

The Tale of Young Masters
After *Eastern Fiction Novels*
by Jun Ye

Whispers of the disaster's arrival felt cold. It was a warning as fallen chairs echoed in a silence. Regulars stood with their legs quivering. A stampede was imminent inside the shop. Akin to a passing storm, the bar emptied during its peak. No one wants to become a victim. Not like that poor soul from last week. I woofed down my dishes, but I was too late.

There's only one bar in the Northern territories. And there's only one unspoken rule in the bar. If you can't avoid the disaster, then hide. Go to a corner. Lay low with your head down. Pretend the liquids have gotten you that night. The disaster is of nobility. A nightmare for the underworld. The North's violent alcoholic. The Northern lord's spoiled grandson.

I was laying low when I heard his entrance, there were no noises except that. His gaze felt like eternity. Then unknownst as to where my courage came from, I peaked with one eye through the gap of two fingers. His table was already littered with empty bottles.

A new face then appeared in the bar. Unkempt with leaves and mud on his face. Possessing sunken eyes that screamed desperation with the gaze of a cornered beast. And he begged. He kneed. He katowed. He offered everything in his possession to the drunken noble. His village has been attacked by bandits and he wants revenge. But the noble cracked up.

Never rub salt on the wounds of a cornered beast. "The village probably deserved it," the noble said. "Pathetic." "Runaway." "Unworthy." Next, the young master was afloat by his shirt's collar. Flustered, yet unyielding, he stated "my grandfather is the lord of the northern territory! Do you dare?" Soon, an echo of the scene from last week played in the store. I shivered. Yet my eyes between the gap of two fingers was glued onto the action. It was a glorious moment in the North.