

# Wing Chun Story: Chapter 15

By Michael Tse

Time passed by very quickly and Wong Wah Bo learned all the Wing Chun Kung Fu skill from his Sifu, Leung Lan Kwai, and he respected him a lot. He worked very hard and was very good at training and, aside from that, there was nothing else he needed to do. His Sifu was very casual when he was teaching him but the detail and knowledge was very deep.

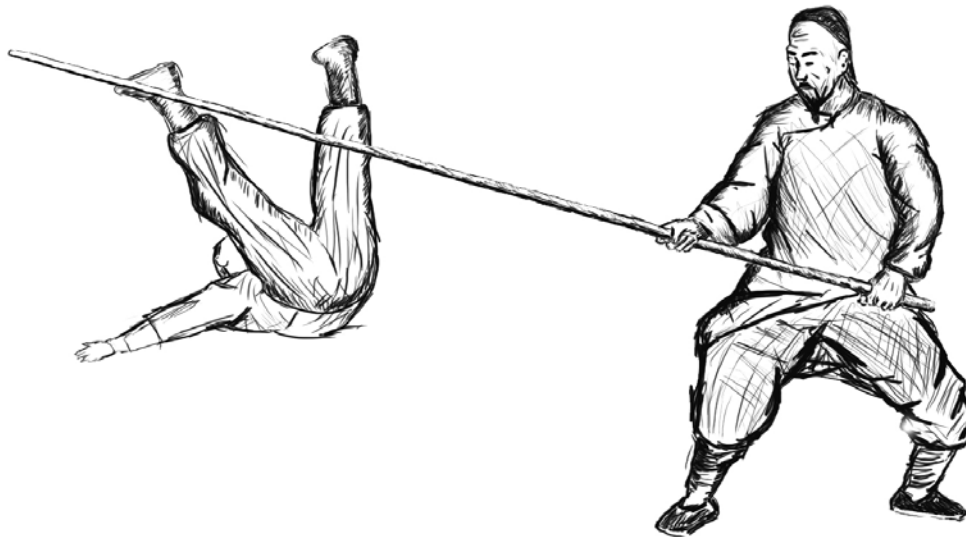
One day Wah Bo went out to the market to get food for dinner. He was quite a good sailor and his Sifu loved his chicken and pepper with black bean sauce. The main thing he needed was a chicken. He was good at choosing a good chicken, making sure the chicken was fed well. He also would check the attitude of the chicken even when it was in the cage. He would see if the chicken was walking around normally and when someone went to pick it up, that it reacted well and tried to escape. If it did, then he knew it was a good chicken as it was strong and alert. Also Wah Bo would check the throat of the chicken, because some bad traders would feed sand to the chicken to make it weigh more, as a heavy chicken would sell for more money. Wah Bo was very careful even if he knew the chicken trader. It was his nature to make sure everything was all right.

That day, whilst he was checking the chicken for the dinner, he spotted someone buying vegetables who looked familiar. It was an old colleague from the opera, but not one of the actors. Then he suddenly realised it was one of the sailors who worked on the boat. Wah Bo was very excited to see someone from the opera and so he quickly finished his business with the chicken trader, but when he turned back around the sailor had finished his shopping and was already walking some way down the street. Wah Bo followed him at quite a distance. He did not want to run to catch him up as it might draw too much attention as there was a chance he was still a fugitive and wanted by the government. Wah Bo wanted to know what his colleague was doing and where he lived.

After a short time Wah Bo followed his old colleague through another area of the market. There he saw a group of five Qing government soldiers with red uniforms carrying big broadswords around their waists. This made Wah Bo slow down and become alert like a tiger observing his target. His eyes were as sharp as a knife. Then one of the soldiers suddenly kicked one of hawker's baskets, sending the tomatoes inside it flying. The soldiers started shouting at the hawker and it was obvious that they were not very happy with the him. At that time it was very common for soldiers to come to the market and take whatever food they wanted and some might even demand money from the traders. So the hawker was in trouble.

Most of the tomatoes that had landed on the floor were ruined, but this was not enough for the soldiers who then stamped on those that were still okay.

The hawker was now crying for mercy but the soldiers just laughed at him. One of the soldiers decided he wanted to kick him to show his superiority. He swung his leg at the hawker, but as he was about to land his kick, the soldier suddenly cried out in great pain and quickly pulled his leg back. A long bamboo stick had just hit him very painfully on the shin and even though the soldier was wearing long boots the bamboo's impact had been very powerful!



Everybody, including Wah Bo, looked to where the bamboo pole had come from and who was holding it. Wah Bo was surprised to see the person holding the long bamboo stick was his colleague, the sailor. This sight brought some memories flooding back.

Wong Wah Bo remembered that he would often see him standing holding a long pole, which he used to push the boat along, a little bit like rowing. As long as the water was not too deep, he would stab the long stick into the bottom of the river and push the boat forward. If the water was too deep, he used a paddle to row the boat with the other sailors. However, Wah Bo had never seen someone use such a long stick as a weapon before. Just beside the sailor, Wah Bo noticed a stack of long poles lying on the ground that were normally used by the hawkers to carry things.

