

E Monarch 306

Chapter 306: I Wish To Go Too

Naturally, if the Second Prince or Jun Mo Xie or other people came to know about these words... they would immediately understand why the Second Prince had asked the Blood Sword Hall's assassins to execute this mission. This faction's men were bound to fail one step before they reached the finish line!

The Blood Sword Hall was the most famous 'house' of assassins in the Tian Xiang Empire; perhaps the entire Xuan Xuan continent. But, the identity of the mastermind behind them... was extremely shocking!

However, if one mulled it over... it would seem normal. In fact, it would make a lot of sense.

Wouldn't it?

How could the entire upper echelon of the Tian Xiang Empire know this organization of assassins? And, how could this organization act so openly without any scruples? So much so, that they had connections with the Families in the Imperial Court... and even the later generations of the Imperial Family...?

The existence of such a group would've been fairly normal in a small country since smaller empires usually have a very weak military force. But, the Tian Xiang Empire's military-strength was tyrannical, and highly centralized. The Empire's Emperor was one of the most talented individuals of the generation. So, how could he allow such an organization of assassins to act in such an unrestrained manner inside his nation? So much so, that they would even have the courage to attempt the assassination of the Royal Princess... as if it was child's play...?

There was a lot more to this matter. Take the example of Princess Ling Meng's assassination for example — the continent's most well-known organization of assassin would likely possess an intelligence network of equal merit. And, though Ye Gu Han's existence was admittedly a secret... but, how could an organization like the Blood Sword Hall fail to find out about Ye Gu Han's presence on her guard? However, they had only sent two Gold Xuan experts to assassinate Princess Ling Meng...

Would facing a 'Sky Xuan bodyguard' of the 'target' with two Gold Xuan experts be of any use? Did it make any sense?!

It was a pity that the Second Prince had been involved in all this. Especially that bullsh*t line, "Your intelligence is erroneous," had already been dispatched to him. The Second Prince probably wouldn't understand the reality of this till the end of his days... that... his own father had used him to cleanse and rectify the bureaucratic structure of the Empire. In fact, he would even use this event to purge his harem.

If this was ever to come to light — the Hitman Jun would accept that he wasn't the world's most formidable player... by any means. That 'title' was undoubtedly reserved for the Tian Xiang Empire's Emperor.

~ The chambers of the Imperial concubines ~

"Little Meng, truthfully tell your mother — what's the problem? Are you ill?" a graceful and gorgeous lady asked in a courteous manner. She wore a yellow gown of her body, and a traditional crown on her head. She was the current Empress, and Princess Ling Meng's mother — Murong Xiu Xiu.

"I... it's nothing. Your daughter's health is fine. Everything is normal. I don't know why Queen-Mother would ask this," Ling Meng didn't admit anything. Ling Meng didn't know what would happen if she told her mother about the misery of Ye Gu Han's condition. So, she invariably lied.

"Normal? Child, you've never been good at lying. You always stutter when you lie." The Empress smiled gently as she looked at her daughter with affection, "Sometimes, you seem very worried these days. And sometimes, you giggle. On top of that, you usually weep at night. Your tears have moistened your pillows. This... would you call this 'normal'?"

"Mother..." Princess Ling Meng let-loose her lovable self, "Could your daughter ever lie to you? There's nothing different with me."

"Could it be..." The Empress smiled. She lovingly poked her daughter's tiny nose, "Perhaps, you've taken a fancy to a Family's young man?"

"Mother... what are you saying?" Princess Ling Meng blurted out aloud. She became bashful, and her face reddened. But, she still hesitated inside. [Can I use this chance to tell my mother about Jun Mo Xie?] Princess Ling Meng couldn't help but blush as her beloved's thought crossed her mind.

The Empress looked at her daughter's expression. How could she not know? [My daughter's body isn't that of a small girl anymore. She had reached that age. My daughter has grown up!]

"You little girl... but I can't tell which family's young man has garnered the affections of my treasured daughter..." The Empress looked at her daughter teasingly.

"Queen Mother..." Princess Ling Meng turned and twisted her waist. She hesitated for a moment, but eventually decided to keep her feeling to herself for the time being. The Princess was no fool. How could she not know that Jun Mo Xie's feelings may not be in compliance? She feared that he might not harbor a favorable impression about her. Therefore, she might court a rebuff if she were to declare her feelings in a rash manner.

However, the Princess's heart was in denial. [You tried to woo me for so many years, but I wasn't impressed. I didn't care no matter how much attention you gave me! And, now that this Princess has no objections... this lecherous guy is giving me attitude... humph!]

"My little girl seems shy. Don't tell if you don't want to. Your mother won't compel you. He he... Little Meng, tell your mother about your beloved as soon as possible. You're not that young anymore. It would become a very troublesome matter if your father — the Emperor — impulsively decided to bestow you in marriage someday..." the Empress spoke as she dotingly played with her daughter's hair.

"Your daughter understands." The Princess cuddled into her mother's embrace. She suddenly recalled her Uncle Ye's years of service... and the misery of his current condition. She felt sick at heart, and wanted to cry.

"I don't know why... but, my heart seems to sense something oddly fearful for the past few days... As if something very bad has happened..." a light smile graced the Empress's face. A pensive expression covered her face as she muttered to herself, "What could it be...? What could have happened? I've been feeling a strange ache in my heart..."

Princess Ling Meng's heart tensed, but she didn't dare to speak. [I don't know Uncle Ye's situation. And, I don't know how many damned enemies he has in this Palace...]

~ Jun Family ~

Jun Mo Xie's forehead was sweaty. He had kept quite in the face of this little girl's bared fangs.

He had remained silent because...

"I wish to go too!" Dugu Xiao Yi arrogantly declared as she held Little White in her arms.

"What are you saying, sister? Do you intend to fill the bellies of the Xuan Beasts? Do you intend to help me or the Xuan Beasts?" Jun Mo Xie flippantly rolled his eyes. [God ah! Spare me, please? This little girl has been annoying me the entire morning...]

"Humph! You might end up in the belly of those Xuan Beasts, but I'm very fierce and powerful! Even my seven brothers can't match me if I use my Knife technique properly. No one in the Gold Xuan realm can match me! Besides, what could a couple of Xuan Beasts do to this little girl?" Dugu Xiao Yi continued in a lofty manner. "Just look at how Little White behaves... doesn't he act like a little puppy even though he's a level eight Xuan Beast? So, what do I have to fear if they are all like this? I can kill thousands of them! And hey, I can find a play-mate for Little White too!"

Little White let-out a discontent whine. [You think it's easy to find such a high-level and top-notch beast?] He raised his eyeballs to look at her. However, he was also aware of the reason behind his mistress's words. He knew that it would be unwise to make a move. So, he ignored her, and went back to sleep.

