying the scenery around them. It seems that Yu Peiyu needed another extra few hours to master the ephemeral form dexterity and both could not leave at this critical point. A minor disturbance could be fatal.

SPLLLLAAAAAASSSHHHH! The water stream of the waterfall was interrupted and the water was curled up. Two powerful water beams could be seen and the waterfall was interrupted by some strong force. It was most strange and grand to see such a mysterious phenomenon.

Mr. Dongguo was so happy that he was jumping up and down and yelled: "Wonderful, fantastic! This is the work of that little boy."

Dongguo Gao understood now that Yu Peiyu has mastered the ephemeral form dexterity and was testing his new skill on the waterfall.

The force which the water came down from the waterfall was incredibly strong but Yu Peiyu could use his internal strength

to stop the water from flowing down and used it to curl it up again.

Suddenly they heard a loud whistle clearly through the waterfall, the noise of the waterfall was very deafening but the whistle outvoiced it with ease. There was a white figure emerging from the water and the sound and the figure descended gracefully as a beautiful white crane.

The descention could be compared to a comet piercing through the sky and in a moment the figure appeared in front of the two Dongguo elders.

Needless to say it was Yu Peiyu.

Like normally he looked ever so tranquil and confident, like those impressive feats he performed did not cost any energy at all.

Mr. Dongguo laughed so hard with happiness, that it looked like his beard could fall off any moment.

Yu Peiyu knelt in front of him and kowtowed to Mr. Dongguo. He said: "Thank you, sir."

Mr. Dongguo stopped laughing and helped him up, he said: "What is up with all those kowtows?"

Yu Peiyu said: "I would like to thank you for teaching me the ephemeral form dexterity, sir."

Mr. Dongguo looked earnest now and said: "Don't try to trick me into becoming your teacher or so! You used the plaque of repay to exchange for the ephemeral form dexterity, that is it. You don't owe me anything and I just repaid my debt, so need to thank me."

Yu Peiyu said: "Although one could say that, but nevertheless..."

Mr. Dongguo quickly interrupted him: "Don't get sentimental now! While you were cultivating for four days a lot happened. Do have any idea what the grave changes are in Wulin now?"

Yu Peiyu shook his head and said: "I do not know, sir."

Mr. Dongguo said: "If I told you, you would think I would be gloating over my performances these past days. Ask my second brother here."

Dongguo Gao did not give Yu Peiyu the chance to ask and told him clearly what happened in these few days.

Yu Peiyu thanked him several times during his narration and was extremely worried when he realized that Ji Beiqing had captured Zhu Lei'Er and was being guarded by Shade.

After Dongguo Gao was finished he anxiously said: "I want to look for Ji Beiqing right away now."

Mr. Dongguo sighed: "No need to rush things! We will see her tomorrow. You need to rest properly for at least one day after learning the ephemeral form dexterity."

Dongguo Gao also said: "Zhu Lei'Er won't be harmed before the three days are up. My brother is right, you should rest properly for one day."

Yu Peiyu was feeling most anxious but all he could do is wait now.

Suddenly they heard purring sounds and cat swiftly came out of the bushes and rushed to the arms of Dongguo Gao, he caught the cat and stroked the fur of the cat gently. It was the same black cat which lead Zhu Lei'Er here.

Dongguo Gao smiled friendly: “Little kitten, where were you last night?”

The cat looked at Dongguo Gao and purred two times, like a wronged child complaining to its' gentle mother.

It was a clear night, the wind was blowing very hard and caused people to shiver. In a cave in a mount there was only one lamp that lit the dark cave. Sitting on a rock was a young girl, Zhu Lei'Er.

Zhu Lei'Er was imprisoned here from yesterday.

Within a short day she looked very sickly and sad, her lively spirit could not cope with the cold and eerie Shade next to her.

The Shade that never died.

When Zhu Lei'Er saw that smile that never left his face, she immediately got goosebumps.

Luckily after putting her here the Shade left her alone and was not in the cave with her.

Zhu Lei'Er thought about trying to escape but she also knew the chances of that were slim even practically none. She thought about dying too, when people are faced with a hopeless and helpless situation and when the spirit is weak death seems like the only option available.

Furthermore Zhu Lei'Er felt guilty, because she was too negligent. She did not even notice that she was being followed by Ji Beiqing and her accomplices, she practically lead them straight to kill Yu Peiyu.

