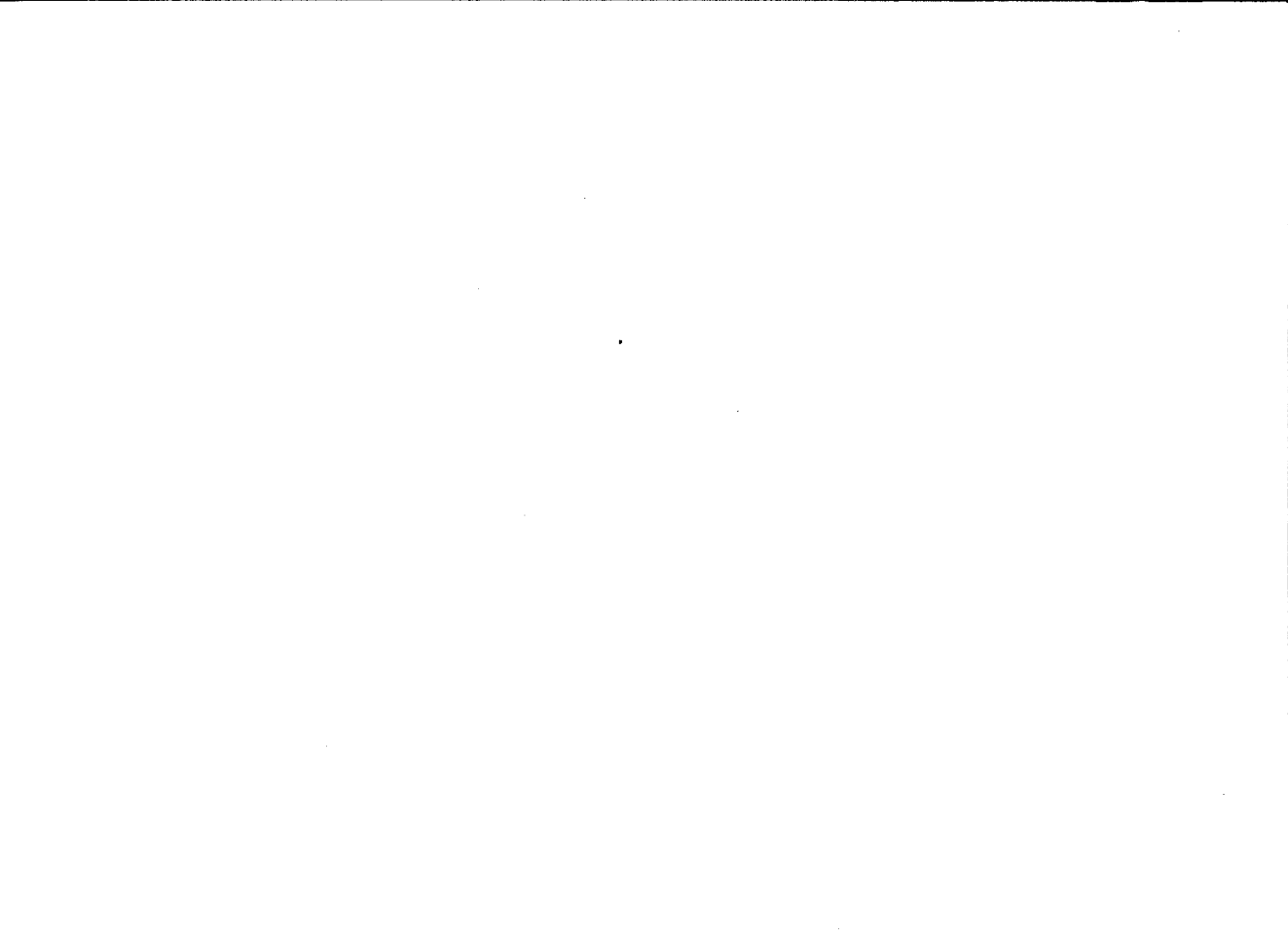


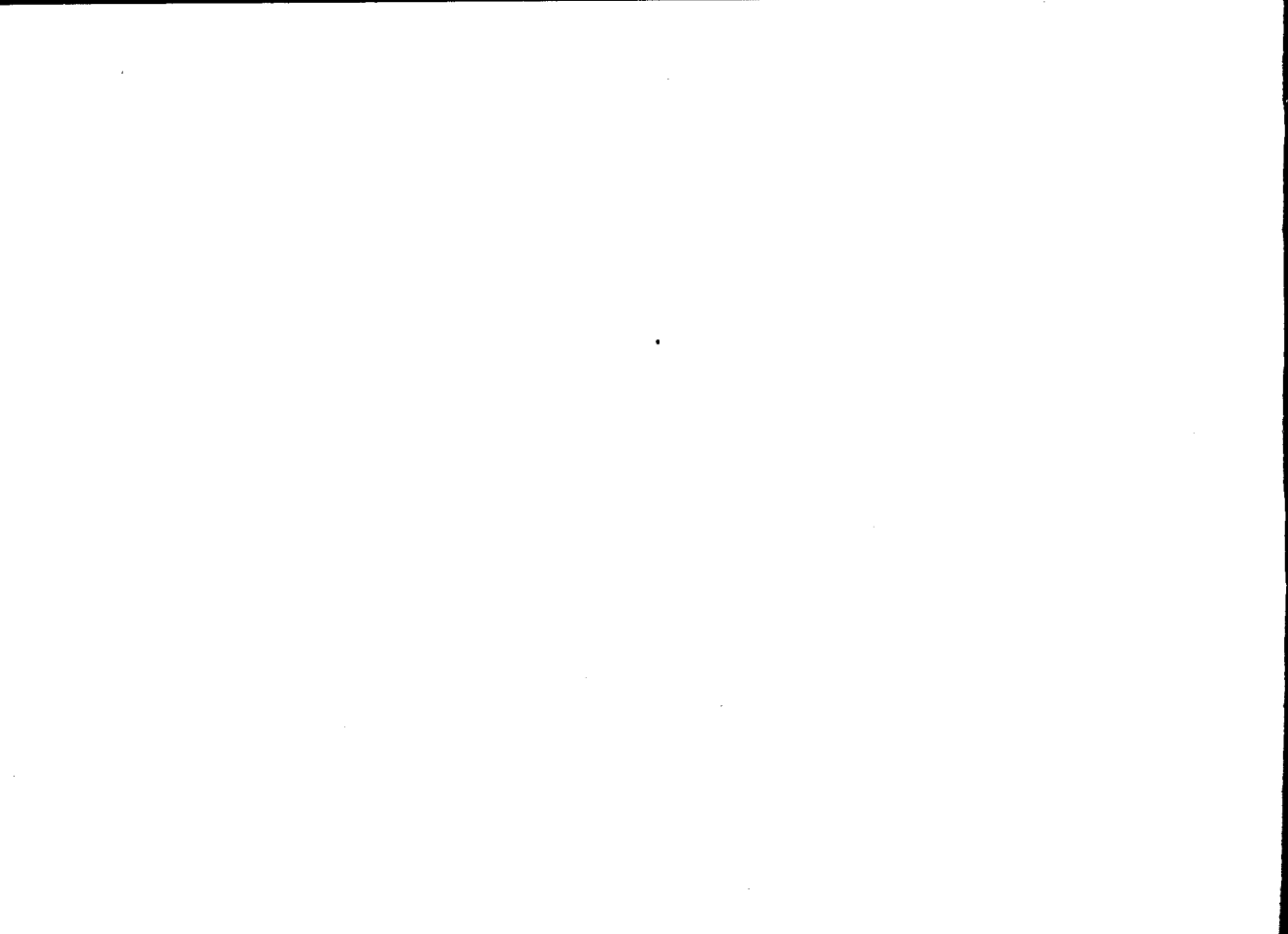


**RED WOMEN'S DETACHMENT**

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# RED WOMEN'S DETACHMENT

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Edited by Liaoning Fine Arts Publishing House

