

Chapter 25 - Drawing the Bow and Shooting Arrows

Grandpa Zang was finally shocked. "Natural superhuman strength!?" Then he shook his head. "I forgot. You practise external martial arts, so it's nothing out of the ordinary for you to have slightly greater strength!"

"You won't be able to shoot arrows with just strength. Take it." Grandpa Zang removed the hunting bow from his back and tossed it to Li Qingshan.

"This is grandpa Zang's ox horn bow. It has the force of a stone!" Grandpa Zang was purposefully making things difficult for this kid. Drawing a bow was different from tossing some stone dumbbells.

A stone was sixty kilograms. Regular hunting bows did not pursue power but greater accuracy and dexterity. Bows with such a heavy draw weight were rare. Even if a heavier draw weight came with greater power, the accuracy and shooting speed of the bow would be horrible unless the archer could control it properly.

If they came across a vicious beast in the mountains, they would miss their first shot. Before they could fire their second, the beast would have arrived already. They would only end up dead. However, all the hunters who could handle a bow with such a heavy draw weight were marksmen. It was nothing difficult for them to hunt tigers or leopards in the mountains.

Li Qingshan weighed the bow in his hands. This was a superior oak wood bow, wrapped in beast hide and then silk. Its bowstring was made from cow sinew, so it was light yet extremely powerful.

He followed the method that grandpa Zang had described, sinking down with his hips into a horse stance. He drew the bowstring in one swift motion, and his muscles and bones rippled with it.

To grandpa Zang's surprise, his form was actually very proper. Then he remembered that Li Qingshan had been watching on from the side earlier. Grandpa Zang guided him a little more with the essentials and Li Qingshan absorbed it all. In just a while, he seemed like he had already put in three months of hard work.

It was difficult to learn archery with a bow that was too heavy. People usually started with a lighter draw weight and would shoot many arrows to practise, gradually correcting their form. Only then would they increase the weight of their bow.

Grandpa Zang directly gave Li Qingshan his ox horn bow in an attempt to set him back mentally. Sure, you have a lot of strength and you can draw it, but it's useless if you can't hit anything. However, Li Qingshan's performance surprised him once more.

It had nothing to do with whether Li Qingshan was actually better at learning than other people. The Ox Demon's Fist of Great Strength taught him the most basic principles to using his qi and utilising his strength. Regardless of the weapon, as long as he grasped the essentials, he would be able to master it very quickly.

Beads of sweat began to emerge from Li Qingshan's forehead. Maintaining the posture of drawing a bow really was much more tiring than lifting stone dumbbells. His bones and muscles ached all over slightly.

This sure is a good way to train my strength. Although it's also very tiring when I practise punching, the punches aren't hitting anything. I need to buy a heavy bow in the future for the purpose of training my strength. It'll definitely be very beneficial to me.

"Alright. Aim at the target and shoot an arrow for me!" Grandpa Zang ordered.

Li Qingshan placed down the bow and rested up slightly before picking up an arrow and drawing the bow once more. He aimed at a target fifty paces away.

"Settle your mind. Don't fire in a hurry. Look at the target!" Grandpa Zang guided from one side.

Li Qingshan stared right at the centre of the target, and his eyes suddenly lit up. However, as it was daytime, no one noticed it. Under his full concentration, the target seemed to expand, no longer so unreachable anymore.

In the legends, ancient marksmen trained their archery by tying a louse to a string before staring at it day and night. They would see the louse gradually expand. At first, it would be as large as a cartwheel before growing to the size of a mountain, filling up their view. Just by firing a single arrow, they would pierce the louse.

Currently, Li Qingshan felt such a sensation. He knew that it was probably due to the ox's tears, which allowed him to see the fast slowly, the far close, and ghosts clearly.

Hit! A thought flashed through Li Qingshan's head, and the arrow left the bowstring, flying towards the target.

Thud! The arrow became deeply embedded in the wooden target. It did not hit the centre but the edge instead. He had barely hit it.

Li Qingshan felt slightly embarrassed. "It missed the centre, but it still hit."