What is the current status of young master Yu, she thought. This was the biggest question on her mind now, she feared for the worst for Yu Peiyu.

Ji Beiqing, Ji Kuqing and “Yu Fanghe” were all great martial arts experts with vicious and strange characters and now they have enlisted the help of other top martial artists.

Whenever she thought of that her heart would ache and she realized that she did not help him but in fact lead disaster to him.

She regretted why she was not more carefull, if she only was a bit more cautious the outcome would be different.

But there was no use in regret now, little good will that do. Regretting choices one made afterwards have proven to be futile over and over again history.

She was thinking to herself: I must die now. Even if young master Yu is alright, I cannot face him anymore.

The more she thought about it the faster she wanted to die.

She was crying heavily now and she was heartbroken, she was sitting and tears kept flowing and flowing endlessly.

Suddenly she stopped herself from crying and sat up, her eyes looked tired instead filled with life like usual. It looked like she just recovered from a serious illness.

She finally made up her mind to die and stormed towards the wall with her head, the cave was filled with sharp stalacites and if she bumped into one with full force she would surely die.

She ran towards the stalagmites and bump she hit something soft and cold. When she looked up she was terrified again, she saw an eerie face looking at her with a strange smile on his face. She bumped into another Shade, he too was wearing a black robe and carrying a red sabre.

She backed away and sat down on the rock and closed her eyes again and did not want to see that awful scary face again.

After awhile she did not hear a thing and she secretly opened her eyes to look and saw she was alone in the cave, she thought that she must have been dreaming but her will to die was still there and decided to throw herself on the stalagmites again.

Like the previous attempt she bumped into something soft and cold -- Shade who was smiling to her again.

This time Shade talked: "Shades are afraid of death, so they hope others won't die either. Especially beautiful young women like you."

Zhu Lei'Er mustered her courage and said loudly: "You were not in the cave earlier, when did you crawl in?"

Shade smiled: "Have you forgotten that I am a shade, Shade goes and comes as Shade pleases. Don't you believe Shade? Let Shade show you!"

In an instant Shade was gone, disappeared into the shades...

And mysteriously reappeared again in the dim light of the lamp smiling as usual.

Zhu Lei'Er yelled with fear: "Don't smile! I am very afraid of your smile!"

Shade said: "Shade only knows to smile, Shade looks very frightening if he cries."

Zhu Lei'Er sobbed: "Please go away! I don't like to see you."

Shade asked: "Will you try to die again?"

Zhu Lei'Er responded loudly: "That is my business, do not interfere!"

Shade said: "But Shade has to interfere. If your head looks like a squashed tomato you won't be pretty anymore."

All of a sudden there was the sound of a rock being moved.

Shade turned around and shouted: "Who is there?"

There was only a light sound outside, Shade turned around and looked at Zhu Lei'Er. He saw that she was startled and looked interrogatively and wondered who made those sounds.

Shade wanted to go out and investigate but suddenly he thought of something and spoke: "My friend, if you want to trick Shade into leaving the cave so you can save her... you have used the wrong plan. Shade is not that easily tricked!"

A voice from outside scoffed: "Then let me fight you."

Zhu Lei'Er stood up with surprise and joy, she recognized that voice. In a flash the lamp went out and another figure was standing in the cave.

Zhu Lei'Er was exhilarated and called out: "Third uncle... "

She wanted to rush over to him and embrace her third uncle, but naturally Shade pulled her back.

Tssaannngg Feng San had drew his sword and pointed it at Shade and said angrily: "Release her and I will let you live!"

Shade smiled: "Are you lying to yourself? Don't you know that Shade can never die?"

Zhu Lei'Er forgot her fear and wanted to get out of this cave, she grabbed hold of Shade from the back and shouted: "Third uncle, quickly chop off his head."

Feng San twirled his sword and the head of Shade was cut off, when the head fell on the ground it was still smiling.

Zhu Lei'Er screamed with fear and ran into Feng San's embrace.

Feng San patted her on the shoulder and said: "Let us leave this place at once."

Zhu Lei'Er nodded with confusion.

Feng San pulled Zhu Lei'Er along and left the cave, all of a sudden they were blocked by a shadow.

When they took a good look at the shadow it turned it was a man in black robe and holding a red sabre, another Shade has come.