Jun Mo Xie felt helpless, "How can you make this comparison? Little White is a high-level Xuan Beast. But, he's not a grown-up, is he? No, we shouldn't even say that... we ought to say that he's an infant! So, how can you associate him with them? Have you never seen another Xuan Beast? Don't you know anything?"[1]

"What nonsense are you talking? You think I don't know stuff? And, the other Xuan Beasts? What about them? Other Xuan Beasts get dispirited the moment they see this Young Lady. They don't even dare to raise their heads!" the little girl proudly declared.

Tears streamed down Jun Mo Xie's cheeks. [Really? How could a pampered girl from a powerful family know about these dangers? You've only seen low-level Xuan Beasts who have been domesticated by others!]

"You must be joking! You always carry Little White with you. And, the Capital only has standard level Xuan Beasts. So, they get dispirited when they see Little White. Does that reasoning make any sense to you? Little White is indeed very formidable here... but he isn't worth anything in Tian Fa!" Jun Mo Xie explained earnestly.

"You think you can fool me as if I were a kid?! Little White is so ferocious! And, you still say that it's nothing? I'm going anyway! And, when I want to go — I will get to go!" Dugu Xiao Yi spoke in an unreasonable manner, "It will be my grandfather's seventieth birthday in two months. He had received an injury to his waist on the battlefield long ago. He can't stay in the wind for long — he catches a cold because of that injury. I've heard that a Snow-Ferret Xuan Beast's fur can prevent a person from catching a cold. So, I plan to hunt down a Snow-Ferret on this trip. I wish to give it to my grandfather on his birthday in order to show my love."

[This little girl thinks that a snow-ferret is just waiting there for her to come for it. She thinks she can just go and grab it...]

Jun Mo Xie nearly fainted. "Sister, good lady... do you think that a Snow-Ferret Xuan Beast is a domestic kitten? ...That you can just grab it? That thing is much higher in level than your iron winged panther. They are at least level eight Xuan Beasts. And not just in name only. In fact, level eight is also a conservative estimate... In other words, it can evolve. Do you understand?"

She had been gentler these days. So, Jun Mo Xie had forgotten about her domineering nature. But, it seemed that she had reverted back to her old ways. ...Someone had rightly said — it's easy to change a country, but it's hard to change one's essential nature!

"What's so difficult about it? Isn't it just a little snow-ferret? What's the big deal?" the little girl waved her hand and cried out. She didn't take Jun Mo Xie seriously. Then, her eyes changed directions as she lowered her head and implored, "Brother Mo Xie, you can spare one horse for me? Right?"

"I can't! I won't even discuss this!" Jun Mo Xie was surprisingly resolute as he denied her. [You think I don't have spare horses? Won't your annoying Dugu Family skin me if something were to happen to you? I'm no gentleman. It will be very troublesome if something happens along the journey ah.]

"Brother Mo Xie, I beseech you!" Dugu Xiao Yi caught his arm, and looked at him in a frail and lovable manner.

"Out of the question! It's no use to tempt me!" Jun Mo Xie snorted. Then, he thought of something and added, "Tempting a Jun Man has never been of any use."

"You think you can be pleased with yourself?" Dugu Xiao Yi snorted, spat and stuck her tongue out. "Humph! I'll just go with my elder brothers if you won't take me! You think I need your charity? You think I can't go to Tian Fa if you refuse to take me along?"

"Do as you wish!" Jun Mo Xie spread his arms, "I'm fine with everything as long as I don't have to take you! If your three elder brothers are willing to take you — they've saved me! They'll have my thanks for sharing the burden!"

Chapter 307: The Crossbows... Have Arrived!

"But, I wish to go with you... Hee hee... following you will be quite amusing. You're not very restful by nature. So, the journey will be very interesting. How could it be any fun to go with my three foolish elder brothers?" Dugu Xiao Yi instantly realized that her 'trick' had been ineffective. So, she shamelessly turned to a new approach.

It was clear to Jun Mo Xie that the little girl's three brothers had flatly rejected her request to accompany them. So, she had come to annoy him. [Why else would she come to me?]

"I've told you. It's not going to happen. You're not to get involved on this trip. So, you can forget about leaving this place!" It was like Jun Mo Xie's heart was made of iron and stone. He wouldn't concede; no

matter what. "You will accompany my sister-in-law at home. You can't go to a place like that. It will be hard to look after you. We're not going on an outing."

"I don't understand how she'll keep me company... Anyway, she won't be accompanying me because I'm going to Tian Fa," a cold voice spoke out. Jun Mo Xie's spine became stiff as he heard those words. He turned his head to look. [Wasn't that Guan Qing Han?]

Guan Qing Han had been feeling as if something was wrong with this matter of marching south to the forest. Not many people knew about their issues with the Xue Hun Manor. But, most of the influential families knew about it; the Imperial Palace was obviously no exception.

[And yet, they mentioned that Jun Wu Yi and Jun Mo Xie were to go ...why would they do that?]

Jun Wu Yi would have to lead the troops into battle. So, that was acceptable. But, why had Jun Mo Xie been dragged into it? This had worried Guan Qing Han. And, what she was most worried about was... [What if the Xue Hun Manor tries to use this opportunity to create problems for Jun Wu Yi and Jun Mo Xie? It will all be because of me... What should I do? The nature of this uncle-nephew duo is bound to make things worse!]

[These two aren't that strong. So, how will they be able to deal with the Xue Hun Manor if some problems were to arise? There's bound to be an argument if either of the two sides brings up my name. And, Jun Mo Xie and Jun Wu Yi won't back down given their nature... Then, how would it end?]

[And, Jun Mo Xie is particularly fearless!]

[Is there anything he wouldn't do?]

Therefore, Guan Qing Han had decided that she must go. She had to go... even if it meant the death of her. [I'll undertake that journey by myself if you refuse to take me along!]

Everyone would return safely if everything turned out alright.

However, Guan Qing Han could always use herself as a bargaining chip if any problems were to arise. She would rather sacrifice her life for Jun Mo Xie and Jun Wu Yi's safe return. However, she couldn't allow the uncle-nephew duo to learn of her intentions. If they were to learn of her intentions... they would rather break her legs so that she wouldn't be able to go. Her third uncle wasn't very likely to take this action. But, she was well aware of her brother-in-law's nefarious nature. She knew that Jun Mo Xie was perfectly capable of confining her.

Guan Qing Han was perfectly aware of that point.

"What's happening today, ah! My sister-in-law... my very own sister-in-law has come to add to this chaos... why did you all come to see me...? Look, I can't deal with this..." Jun Mo Xie grabbed his hair. It seemed as if he had been driven mad, "Don't come to me if you wish to go to Tian Fa. I've already said no... So, go to Third Uncle!"

"Your decision in this matter is your business. But, whether I go or not is mine!" Guan Qing Han looked unenthusiastically at Jun Mo Xie. Then, she quickly pulled Dugu Xiao Yi and left without consulting anyone. However, Dugu Xiao Yi gestured towards Jun Mo Xie with her eyes to demonstrate her protest as she left.

