

## Wing Chun Story Chapter 14

By Michael Tse

They watched the old man beat down most of the soldiers around him. The only ones who were still standing were the soldiers who were too afraid to get close to him. The old man was dressed in grey clothes, just like an ordinary worker from the kitchen; on his feet he wore very simple grass soled shoes. His trousers were rolled up and you could see his legs and feet were very strong and his eyes had a very strong spirit. If you just caught his gaze it would be enough to frighten you!



The high-ranking officer saw all of this and he knew his soldiers were not good enough to handle this old man. He wondered whether he could capture him. It was very difficult to say. However, he had no choice and so he drew out his favourite weapon, a big broadsword. This big broadsword had been made especially for him after he had become well known to a very good sword smith in Henan Province 河南, Zhengzhou City 鄭州市, where some very famous Kung Fu Masters came from. This broadsword had killed over a hundred people and this had earned him fast promotion to a high-ranking officer in the Qing Government. Actually the officer's name was Xu Zhen Dong 許振東, people called him Fast Broadsword Tiger 快刀虎. His sword was so fast that even when someone shot arrows

at him he could block them with his broadsword. He knew he was good and had been training for over 30 years, since he was 7 under his uncle, who people called the King of Broadsword 刀王. Xu had never been afraid of anybody, but this time it was very different, this old man was powerful, strong and fast.

Xu thought to himself that spending too much time fighting with this strong old man was not a good idea and very dangerous. So in the end he decided to use all his energy in one fast movement and chop the old man while he was looking the other way, when his back was against him. The old man turned his back and Xu saw that this was his best chance to strike. However the old man seemed to have another pair of eyes in the back of his head and knew it was coming. The old man did not step forward to avoid the fast chop, but instead he stepped backward toward Officer Xu. With his back still towards Xu and when he was very close he elbowed Xu in his chest! The elbow strike was too powerful for Officer Xu who suddenly felt sick. Xu could not breathe, his hands became weak, and the broadsword which for over ten years he had held and knew it's weight so very well, the broadsword that felt a part of him and was nothing for him to hold, but other people found so heavy they could not even swing, for the first time he could not hold it! It felt very heavy and he dropped it!

However, the broadsword did not hit the ground, the old man caught it with his left hand. The old man then turned very quickly to face officer Xu who was now pale and weak. Xu felt something cold at his throat and he knew that it was the blade of his own broadsword! At this moment he knew he was lost, his life was over, and he was going to die.

Officer Xu looked into the old man's eyes; they were so strong and full of spirit and Xu resigned himself to death. Suddenly the old man smiled at him! And then quickly turned around and ran off, disappearing from the centre of the group. "Who is that old man with such high level Kung Fu skill?" Officer Xu thought to himself. He knew that amongst the rebels there must be more than one high level Kung Fu Master. He now realised that it was no easy task to capture and defeat them. Now he had to try to explain this to his superiors who were always putting pressure on him to round up all the rebels.

Leung Lan Kwai 梁蘭桂 had been watching all of this and when the old man ran away, he and the young actor tried to follow him. Leung Lan Kwai was curious to know who the old man was. The young actor said he knew him, his name was Chen Shin 陳善, but he did not know he was so good at Kung Fu.

Leung Lan Kwai continued following the old man with the young actor trailing behind, but the old man was too fast. Suddenly Leung Lan Kwai felt something flying straight at him, he just had enough time to dodge it but the young actor behind him was hit, luckily it just hit him on his right shoulder and he was not hurt seriously. Leung Lan Kwai stopped chasing and went back to look after the young actor. He found that it had only been a small twig from a tree. He thought the old man must have picked it up whilst he was running and thrown it at him, worried that he was being chased by the Government soldiers. Leung Lan Kwai knew that they would not be able to catch the old man again so he told the actor, "Come with me, if you want to survive."

Leung Lan Kwai brought the young actor back to his home. He got him some clothes, let him wash his face and told some of his servants to make some food for him. He then introduced himself to the young actor and actor introduced himself too.

The young actor's name was Wong Wah Bo 黃華寶. He had joined the opera when he was very little and trained very hard in acrobatics. Now he was 18 years old and he could do all the most difficult manoeuvres: the splits, tumbling, postures and operatic weapons (which were for performance only not for real fighting.)

Wong Wah Bo had seen Leung Lan Kwai's Kung Fu and was completely impressed by it. He had always wanted to learn real Kung Fu rather than just performance skill and although he had seen many actors who knew some Kung Fu, he had never seen anything like Leung Lan Kwai's Kung Fu, a skill that was so good. Whilst they were talking to each other Wong Wah Bo knelt down on his knees and asked Leung Lan Kwai to teach him Kung Fu. He said he could not miss such a good opportunity as he had found a real Sifu to learn real Kung Fu from.