Feng San paced back with three steps and pointed at Shade: "You... are dead... "

Shade laughed sinisterly: "Don't you know that the head of Shade will always stay at place, you were imagining things earlier."

Feng San was a bit startled to see these fearless strange "monsters."

He wanted to use his art of levitation to outrun this strange character, but in vain everytime Shade would block their way.

In such situation Feng San had no choice but to fight him again, the swordsmanship of Feng San was excellent and has reached the level of perfection. In an instant Shade was cornered by Feng Shan's web of sword stances.

However Shade was not impressed, he wielded his blade like a sea of sabres even if he could not shield himself on time he could still handle a few stabs.

Zhu Lei'Er had learnt from her previous mistakes and quickly left this place while Feng San was keeping Shade occupied.

Shade smiled: "Do you think you can escape from Shade? Do not underestimate Shade!"

Shade jumped out of Feng San's web of stances and followed Zhu Lei'Er. He had already blocked her, Feng San was most frightened. He thought in order to save Zhu Lei'Er the Shade has to be eliminated, not even Mr. Dongguo could save her from Shade.

But how does one stop Shade? The only way was to defeat the master of Shade, Ji Beiqing. But he knew that with his sword he could not defeat Ji Beiqing. To deal with this menace one had to destroy the root of this problem.

Suddenly he woke up from his thoughts by Zhu Lei'Er's cries: "Third uncle, save me!"

During her escape Shade has already captured her and was returning to the mount with incredible speed.

Feng San was startled and gave chase at great speed too but unfortunately Shade was faster than him. Feng San was shocked and heard the cries of Zhu Lei'Er gradually dying out and he lost track of Shade and did not know in which direction he left.

Feng San was feeling most troubled and frustrated now.

All of a sudden he heard the voice of Ji Beiqing through the whistling of the wind: "Master Feng San, don't you find yourself a bit too rude? Running amok on my territory."

He could only hear the voice and not see her in person.

Feng San replied loudly: "Madame Ji, I hope you could show yourself to me. I have a few questions for you."

Ji Beiqing said: "Do you think there is need for such an action?"

Feng San said: "Of course, I want to know exactly why you are holding Zhu Lei'Er captive."

Ji Beiqing replied: "It is simple, I just want young master Yu to show himself."

Feng San sneered: "With your fame and status in Wulin don't you find holding a young girl captive a bit too shameless."

Ji Beiqing said: "That depends on the situation, I regard Zhu Lei'Er as my guest at the moment and no harm will come to her now. However whether this situation will change it really debatable, besides... "

Feng San scoffed: "Besides your other shameless deeds have already been exposed, what does an extra one or two matter doesn't it?"

Ji Beiqing laughed: "You're absolutely right. Perhaps this why people say [a man with many debts is not worried and a flea-bag is not afraid of itching]. Since you understand my reasons I suggest you leave at once, when young master Yu arrives I will release Zhu Lei'Er."

Feng San angrily said: "I hope you can keep your promise and I can guarantee that young master Yu will not disappoint you."

After saying that he swiftly left the mount and was gone in an instant.

It was dawn now, the sun lit up the desolate ground. It looked very gloomy this place, nothing grew here. A young man in white robe stood there firm as a mountain and carefully observed this place. Nothing suspicious so far, needless to say the young man was Yu Peiyu.

Yu Peiyu was a bit surprised that everything here looked so peaceful and deserted, during his pensive mood he noticed three figures coming his way the movements of these three figures were extremely graceful and fast. In a instant they were standing behind Yu Peiyu, they were Mr. Dongguo, Dongguo Gao and Feng San, Dongguo Gao was still holding his cat in his arms.

Mr. Dongguo turned to Yu Peiyu and asked: "Boy, have you seen anything yet?"

Yu Peiyu answered: "Nothing suspicious."

Mr. Dongguo frowned and said: "We should be extra careful who knows what those threesome are up too."

Yu Peiyu nodded and suddenly said in the direction of opposite mount: "Yu Peiyu is here as requested, please show yourselves."

After he called out they saw a figure emerging from afar it was the so-called chancellor of Wulin "Yu Fanghe" or better known as the elusive cloud, Yu Duhe.

Following him were Ji Kuqing and Ji Beiqing.

Mr. Dongguo said softly: "They must have hidden themselves in one of those rat caves."

