

Golden 111

Chapter 111 Family Matters

"This damn thing is such a hassle. White Lion, stop messing around and go play by yourself.

Zhuang Rui pushed away the white lion that had snuggled into his arms, and looked at the dark stone in his hand with a rather helpless expression.

Three days had passed since the incident at the police station. After Liu Chuan's father left that day, Zhuang Rui and Liu Chuan also left with Monkey Li Bing. However, the matter did not end so easily.

According to Liu Chuan's later account, all of those joint defense team members were dismissed and removed from the team. Hao's brother-in-law was removed from his position as deputy director and reassigned to a police station in a suburban area as an ordinary police officer because he abused his power to help his relatives seek personal gain.

As for Director Wang, he was also implicated. Due to his poor management of his team, which led to a decline in police conduct, he was dismissed from his post and transferred to another police station as deputy director. He was fortunate in a way that he was not completely stripped of his position.

The most unlucky one was Boss Hao. He was detained by the police for a day. After being released, he didn't dare to stay in the flower and bird market anymore. Liu Chuan simply asked Zhou Rui to sublet his storefront to be used as an office for the mastiff kennel in the flower and bird market. Only then was the matter considered settled.

These past few days, Zhuang Rui, Liu Chuan, and Zhou Rui haven't been idle either. Liu Chuan needed to process the land use contract and the business license for the mastiff kennel, so he pulled Zhuang Rui along to find someone to design the kennel's floor plan. Zhou Rui, of course, stayed at the flower and bird market to familiarize himself with the pet trading process.

In 2003, although the internet was not very developed, it was still possible to find information about some Tibetan Mastiff kennels. After checking several large Tibetan Mastiff kennels online, Zhuang Rui had a better understanding of the situation.

Zhuang Rui's previous university was famous throughout the country for its architecture department. Although he studied a different major, Zhuang Rui made several good friends with alumni from the architecture department. Of course, they have all entered the workforce now. Zhuang Rui contacted an alumnus who works in Nanjing by phone, put forward his requirements, and sent the relevant information online. He was now waiting for the other party to produce the drawings.

Zhuang Rui handled all these matters smoothly without taking up too much of his energy. However, he was only three or four days away from leaving for Nanjing, and he couldn't bring himself to present the gift he had prepared. Zhuang Rui had decided to give the jadeite inside the stone to Qin Xuanbing as a gift, but despite racking his brains, he couldn't break the stone open and ended up ruining the stone containing the jadeite the size of a fingernail.

These past few days, Zhuang Rui has searched all the hardware stores in Pengcheng City, but not a single one sells a small grinding wheel machine. He also couldn't find out where he could buy one. With his departure for Nanjing just a few days away, Zhuang Rui, in desperation, came up with a foolish idea.

Zhuang Rui had just gone to the pet market, using the excuse that he needed to drill a few holes in the wall at home, and brought home an electric drill from Liu Chuan's shop. While his mother wasn't home, he planned to drill a few holes in the stone and then use a hammer to break it open. However, his professional skills were lacking, and his aim was off. With one drill, he hit the core of the stone. The jadeite was already pitifully small, and Zhuang Rui shattered it into pieces with one drill. Luckily, he was doing the experiment on a stone with a small amount of jadeite; otherwise, when he later learned how precious jadeite was, he would probably be devastated.

In fact, Zhuang Rui knew that it would be as easy as playing around to break the stone open in any machine shop, but he didn't dare to do it. He also didn't have a good excuse. If he let those craftsmen cut the stone open casually, the egg-sized jade inside would definitely be destroyed. But if they broke the stone open according to his instructions, he would really have no way to explain himself after the jade came out.

Moreover, I can't ask Liu Chuan for help with this matter. Otherwise, once I give the jade to Qin Xuanbing, even a fool would know what's going on.

"Xiao Rui, what are you doing upstairs again?"

The old lady downstairs started talking again, probably disturbed by the sound of the electric drill earlier.

"It's nothing, ma'am. I just drilled a hole in the wall to hang something."

Zhuang Rui opened the window and replied. He was now thinking about whether he should buy a house outside. It was really inconvenient here. If he were in Song Jun's villa, no one would bother him even if he used a power drill or set off firecrackers.

Shaking his head with a self-deprecating smile, Zhuang Rui laughed inwardly at himself for starting to daydream as soon as he had a little money. The three million had already been transferred to Liu Chuan, and now he had less than a million left, not even enough to buy a garage for that villa.

"Xiao Rui, come and eat."

A knock on the door startled Zhuang Rui awake. He glanced at his watch and saw it was already past noon. Since Zhuang Min moved here, she had stopped working and stayed home taking care of the children and cooking. Zhuang Rui had been eating ready-made meals every day anyway.

"Hello, Uncle..."

As soon as I entered Zhuang Min's house, I saw the little girl sitting obediently at the dining table, looking like a little adult. But when she saw the little white lion, she immediately jumped off the chair and the two little ones started playing around.

"Hey, brother-in-law, aren't you at work today?"

Seeing that Zhao Guodong was also at home, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but ask, since Zhao Guodong usually didn't eat lunch at home because his workplace was a bit far away.

"Yeah, there's not much work these days, so I've taken a day off. You'll be going back to Zhonghai soon, right?"

Zhao Guodong wasn't in a very good mood, and he casually chatted with Zhuang Rui.