Her thought behind this gesture of protest was simple, [I'll be nice as long as you don't make trouble for me, and love me.]

Jun Mo Xie's mouth twisted wryly.

On the afternoon of the same day — Jun Mo Xie and his over-two-hundred imperial guards divided into groups, and disappeared from the Jun Family's residence.

Later that night...

Grandpa Jun's tall body stood sturdily in his courtyard. He said something to the ten shadowy figures that stood in front of him. Then, the ten figures dispersed and disappeared from the courtyard without a trace.

Grandpa Jun sighed and asked Old Pang, who stood beside him, "When will they reach...?"

Old Pang thought for a moment and replied, "Approximately by tomorrow evening."

"Hmm..." the Old Man frowned and spoke, "Old Pang, prepare the face-masks and dark clothes."

Old Pang's eyes beamed with happiness.

Jun Wu Yi was inside his small courtyard. The Third Master had torn a slip of paper between his hands. He chuckled and muttered, "Tomorrow evening..."

The curtains of night descended and ascended. The morning sun rose in the sky, and then set again. Soon, it was evening...

The moon was already on the rise after the sun had set. Time had passed in a flash. Zhou Wu Ji had forgotten how many times he had raised his whip to hasten his horse. It had been two mornings since he had left his ship and had come ashore. And, it had been two full days of haste.

They had hardly stopped ever since they had left the south. They had been travelling for nine days. And, they had hastened night and day. The result was also quite obvious. They were two days ahead of schedule. Two full days!

It was easy to imagine the number of mishaps they had avoided because of these two days.

This made him a little excited. Not a single unexpected incident had occurred over the last nine days... whether it was the land route or the waterways. They had smoothly journeyed with the current. However, this was also quite hard for him to accept... things had gone 'too' smoothly.

As a result, Zhao Wu Ji's heart hadn't been able to relax. On contrary, it made him even more alert. These circumstances were highly unusual. And, he was surprised by any lack of misfortune.

Ever since he had received this job — the Zhao Family's head, Zhao Wu Ji — had tried to understand what this represented and what it meant. But to his regret... it was already too late by the time he figured it out.

This was because the manufacturing had already commenced by the time understood this matter.

[The Second Prince is up to something...!]

[However, what would a prince wish to manufacture with these things? And moreover, why would he wish it done in secret?] Zhao Wu Ji had realized that he had unwittingly stepped onto the Second Prince's pirate ship. And, now it would be too awkward to get down.

From the moment they had received this task — his family would end-up getting tied closer to the Second Prince's war chariot with each and every kill from those crossbows. And, it would become even more difficult to get out of this situation if the blood of any other Imperial Prince was shed.

However, he had no means to resist this.

Leaving alone the fact that the manufacturing had already started... how could he have backed-out even if it hadn't?

His family had some influence. But, it was still nothing when compared to the Second Prince's strength. He feared that his family would be annihilated in half-a-day if he had declined that job; they would vanish from the face of the earth.

Great risks represented huge profits. His business could earn three-hundred times the profit from this job alone. This would make his business even more profitable. So, even if he had to stake his life on the line for this job... it was worth the risk.

Moreover, this entire matter was somewhat political in nature. So, if he could gain some foot-hold in the political structure of the country as a reward...

Zhao Wu Ji felt that he had swallowed a housefly. But, he still had a smile of appreciation his face. [The fly tastes disgusting when it enters one's mouth. But, it's quite nutritious. After all, it contains a high amount of protein.]

The Xuan Beast Tendon crossbows were manufactured very quickly. No mistakes were made while manufacturing them. The Zhao Family's head — Zhao Wu Ji — had then relaxed a little. However, his nerves had become taught soon-after since he had realized one thing clearly; the journey to deliver these crossbows to the capital was the real test.

Therefore, he had chosen to halt the entirety of his family's business, and had gathered all the experts in their ranks to safely escort these crossbows to the Capital City. But, he still didn't feel relieved in his heart. So, he started to look for additional manpower. He incurred a massive cost, and engaged the Vice-President of the Southern Trade Union to personally lead experts who were to escort the cargo... just to ensure complete safety.

However, the Second Prince disrupted the proceedings just when the preparations had been put in place. He had sent the troops from his elite guard to escort them. This was done to ensure absolute safety. But, this matter scared Zhou Wu Ji. It had seemed to him that the preparations he had made were quite sufficient. In fact, he felt that they would be more than enough to deal with any eventuality.

However, the Second Prince wasn't even remotely comforted. This was a very serious matter. So, it was quite possible that the cargo would find itself ambushed by an unusual and exceedingly strong force. The strength of the original escort-convoy wouldn't be sufficient to deal with the matter if this were to happen.

The true use of these crossbows had become abundantly clear at this point. His plans had failed even before their start.

Each step the horse under his crotch took... was a step closer to a bloody Imperial struggle.

Eventually, they were close to the Tian Xiang City.

"Elder brother, we've safely come so far. The Tian Xiang City lays just two-hundred kilometers ahead. Even if someone wanted to intercept us... I don't think they would be able to commit such a huge crime so close to the Capital!" A slim man walked his horse besides Zhao Wu Ji. He was smiling, and looked gratified. "It seems that we were worrying so much for no reason. I really didn't expect things to go so smoothly. It seems that the Second Master's arrangements for secrecy were genuinely outstanding!"

This slim man was Zhou Wu Ji's younger brother, Zhao Wu Tian. He was also one of the very few people in the Zhao Family who was aware of their client's identity.

"I hope so!" Zhao Wu Ji sighed as he looked at the darkening sky. He suddenly felt that the grey heavens were transforming into a giant black-hole. He felt as if this black-hole was sucking him and his family into it... and he didn't have the strength to resist such a thing.

"Only the last stretch of the road remains. Everyone is to raise their spirits, and use the entirety of their remaining energy to reach the Capital as soon as possible so that we can deliver and unload the goods. Our responsibility will be over with that, and we can finally relax then," Zhao Wu Ji breathed out. He lowered his head as he tried his best to disperse those gloomy and chaotic thoughts.

"Yes!" Zhao Wu Tian responded, and quickly slowed-down his horse. He then took out a small banner from his bosom, and quickly waved it twice in the air. The whole caravan was moving quite fast anyway. But, it suddenly started to move even faster.

There was a sudden sound of urgent hoof-beats. A tall and sturdy middle-aged man quickly caught up; he was atop a red horse. His windblown and travel-weary face had an impatient look on it. "Zhao Family's master, there's not much distance to the Capital now. So, there's no need to hurry like this, right? We brothers have been scared and jittery the entire route since we've been hasted throughout. We're exhausted. The sky is also getting darker. I don't know how hard the road will be at night; things might change under the dull light of the night sky. I suggest that we find a place to 'set-up camp' for the night. Then, we can start again tomorrow. We are anyway ahead of the agreed-schedule by two days. So there is no need to hurry since we'll have plenty of time in the morning, right?"