In a moment Ji Kuqing and Ji Beiqing were standing in front of them.

Ji Beiqing looked at Yu Peiyu carefully and said: "Do you remember what you said to me in that stone hall?"

Yu Peiyu said: "Are you referring to your plot in assassinating Mr. Dongguo?"

Ji Beiqing said: "And some other matters we discussed."

Yu Peiyu said: "If it wasn't for the book of debts and knowing the charades of your husband I would still be confused as to who my real enemy is."

Ji Beiqing said: "At such a young age, you have really gone overboard by exposing the contents of the book of debts."

Yu Peiyu retorted calmly: "Compared to the methods you used against my late father I still have a long way to go compared to you lot."

Ji Beiqing scoffed: "Because of a personal vendetta you have turned yourself into the public enemy of Wulin."

Yu Peiyu said: "I knew that would be a consequence but in order to return justice and good to the realm, I don't need any second thoughts."

Ji Beiqing said: "Let me first comment that I respect your tenacity, but you cannot escape your punishment."

Yu Peiyu smiled: "We shall see, but one should always take both the best scene and the worst scene scenario in account in life. I think Madame Ji understands what I mean?"

Ji Beiqing said: "Do you mean what we will do if we cannot capture you?"

Yu Peiyu said: "Precisely."

Ji Beiqing sneered: "No need to trouble yourself about that young master Yu."

She now turned to Mr. Dongguo and said: "As you can see this is now a matter of doom or die, can you see that?"

Mr. Dongguo said: "I am not senile, I can see the situation crystal clear."

Ji Beiqing said: "Very good! This is your last chance to back out of this matter, once you're dragged into this whirlpool there is no coming back. I urge to think carefully about your decision."

Mr. Dongguo said: "I don't need to think about it at all, I will not back out of this."

Ji Beiqing said: "Alright, none of you shall leave."

Mr. Dongguo laughed: "I am an old man I have been spending practically my entire life listening to threats. Don't overestimate yourself, Madame Ji?"

Ji Beiqing grunted and made a gesture to Yu Duhe, Yu Duhe took out a flag and was waving it about.

That was the flag of Wulin and was only used when Wulin faced imminent danger. The flag represented the power and authority of the chancellor Wulin, as a martial artist in the realm one had to obey the flag and the chancellor no matter what.

Suddenly from behind the valley about 300 martial artists appeared and were marching up the mount slowly, amongst these people were also the 13 leaders of the great orthodox schools. It was a most grand event now, not inferior to the gathering months ago at Lake Huang.

Ji Beiqing laughed very happily: "Mr. Dongguo, can you see this? What will become of you now?"

Mr. Dongguo was stroking his long beard and said softly: "You have some powers of persuasion, impressive..."

Ji Beiqing said: "Having regrets now? But it is too late now!"

After her shout Yu Duhe waved his flag again. The signal for a mass attack, the 300 martial artists could only advance and not back off as stated in one of the agreed directives as the gathering of Lake Huang.

Yu Peiyu was feeling most frightened now, what would happen a great massacre was about to happen.

However something odd happened the more than 300 martial artists did not advance forward just stood there watching ignoring the flag's directions.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh...

Yu Duhe was startled and used his internal power to wave the flag a few more times almost breaking it but in vain nobody moved.

Yu Duhe put away his flag and yelled furiously: "You dare to disobey the commands of the chancellor of Wulin!"

His voice travelled far and loud throughout the mountain area.

A clear deep voice replied: "Unfortunately you are not old man Fanghe, you're just the rogue elusive cloud Yu Duhe. You are just a puppet put on place by Ji Kuqing and Ji Beiqing. Do you expect us to follow your lead after knowing your true identity?"

Yu Duhe was shocked and stunned now. Ji Kuqing and Ji Beiqing were both angry and shocked and were trembling.

The realm of martial arts was a place which was strange and sometimes downright cruel but the justice and righteousness were two concepts that still existed in this hard world. And these concepts would often resurface when things look awfully dire.

Yu Peiyu had tears in his eyes from gratitude, for months he has been wronged and finally people started to believe him.

Mr. Dongguo stroked his beard happily and said: "Madame Ji, this is unexpected turn of events isn't it?"

Ji Beiqing scoffed: "There is nothing to be happy about, unless I, Madame Dark Jade, perish on the spot I will still extract my revenge on you."