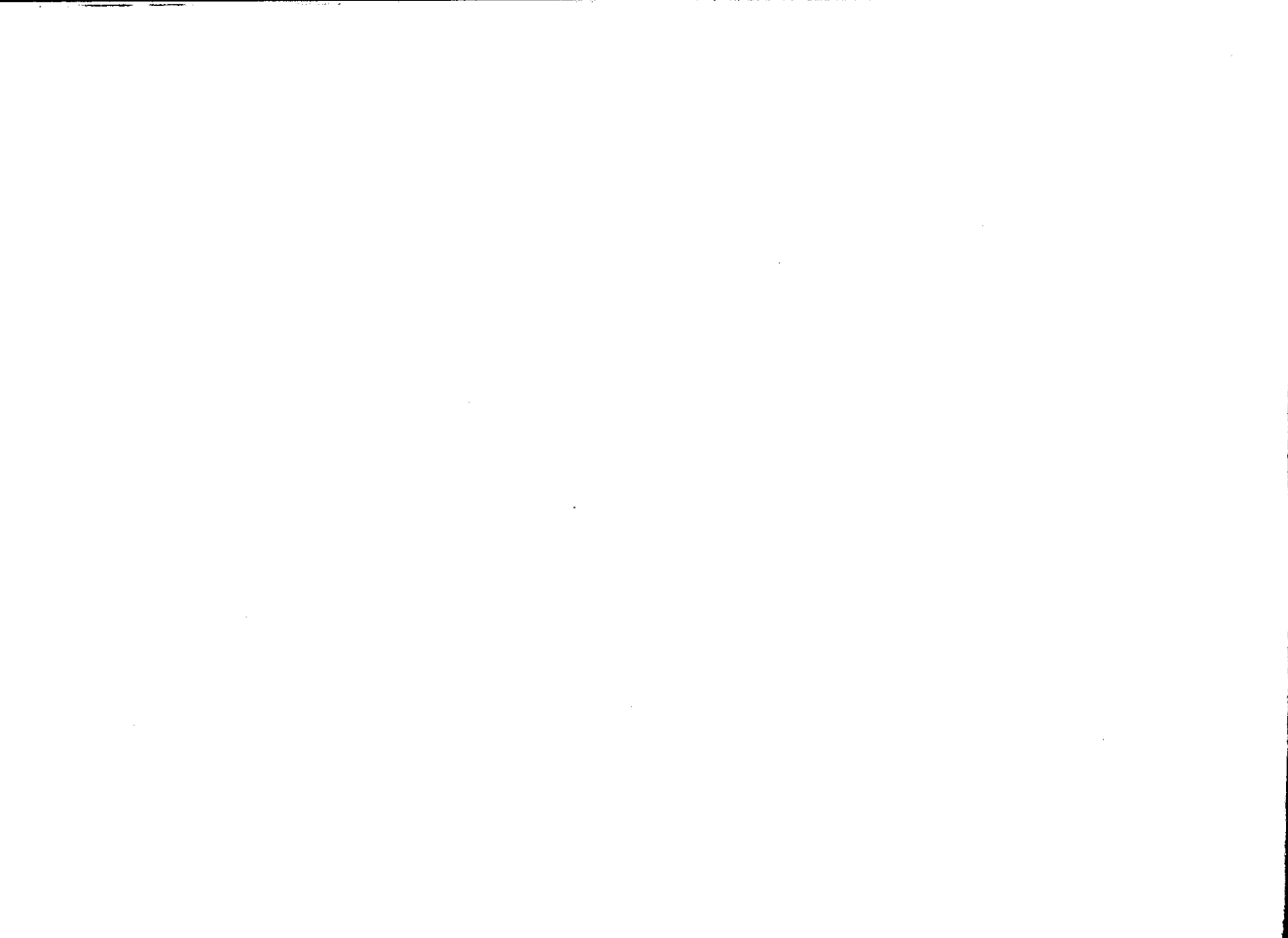
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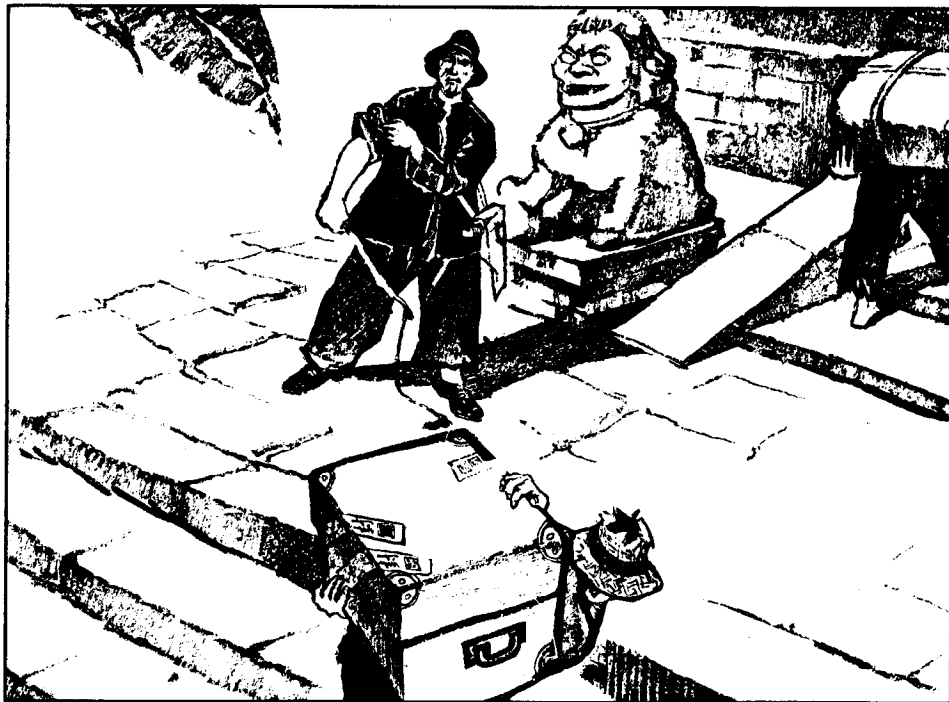
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**T**his is a picture-story book about Chiung-hua, a slave girl in the house of Nan Pa-tien, a tyrannical landlord on Hainan Island. She is so cruelly treated that she runs away and joins the Red Army with the help of an officer named Hung Chang-ching. In the grim revolutionary struggles she fights bravely. And after Hung gives his life in covering the withdrawal of the main forces, Chiung-hua shoulders the tasks left by the martyr and leads her comrades in counter-attacking the enemy. She kills Nan Pa-tien in the battle.

The story pays tribute to the unconquerable spirit of the Red Army fighters and to the vigorous revolutionary struggle waged by the people of Hainan Island under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party.







It was 1930 — the darkest period in Chinese history. The story begins on Hainan Island off the south coast of China's mainland where a despotic landlord lived — he was known as Nan Pa-tien. He was commander of the defence corps, and he cruelly oppressed the peasants and seized property. The working people groaned under his oppression.



Wu Chiung-hua, a slave girl in Nan's mansion, was unable to bear the landlord's oppression any longer. So she ran away when the landlord's guards were slack. And all the time she had only one thought in her mind—to escape and join the Red Army to take revenge!



As she desperately ran away, she suddenly came face to face with a man on horseback.



Chiung-hua turned and rushed on. Close after her the landlord's gang carrying torches and lanterns ran in hot pursuit.



Immediately realizing what it was all about, the man on horseback was filled with anger. "These are Nan Pa-tien's thugs!" his servant said with hatred. Then his master said, "That's Coconut Village ahead, look out!"



When they came near Coconut Village they were surrounded by the landlord's defence corps. "Halt! Where are you from?" The man on horseback dismounted and calmly replied, "My family name is Hung. I'm an overseas Chinese coming back to sacrifice at my ancestral temple."



A defence corps leader nicknamed Gold Teeth examined his case and found many greeting cards on top. Searching beneath them he was overjoyed to see it packed with shining silver dollars!



Consequently, the master and servant were sent in custody to Nan Pa-tien's dungeon. The girl they had just met on the road was tied to a post. She had been so cruelly beaten that she was covered with wounds. But she was not cowed. "Go on with your beating,"- she said bravely. "I'll run away as soon as I get another chance!"

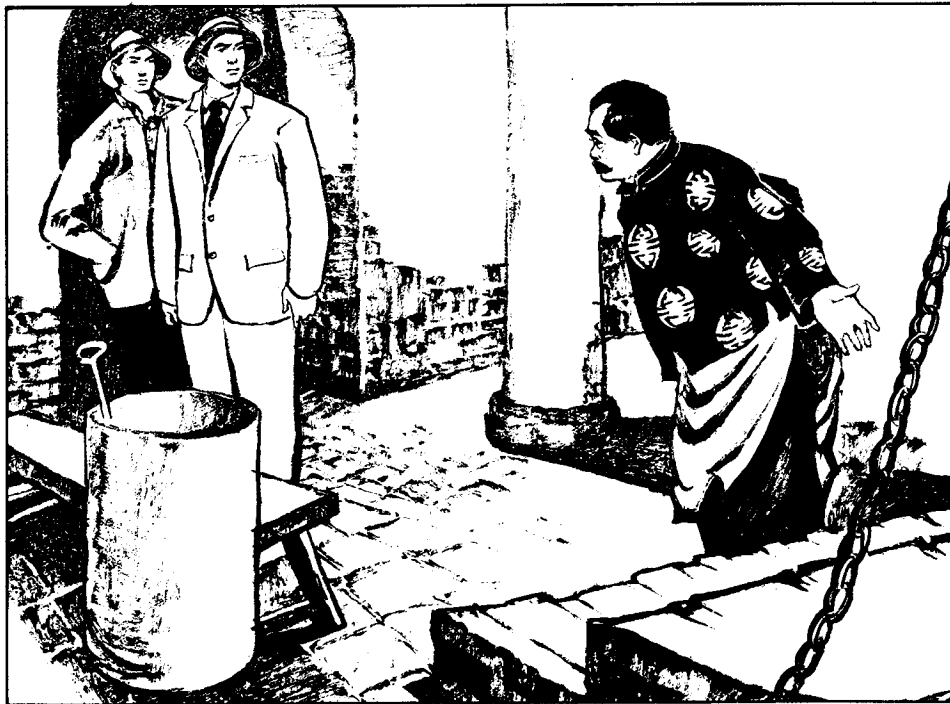




Before long Gold Teeth brought Lao Szu, the landlord's junior steward, and said to him with a servile smile, "They are the new ones. Got pots of money!" Before Lao Szu could answer, the overseas Chinese said angrily, "Call yourselves a defence corps? You're just a bunch of bandits! Go and fetch your commander!"



Taking the overseas Chinese to be someone of importance, Lao Szu hurriedly reported to Nan Pa-tien. Seeing that all the names on the greeting cards in his case were from well-known people in Kwangtung and Hainan Island, Nan Pa-tien decided that the overseas Chinese must have influential connections. So he roared at Lao Szu, "You swine! How dare you be insolent to our guest!"



Nan Pa-tien immediately went to the dungeon to apologize, saying, "Mr. Hung, my ignorant subordinates have offended you. Please overlook it!"



Nan Pa-tien planned to use the wealth and influence of the overseas Chinese to purchase some ammunition and, together with him, wipe out the newly-founded Red Army. So he tried to make amends by giving him a feast in the guest room. The bandit chief Huang Chen-shan was invited to the feast.