The man speaking was the South Trade Union's Vice-President — Meng Xiao Song.

Chapter 308: I've Come Here to Rob!

He had been restraining a belly full of anger that entire journey. The man didn't even know what he had been escorting. This entire journey had been an unusual mystery to him. On top of that, they had hastened the entire journey. As a result, he and his twenty men were nearly falling apart due to exhaustion. Moreover, nothing unusual had happened since the beginning of the journey.

[Isn't this just pure and unnecessary torment?]

[The Zhao Family's men seem to be very serious. It seems like their mothers have died. And, then there are those other bastards... God knows where they've come from! Those guys have acted so arrogantly ...as if my men are just meant for odd jobs! Would the Emperor's Imperial Bodyguards have acted like that with me if they were here instead of this bunch?] Meng Xiao Song had been left feeling very gloomy because of all these factors.

They had hurried the entire journey. Their buttocks had been segmented after riding their horses for the entire day. So, they had all sighed with relief when night fell. They had just started to think that they could finally rest... that they would look for a decent tavern and enjoy a good wine. They were in the mood to find a young woman to have a good time with. But, they had unexpectedly received a command to accelerate their pace further.

[This is against the will of the heavens! Isn't this completely unreasonable?]

[Every mission I take becomes a scenic tour. So, why are you giving us such a hard time? Do you think that I would've personally come on this trip if it weren't for your promise to pay an insanely-high price of fifty thousand silver taels? However, I've given you the respect of a man. So, don't think that you can work me like a donkey!]

That is why Meng Xiao Song — the Vice-President of the Southern Trading Union — couldn't bear it anymore. So, he asked in a rude and loud voice.

"It's of great importance! We have no choice but to be vigilant! Vice-President Meng is extremely magnanimous, but still I ask him to forgive us for this," Zhao Wu Ji forced a smile and cupped his hands.

"Bullsh*t! 'Of great importance, of great importance;' I must've heard this line 800 times over the course of this journey! I'm sick of the trouble you've been giving me! Zhao Wu Ji, I advise that you give us some respect. You're paying us a lot of money to protect your convoy on this trip. But, we are not the Zhao Family's hired errand boys. You must understand this point very clearly. Don't think that we're dim-witted pigs!"

Meng Xiao Song was anxious. He had heard that line, "great importance!" so many times over the course of the journey that it had caused calluses in his ears. So, he couldn't help but explode when he heard it again.

Zhou Wu Ji forced a smile. He was about to give an explanation because it wouldn't do to have his own side stuck in internal strife. But, four men suddenly arrived riding on their horses. The faces of the four horsemen were cold as they came over. Their eyes were open wide as they stared at Meng Xiao Song and spoke coldly, "What's going on? What are you arguing for? You brat, why are you so dissatisfied... did your mother die or something?"

The four horsemen were from the Devine Storm Guard. They had also made a difficult journey. So, they too harbored a lot of complaints in their hearts. However, they didn't like it when they saw Meng Xiao Song take the lead and voice his discontent. [We haven't complained one bit. So, what are you worth?]

Meng Xiao Song could clearly feel an intense murderous intention emanate from those four horsemen. His heart suddenly flew into a rage. [These handfuls of trivial Gold Xuan soldiers dare to threaten an Earth Xuan expert like me? In fact, they're scolding me!? This is against the heaven's law! How can it ever be reasonable?]

"Why? You have something to say in this matter?" Meng Xiao Song looked at them coldly, and put his hand on the hilt of his sword.

However, Meng Xiao Song instantly regretted doing that because ten other warriors suddenly crowded around him. Their swords made 'ringing' noises as they shouted and unsheathed them; their blades glittered with a cold light. Then, those warriors suddenly charged towards them without saying another word, and slashed down mercilessly with their swords.

"Insane! You're insane!"

They were many in number, but they were only at the Gold Xuan realm. So, they shouldn't have been much of a problem for someone like Meng Xiao Song who was at Earth Xuan realm. However, action of the Devine Storm Gaurd had been completely unexpected since they were all companions for the duration of this trip. ...Meng Xiao Song's face had made it obvious that he wasn't exactly happy, but he hadn't done anything as of yet. But, those men had suddenly started to attack without saying anything... or giving any reasons. The other party wasn't even ready...

"Stop! Everyone stop! We are all on the same side!" Zhao Wu Ji had started to sweat profusely. But, he rushed over to mediate.

"Slam! Slam!" they had finally withstood the first round of the siege. But just then, another horseman came over with the intention to attack them; those men weren't very strong, but their disposition when mounting an attack was that of 'one soldier filling the gap left by a toppled comrade'. They wouldn't give-up unless they had defeated the enemy.

Zhao Wu Ji was extremely anxious. He was barely able to speak, "Everyone! Everyone, we're on the same side. We're all going to the capital for a major event. So, why are you attacking friendlies?"

After several efforts to mediate... both sides called for a halt.

The Second Prince's Imperial Bodyguard was accustomed to oppressing people. So, how could they tolerate Meng Xiao Song? [So what if your cultivation is at Earth Xuan Realm? Many Earth Xuan exerts have died by our brothers' hands. How could you be any different?]

[We see that you're Earth Xuan, and we are merely Gold Xuans. But, us brothers are the Imperial Family's sworn bodyguards. We're the government, and you're the commoner! We'd get it if you were a Sky Xuan or higher. But, how can you dare to display such a temperament when you're not? We'll brand you a traitor you idiot!]

The Imperial Bodyguards maliciously looked at Meng Xiao Song's fleshy butt. [We've heard that many serious felons are into buggery...]

Meng Xiao Song had flared up in the beginning. But, he had calmed down after Zhao Wu Ji had whispered a few words into his ears.

"These men are from the Imperial Bodyguard," these softly spoken words had immediately dispelled Meng Xiao Song's anger. In fact, they had terrified him.

People hadn't fought with government officials since the ancient times.

This was the eternal and steadfast norm since time-immemorial.

An Imperial Bodyguard could kill a local official without any justification, and no one would say a word. So, what value did a person from the southern district hold? And, that too someone with a business house in the southern districts?

[No wonder Zhao Wu Ji was acting like an obedient grandson! This assignment is tantamount to royal service. Could we dredge-up a semi-official position after this assignment is over?] Meng Xiao Song started to look at those Imperial Bodyguards in a flattering manner as this thought crossed his mind.

Then, the convoy resumed its journey. The mood had become quite harmonious because of that little tiff.

There was a tall mountain up ahead. It was called the 'Tian Xiang Iron Wall'. It was like a natural rampart that protected the Capital.

One could vaguely see the Tian Xiang City after they had climbed the top of that mountain.

The mission could be considered as ninety-nine percent complete after they had reached the mountain.

They could finally sigh with relief.

Zhao Wu Ji raised his palm, and ordered a short rest at the foot of the mountain. Those on foot unloaded their pots and pans, and started to prepare a meal. Everyone was to eat till they were satisfied, and then continue onwards with full speed to cover the remaining distance. The sooner they were inside the city walls... the happier they would be. Those 'brothers' were happily laughing together.