Ji Kuqing roared and raised his palm towards Mr. Dongguo, he did not fight him but glided away from his stance.

Mr. Dongguo said to him loudly: "Cuckold friend, the boy is here. You really should look for him instead of me, he gave me the book of debts."

Ji Kuqing was a bit stunned by his words and stood there surprised.

Yu Peiyu said: "Mr. Dongguo is right, you should be looking for me. After you."

Ji Kuqing laughed evilly: "I won't kill you, I will take you back to my stone hall and turn you into a wax figurine. This time I won't miss out on that opportunity."

He raised his palms and generated his full power to his hands and stormed towards Yu Peiyu, Yu Peiyu's twirled his palms up and received the attack.

Bamm, the two powerful forces met each other creating small forceful winds. In a blink of an eye Ji Kuqing was flung seven metres away and called out tragically. When he landed on the ground, he coughed up blood and died.

He still gazed at Yu Peiyu with disbelief in his eyes like he could not believe that he could not even withstand one blow from this brat.

Ji Beiqing was completely dumbstruck and stood there motionless.

Ji Kuqing was not only her brother but also her husband and when she saw the lifeless body of Ji Kuqing her heart ached.

But she remained dignified, which was truly awesome and only a few tears could be seen through her veil.

She looked at Yu Peiyu with a face full of anger and sorrow and said: "After parting with you for three days one should really re-evaluate that person. This proverb is very true, you have mastered the ephemeral form dexterity haven't you?"

Yu Peiyu said: "Yes, Mr. Dongguo has taught me this skill."

Mr. Dongguo said anxiously: "Don't put the blame on me, little brat. Be careful that she gives me a hit with her pre-heaven seraphic energy."

Yu Peiyu understood that Mr. Dongguo reminded him to be careful that Ji Beiqing could attack at any time with her pre-heaven seraphic energy.

Like Mr. Dongguo said Ji Beiqing suddenly attacked Yu Peiyu with her pre-heaven seraphic energy with incredible force and speed. After hearing Mr. Dongguo's words Yu Peiyu had already prepared himself for a possible attack from her and returned a blow back.

A loud: Bannngg could be heard, the outcome was of course different from Ji Kuqing's.

Both the ephemeral form dexterity and the pre-heaven seraphic energy were strong and powerful skills, when the two forces collided small whirlwinds were created and dust and leaves in a radius of 4 metres were flying around. People standing close felt pain because of the energy released.

The dust slowly settled and two figures were still standing there, Yu Peiyu looked like he was trying to regain his balance and Ji Beiqing was feeling nauseating.

Mr. Dongguo was laughing happily at the side.

Ji Beiqing looked shocked and surprised now, it was unbelievable. Learning the ephemeral form dexterity in such a short time is quite amazing but even more startling is reaching such a high level in only a matter of days. The pre-heaven

seraphic energy of Ji Beiqing could only overcome by Mr. Dongguo now there was another person who could meet her match.

Suddenly a loud roar could be heard and a man was running over with amazing speed and stopped next to Ji Beiqing. It was Yu Duhe, he lost his status as the chancellor of Wulin and looked furious and his anger was focussed at Yu Peiyu.

Mr. Dongguo said: "No need to get angry, you should even thank the boy here."

Yu Duhe asked fiercely: "What do you mean?"

Mr. Dongguo pointed at the corpse of Ji Kuqing and said: "He ridded you of a rival, now you can openly be with Madame Ji. No need for being sneaky in the future."

Before he could say anything else he felt a surge of energy coming towards him. The words of Mr. Dongguo were too degrading and Ji Beiqing felt humiliated.

Mr. Dongguo and Ji Beiqing were engaged in battle now, Yu Duhe drew his sword and attacked Yu Peiyu ferociously with his sword. His web of swords ensnared Yu Peiyu, he was now the elusive cloud again and did not have to pretend to be a gentleman anymore. All he wanted to do is chop Yu Peiyu in little bits, Yu Peiyu avoided more than ten stances. Finally he saw the chance to draw his sword again.

The wielder was as beautiful as jade and the technique was like a rainbow and everyone cheered with surprise to see this stance, Heaven filled with stars. More than 300 pairs of eyes were directed to Yu Peiyu and Yu Duhe, nobody spoke and all their undivided attention was focussed on these two men.