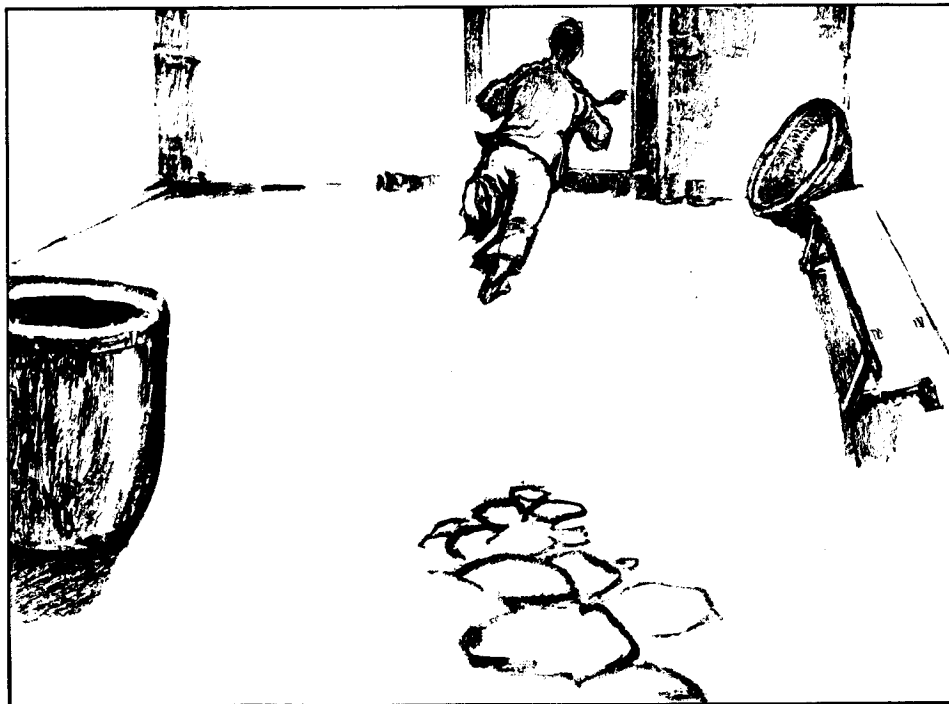
During the banquet Nan Pa-tien said, "Brother Hung, if you want to build your family fortune in your native home, you must first wipe out the Communists!" The overseas Chinese replied, "We should exert ourselves to save this fine land. But I am now returning to my native home to rebuild my ancestral temple. Let us talk the matter over after my trip."



Meanwhile, Lao Szu, under Nan Pa-tien's orders, came that night with another thug to the water pit in the dungeon. They planned to take Chiung-hua away to be sold.



Chiung-hua climbed out of the water, then suddenly seized Lao Szu's leg and threw him backwards into the water.



Not frightened by the whip and the fetters the brave Chiung-hua once again tried to escape from the landlord's bloody den.





But weakened by her wounds Chiung-hua was recaptured and dragged back by the landlord's thugs. As there was a guest present, Nan Pa-tien said impatiently, with a wave of his hand, "Hurry up and sell her!"



The overseas Chinese saw what was happening. His quick-thinking mind thought up a plan and he said, "At the moment, my mother is living in Canton and wants to buy a maid. This. . ." Thinking this a rare opportunity to please the guest, Nan Pa-tien consented straightaway. "By all means. She was really born lucky," he said.



Next morning, they left Nan's mansion. Chiung-hua, following behind, watched them suspiciously.



Reaching Boundary Ridge the overseas Chinese dismounted, untied Chiung-hua and said, "You can go home now." When she was sure he meant no harm, she replied briefly, "I don't have a home. Both my parents were killed by Nan Pa-tien. I want to get in touch with the Communists and join the Red Army!"



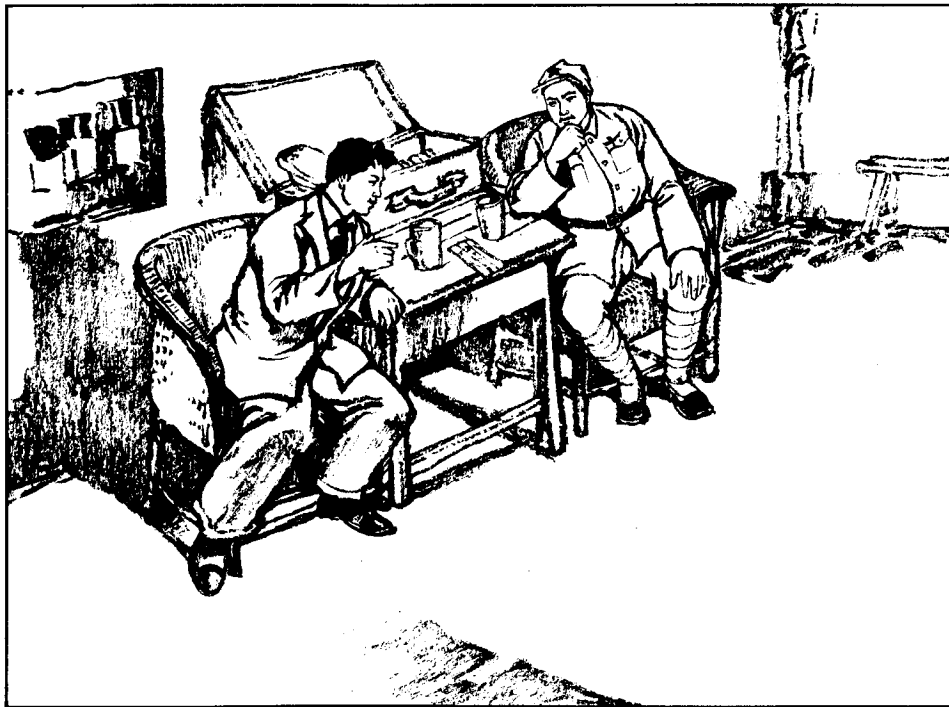
The overseas Chinese was overjoyed and pointed the way to Red-stone Village. After asking her name he took out four silver coins and said, "Take this to buy something to eat on the way."



Chiung-hua took the coins. She was deeply moved. She wanted to say something but did not know how to put it. After she had walked for a few yards she turned around and bowed—and then hurried off.



When they reached the forest deep in the mountains, a Red Army guard hurried over to welcome them. For, in fact, the overseas Chinese was Hung Chang-ching, Party secretary of a special unit of the Red Army and the servant was messenger Hsiao Pang. They had just been to Canton to collect the workers' contributions in support of the Red Army. Afraid of exposing the whereabouts of the divisional headquarters, they had not brought Chiung-hua with them.



Hung Chang-ching gave his report to the divisional commander who commended them on their ingenious escape from Nan Pa-tien and their rescue of Chiung-hua. "Tomorrow," concluded the commander, "a mass meeting will be held in Red-stone Village where the first armed revolutionary unit of women in China will be founded. The Party appoints you as its representative to this company of women fighters."





At night, the hills were veiled in mist and rain. Hungry and worn-out, Chiung-hua picked her way along the mountain path. Suddenly, she spotted a cottage at the foot of the hill. "Perhaps," she thought, "I will be able to get something to eat there."



Creeping up to the door, Chiung-hua saw a bunch of manioc hanging on the wall. She took one and hungrily munched it.



Having gulped the food, Chiung-hua was collecting some raindrops to drink when she heard suddenly someone saying softly, "Hey, don't drink that! Come on in, there's water here." She gave a start and saw a figure standing in front of the doorway.



Following the person inside Chiung-hua discovered he was a young man. She was a little flustered. But the young man hastily removed his turban and said, "Don't be afraid. I'm a girl too. My name's Hung-lien."



Puzzled, Chiung-hua asked, "Elder sister, why are you dressed like a man?" "Just for self-protection," answered Hung-lien. Then Chiung-hua asked her why she was all alone in the house. "My in-laws have gone to the city to worship," she answered. "And I am going to take this chance to run away and join the Red Army."



Chiung-hua asked her whether her husband would agree. Pointing to the wooden figure of a man on the bed, Hung-lien said bitterly, "That's my husband. He died before our wedding but I was forced by feudal customs to marry this dummy and keep it company for ten whole years!" Chiung-hua said angrily, "There's really no way out for girls like us. Let's go!"



Next morning, Chiung-hua and Hung-lien hurried to Red-stone Village to find the Red Army.



On entering the village they saw many people going to the rally for the founding of the women's detachment. They were anxious to join when they met Hung-lien's old neighbour, Ah-kuei, now a member of the Red Guards. Hung-lien told Chiung-hua, "He ran away from the landlord's house two years ago."





Ah-kuei led them to the rally. At the centre stood an orderly formation of troops. Chiung-hua was very eager to join their ranks. She was very excited.



The rally began. The divisional commander spoke briefly and forcefully, "Comrades! At present the Chiang Kai-shek reactionaries are launching frantic attacks on our Central Revolutionary Base on the mainland. The Party calls on you women who have suffered so bitterly to take up arms and open fire on the vicious reactionaries! . . ."



The divisional commander went on to say, "Now, on behalf of the Chiungyai Committee of the Communist Party of China and the Independent Division of the Red Army, I present the colours to China's first company of women fighters."



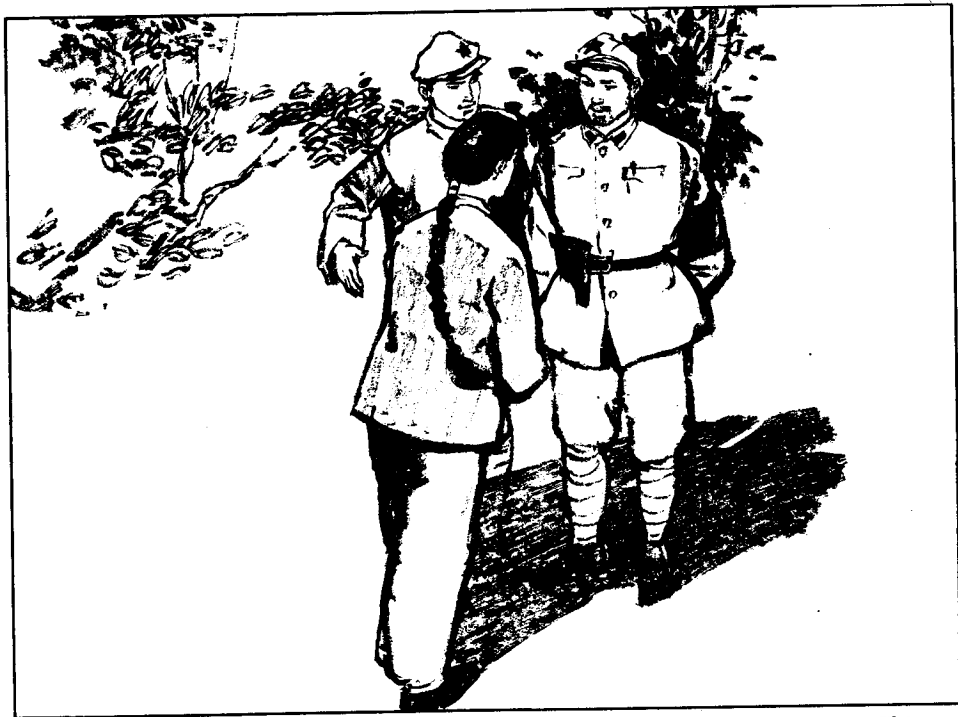
Taking hold of Hung-lien's hand, Chiung-hua ran towards the rostrum. The women fighters of the Red Army were singing the march of the women's detachment as they passed in review. Catching sight of them following behind their column, a woman fighter said, "Hey, you two. Keep out of the ranks. We are having a parade!"