The smoke rose from the iron pots and disseminated the smell of rice. A barbeque was supported on iron frames. Its smell drifted in the air. Everyone swallowed their saliva with the greatest of greed in their eyes. Their spirits had been repressed the entire journey, and their bodies were extremely tired. It had been an unbearable trip...

However, they could finally relax and gorge themselves.

"Serve the meal!" Zhao Wu Tian shouted happily. He picked up a large iron bowl and advanced.

"He he... serve the meal? You think you'll get to have a meal? ...That you'll gorge yourselves? You devils! The time is very limited! Go to hell, and eat a meal there!" a measured voice sneered. It seemed like an extremely cold wind from hell had started to 'whistle-about'. It chilled everyone to the bone!

"Who is it? Come out!" Everyone nervously sprang up, and unsheathed their swords in unison.

"We're here to rob you!" a loud and excited roar emanated as a blue light flashed. There was huge blast without any prior warning. The cooking pots on the ground exploded, and the cooked rice was scattered by the explosions. The iron fragments from the cooking pots flew everywhere. Then, the endless pained and miserable screams of several people were heard. The fact was that... many people had been unlucky-enough to die when fragments from the iron pots hit their bodies.

"A Sky Xuan expert?!" everyone exclaimed in alarm; without exception... whether it was the Earth Xuan Meng Xiao Song... or the previously arrogant Imperial Bodyguards.

A figure covered in blue light rushed out like a rocket. "SLAM! BANG!" several warriors in were sent flying. They sailed through the air like clouds in the sky. A masked and black-clothed individual stood in the middle of the area. He extended a hand, and grabbed Zhao Wu Tian by the neck. Then, he raised Zhao Wu Tian's body off the ground. His actions looked so effortless that it felt as if someone had grabbed a chicken by its neck. Zhao Wu Tian's face turned red and purple since he was being choked, while his arms and legs struggled helplessly in the air.

"Tell me! Where's that batch of Xuan Beast crossbows kept?" The blue light flickered around the masked black clad man as he tightened his grasp. A cold tyrannical light flashed in his eyes.

"Kill him!" a shout arose from all sides as thirty-to-forty people brandished their swords and dashed towards the black clad man without caring for Zhao Wu Tian's precarious situation. Meanwhile, Zhao Wu Ji shouted with a sense of urgency in his tone, "Careful... my younger brother...!"

Then, another excited roar emanated from the pitch-black mountain woods. This roar literally shook the ground. A second figure — his face hidden behind a mask, and body dressed in black clothes — suddenly

rushed out. He too was covered in a blue light. He wielded his sword in left hand, and warned of the impending slaughter with his right.

The first black-clothed and masked man looked at Zhao Wu Tian and spoke in a cold tone; Zhao Wu Tian was struggling helplessly in his clutches. The masked individual's voice didn't have the slightest trace of emotion as he asked, "It'll be extremely bad for you if you don't speak. And, don't tell me it's inside the carriage. I won't be fooled by such a childish lie. You'll only meet one end if you dare lie to me — Death!"

"In... in..." Zhao Wu Tian's legs flailed in disarray, and his eyes belied his fear. A yellow ray of light flashed through him at that moment. He screamed and twitched for a moment. Then, he went limp.

"Bastard!" the black-clothed man cursed in rage and pounced. The nearly 500 men in the caravan were thrown into complete disarray.

Zhao Wu Ji let out a mournful and miserable scream in the midst of all that chaos, "Little brother!" He was suddenly filled with the desire to pounce at the warriors from the Imperial Guard, "You killed my younger brother!"

The warrior who was faced with Zhao Wu Ji's accusations... was actually the head of the Second Prince's Divine Storm Guard — Zhang Cun Xiao. He became even more ferocious when he saw the Zhao man becoming angry. His face became red, and he sternly shouted, "Zhao Wu Ji, you dare to go against the Second Master!? Your younger brother craved life and feared death. He would've divulged the secret if I had taken action any later! My decision to kill him was the proper thing to do. It was a natural course of action! A catastrophe would've befallen everyone if he had been allowed to reveal the secret! And, every member of your Zhao Family would've been beheaded because of it, you fool!"

Zhao Wu Ji trembled all over. Then, he came to complete halt. He had nowhere to vent his grief and indignation. So, he suddenly let out a violent roar. He then turned towards the first masked-and-black-clothed man, and dashed towards him.

Chapter 309: I Will Only Observe; I Won't Even Speak

Someone shouted from midair, "Great Senior, we might as well kill everyone and then look for those crossbows. These people were escorting those crossbows. So, the crossbows couldn't have flown to the sky, isn't it?"

A figure covered in blue light shot out. The glittering blue light of his sword illuminated the surrounding radius of three meters. That person's appearance gave rise to wretched howls. This individual slashed at the crowd and opened a bloody path for himself at the cost an individual who was sent spinning. He then killed his way into the middle of the battlefield.

Zhang Cun Xiao shouted loudly, "Everyone, encircle them! Cooperate and form an iron barrel to kill them! Resist the enemy!" Everyone responded and rushed forward. The roar to kill emanated from all directions as the Imperial Guard drew close to the center. They weren't a match for these three Sky Xuan experts, but they gradually managed to stabilize their position and disposition.

A faint sigh emanated from the top of a tall tree. However, no one could be seen on it.

The Young Master Jun had been hiding on that tree.

Jun Mo Xie was endlessly shaking his head as he watched at the battle. Those three individuals had been killing everyone without any reason. This had left him speechless. [They are such unprofessional robbers! I don't know what nonsense that Great Master Lei Wu Bei has taught these guys!]

Jun Mo Xie had obviously realized that those three black-clad individuals were the three remaining disciples of Lei Wu Bei's.

After all, he was 'all too familiar' with them.

[These three have a higher chance of messing-up than succeeding! What a waste, ah!]

[A robber has to arrive in silence and attack at once. But, you guys unexpectedly found it important to say a few words before you attacked...!]

This had left Jun Mo Xie speechless.

[This is all nonsense!]

[There was no hope for your robbery plans, ah. But, you've disturbed this Young Master's perfectly crafted plan as well! So much money spent! So much physical effort expended!] Luckily, Lei Jian Hong didn't say, "This Mountain is mine, and I have planted this tree. So, you'll have to pay a toll-price if you want to cross," Or something similar. Otherwise, that would've annoyed Hit-man Jun beyond reasonable limits, and he would've fallen head first down the tree.

Jun Mo Xie had started ahead of time, and had led his personal guard to that place a day-before. They had dug-up the pit falls, and had concealed their presence. In fact, Jun Mo Xie had even distributed a pill to each one of his men; this pill would assist to suppress their aura. Over two hundred men had systematically arranged themselves in hiding in the woods nearby. Naturally, they had already dug underground caverns, and were now hiding inside them. They would start like thunder the moment that caravan would enter their encirclement. They would've seized the items, and quickly fled.