Tsing, tsing, tsing... tsing, tsing, tsing...

Two figures were twirling their swords around and their bodies moved fantastically fast, they could only see webs of sword stances. Making it difficult to tell who was gaining the upper hand.

All of a sudden there was a clear clang noise and something metallic flew into the sky, now some people were shouting: "His sword has broken."

The fighting stopped and Yu Duhe and Yu Peiyu were facing each other again, Yu Duhe was holding a broken sword and was sweating heavily looking surprised. Yu Peiyu looked graceful and elegant as usual, it was obvious that Yu Duhe was no match for Yu Peiyu.

In that intensive but short battle Yu Peiyu generated the ephemeral form dexterity into his sword, if not how could he break Yu Duhe's blade that fast.

Mr. Dongguo and Ji Beiqing were evenly matched and they both stopped to see the outcome of the Yu battle.

Yu Duhe was presented another sword, it was given by Yu Peiyu.

Yu Peiyu looked angry and said: "You're my second uncle, but your crimes and actions have dishonored the family Yu."

Yu Duhe's eyes spat fire and remained quiet.

Yu Peiyu said: "Because of the ancestors of our family and because you are still my second uncle I cannot kill you. Use this sword to take your own life."

Yu Duhe looked very troubled and nobody could guess what he would do.

Everybody stared at uncle and nephew and wondered how this would end, Yu Duhe picked up the sword Yu Peiyu threw in front of him.

Suddenly he stabbed towards Yu Peiyu with amazing speed, all the heroes watching called out with surprise. This special technique Yu Duhe was both lethal and strange and Yu Peiyu did not see this attack coming. All the heroes were worried about his safety.

The sword flashed in the sunlight and Yu Peiyu made a short, low grunt. The heroes saw that Yu Duhe was forced away from Yu Peiyu by a strong energy. It was Mr. Dongguo who intervened now and used his ephemeral form dexterity to push Yu Duhe away, Yu Peiyu only had a flesh wound on his arm.

Mr. Dongguo gazed at Yu Duhe with his sharp eyes and said earnestly: "Some impressive stance that was, Yu Duhe! If you have any shame or decency of a martial artist you should take your own life now."

Yu Duhe looked sinisterly and laughed evilly: "Before I commit suicide I want the heads of two men, the first one is yours!"

Mr. Dongguo said: "Excellent, I wanted to help the boy after all. I will deal with the despicable fiend like you on his behalf."

Yu Duhe laughed tragically but also sinisterly: "I will grant you your wish."

He roared and advanced forward wielding his sword to surround Mr. Dongguo. Mr. Dongguo engaged him with his bear hands but did not dare to be overconfident.

Both knew that this a battle between life and death and used their best skills in this battle. The one twirled his palms like a wall of energy, the other wielded his sword like a sea of blades, but waited for an opportunity to arise to attack with a lethal blow.

Now all the heroes called out with shock and surprise, they heard two different sounds bamm and fssstt after both exchanged their lethal stance the outcome of the battle was also evident. Mr. Dongguo's right arm sleeve was cut off and Yu Duhe was flung aside by the ephemeral form dexterity and vomitted blood before he died, all his vital organs were shattered to pulp.

All the heroes cheered loudly.

Yu Peiyu stood there completely dazzled, he did not know what to feel.

At this point Ji Beiqing leapt up and run up the mount.

Mr. Dongguo hurriedly ordered: "Brother, accompany the lad to look for Shade. The life of that girl is still in his hands."

Yu Peiyu and Dongguo Gao nodded and quickly went to the cave.

Mr. Dongguo and Feng San gave chase to Ji Beiqing, they could not let her escape today.

The heroes who were here also divided into two groups one group followed Yu Peiyu and Dongguo Gao, the other group followed Feng San and Mr. Dongguo. They wanted to know the outcome of these fights.

The entrance of the cave was blocked by a stone tablet, the surroundings of this place were most desolute and gloomy. Yu Peiyu was worried sick about Zhu Lei'Er smashed the tablet with one blow and debris flew all around.

Even with their sharp eyes they could not clearly see what or who were in the cave.

Suddenly a voice from inside said: "Who is it? Who dares to disturb Shade?"

Yu Peiyu shouted: "Hand over Zhu Lei'Er! Or else I will level this cave down with you in it."

