

**Swordplay under the
Moon**

Yue xia chuan dao

◆ 月下傳刀

The following episode takes place some time after Wu Song kills the tiger on Jingyang Ridge and returns home to find his elder brother, Wu the Elder.

Meanwhile his brother has married the beautiful Pan Jinlian. The young bride is far from satisfied with her 'three feet' dwarf of a husband, and when she meets Wu Song, the handsome hero who, bare-fisted, killed the beast, her heart is set on fire. Wu Song is, however, cold to her approaches and gladly leaves on a mission to the capital.

During his absence Jinlian now falls in love with the rich apothecary of the town, Ximen Qing. In order to be able to be together day and night, the two of them poison Wu the Elder. Away from home, Wu Song knows nothing about it. His life is exceptionally carefree and harmonious, and the storyteller indulges his audience with this little 'story outside the story', a digression to fill up time while sinister

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Told by

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After Wu Song had been appointed a constable of the police force in Yanggu District of Shandong, he was officially commissioned to travel to the Eastern Capital in Henan in order to carry out an assignment. The Eastern Capital of Henan is the same as today's Kaifeng in Henan. After he had arrived in the Eastern Capital, he went to the *yamen* of administrative affairs to deliver his letter, whereupon he put up in the inn waiting for the reply. He took a day off, and as he had nothing special to do, he went out into the street for a stroll.

The Eastern Capital of Henan was the centre of a great nation: broad alleys, neatly lined with shops on both sides, people coming and people going, a heavy traffic of horses and carriages, constantly flowing in an endless stream. Second Master Wu walked along looking at the spectacle. As he strolled along, the sky suddenly changed colour, the weather was changing.