However, the people in the surroundings were left speechless from surprise. During the first time he had ever shot an arrow in his life, he had drawn a bow with the weight of a stone and struck a target fifty paces away. Even a village that relied on shooting prey for generations had never seen such a person.

Just what are the origins of this guy?!

Grandpa Zang barely managed to remain composed. "Just keep practising in the future." As an old and experienced hunter, he knew the best that Li Qingshan was unable to estimate the falling trajectory of the arrow and the effects of the wind because he was shooting for the first time.

"But I feel like this bow is still not powerful enough!" Just like how people should always aim above and beyond, Li Qingshan wanted a powerful bow that would take all of his strength to draw.

Grandpa Zang said nothing in reply. He took the bow from Li Qingshan and aimed it at the target in the distance. His cloudy eyes suddenly became as sharp as a hawk's.

His right hand moved rapidly. Out of everyone present, only Li Qingshan saw it clearly. He had shot three arrows consecutively.

Thud! The three arrows formed a single line, striking the centre of the target, but there was only one sound.

The surroundings fell quiet before erupting into a string of cheers.

“Rapid fire arrows!” How could Li Qingshan not recognise this bow style? He had read about it in books in his past life, but he had only treated it as an interesting act.

However, now that he had witnessed it first-hand, he finally understood that it was truly a killing technique. He thought to himself that unless it was a close combat situation, it would be difficult for him to evade this bow style. On the other hand, if grandpa Zang decided to ambush him, he would be dead for sure.

Grandpa Zang saw how Li Qingshan had stopped talking, while Li Qingshan had already understood what he was trying to say. If he could not unleash something like that, there was no point to aiming above and beyond and using a bow he could barely draw. It was not like grandpa Zang could not draw a heavier bow. Rather, he had chosen a bow that suited him the most. Li Qingshan went up and bowed courteously, saying sincerely, “Please teach me archery, grandpa Zang!”

“You’re part of our Drawn Reins village now, so I will guide you with everything I have even if you hadn’t mentioned it. As for how much you can learn, that’ll be up to you. However, I’m confident that your skill with the bow will exceed mine in the future.” Grandpa Zang was happy inside, and his expression eased up amiably.

He did not take a liking to Li Qingshan originally, but the talent and strength that Li Qingshan had demonstrated shocked him. Moreover, there would be times when he would drop his pride to seek guidance. As a result, grandpa Zang’s attitude turned around completely, not only acknowledging Li Qingshan’s identity immediately, but also appreciating him very much.

Grandpa Zang’s evaluation shocked everyone. Grandpa Zang was the best with the bow in the village; this was a publicly accepted matter. Even the hunting chief Huang Binghu’s skill with the bow came from his personal guidance. Such an evaluation would probably shock the entire village.

The youngsters, who were originally very hostile towards Li Qingshan, gathered over once more. They talked to him all at once, showing some attachment to him. They were not intentionally fawning over him. Instead, they just admired the greatest at their age.

Perhaps some of them felt envy and wanted to reject him, but they were no longer bold enough to slight and provoke him. The atmosphere actually became harmonious. Li Qingshan came to a realisation that in order to get others to acknowledge him, a clever tongue was not enough. Instead, he needed to demonstrate sufficient strength.

If he did not possess this strength and wanted to achieve the current result diplomatically, not only would it take a very long time, he would have to bow and scrape to them as well, twisting his conscience.

He practised until the evening, and Li Qingshan could already land every single arrow he shot on the targets. However, he needed preparation with each arrow; he was nowhere close to being able to fire them at will like grandpa Zang, much less achieving rapid firing. However, to the eyes of others, this was already unbelievable enough.

In the next few days, Li Qingshan devoted himself to practising the bow, making progress with each passing day. Although he did not stop with the Ox Demon's Fist of Great Strength, he progressed extremely slowly.

Finally, after enduring all those days, Li Qingshan returned home and carefully opened a jar of alcohol. The heavy smell of alcohol and medicine filled his nose and mouth. He directly lifted up the jar and took a great gulp.