Shade said: "You cannot scare Shade, if you want this beautiful young woman to die too you should try to level this cave. However Shade still wants to fight you."

Shade sort of tavelled like fog and was standing in front of Yu Peiyu in a moment holding Zhu Lei'Er's righ wrist tightly. Yu Peiyu saw two streams of tears running from her eyes and she called out with extreme joy: "Young master Yu..."

She could not speak now, she was sobbing. Shade looked very pale and was still smiling awfully.

Yu Peiyu yelled: "Release her!"

Shade said: "Feng San failed last night, don't you know that it is futile."

Yu Peiyu said: "Today you have to release her."

Shade said: "Unless you kill Shade first, but Shade cannot die."

Yu Peiyu did not know how to handle this situation, he knew that Shades were not afraid of swords or sabres. Initially he wanted to use the ephemeral form dexterity strike him down, but he was afraid that the power of the ephemeral form dexterity was too awesome and might wound Zhu Lei'Er too.

Zhu Lei'Er looked both frightened and shocked, she looked very sad now and not seeing her for days she was very frail and sickly now.

Yu Peiyu had no idea what he could do to save her, but he could not let Shade leave this place.

The cat in Dongguo Gao's arm purred to Zhu Lei'Er, like it saw a familiar face.

Yu Peiyu decided to attack at once, his fists and sword made the surroundings turn pale with fear. The force he emitted was magnificent, but like Yu Peiyu guessed his sword made no impression on Shade. He would even laugh when he was stabbed or cut, he was wielding his sabre with one hand and held Zhu Lei'Er tightly with his other hand.

Zhu Lei'Er would scream out of fear when she saw Shade's bloody body and he was still smiling sinisterly. After a hundred bouts they were still no step closer in saving Zhu Lei'Er, Yu Peiyu knew that after a thousand stances the result would still be the same.

Zhu Lei'Er revealed a desperate and hopeless expression and said: "Young master Yu... Don't mind me anymore... I will only be a burden to you."

The cat of Dongguo Gao was purring loudly towards Zhu Lei'Er like it seemed to understand that Zhu Lei'Er was in danger and looked like it would attack Shade at any point.

While Yu Peiyu was fighting he said: "Lei'Er, don't despair! I will save you from this monster's hands."

Zhu Lei'Er was touched and tears were welling up in her eyes.

Dongguo Gao looked worried too and wondered what way there was to save Zhu Lei'Er from this strange creature, all of a sudden Shade stopped fighting and was muttering something strange and incoherent like he was talking to an invisible person.

Yu Peiyu was surprised too and stopped advancing and carefully observed him.

Shade now turned to Yu Peiyu and smiled: “Young master Yu, I have some bad news for you.”

Yu Peiyu asked: “What is it?”

Shade said: “Madame Ji spoke to me earlier and I gave me an order. Do you know what that order is?”

Yu Peiyu said: “How should I know your nonsense?”

Shade pointed at Zhu Lei'Er and said: “Madame Ji said that she lost her value and told me to kill her immediately.”

Yu Peiyu was so frightened that he paced back with one big step and said: “You dare!”

Shade laughed: “It is not a matter of daring or not, but Shade finds it a pity to kill a pretty young woman like her.”

He drew his sabre again and said: “But Shade has no choice and will never defy the orders of my master.”

Shade was still smiling and raised his sabre to hack at Zhu Lei'Er's neck.

Suddenly Yu Peiyu flung his sword across and Shade blocked the sword but he could not hold on to his sabre and was forced backwards by Yu Peiyu's powerful internal strength.

Zhu Lei'Er saw an opportunity to break free from Shade's grip and quickly ran towards Yu Peiyu.

Shade laughed: “Escape? No one escapes from Shade.”

He closely followed Zhu Lei'Er again and soon caught up with her, there was still some distance between her and Yu Peiyu.

Shade had already picked up her sabre and wielded it again and was about to hack at Zhu Lei'Er in the back, not even Yu Peiyu might be able to rescue her in time.

In this most dangerous and tense moment everyone's heart skipped a beat, when suddenly Dongguo Gao's cat jumped towards Shade. The paws of the cat reached Shade's face and when Shade realized that a black object leapt towards him he twirled his sabre back to protect his face.

The cat purred loudly in pain: “Miaoooooooo...”