Leung Lan Kwai was very happy because that was what he wanted all along. Finally he had found a good student, someone to whom he could pass his Wing Chun Kung Fu to. It would have been a pity if no one could carry on this wonderful and amazing skill.

In traditional Chinese Culture, teacher and student are as close as father and son. Leung Lan Kwai knew the training would be hard but he knew Wah Bo was able to learn because he was used to training hard in the opera. From then on Leung Lan Kwai put all his energy on

Wah Bo. They both got on very well because Leung Lan Kwai was only 12 years older than Wong Wah Bo. He was also a very easy going, casual person and still liked to play and enjoy himself. So many times people thought they were uncle and nephew or even two brothers. But when it came to teaching he was very strict as this was how he had learnt from his teacher Leung Bok Chau 梁博儔. Leung Lan Kwai wanted Wah Bo to learn all the skill so he might become even better than him.

He told Wong Wah Bo, "You must be able to apply all that you have learnt and know it properly. Think about how you might be able to improve the skill. This skill is new and we need to develop it more, but we must also follow the principle simple and direct. The high level is always to use less energy to defeat the stronger one."

Wong Wah Bo respected Leung Lan Kwai very much. He even picked up the skill very fast because of his acrobatic foundation. That previous training had made his joints flexible and his bones strong. However, the one part of training he found very difficult was Chi Sau 黏手. This was about coordination and reactions, and this was new to him. Fortunately his opera partner training for fighting scenes helped him a little.

One day a friend of Leung Lan Kwai invited both him and Wong Wah Bo to his 60th birthday party. The party was to be held in a famous restaurant in Guangzhou 廣州. At the birthday party there were some people performing opera, both singing and some acrobatics. Everybody was enjoying themselves, drinking some wine or tea and eating delicious food. However, one guest was already very drunk and was talking very loudly. He started to criticise the food, the drink and even criticised the host. It made the atmosphere very tense and everybody became worried. Then a few guests tried to stop the drunken guest. However he knocked them all down. Even though the drunk was skinny, he was very strong. Everybody in the restaurant stood up to watch, but did not know what to do. Suddenly the drunken guest attacked the host! He broke



one of the clay bottles of wine and holding a sharp piece attacked the host shouting, "You opened up your cloth factory and made us lose business! Now see how you feel when you lose something!"

When the drunk had knocked the other guests down, Leung Lan Kwai had made an eye signal to Wong Wah Bo to get close to the drunk. By the time the drunk had broken the bottle and attacked the host, Wah Bo was already there. When the drunk started to attack, Wong Wah Bo used Pak Sau on the drunk's right arm, which was holding the bottle, and this diverted his attack in a different direction before he could fully strike. Wong Wah Bo thought that this would be enough to stop the incident, but the drunk was still strong and the shock had actually sobered him up and now he was wide awake. His face looked clearer, though his eyes were still red, and more importantly the sharp piece of clay did not drop out of his hand. Now the drunk thought that Wong Wah Bo must be the host's bodyguard and so he began to attack him instead. He slashed across Wong Wah Bo's face and Wong Wah Bo stepped back. He avoided the first attack but he knew there was not enough space for him and so he had to deal with this quickly.

The first attack did not work and so the drunk attacked again, this time he slashed upwards with his sharp weapon. This was very dangerous because any attack going from the bottom up to the top is hard to defend and avoid. Wong Wah Bo had been training for over three years now and luckily his reactions were quite good. Wong Wah Bo kicked the drunk's forearm as he dropped it down to cut up and this was the perfect place to stop the attack. The legs are always stronger than the arms even those who have very strong arms. This time Wong Wah Bo's kick was strong enough to make the drunk drop the sharp piece of clay. The drunk had no weapon, but he still continued to attack Wong Wah Bo and was determined to get rid of him so he could attack the host.

The drunk jumped at Wong Wah Bo and tried to knock him to the floor. Wong Wah Bo moved very fast so the drunk missed and landed on the floor. Other guests immediately tried to control him, but the drunken guest pushed them all away and got up! Now he was both wide awake and seething with anger! Suddenly a very strong force hit him and he bounced into the wall knocking down tables and chairs and breaking bottles and plates. It was so fast nobody knew what had happened. When everybody turned back they saw a skinny gentlemen wearing a shiny traditional long blue robe standing right where the drunk had just been standing. Then they all recognised that it was Leung Lan Kwai.

Quickly they all began to relax as they saw the drunk was lying on the floor unconscious and some people came to ask Leung Lan Kwai what happened. The birthday host knew Leung Lan Kwai had good Kung Fu skill and so he was very glad he had been able to stop the whole incident. Now he was safe and he came to say thank you. Happily, the birthday party continued and all the guests enjoyed it despite what had happened.

When the party was over they all left, but still no one knew how Leung Lan Kwai had knocked the drunk to the floor. When they were back at home Wong Wah Bo asked, "Sifu how did you do that?" Leung Lan Kwai just smiled.

To be continued...