[These three people attacked the caravan before it fell into my encirclement!]

[These fuc*ers have left me speechless!]

Jun Mo Xie quickly spread the news amongst his men. He told them to be calm and motionless. They would first see the result of that battle. He analyzed the situation... [Those three are obviously quite powerful. It won't be easy to succeed against them, ah. Moreover, this has turned into a dog-eat-dog type of battle. I'll have to come up with a new plan.]

Just when Jun Mo Xie was thinking this... Lei Jian Hong rushed forward and issued a low whistle. Suddenly, the loud rumbling sound of orderly footsteps echoed. A huge group of black-clothed and masked men rushed over and joined the battle at once. The deadlock between the two sides was broken in an instant.

The Devine Storm Guard's leader — Zhang Cun Xiao — was hit on the chest by a palm. He sprouted blood from his mouth as he was thrown back. However, he extended one hand behind his back, and pulled out a fire rocket from the back of his belt. Then, he shot it skywards. Suddenly, a 'bang' sound was heard. The night-sky was lit up by the firework; a vivid image of a pair of blood-red swords had taken shape above.

"It seems that the Blood Sword Hall had also hidden themselves in this area. Now, let's wait and see which side is stronger, and which is weak... in any case, I'll just sit here and watch the two tigers fight. I'll let them fight till they are spent, and then I'll reap the benefits." Jun Mo Xie was crouched atop a tree-branch like he was seated on a horse. The branch moved up and down because of the wind and the movement's rhythm was extremely... weird. If he was to show himself, and someone was to see him... they'd believe that he was doing something secret and private with the tree...

The Young Master Jun supported his chin in his hand. He calmly waited — engrossed. [This is so lively! Blood Sword Hall, Lei Wu Bei's disciples and Li You Ran's secret experts... It's better if they all suffer serious losses in this battle. In fact, it would be best if they all die!] He wanted this to happen, but he didn't have very high hopes for the same.

[Anyway... I'll just observe; I won't even speak]

It was such a pity that the resulting outcome had been contrary to everyone's expectations. The signal for the Blood Sword Hall had been issued a while back. But, the experts of the Blood Sword Hall hadn't come to their aid; not even a single shadow had arrived.

The lonely mountain was mostly quite; only the murderous yells could be heard. The residual light from the bonfires was lighting-up the deathly pale complexion on the faces of Zhao Wu Ji's men.

"I genuinely had more support, but you were only bluffing!" Lei Jian Hong sneered as he taunted. "This is awfully amusing! This 'bluff' trick may work on others, but it won't work on me. You couldn't play me... but, you managed to play with your own chances! It looks like you're impatient to leave this life. I shall certainly fulfill your wishes!"

Zhao Wu Ji was rolling around like a lazy donkey. He cut a sorry figure as he narrowly avoided a blade that had slashed-down on him. His loud weeping voice rang out, "Commander! This... this... our reinforcements... didn't you say that our reinforcements would be following after us? Why? ...Why? ...Why? ..."

He had wanted to say, "Why hasn't there been any activity from them?" However, three blades came 'whistling' down to chop him while as he was speaking. That interrupted his speech three times. And, it ended-up sounding like he was stuttering.

"How would I now? You think I'm not worried?" Zhang Cun Xiao cursed in rage. "Worry about your little life first!"

The Li Family's elite warriors — led by the three Sky Xuan experts — had gained an overwhelming advantage by now. They had pressed their enemies hard; step by step. And, Zhao Wu Ji's men had been compressed into an extremely small and circular formation. A little over a hundred men had survived on Zhao Wu Ji's side. They were holding a defensive line with great difficulty. They were doing their utmost to resist their enemy's dangerous attacks as they crowded into that circle. Not a single man from their side was left alive outside their circle!

Meng Xiao Song, Xiao Wu Ji and Zhang Cun Xiao — the three of these leaders were at the center of the defensive circle. Their faces were deathly pale.

The time-elapsed since the signal had been dispatched... had passed the time it takes for an incense stick to burn down. Yet, there was no trace of the reinforcements from the Blood Sword Hall.

Meng Xiao Song couldn't help but curse. His voice had already started to resemble weeping, "What's this? How can someone attack the Imperial Guards so brazenly this close to the Capital? I tell this senior... I have a family to take care of. I've followed you this time, but it hasn't been easy at all. Now, why don't you hurry up and think of a way out? You're the boss in the Capital's region... so, why don't you take note and apprehend these people later...?"

Meng Xiao Song's cultivation was quite high. He was at the middle level of the Earth Xuan realm. He was the strongest expert in Zhao Wu Ji's party. However, he had been living like a prince for many years. He had lost the fierce determination for victory and the unshakable murderous aura he had once possessed a long time ago. He had also come to treasure his family's life more than ever before. So much so, that he would measure the safety of his life above an opportunity to make money. He couldn't help whining about it since their situation had gotten desperate. But, it was too late for regrets.

[I could've been drinking tea in a safe environment at home? Perhaps I would be walking a dog, or bullying the common folk, or seizing a girl... wouldn't that have been fun? Instead, I've been cheated in the name of those fifty-thousand silver taels. I haven't even taken possession of the money! And yet, my life is coming to an abrupt end here...]

Zhang Cun Xiao couldn't help but become enraged, "You're shouting trivial stuff in this chaos? The hearts of my men are already in confusion. And yet, you yell your nonsense? You're making them more confused, and you're scattering our fighting spirit! I'm telling you... shut up! If you make any more noise — I promise — I'll cut you down with my own blade!"

Meng Xiao Song couldn't help but get angry. He used his blade to protect his body as he shouted in indignation, "What nonsensical argument is that? You're a noble Imperial Guard who serves the Emperor! You're intermediary officials! We're just common folk with little power. We were merely assisting you in delivering these things. You've put our lives in danger, and you're still giving me this much attitude!? And now, we can't even utter a word?"

Meng Xiao Song stopped speaking. Then, he shouted... even before Zhang Cun Xiao had an opportunity to reply, "Help! Save us!" His Xuan Qi cultivation was only second to the three Sky Xuan experts in this setting. Yet, he had been retreating since the start of the battle. He hadn't received even a single injury, but his loud voice travelled in all directions and spread far.

Jun Mo Xie nearly tumbled down the branch he was sitting on. [Uncle, no matter what you say... you're still an Earth Xuan expert. You can't be considered as one of the top people in this world, but you're accorded the prestige of a high-level individual! So, how can you have such greed for life?]

The masked and black-clothed Lei Jian Hong couldn't help but stagger at this either. He then laughed and called-out in a sinister manner, "Shout! Shout! Shout as loudly as you can! It's no use even if you damage your throat shouting! No one will come to save you!"

Jun Mo Xie trembled all over. He remained silent and inquired of the heavens... he had a strong urge to faint; [heavens let me die! How could you allow me to hear these classic words at such a crucial moment?!]