After the review, the company commander asked Chiung-hua what they were doing there. She said they wanted to join the women's detachment. The company commander said, "I noticed you joined the ranks when the troops were holding a march past. You are very bold."



"Well then," said the company commander, "you two go and make out your applications, stating your reasons for wanting to join up." Chiung-hua ripped open her jacket to show the marks of the whip, and said, "My reason? Here's my reason!"



Just then the divisional commander and Hung Chang-ching walked over. Chiung-hua was stunned, "How is it? . . . The man on horseback . . . was you?" Smiling, Hung Chang-ching nodded to her and said to the divisional commander, "This is the woman I spoke about." The divisional commander said, "All right, let her stay."



Chiung-hua and Hung-lien put on the uniform of the Red Army fighters for the first time and felt full of strength. Their new life was bringing them endless joy.





Chiung-hua and Hung-lien underwent tough, revolutionary training and one day in spring they were ordered to reconnoitre at Coconut Village. After they had disguised themselves they were told to be particularly careful, and not to reveal their identity on any account.



Outside the south gate of Coconut Village, Chiung-hua and Hung-lien carefully observed the position of the guns in the enemy's new fortifications.



At that moment, Nan Pa-tien, accompanied by a bunch of his thugs, was on his way to visit his ancestral graves. The sight of him filled Chiung-hua with anger and she whipped out her pistol. "What are you doing?" asked Hung-lien. "I want to take revenge!" the other replied, gritting her teeth.



Chiung-hua fired two shots before Hung-lien could stop her.



Nan Pa-tien was hit in the left shoulder. And the thugs were thrown into confusion.



Seeing they had exposed their position, Hung-lien hastily dragged Chiung-hua back to company headquarters. "You shouldn't have acted against the scouting rules in order to take your own revenge," the company commander said to Chiung-hua sternly. "Remember you aren't the girl you were three months ago. You're a soldier now. If you keep on doing things like this you had better go your own way."



Seeing the company commander so angry Chiung-hua thought she was no longer wanted. With tears in her eyes she thought, "How is it that I was wrong in firing at the landlord? The Red Army is my home, I can't leave it!"

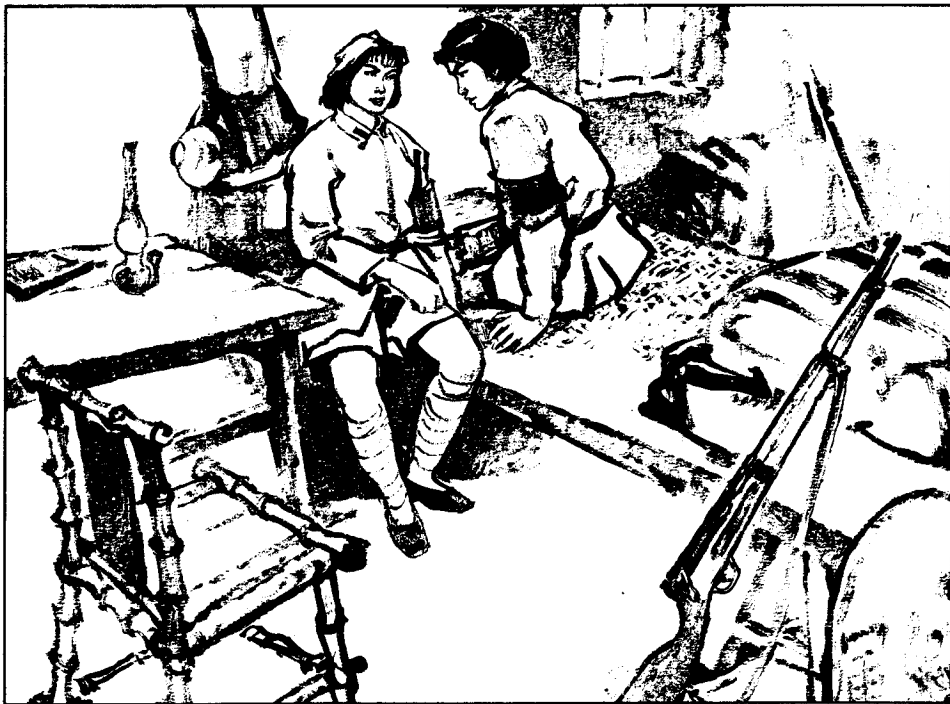


When Hung Chang-ching heard about the incident he came to see Chiung-hua. He hoped he might be able to help her. "Comrade Chiung-hua," he said, "do you think you're the only one with wrongs to avenge? Is there any proletarian whose heart isn't soaked in tears? Can you get anywhere simply fighting alone? Don't forget you're a revolutionary fighter!"





Hung's words made a deep impression on Chiung-hua. He wanted her to bear this lesson in mind, so he told her to go and think over her mistake. Impressed by the way Hung had dealt with the matter, the company commander criticized herself for her wrong attitude towards Chiung-hua's mistake.



"Sister," Chiung-hua said to Hung-lien, "Comrade Hung Chang-ching's way of letting comrades realize their mistakes is very good. He does it in a way you can accept from the bottom of your heart!" "Yes," Hung-lien replied, "we should learn from people like him and try to improve ourselves."



The next morning when the two were practising hand-to-hand combat in their room, a comrade brought them their food. "We'll be attacking Nan Pa-tien tonight," she told them. "Really!" exclaimed Chiung-hua, excitement written all over her face.



Without bothering about her food she started out to ask the company commander for permission to take part in the fight. Then she stopped in the doorway. "Haven't I been told to think over my mistake?" she thought.



Hung-lien encouraged her, saying that nobody would remember the matter. "No," said Chiung-hua firmly after a little thought. "Since I've been told to think over my mistake, I must really observe discipline." So Hung-lien said, "Then I'll go and ask the company commander on your behalf."



Hung Chang-ching was discussing the plan of action with other officers when Hung-lien came in to plead Chiung-hua's cause. "Why didn't she come herself?" asked Hung Chang-ching. "She said she must really abide by discipline," said Hung-lien. "All right," he chuckled, "tell her to wait for orders."



After Hung-lien had left, Hung Chang-ching said, "Nan Pa-tien is expecting me to go back to discuss important plans with him. If I go back as a wealthy overseas Chinese merchant, I'll get him in my grip. Then the enemy will lose their commander." All agreed to his idea.



Dressed once again as a wealthy overseas Chinese merchant Hung Chang-ching arrived at Coconut Village with Chiung-hua, Hung-lien and Hsiao Pang.





When the tyrant came out of his mansion to greet him, Hung thought, "Don't rejoice too soon. Your hour will soon come."



In the reception room he told Hung-lien to present Nan Pa-tien with gifts, which included rare medicinal herbs and a large amount of silver dollars. "A few native products," said Hung. "Oh, there is no need for so many gifts!" exclaimed Nan Pa-tien.



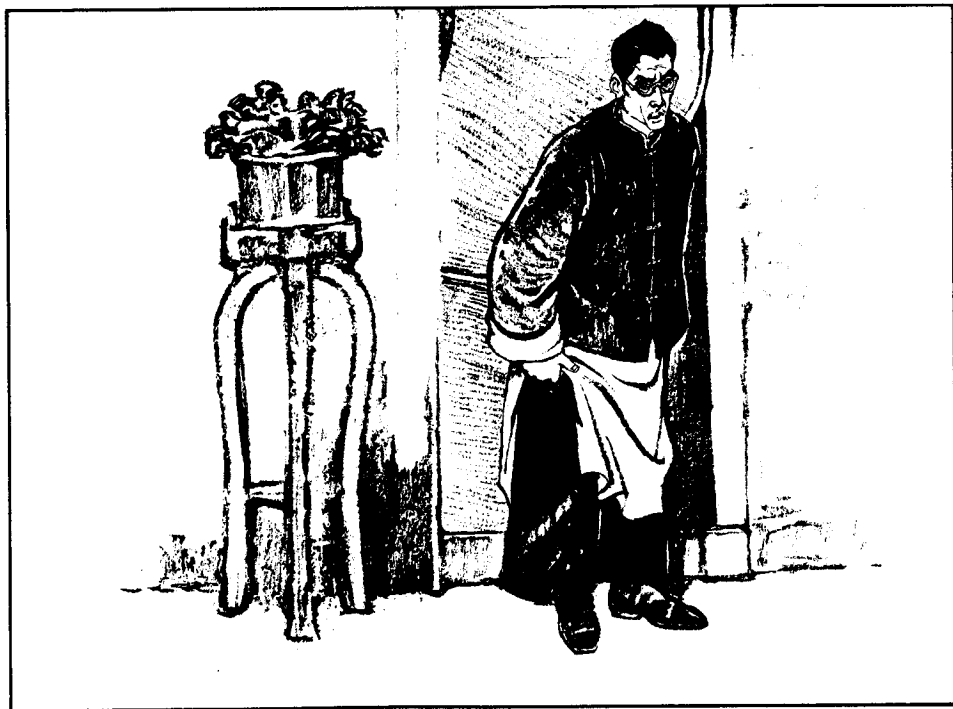
As he stood up to express his thanks Nan suddenly uttered a groan. "Aren't you feeling well, brother?" asked Hung pretending to be ignorant about what had happened. "Those Communist bandits," Nan said angrily, "took a shot at me, hitting me in the left shoulder. I must get my revenge!"



After a while he added, "Brother Hung, about that matter we discussed last time. . . ." Without waiting for him to finish, Hung said, "Oh, my mind's made up. I can't promise to give every thing I possess, but at least I'll do my utmost to help maintain order here on Hainan Island."