All the soldiers looked at the sailor. They all knew that he would resist arrest so they all went to pull out the broadswords they were carrying tied to their waists

However, as one of the soldiers was drawing his sword his hand burst with pain as it was hit by the long bamboo stick. It was so painful that he yelped in agony and dropped his sword. Of the five soldiers two were hurt so only three now remained to fight. As they approached the sailor, they raised their swords to chop him down, however, the sailor's long stick was too fast. He

used the tip to hit one soldier square in his chest and send him falling back five or six steps before he fell painfully to the ground.

Another soldier managed to get closer, but as he swung his sword down the sailor hit it with the middle of the stick sending the sword flying up in the air. The strike was so powerful that there was no way the soldier could hold onto it. Almost at the same time the long stick came back down and hit the soldier's shoulder. He gave a loud scream as he fell down. Only one soldier was left, but as the sailor turned to him, he was already long gone. The sailor had expected this and he smiled to himself.

All the people in the market were staring at him. "Who is the person with the stick?" the people were asking but no one dared to approach him as he stood there with that fierce smile on his face. The hawker was now terrified and began packing his stuff as quickly as he could and disappeared. He knew that attacking government soldiers was a big crime and he did not want to be involved. The sailor dropped his stick and turned to run as well as he knew that more soldiers would be coming.

Wong Wah Bo watched all of this and it raised his curiosity even more so he continued following his old colleague. After few miles, they had come to a quiet area. The sailor suddenly turned around and glared at Wah Bo with an unkind face. Wah Bo knew the sailor was ready to fight.

Wah Bo had seen him fight with weapons and wanted to know how good his bare hand Kung Fu was so he immediately closed on him and threw with a straight palm to hit his chest. The sailor was not slow and blocked Wah Bo's attack, hitting his forearm with his own. The sailor's forearm was very powerful and struck with great force. It was fortunate that Wong Wah Bo was just testing and had expected the sailor would block him. Immediately Wah Bo changed his straight palm to be Huen Sau (Circle Hand), moving his hand from outside to inside. He then used Laap Sau (Grapping Hand) to hold the sailor's strong forearm.



This was good for Wah Bo because the sailor was so strong that the more force he used, the easier it was for Wah Bo to hold onto. It is like holding a pole; the more stable the pole the safer it is. Wah Bo's right hand was gripping the top of the sailor's right forearm. Even though the sailor's arm was

very strong, it was still not strong enough to overcome Wah Bo's Laap Sau. Wah Bo's Laap Sau was pushing downward and he then used Juen Ma (Turning Stance), which was helping him to use his whole body to press down. So, as powerful as the sailor was, he could only lift upwards with his forearm and he could not compete with Wah Bo.

It is like arm wrestling when someone uses only the forearm, but the other person uses the whole body together with a good angle. The sailor felt Wah Bo had tremendous force, which he had never come across before. He knew he was strong, just about the strongest person in his area of expertise, even within his sailors group. "How can this skinny man have more strength than me?" he asked himself and so he used even more strength to try and lift up his arm. This is a very natural reaction, if a person finds he is not strong enough to do something he will try to use more force and more strength next time round.

The sailor was surprised and happy when his increased effort worked! But he suddenly realised it was too much as suddenly there was nothing there to push upwards against! Wah Bo's hand had disappeared! The sailor's initial happy reaction quickly changed to panic, as he knew it is not good when there was no force to move against. He had not expected that and he knew he needed to stop his own arm shooting up, but unfortunately it was too late.

He had used so much strength that his fist shot up and back hitting him in his own face. It was embarrassing. How could he hit himself with his own fist? This made the sailor angry and his face hurt. He knew that this time he was facing someone with high-level Kung Fu and this was bad.

However, when he looked over at the skinny gentleman, he saw he was smiling at him and that he was not threatening him. Now he really was confused. He stared at his opponent for a while and then suddenly realised he knew this skinny man. It was the leading actor on the opera boat. The sailor asked, "Are you the actor Wong Wah Bo?" Wah Bo was surprised that he had recognised him so quickly and answered, "Yes, I am." With a confused look the sailor asked, "Why did you hit me?"

Wah Bo smiled. "I just wanted to play with you. No other meaning." The sailor asked with interest, "I did not know you wanted to play with me. Where have you learned such a skill? I did not know you knew such powerful Kung Fu?" Wang Wah Bo replied, "You also have such good stick skill which I never noticed before."

"You saw me back there in the market then?" the sailor asked with wide eyes. Wah Bo did not say anything apart from, "Mmm," but nodded his head a couple of times. Then Wah Bo asked, "What is your name? I know you are a sailor from the boat,"

"You are with the government soldiers, aren't you?" the sailor asked in return. "Nooooo, if you had not beat those soldiers up, I would have!" Wah Bo

answered very firmly. "All right. My name is Leung Yee Tai," the sailor replied sincerely. "What a coincidence! My Sifu is also called Leung, that means we are close." Wah Bo said happily.

"What kind of Kung Fu did you use on me? It was interesting; I would like to try with you again," Yee Tai asked, just as a child would who had found an interesting game. A part of him also did not believe Wah Bo was that good and he may have lost just because he was not prepared. "Good, we can compete again to see who is better," Wah Bo replied as his interest had also been aroused.

to be continued....