Meng Xiao Song had by-and-large shouted to save his life since he was very greedy for it. However, Lei Jian Hong's words had been quite famous in his previous world.

Jun Mo Xie was in a state of trance. He could almost visualize a sinister man with a vulgar expression... facing a young girl in an empty alley. The man appeared quite pleased with himself as he shouted, "It's no use even if you damage your throat shouting..."

He absentmindedly thought that the scene was contrived a bit melodramatically. But, it still couldn't compare to the scene before his eyes. Moreover, there was a man in this world who had spoken those very words!

A strange sound came from Jun Mo Xie's throat. It was the sound of him choking on his saliva; as if he was on the verge of death. [I have to vomit. This is too disgusting!]

The situation was still as one-sided as before.

Zhao Wu Ji's men were mostly dead. Most of the men Meng Xiao Song had brought from the Southern Trade Union had turned to corpses. Their blood had proverbially splashed across the horizon. He had no choice but to admit that the two hundred members of the Devine Storm Guard — sent by the Second Prince — were the strongest. Nearly hundred-and-fifty men of the Devine Storm Guard were still alive.

The strength of the men from the Devine Storm Guard couldn't be considered to be very high in their own individual merit. In fact, they were probably slightly weaker than the members of the trade union and the Zhao Family. However, they had a huge advantage in terms of battle experience. And, they were accustomed to fighting in formations. Therefore, their disposition was stable even though they had fallen into a disadvantageous position. Moreover, they were especially good at fighting in close encirclements. Their team-strength was so powerful that they held a considerable advantage even in such a pitch black night where these two forces were facing off.

As for the Zhao men, and those from the trade union — their individual fighting strength was stronger than the men of the Devine Storm Guard. However, they were accustomed to fighting alone, and had no experience when it came to cooperating with others. So, they had relied on their own strength, and had proceeded to kill even though they were faced with such a large-scale and chaotic warfare. As a result of that... they were the first ones to die. They were stronger in comparison when it came to individualistic strength, but their team-spirit was lacking in front of the 'experts.'

Lei Jian Hong and his fellow disciples attacked from three sides. It was clear that they were getting impatient. After all, this location was very close to the capital. The consequences could be huge if the news of this event were to spread.

Chapter 310: We've Lost Another One!

Lei Jian Hong's sword suddenly turned into a blue tornado in the midst of that battle's confusion. There were rapid explosions as he resolutely smashed the defensive circle that had been made by the members of the Devine Storm Guard.

Loud explosions echoed as over ten members of the Devine Storm Guard bore the brunt of the attacks. That exceptionally ferocious attack made them spit blood as they went flying upside-down. Lei Jian Hong didn't neglect this chance. The blue light that had covered his body wrapped around his long sword as he slashed at the men in the circle. The seven or eight people who were in the sword's range were cut into two.

Lei Jian Hong had intended to open-up a gap in their defense using the entire might of his strength. However, the strength of his previous attack had crumbled, but the new attack hadn't yet replaced it yet. This was a crucial moment. And, Zhan Cun Xiao, along with the other members of the Devine Storm Guard, quickly rushed over to fill the gap. And then, thirty swords fell on Lei Jian Hong with the intention to behead him. Lei Jian Hong's was able to muster his Qi in the given time-frame. So, he fell into a defensive position as he parried continuous blows from around a dozen swords. However, he was a Sky Xuan Peak expert at the end of the day. So, he was able to withstand the numerous enemies in a stable manner. He then mustered his powerful Xuan Qi as he defended against many sword attacks, and gave out a loud roar. His tyrannical sword power had been replenished by now; around a dozen men sustained serious injuries and fell to the ground.

Lei Jian Hong had gained a good foothold by breaking through that defense. However, he had exerted a lot of effort to resist those multiple counter-attacks. And then, he had roused his powerful Xuan Qi to use that murderous maneuver. This had somewhat injured his meridians. Moreover, he had received strong attacks from over ten enemies' swords — twice at that. His high Xuan Qi cultivation had made his skin as hard as iron. Therefore, he didn't receive any wounds on his body, but his clothes weren't able to escape their fate. His clothing had been slashed to strips. His clothes now looked like those of a beggar. Lei Jian Hong then quickly turned around, and retreated away.

Lei Jian Hong merely needed a little time to recuperate. All he had to do... was to harmonize his breathing for a moment. And then, he'd be able to reinstate himself to his original state.

However, the outcome of Lei Jian Hong's powerful attack had been very shocking. He had thoroughly opened a gap in their defenses on his side. That was when the Li Family's elite warriors shouted in unison, and rushed-in like a powerful sea-tide. The other two Sky Xuan experts employed the same

tactic in the other two directions. They made a gap... and when that gap in the Devine Storm Guard's defenses was exposed... the defending troops were thrown into disarray.

Lei Jain Hong and his two companions had initially conserved their strength to deal with the Blood Sword Hall's experts as-and-when they'd show-up. However, those people didn't show up. They presumed that the enemy never had any reinforcements. Therefore, the three Sky Xuan experts became relaxed, and embraced a blitzkrieg-ish attitude. And then, they displayed their true strength. They didn't spare any expenses when it came to consumption of their Xuan Qi, and pounced at that flock of sheep like tigers. They then commenced the slaughter.

"Stop... don't kill me! I'm the Southern Trade Union's Vice-President! I... I... I surrender!" Someone's mournful shout pierced the blue dome of the heavens. It was Meng Xiao Song.

His side was being defeated. So, he couldn't repress that feeling of abject fear in his heart; nor could he repress his thirst for life. Therefore, he put forth his surrender.

Zhou Jian Ming — Lei Wu Bei's second disciple — was facing him. He was thoughtlessly about to chop down with his sword when he unexpectedly came-up against this person who wasn't really very weak in terms of strength. However, how could he bear to fight an opponent who just went down on his knees? And whose face was covered with tears and snot? "Let me go... I... please great hero... have pity on me. I have a hundred year old mother back home. I have hungry and crying children..."

Meng Xiao Song cried as he continued to whimper, "Great hero... boo hoo... I don't want to die!"

Zhou Jian Ming stopped and stared blankly.

He could never have imagined that there would be someone in this world who'd be so greedy for life, and so afraid of death. [This shameless person is kneeling down when the two forces are clashing. Unexpectedly, he's the Southern Trade Union's Vice-President... Isn't this humiliating for him? He's indeed without any sense of shame; he's extremely shameless! His shamelessness knows no limits...]

"Bullsh*t! Come crawling to the Master you coward! Tell me where the Xuan Beast Crossbows are kept, and I'll let you go. In fact, I'll make a way for you to escape!" Zhou Jian Ming yelled in anger.

"It's... it's... those crossbows..." Meng Xiao Song tried his best to become beady eyed. [Wouldn't I want to tell you if I knew? Do you think I know where they've hoarded those crossbows? Do you think I consider them to be more important than my life? I really don't know ah!]

