



Ning, listening to this, felt totally confused, as though his head was covered by mist and clouds. “Father, you say that I must prepare my body before I can train with a sword. I can just barely understand that. But I must also prepare my ‘mind’? What does that mean?”

“Don’t be impatient.”

Yichuan looked at his son. A thick book appeared in his hands out of nowhere. He tossed it towards Ning. “First, closely read through this boxing manual. There are sixteen stances in this boxing technique. It contains the simplest yet most fundamental of methods to allow one’s body to exert strength. Once you have mastered this boxing technique, your entire body will act as you will and you will be able to exert strength with ease.”

“The sword is born from your body. If not even your body acts as you wish it to, how can your sword act as you wish it to?” Yichuan looked at his son, worried that his son would bite off more than he could chew. “First, you must calm your mind.”

Ning understood the logic that ‘sharpening the knife didn’t slow down the cutting process’.

“Yes, father.” Ning said as he lowered his head to begin reading the book. He began to closely review the mysteries of boxing described in the book. The book was quite thick, but actually, it was because it was made from animal leathers, which made every page very thick.

After memorizing the profound secrets, he began to train. His father constantly gave him advice and pointed out his mistakes, or even demonstrated himself so as to help Ning understand.

Actually, the [Shadewind Steps] also contained some principles on exerting force, but the [Shadewind Steps] were primarily about using force in the legs. Because he had some prior experience now... Ning learned relatively quickly.

Two hours later.

“Rest a while.” Yichuan looked at his sweaty son. “In the future, you will spend two hours every day training your boxing, unless and until I judge that your body is prepared to train with the sword.”

“Preparing your body to train with the sword is just one aspect.”

“You must also prepare your ‘mind’ to wield the sword.” Two black metal swords appeared in Yichuan’s hands, and he tossed them to his son. “Take them!”

Ning took the two swords.

Yichuan pointed to an empty area. Hu. A metallic puppet appeared out of nowhere, wielding a single saber.

“This is a puppet,” Yichuan said. “Ki Refining practitioners of the Immortal way are often good at producing these puppets. This one is just a very ordinary puppet, with the power of a master-level Houtian combatant. However, its body is extremely tough.”

“Father, what are those red spots on its body?” Ning wondered.

The black metal puppet had over ten red dots on its body. The red dots were located between its forehead, on its throat, on its chest, on its arms, hands, back, and some other areas.

“Try stabbing at the red dot on its forehead,” Yichuan said. “You have to be fast.”

“Yes.” Ning stabbed out fiercely with his right hand.

Hua!

The tip of the sword pierced forward, but it struck the head, roughly an inch away from the red dot.

“But...” Ning was slightly startled. He clearly had aimed at the red dot. He couldn’t help but try stabbing three more times, but the results were always the same, slightly off.

“Have you discovered it?” Yichuan said calmly. “Although you want to stab it in the middle of the forehead, when you actually try to do so, you aren’t able to do so accurately. How can you stab accurately? First, you have to have to control your body perfectly. Second, you have to train countless times.”

“Every single sword technique can be described as being composed of thirteen specific movements; chop, pierce, scrape, sweep, break, tap, cleave, support, intercept, twist, lift, draw, and sheath.”

“Chop, pierce, scrape, sweep, tap, cleave; these are used to attack.”

“Support, break, intercept, twist, lift, draw, and sheath; these are used to defend.”

Yichuan pointed at the metal puppet. “This puppet isn’t moving at all, and it has nine red dots on its body. Execute the ‘chop, pierce, scrape, sweep, cleave, and tap’ movements against it. I will teach you the secrets to every single movement and how to move in harmony with your attacks. Every single basic movement must be practiced at least ten million times!”

“In the future, the puppet will begin to move and chop at you with its own saber techniques. You will then use the ‘support, intercept, twist, lift, draw, break, and sheath’ movements, the seven basic defense movements, to defend yourself. You will train all of these movements ten million times as well.”

“Attack!”

“Defend!”

“After you have become familiar with these two, the puppet will engage in battle against you, and you will use the combined thirteen stances to fight against it.” Yichuan looked at his son. “When the day comes when your thirteen basic stances have become engrained into your mind and your bones, and when you are perfectly accurate, that is when you will have absorbed the essence of the sword into your mind. Only then will your mind be ready to train in the sword.”

Ning listened with his breath held.

“Prepare your body.”

“Prepare your mind.”

“Afterwards, you will be able to truly start training in sword techniques.” Yichuan looked at his son. “Sword techniques are very complicated, but they are still formed from these thirteen basic movements. If you aren’t even able to memorize and absorb these thirteen basic movements... how can you possibly have any achievements in training with the sword?”

“After you have truly become familiar with the sword techniques I will pass down to you, then you can be considered to have reached the first, ‘basic’ level of wielding a sword.”

“The sword has three levels as well.”

“The basic level, the advanced level, and the ‘one with the world’ level!”

“The ‘advanced level’ for footwork requires precise control over the body. But the ‘advanced level’ for the sword requires one to have precise control over both the body and the sword, and then merge them into one! It is ten times harder!”

“Becoming ‘one with the world’? That’s even farther off.”

Yichuan looked at his son. “Ji Ning, do you now understand the path you must walk?”