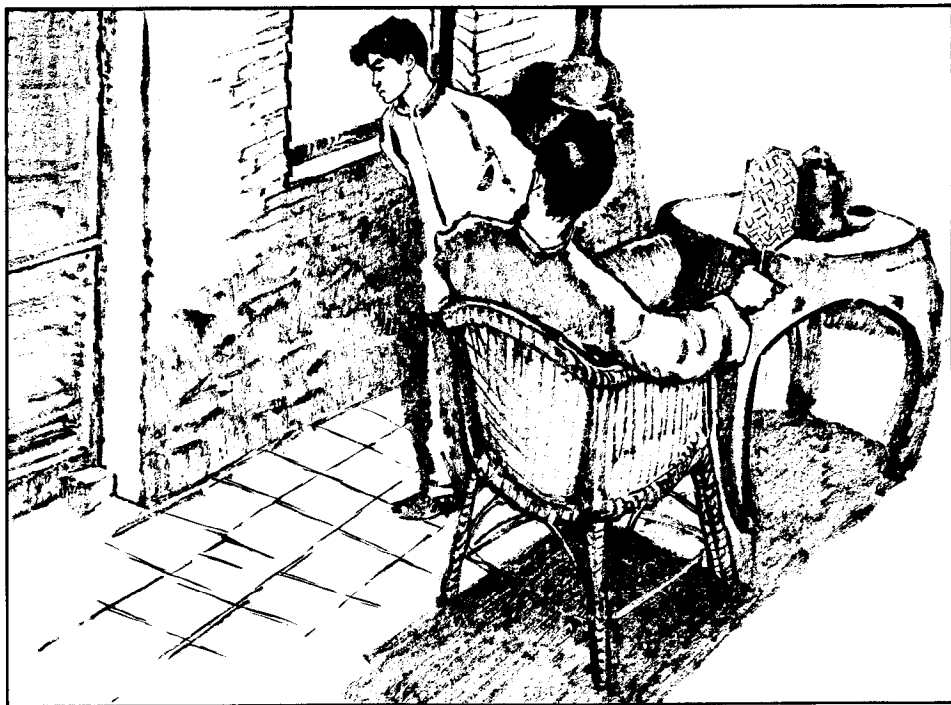
Nan Pa-tien was very pleased but the head steward remained suspicious. Alone with his master he said, "On the way to his home district and during his return journey he had to pass through Communist-held territory. How did he get through so easily? Anyway, he talks in such an arrogant way it would be impossible for him to work together with others for very long."



"If he were a mere nobody, I would not have troubled to make friends with him," Nan laughed. "Now go and tell Lao Szu to go to the mountains and invite Huang Chen-shan here to discuss some important matters." Before leaving, the head steward said, "I only hope, Commander, you'll be on your guard, otherwise it may cost you dear!"



After supper the head steward — a loyal lackey — stole over to Hung Chang-ching's quarters. Hung-lien and Chiung-hua caught sight of him as he was eavesdropping outside the window.



Chiung-hua promptly tipped Hung off about the spying. To make every word heard distinct he said in a loud voice, "Hsiao Pang, you go back to Canton tomorrow and bring my mother here for a holiday. I've decided to stay here for a few more days to discuss some business with Commander Nan."





All was quiet in the dead of night. Hung looked at his watch and saw that it was the time for action. He told Hsiao Pang to go and open the back door.



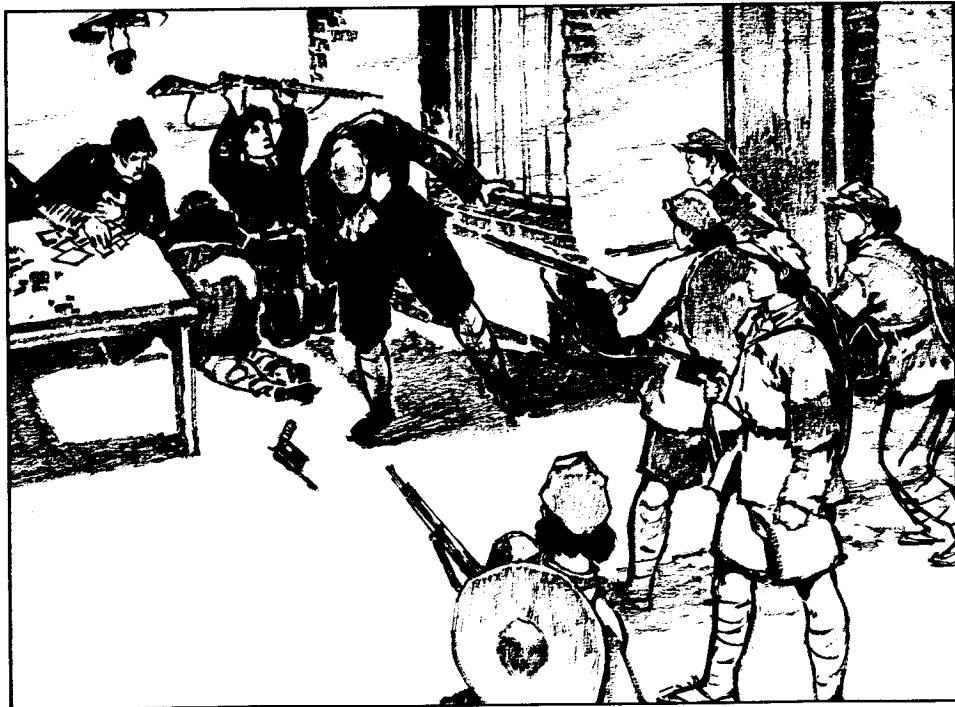
Hsiao Pang crept over to the back door and opened it. The women fighters who had disguised themselves as village girls slipped in.



Chiung-hua and Hung-lien tiptoed into Nan's sleeping quarters.



The landlord was trapped in his sleep. Giving him a contemptuous glance Hung ordered three fires to be lit. These were the signal for the Red Army men and the women fighters to attack the defence corps that guarded the village.



Meanwhile, the women soldiers hidden in the village rushed into the defence corps headquarters. Gold Teeth was shot by the company commander as he drew out his pistol.



Coconut Village was lit up by the fires as the Red Army broke into it. Many of the defence corps members were killed, others surrendered. The village was liberated.

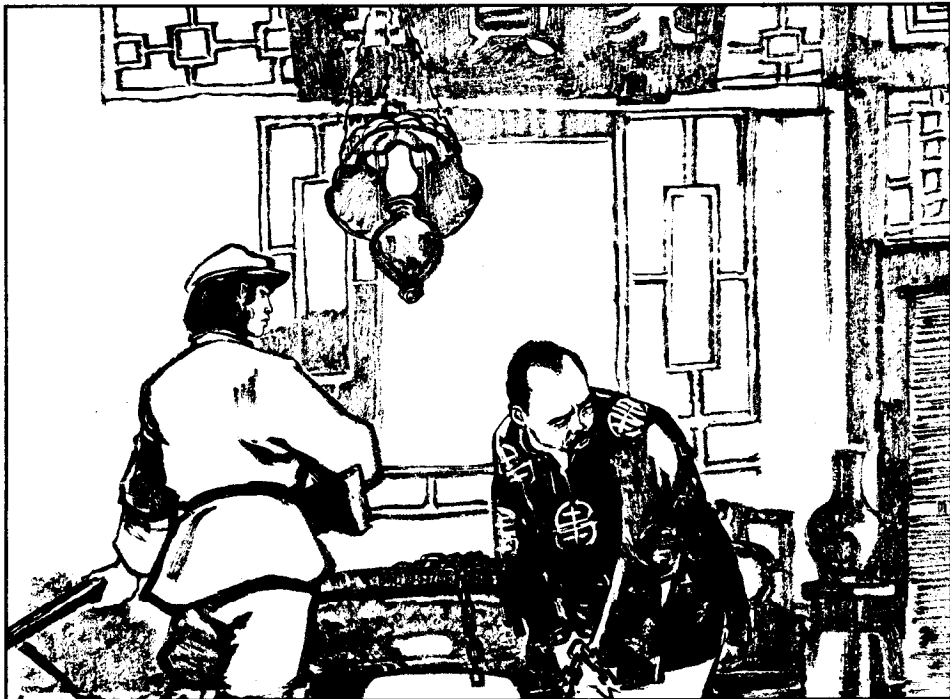


After daybreak Chiung-hua marched Nan Pa-tien down the street. She cried out all about the crimes Nan had committed against two generations of her family. "Countrymen," she cried, "I was a slave in Nan Pa-tien's house. Just because my father kicked his dog, he had him beaten to death. . . ."



Chiung-hua's story aroused the crowd who demanded that punishment be meted out to the despot who had crushed them for so many years.





With the parade over, Nan was kept in custody awaiting public trial. But when the cunning old man saw there was only one woman soldier guarding him, he thought of a way of escaping. He asked to go to the toilet.



He went into the inner room, prised up a plank in the floor and disappeared into an underground passage.



When the company commander came in with Chiung-hua and Hung-lien to take Nan to the trial, the guard told them that he had gone to the toilet in the inner room. Chiung-hua rushed in and found the uncovered hole on the floor — Nan Paitien was nowhere to be seen.



She fired two shots in rapid succession into the tunnel before jumping down to give chase.



Nan Pa-tien clambered out of the other end of the tunnel and ran up the hill. At that moment, the junior steward Lao Szu was on his way back with the bandit chief Huang Chen-shan. They were surprised to see Nan in such a state.



Nan Pa-tien had been so frightened by the fighting that he was unable to utter a word when the two rushed over to meet him. Looking in the direction where he had come, Huang Chen-shan saw a woman soldier running up the hill. He fired several shots at her. Then he and Lao Szu dragged Nan off and disappeared behind the hill.



Chiung-hua was hit and fell to the ground. In her eagerness to recapture the landlord she had been caught off guard.



The company commander, who had been in hot pursuit some way behind, saw Chiung-hua fall and rushed up and held her in her arms.





Chiung-hua was taken to a rear hospital for an operation on her wound. When Hung Chang-ching visited her and asked how she felt, she said, "I'm fine. A whipping from the landlord was much worse than this."