"Hurry up! Damn it! What are you turning all 'beady eyed' for, you coward?! Do you want to die? Nod if you're that unhappy with life!" Zhou Jian Ming yelled loudly.

"Great hero... spare me! I... I'm useless... I don't know where those crossbows are kept!" Meng Xiao Song was extremely scared. He suddenly kowtowed with a "Slam!" — that was actually the sound of him touching the ground!

"I'm going to fu*k your mother! Your surrender isn't worth a fart! It's no good; you don't have the tiniest bit of usefulness for me! Fu*k you, you coward!" Zhou Jian Ming cried loudly. His eyes widened in a glare. He then raised his foot and gave a tight kick "Bang!" to Meng Xiao Song's abdomen. His kick sent that man over three meters away, but he was left feeling gloomy.

[This coward didn't know anything, and yet he came to surrender... really?!]

The airborne Meng Xiao Song was still shouting "Spare... my life..." He hadn't finished his sentence when his voice suddenly stopped. A blood red sword had metamorphosed in the sky. It had easily cut the airborne man's body into two. Then, it picked-up speed instead of slowing down, and shot straight towards Zhou Jian Ming.

Meng Xiao Song's body was cut into two, and sprayed a rain of blood everywhere. Then, a blood-red figure emerged from that rain of blood like a devil.

This figure had penetrated straight through Meng Xiao Song's body.

A ray of light flashed forward like lightning, and chopped the leg which Zhou Jian Ming had raised to kick Meng Xiao Song's body. Zhou Jian Ming hadn't retracted his foot in time. The light cut the flesh as easily as knife cuts butter.

[This attacker has grasped this moment of opportunity very accurately!] Jun Mo Xie was still seated on top of the tree's branch. And, he was 'all praise' for the attacker after witnessing that attack.

Considering that strike alone — Jun Mo Xie wasn't sure that he could've done it better if he had decided to do it. This stealth attack had been executed perfectly. In fact, the level of perfection had reached amazing heights.

This attacker had hid himself on the sidelines. He had picked the moment when Meng Xiao Song had surrendered and Zhou Jian Ming had let loose a kick on the former in his act of hostility. And, at that subtle moment... Zhou Jian Ming, Meng Xiao Song and the attacker were positioned in a straight line from a certain altitude. Therefore, he had been concealed from Zhou Jian Ming's line of sight by Meng Xiao Song's body for a brief moment.

It was as if a thin leaf had covered the eyes of a person, and that person had been momentarily left incapable of seeing the whole forest.

This was exactly the case of the so-called 'leaf that had covered the eye'.

And, that subtle point had been extremely vital. That 'bloody garment' assassin suddenly moved into action. He had gone along the straight line, and had penetrated Meng Xiao Song's body. He had then moved straight towards Zhou Jian Ming. The latter was very gloomy and indignant at that point of time. So, his vigilance had been at its lowest.

The sword came-off smoothly.

The assassin's Xuan Qi was indicative that he had reached the Sky Xuan realm, but his true strength was at most at par with that of Zhou Jian Ming's. In fact, he could even be considered a bit weaker than Zhou Jian Ming. Therefore, the best result would've been a draw if the two sides had engaged in a full-frontal face-off. In fact, the assassin would've at most caused insignificant and minor injuries even if he had chosen to attack stealthily. However, he had ingeniously chosen this perfect moment, and had managed to chop-off Zhou Jian Ming's leg!

"Argh!" Zhou Jian Ming screamed with extreme pain as soon as he saw his right leg being cleanly cut-off. A fountain of blood gushed out. His eyes nearly popped-out of their sockets. He raised his head in pain. Though, the assassin hadn't relaxed at that moment. He had chopped-off the right leg of his opponent, and had taken the advantage of the moment to completely cut-off the right leg from the very center... his sword had moved like a hot knife through butter.

Zhou Jian Ming's howl sounded very miserable. In fact, it didn't even sound like a man's scream. He anxiously tried to move backwards, but he had forgotten that he had just lost a leg. So, he fell down face-up instead of leaping backwards. His assailant's elbows lit-up like blue sledgehammers as they resolutely bludgeoned his chest. Moreover, there were continual "Crack!" sounds from the breaking of the bones; Zhou Jian Ming's ribcage had been broken.

The screams coming out of Zhou Jian Ming's mouth were similar to that of an injured animal that was nearing its death. His mouth spurted blood along with the damaged internal organs' tissues. The mask on his face had disappeared long ago. The expert's rough facial features had twisted like that of a young dragon's. His blue veins twisted as they butted-out of his skin.

A grim light flashed in the killer's eyes. He still didn't let-off on his attack. His hands clutched his opponent's knees. His left leg fell as he raised his right one to kick. He used this style to hit Zhou Jian Ming's lower crotch in a continual manner. Meanwhile, the assailant's elbows were frantically striking Zhou Jian Ming's chest, while his hands dazzled with blue lights as they ferociously hit both of his opponent's temples.

"Bang!" Zhou Jian Ming's seven orifices turned into fountains.

...fountains of blood.

The attacker's legs incessantly moved up and down as he continued this frantic attack on his victim's body from different directions. He had carried Zhou Jian Ming's body several meters in a wink of an eye, and the latter had been forced to sustain those frantic and continuous strikes all the while. Zhou Jian Ming's tall and burly body had been transformed into a lump of soft meat by the time this onslaught came to an end. He had become a mass of pulpy flesh. His entire body had withered down. Not a single whimper could be heard from his mouth.

The bones in his body had been turned into fine powder.

In fact, some of the broken bones had flown out of his body under the powerful impact of this unceasing and frenetic onslaught.

"Second brother!"

"Second senior!"

Two grief-stricken and lung-rendering shouts echoed. Lei Jian Hong and his junior sister-disciple Fang Piao Hong had flipped-out. They abandoned their respective fights and came over. However, it was too late. Zhou Jian Ming's body had been turned into minced meat. Not a single breath had been left in his body. He was undoubtedly dead.

"Are you from the Blood Sword Hall? Who are you?!" Lei Jian Hong's eyes reddened as he resolutely scowled at that blood-red figure.

"Senior Lei's eyesight is exceptional! This insignificant soldier is blessed to finally meet these two famed Sky Xuan experts!" The red clothed man smiled as he calmly rubbed his hands to remove the bits of meat and dregs of bones from them. He then turned to them and smiled, "I wanted to exchange greetings with you three famed personalities. But, your second brother has already transformed to dregs. But still, it's a pleasure to meet the two of you. I lack a bit of mannerism. So, I request the two senior Sky Xuan experts to cut me some slack."

Jun Mo Xie was still seated atop the tree. But, his expression had transformed into a very strange one. [This guy's words are too overbearing. There was no trace of aggression in them... or in his heart. I would've probably done the same if I were in his place. In fact, his choice of words wasn't very different from mine. I've made my decision with regard to this man — I shall leave his corpse intact!]