“Yes.” Ning nodded heavily.

The [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens] training technique would give him a Fiendgod's body and inconceivable strength.

But the training in footwork and swordplay would decide... how much of that strength he would be able to use!

"Father, how long would I need to train before I can reach the level of 'one with the sword'?" Ning couldn't help but ask.

"Hard to say." Yichuan shook his head. "In the past, I had spent six years mastering the basics, then six more before becoming 'one with the sword'. You can say that it took me twelve years!"

"Twelve years?" Ning held his breath.

His father, despite being young, had become the number one expert of the Ji clan of the West Prefecture. Someone as peerless of a talent as him had needed twelve years. Many ordinary people... would spend their lives training without being able to reach the 'one with the sword' level.

“Don’t bite off more than you can chew. Take things one stable step at a time.”
Yichuan looked at his son. “Let’s begin. Let me first teach you the ‘pierce’
movement of the thirteen basic movements!”

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Under his father’s guidance, Ning’s posture was very correct as he pierced
repeatedly! Chopped repeatedly! Scraped repeatedly! Tapped repeatedly!

This was very boring.

And very tiring.

Fortunately, Ning had astonishing regenerating capabilities. And given his
experience in being tormented by illness in his past life... he was a person
who would not easily give up.

After training attacking movements for two hours, he began to train defending
movements for another two hours.

The metal puppet wouldn't get tired, delivering endless hacking blows with the saber for Ning to defend against.

"Yichuan." Snow stood from afar, watching her son train hard.

Yichuan walked to his wife's side as well, and both of them watched that distant metal puppet battle against their son. "Snow. I didn't expect this. I really didn't expect... that our son would have such strong willpower. I had even prepared for him to complain about being tired, and prepared to force him to continue training. I didn't expect that I don't need to force him at all!"

"When he was training his footwork in the morning..." Snow felt sorry for her child. "Even though he said he was tired, all he did was talk. He didn't stop a single time. Six hours in the morning, six hours in the afternoon... twelve hours of the day spent training. Ning is still very young..."

"I still remember when I was young," Yichuan said softly. "At that time, I was forced by my father to train. I felt too tired and that I was at the point of collapse, but whenever I gave up, my father would use his whip to beat me. I cried each time I drew my sword or used it to pierce... that continued until I turned ten, and my father was killed by a Diremonster from Eastlake Mountain. The status of my mother and I dropped by a thousand fathoms.

Seeing how cold everyone had become towards us and then my mother die of illness... I finally woke up. I no longer said I was tired, or that I was hurting. Every day, I focused on my training.”

Someone who had never trained before would never know how exhausting training was.

Tiring to the body. Tiring to the mind.

Someone who wasn't sufficiently mentally resolved or who had insufficient desire wouldn't be able to persevere.

“I had my doubts about our son's future accomplishments,” Yichuan said softly. “Although his aptitude for the Fiendgod Body Refining is very high, if he doesn't work hard, he still wouldn't accomplish much... but now, I believe that my son will definitely become one of the true experts of this world. He definitely will!”

Hearing her husband's words, Snow stared at her son who was still training in the distance. She gently nodded. “I believe it too!”

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Watching himself grow stronger, even stronger than those 'supermen' in the movies, was an absolutely wonderful feeling!

A year later.

Hua!

Blindfish, standing far away, threw four stones up into the air. The slightly taller Ning nocked his bow while grabbing four arrows, holding them tightly between his five fingers.

Shua! Shua! Shua! Shua!

Four arrows flashed out simultaneously, leaving behind four trails of air in the sky, hitting all four of the rocks that had been thrown up. The four rocks all shattered into tiny pieces which fell to the ground.

"Good." Blindfish walked over, laughing loudly like the thunder.

“Master Blindfish.” Ning put away the bow.

“You’ve already mastered the mental segment. You’ve even quickly mastered my pride and my joy, the ‘Quadshot’ skill.” Blindfish praised as he nodded. “I have nothing left to teach you when it comes to archery. Next, you will have to just continuously train and build up experience. As your strength grows, you will be able to fire more powerful arrows. This training courtyard is now too small for you. You need to go to a larger, more expansive place and shoot arrows from a distance of one, two, or even three or four kilometers! The farther away you are shooting from, the more you will have to factor in the wind and the environment.”

“Understood.” Ning nodded.

Archery required one to be extremely precise.

One needed to consider the strength of the pull, the trajectory of the arrow, and also the downward pull of gravity. At the same time, one had to factor in the wind speed!

Although it was complicated, as long as one could sense the direction and strength of the wind, one would be able to shoot without even needing to aim. This was because the question of from what angle to fire from and how to fire would have already been built into one's bones from countless repetitive training exercises. At least, to the current Ning... within a range of five hundred meters, not even a fly could escape his arrows!

But this was far from being enough!

As his strength grew, his arrows would be more powerful as well. Some Xiantian lifeform's arrows would fly several kilometers and still have tremendous force! The greater the distance, the more difficult it would be to shoot accurately as well... it required even more training and experience.

"Starting tomorrow, I won't come here anymore. Young master, you are the most talented student I have ever taught." Blindfish looked at Ning. "Don't waste your talent. In the future, you will definitely become the most terrifying godly archer in the Swallow Mountain area."