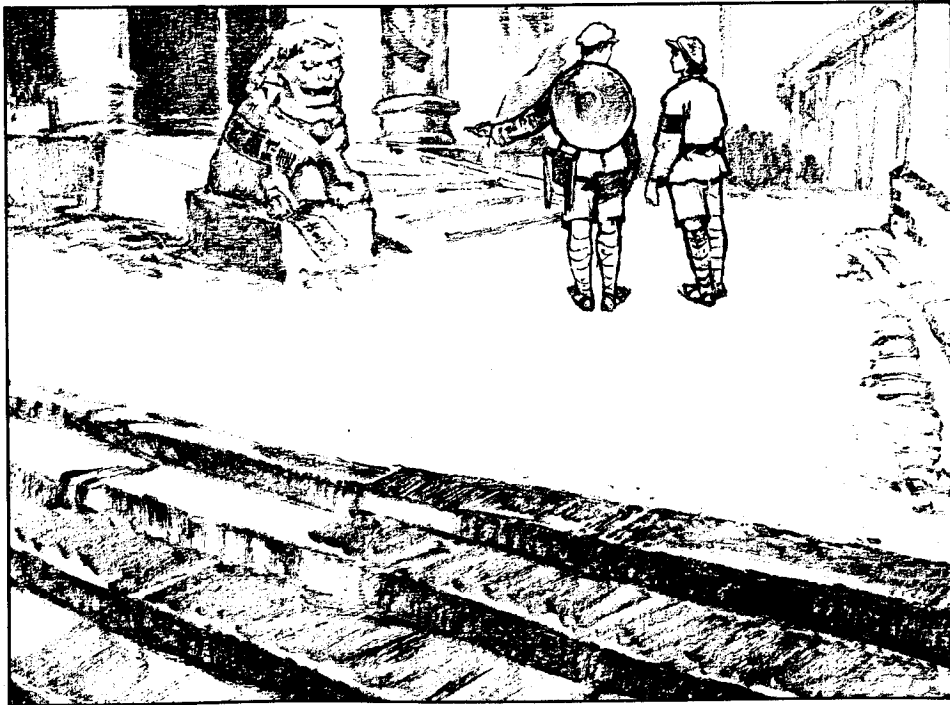
Several days later Hung came to see her again and was relieved to find her looking better. He told her about the rapidly developing revolutionary situation throughout the country. Overjoyed, Chiung-hua was anxious to be up and about again and to take part in the struggle.



Chiung-hua's wound was healing gradually. Remembering the Party's teachings she read a lot during her convalescence which helped her understand many revolutionary theories previously unknown to her.



Soon she was discharged from the hospital. On her way back to the unit she fell in with Hung at Boundary Ridge. She asked for permission to go alone to the county town and come back with Nan Pa-tien's head. "And if you should fail?" asked Hung meaningly. "Then he'd get my head instead" was her curt reply.



As they walked towards Coconut Village, Hung thought about how he could make Chiung-hua understand the power people possess when they fight together. Soon they were in front of Nan's mansion which now housed the local people's government.



In his office Hung indicated a map on the table and said, "Chiung-hua, can you find Hainan Island?" She was unable to locate it. "See, it's right here," Hung pointed it out. "What a tiny place!" exclaimed Chiung-hua.



"Coconut Village isn't even on the map, not a trace of it!" said Hung. "Now, Chiung-hua, think! Could a huge country like ours ever be liberated if we were to depend on the bravery of one individual alone?" Chiung-hua suddenly saw the point. "You're so good at making others understand!" she laughed.



Impressed by Hung's knowledge, Chiung-hua asked him how long he had been at school. He said that when he was small he had worked with his father on an ocean-going ship. He began school at ten with the help of the Canton Seamen's Union which was later banned by the reactionaries. Many members were killed and his father was flung into the Pearl River. So he stopped going to school.





"Because I could speak Hainan dialect I managed to escape from Canton," said Hung. "Chiung-hua, if we are to right the bloody wrongs and overthrow the detestable old society, we must always depend on the collective, on the whole working class!" Each of Hung's statements struck home in Chiung-hua's mind.



Educated by the Communist Party Chiung-hua and Hung-lien quickly raised their class consciousness. They were eager to join the Party. In their letters of application for membership they wrote, "I will carry the struggle through to the end for the complete emancipation of the whole working class and for the realization of communism!"



One year later Chiang Kai-shek sent his Central Guards' Brigade to Hainan to wipe out the Chiungyai Independent Division. Since his escape Nan Pa-tien had gone about quietly in the county town, hoping for a come-back. Hearing about the arrival of the brigade he and members of the local gentry went to the wharf to welcome the troops.



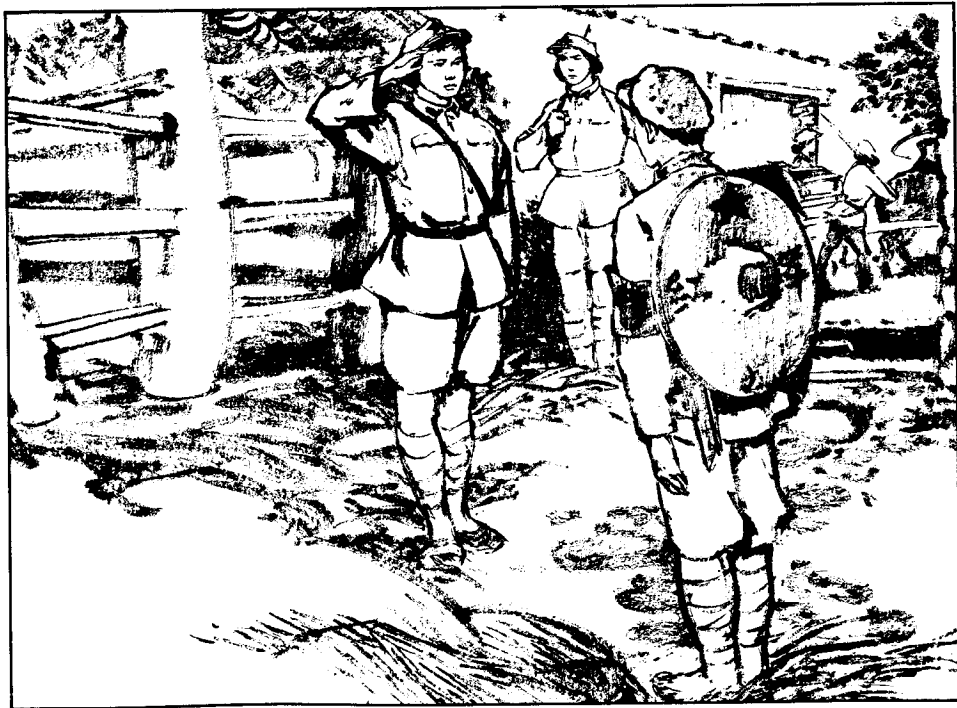
Over the dinner table Nan proposed to Brigade Commander Chen, "Our troops should make use of Hainan's particular features in waging war. Concentrate our forces at one point and launch surprise attacks. In this way the enemy will be unable to evacuate all the civilians and property from their new area, even if they do find out about the movement of our government forces."



"Our unit has come to Hainan from Kiangsi, firmly resolved that the Communists on this island must be completely wiped out," the brigade commander nodded. "Full consideration must be given to Mr. Nan's suggestion. I'll instantly order my three infantry regiments to set out tonight on two routes—left and right!"



Having heard of the enemy's plan, Hung and the company commander started to organize the withdrawal of the women's detachment, the Red Guards, the government functionaries and their families. Meantime, Hsiao Pang galloped up and handed Hung a dispatch from division headquarters.



After reading the dispatch Hung said, "Company Commander, you take the first and second platoons and join the main forces to thrust into the enemy rear. The third platoon and the comrades of company headquarters will come with me to Boundary Ridge to pin down the enemy." The company commander wanted to intercept the enemy, but Hung would not hear of it. Reluctantly she said good-bye to him.



Hung-lien was looking after her comrades wounded in the fighting, when Chiung-hua ran up to tell her to withdraw them immediately.

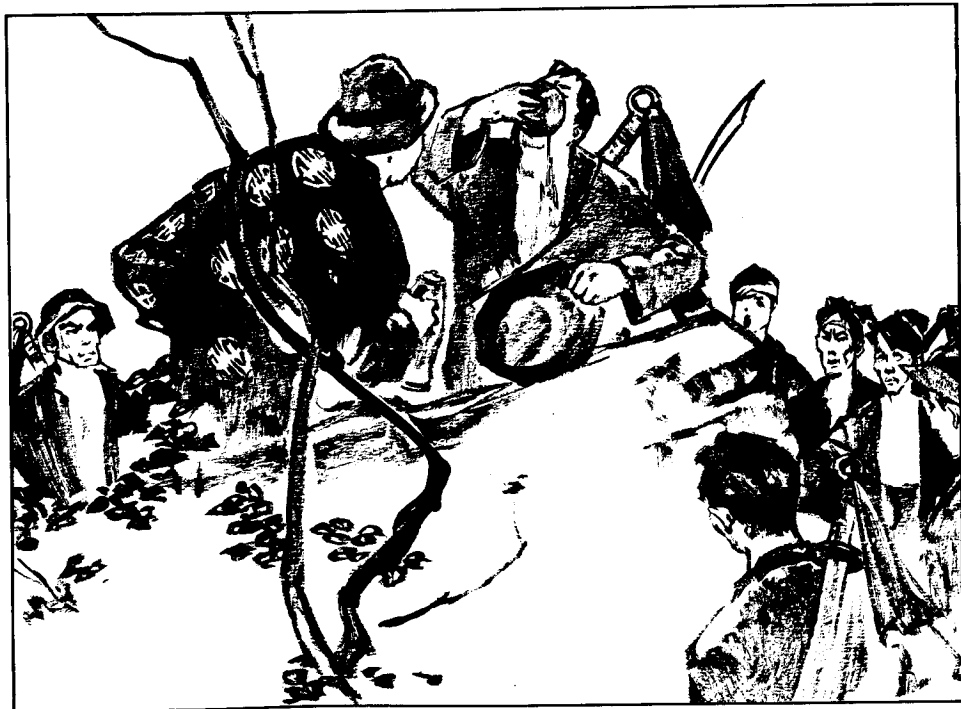




After the wounded were evacuated from the village, Hung Chang-ching led the last group of the women fighters to Boundary Ridge.



At dawn the Kuomintang troops occupied Coconut Village. Then under cover of artillery fire they started to attack Boundary Ridge. Entrenched on the hill-top the women soldiers of the third platoon put up a stubborn resistance, beating off several enemy attacks.



Their attacks having failed, Nan Pa-tien told Huang Chen-shan to lead his thugs in a charge. Before he went, Nan offered him three bowls of wine.



Huang swallowed a paper charm to "protect" himself from bullets and tore up the hill at the head of his men. They were wielding broad-bladed swords.