The toes of the cat were chopped off by Shade's blade, the blood of the cat splattered in Shade's face. Zhu Lei'Er caught the wounded cat and saw it was twisting and turning in pain.

But now a strange thing happened Shade fell down and was turning and calling out in pain too. Both Yu Peiyu and Zhu Lei'Er were stunned and shocked to see this, only Dongguo was smiling and recited softly: "Amitabha... Amitabha..."

In a blink of an eye Shade was melted to a mere pool of blood and pus, Yu Peiyu cautiously looked around and was afraid that Shade would reappear somewhere else again. That was something that Shades often did.

Dongguo Gao smiled: "Don't worry, young master Yu. Shade will not appear again, ever."

Zhu Lei'Er and Yu Peiyu looked at him confused.

Dongguo Gao stroked his cat gently and said: "This is was something nobody expected but Shade was killed by Miao mi and her paws had destroyed Shade forever."

Yu Peiyu said in a surprised tone: "I have heard that the blood of a black dog can repell evil, but the blood of a black cat can too?"

Dongguo Gao said: "Yes, of course. This is a good example of it."

Zhu Lei'Er embraced the black cat tenderly and kissed several times, she softly said: "Dear Miao mi. Because of me you are injured heavily."

The cat seemed to understand what she said and purred sweetly, Yu Peiyu gave the cavern one more good look before he, Dongguo Gao and Zhu Lei'Er left this awful cave. Zhu Lei'Er was tending to the wounds of the cat while she followed Yu Peiyu closely and when they descended from the mount the cat was already bandaged.

Yu Peiyu saw Feng San and Mr. Dongguo instantly and rushed over to them, Feng San was thrilled to see Zhu Lei'Er unharmed.

When Mr. Dongguo and Feng San heard how they defeated Shade they were both most surprised.

Yu Peiyu asked: "Where is Ji Beiqing?"

Mr. Dongguo said: "We pursued her to here but we lost track of her now. She must have hidden in one of the caverns here."

Dongguo Gao said: "We must find here before she can find a way to escape."

All of them nodded in agreement.

Looking down from the deep cliff they noticed that nobody has ever been here before, it was only accesible for birds and animals.

When everyone was trouble about how to find Ji Beiqing, they suddenly heard Mr. Dongguo yelling: "Over here! Ji Beiqing must be hiding here."

All of them rushed over where Mr. Dongguo was standing, they saw a cavern in the shadow of the mountain. The cave looked very deep and dark.

Yu Peiyu said: "Mr. Dongguo is right, look there are fresh marks over there."

Mr. Dongguo said: "Well, let us not debate anymore. Let us all enter together."

They made a fire and carefully entered the dark cave, they looked cautiously and hoped to find a trace of Ji Beiqing. When they turned another corner they saw her.

She was sitting on a stone with her eyes closed like a monk in meditation. All of them were cautious now but walked slowly towards her, but she was still sitting there motionless oblivious to their presence.

Mr. Dongguo finally sighed and shook his head: "She has taken her own life in the end."

The rest were surprised and looked closely to see Ji Beiqing, Madame Dark Jade, sitting ever so beautiful, ever so elegant and dignified like she was alive.

All of them were relieved that this was finally over and walked out of the cave again, as soon as they walked out of the cave all the heroes cheered. A lot of voices shouted happily: "Young master Yu, we hope you can become the new chancellor of Wulin!"

"Right! We hope you can continue late master Yu Fanghe's principles and lead the realm to a new prosperous and peaceful era."

"We support you without hesitation! Let us all restore glory to Wulin!"

Mr. Dongguo was very happy and he was glad that this turmoil in Wulin was finally over. But what lies ahead for the realm? Nobody could answer that question, the heart of men is easily subjected to change comparable to the unpredictable weather.

The only way is to walk cautiously ahead and drift along with the tide.

Yu Peiyu has avenged his father, he slowly walked away from this mountain feeling confused. He had a lot on his mind, he thought about Lin Daiyu, about the future of Wulin and his future responsibilities. Furthermore not far behind him was a young girl holding a cat in her arms, she was Zhu Lei'Er who gradually came out of her shock.

She too was feeling confused at the moment, but one thing she was certain of----
----wherever Yu Peiyu went she would follow. The oceans may dry up, stones may

rot, heaven may turn chaotic and earth may grow old but her heart will never ever change.