The women soldiers had run short of ammunition. "Chiung-hua," said Hung, "we've fulfilled our task of interception. You lead the first and second squads and the wounded and pull back at once, while the third squad and I will cover your withdrawal." Chiung-hua, however, insisted on staying at the front.



Hung fixed his eyes on the girl, then in an outburst of feeling said, "Comrade Chiung-hua, the Party has approved your application and Hung-lien's for admission to the Party. From now on you're a vanguard fighter of the proletariat. If we should fail to get away, then you Party members who have pulled back will be the mainstay in the future. You will shoulder the responsibility till victory is ours!"



Noticing her hesitancy Hung said earnestly, "Go on, accept your first assignment as a member of the Party." Chiung-hua looked at him with emotion, then took the four silver coins from her pocket that he had given her. "Comrade Chang-ching," she said, "here are my first Party dues."



Hung watched till Chiung-hua and the others were out of sight. Then he turned and saw Huang Chen-shan and his men charge brandishing their swords. He trained his machine-gun on Huang who was running in front of his men.





The bandit chief was shot dead before he approached Hung's position. Hung himself was seriously wounded.



Shortly after the women fighters had withdrawn to the other side of the hill, the scout reported that there was no news from the front. "Check up on the weapons," said Chiung-hua firmly, "and gather all the ammunition together while I go back to see how things are."



In a dark ancestral temple Nan Pa-tien was complaining to Battalion Commander Hu. "Sir," he said, "we've lost a whole company just fighting a small detachment of women!" "Where are the main Communist forces?" demanded Hu furiously. "Just get me out of the clutches of these women!"



An orderly came in and handed a dispatch to Hu. After reading the letter he said, "We've been split up by the Communists. We'll proceed to brigade headquarters at daybreak tomorrow. So we'll be getting out of this inferno of a place!"



The battalion commander left in an angry mood. Presently Lao Szu came in to announce, "Commander, he's come to again." Seriously wounded, Hung Chang-ching had lost consciousness and been captured by the enemy. But despite their torture he had not given the enemy any information.



When Hung was brought in, Nan Pa-tien pointed to a sheet of paper on the table, which bore the heading "My Confession". "Mr. Hung," he said, "if you will call on the women's detachment to surrender, you can still have riches and honour." Hung held his head high and looked proudly at the landlord.



With a sarcastic laugh Hung took the brush and crossed out the words "My Confession". Then he wrote:

*Chop off my head if you wish,  
My cause is just!  
Others will follow behind  
When I am under the sod!*



"Just fine!" Nan roared in a fury. "Now you can die for your just cause! Drag him out!"





Hung was tied to a huge tree. Behind him were bundles of cotton which had been soaked in kerosene. He looked for the last time on the lovely countryside. Fixing his fierce eyes on the murderers he shouted at the top of his voice, "Down with the Kuomintang! Long live the Communist Party!"



Within seconds Hung was enveloped in flames and died a hero's death. Chiung-hua saw all that was happening from the hill-top, but she could do nothing. If she did the whole campaign might be adversely affected. She was overcome with grief as she watched, unable to save her close comrade-in-arms from the enemy.



With tears in her eyes Chiung-hua retraced her steps.



On the hill-slope she found Hung Chang-ching's brief-case. It contained the four silver coins and the two applications for Party membership written by Hung-lien and herself. Memories flooded back to her as she solemnly vowed: "I'll carry on the work left unfinished by Comrade Hung Chang-ching, unite with my comrades and carry the struggle through to the end!"



When Chiung-hua returned her comrades sensed something was wrong. Controlling herself Chiung-hua said, "The comrades at the front have all died the death of heroes. Comrade Chang-ching has given his life for our glorious cause!"



Every heart was ablaze with hatred. "Comrades," said Chiung-hua, "the Party organization still exists. We must shoulder the tasks left unfulfilled by the martyrs and fight to the bitter end!"



Hsiao Pang arrived at noon with an order from the division commander. "The enemy troops have been routed by our main forces," he told the women fighters. "As Nan Pa-tien may attempt to escape, the division commander orders you to do your best to pin him down. You are to hold out till the main forces arrive at six o'clock tomorrow evening!"

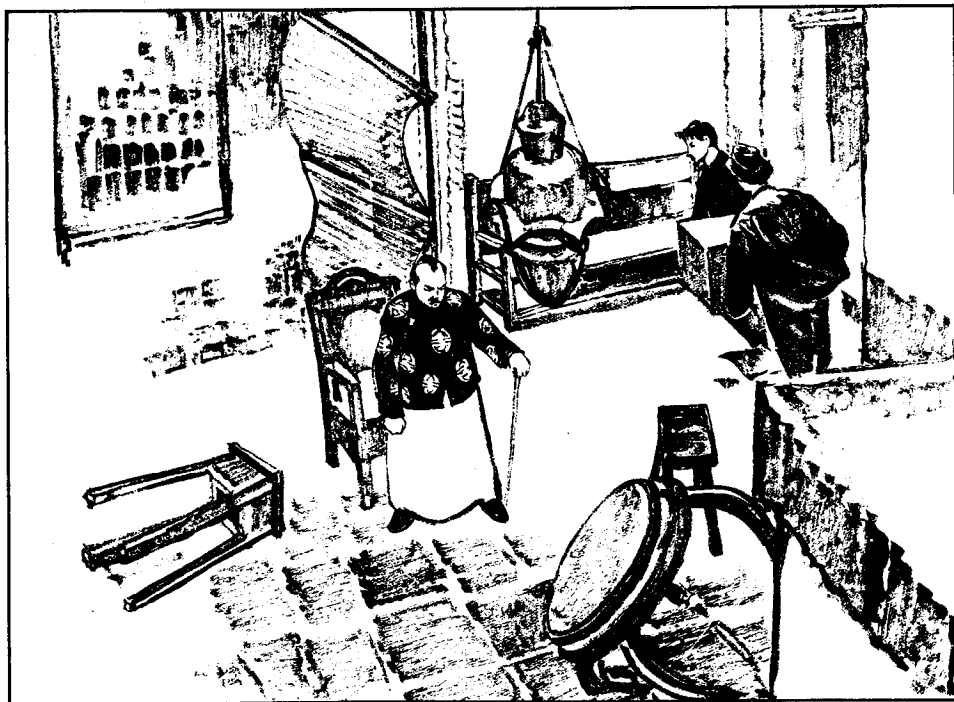


The scout sent out to reconnoitre also returned to report that Nan Pa-tien was getting ready to escape and that he had arrested many villagers in preparation for a massacre. Chiung-hua called the Party members to a meeting where her plan of operation was approved.





At noon the next day Chiung-hua and the other women fighters, dressed as villagers, went to Coconut Village.



Nan's mansion was in a commotion as the stewards packed up things and moved cases. The landlord was also busy — he was frantically destroying his furniture and ornaments so that nothing of value would be left behind.



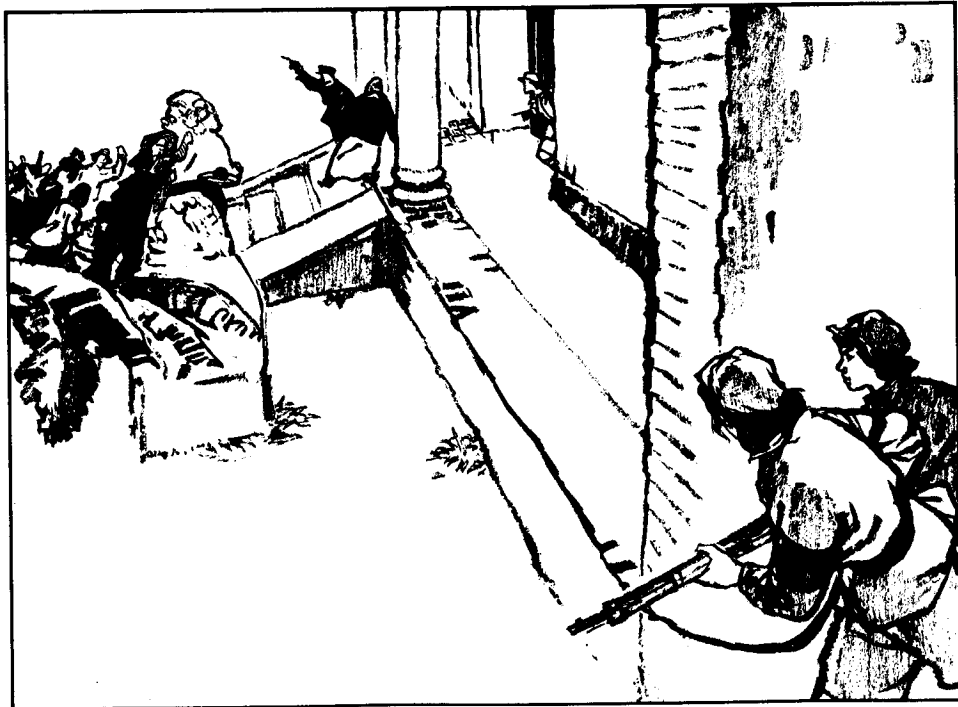
Lao Szu came into the reception room. "Commander," he said, "we've rounded up all the paupers in the village. Will you have a look?"



Nan came to the square in front of his house. "Well, paupers, you haven't expected this, have you?" he shouted. "I'm going to make sure you don't dig up my ancestral tombs after I leave! But if any of you shouts 'Down with the Communist Party!' I'll spare his life!"



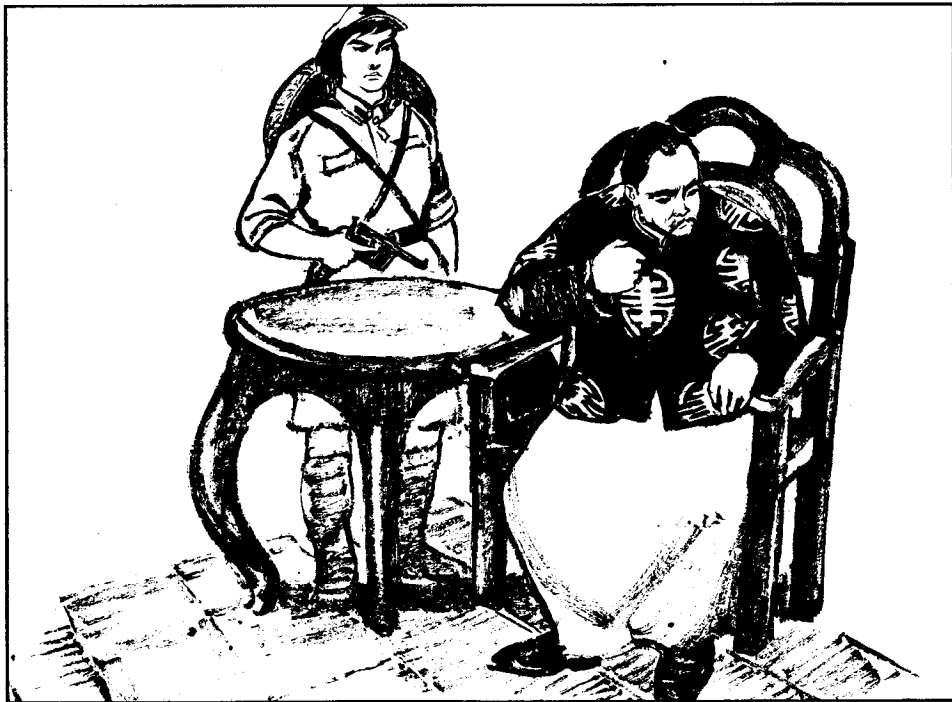
The villagers did not say a word. They glared sullenly at him. "What, none of you will shout out?" he threatened. Suddenly an old man raised his hand and cried, "Down with the despots and evil gentry!"



In a rage the landlord ordered the old man to be killed. At this point Chiung-hua and her comrades, who had caught the enemy unawares and quickly occupied Nan's mansion, appeared on the scene.

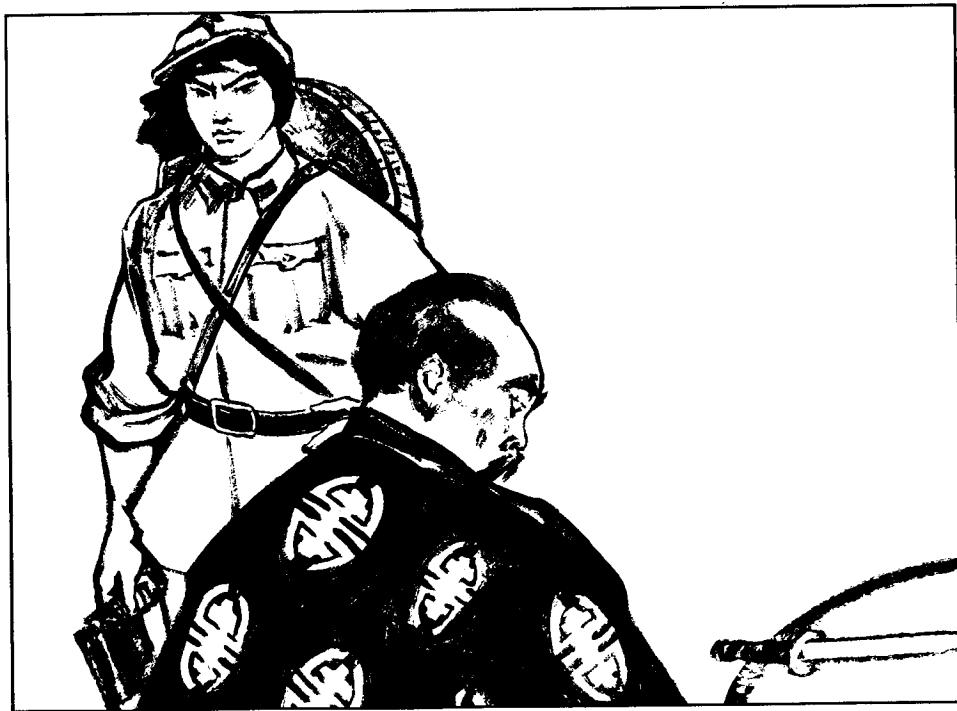


The members of the defence corps were dumbfounded by the sudden appearance of the women soldiers. Nan Pa-tien was captured.



The landlord was led into the reception room in his mansion. "I tell you, the Red Army has routed the Kuomintang troops and is now coming to this county," Chiung-hua shouted angrily. "Tell your men to surrender at once!" Pretending to be calm Nan said, "Allow me to take my own life."

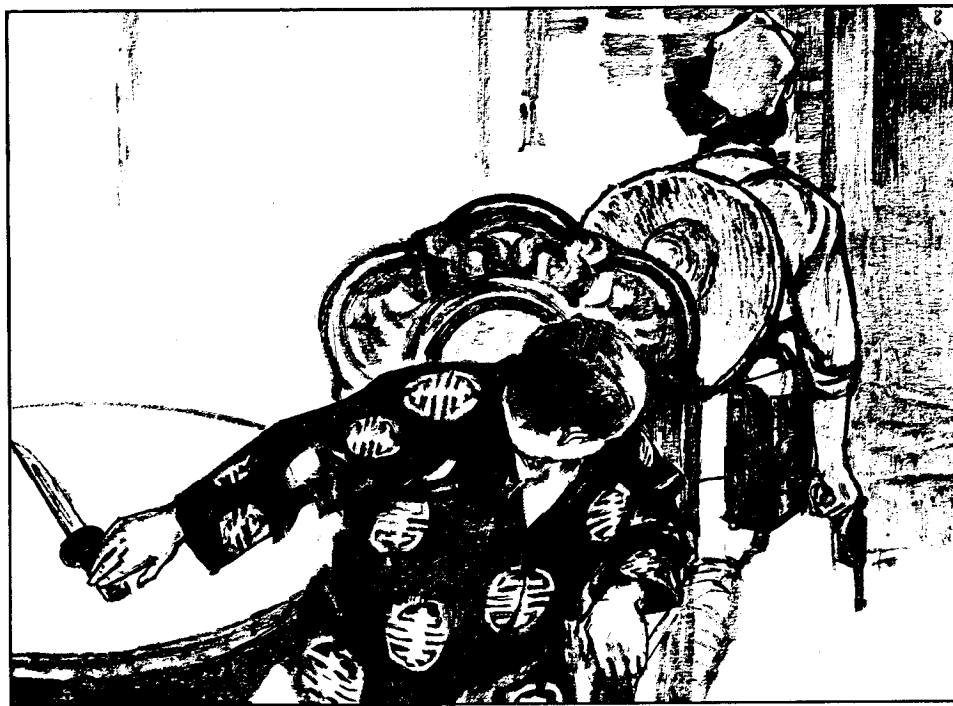




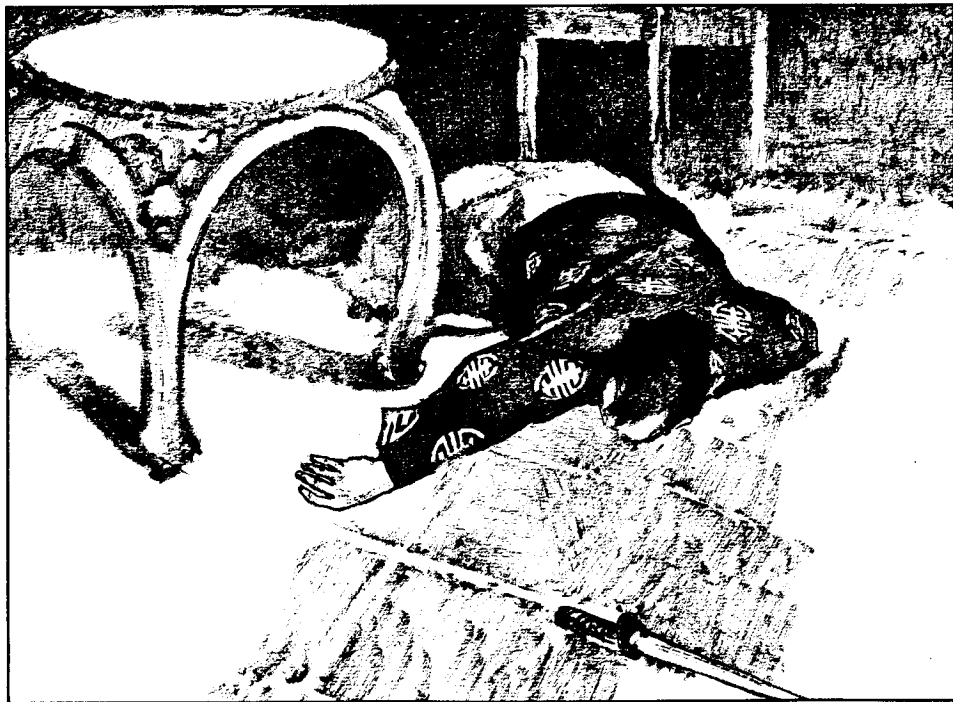
Chiung-hua threw him a dagger. Nan reached for it with a trembling hand, but immediately drew back. With a scornful smile Chiung-hua said, "At the first glance I saw you had the heart of a wolf but the courage of a rabbit!"



"There need be no hatred between us," pleaded the landlord. "Let bygones be bygones. Leave me some way out. I'll evacuate my men and leave all my property to you. I promise to leave the army and never come back here again." "A fine idea! You'll just come back and attack us," retorted Chiung-hua.



There were cheers outside—the main Red Army forces had joined up with the women's detachment. When Chiung-hua turned to look out of the window, Nan Pa-tien, grinding his teeth, reached for the dagger.



Before he could pick up the dagger, Chiung-hua had fired twice and the tyrant dropped full length on the floor.



Amid thunderous cheers Chiung-hua reported briefly to the company commander about the battle they had fought. The commander and the other comrades praised her for having fulfilled all her assignments.



The women's detachment had withstood hard times and performed outstanding exploits. Soon after the battle a second company of the detachment was organized with Chiung-hua as its Party representative.



Standing before the ranks of the new fighters Chiung-hua said with emotion, "From today on the hundred and twenty of you will be glorious fighters. . . . We must carry forward the splendid tradition of the first company of the women's detachment! We must learn from the martyrs who have given their lives! We shall advance and defeat all the Nan Pa-tiens."



At dawn the heroic women's detachment was on the march again. The revolution was surging forward and they were marching to wipe out all the Kuomintang reactionaries.





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