"Is the factory not doing well?" Zhuang Rui asked. He had no reason to hold back since it was his own family.

"Yes, after the restructuring, it became private, but our wages and benefits are getting less and less. There's no point in continuing like this."

"Let's eat first. Why are you talking to Xiao Rui about this? If you keep doing this, you'll quit. With your skills, you can do it anywhere. Nannan, go wash your hands. You're being disobedient again."

Upon hearing her husband's words, Zhuang Min immediately took over. Zhuang Rui knew that his sister-in-law was honest, usually hardworking and quiet. For her to say something like this now, it must mean that her workplace was about to go under.

Zhuang Rui considered it for a moment and then said, "Brother-in-law, if it really doesn't work out, why don't you quit your job? Da Chuan and I are planning to start a Tibetan Mastiff kennel, but we don't have enough manpower right now. Besides, I'm going back to work in Zhonghai soon. You can represent me and work at the kennel. You know about plumbing and electrical work, so we won't need to hire anyone else. What do you think?"

"Aoyuan? I've never heard you mention it. The plumbing and electrical work is simple; you just need to maintain it regularly. You don't need to be there every day. But Xiao Rui, can he be stable? You know, I've worked at this company for over ten years. If I quit, I'll lose my job."

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Zhao Guodong's eyes lit up at first, but then he became somewhat hesitant. People who stay in familiar environments for a long time are generally unwilling to move, especially since his company used to be a state-owned enterprise. Although it wasn't doing very well after the restructuring, he could still earn more than a thousand yuan a month, which was considered a middle-income in Pengcheng.

Before Zhuang Rui could speak, Zhuang Min interjected, "So what if you've worked here for over ten years? What has the company given you? Not even an apartment. Guodong, I told you long ago, you should start a car repair shop with your mentors and apprentices. It would definitely be better than working here. But you wouldn't listen. Go work for Xiao Rui. You know Da Chuan well. It's your own business, they won't treat you badly."

Yes, brother-in-law, there's no such thing as a secure job anymore. The sooner you start working for yourself, the wider your career path will be. I'm back working in Zhonghai now to learn something, but I'll still have to come out on my own eventually. If you're not happy working at the mastiff farm, you can find a place yourself. I'll provide the money, and we can invest in a car repair shop or open a car dealership."

Although he only has less than a million yuan left, he expects to make a large sum again once Tang Bohu's "Li Duanduan" is framed in half a month. Zhuang Rui has been researching online recently. Although Tang Bohu has many surviving works, his fame among the people makes each piece highly sought after. His painting, due to its large size, should be worth between six and nine million yuan. Knowing Song Jun's character, he probably won't haggle over the price.

Moreover, selling the painting to Song Jun would save Zhuang Rui a lot of trouble. After all, this item was traded on the black market, and Zhuang Rui didn't have the extensive social connections that Song Jun and others had to launder the painting and send it to an auction house.

As for investing in a car repair shop, Zhuang Rui wasn't just talking about it casually. He majored in finance and economics and is quite sensitive to the market. When he was at China Overseas, he observed that the number of privately owned cars has been increasing in recent years, and he expected that the automotive-related industries would also flourish in the future.

Having been frugal since childhood, Zhuang Rui didn't know what to do with the money when he had more than three million. After a while, he would have several million more coming in. If the stock market wasn't doing so well, he would have been thinking about investing the money in the stock market. If his brother-in-law were willing to open a car repair shop or a car dealership, Zhuang Rui would be more than happy to invest in it. After all, it's good to keep the money in the family.

"Xiao Rui, opening a car repair shop requires over 100,000 yuan. Do you have that much money right now?"

Zhao Guodong thought about it for a while. There wasn't much of a future in working at his company. He was only in his early thirties, so he might as well go out and try his luck. However, he couldn't afford the initial investment.

"Over ten thousand? That's so little?"

Zhuang Rui was stunned for a moment when he heard this. He thought that opening a factory would cost at least a million or two, but he didn't expect that it would only cost a few hundred thousand, which he could take out right now.

"Xiao Rui, you don't understand this industry. Tens of thousands is already a lot. If you scale it up a bit, you can start with forty or fifty thousand."

When talking about his profession, Zhao Guodong became excited and started counting on his fingers: "Actually, the initial cost of opening a car repair shop is not much. Apart from the rent, the equipment is the main expense. Buying two four-post lifts and two two-post lifts will cost about 20,000 yuan. A medium-sized paint booth should cost about 40,000 yuan. A sheet metal mustard machine and a computer decoding machine will cost more than 15,000 yuan. Add some small tools, and more than 100,000 yuan will be enough."

Listening to Zhao Guodong talk eloquently, Zhuang Rui realized that his brother-in-law wasn't as dull as he had imagined, and that he had probably been thinking about opening a factory for quite some time.

Brother-in-law, I don't understand any of this. How about this, I'll put up 200,000 yuan. Do you think we can set up a car repair shop? If we can, you can quit your job. I have 100,000 yuan in my room. I can go out and get another 100,000 yuan later."

Zhuang Rui was a bit confused by Zhao Guodong's technical jargon, so he simply stopped listening and decided to just pay up.

"Two hundred thousand is enough, but Xiao Rui, do you still have that much money? Although this dog is valuable, you haven't sold it yet."

Zhuang Min and her husband were unaware that Zhuang Rui had sold the manuscripts; Zhuang Rui had only told his mother about it, which is why Zhao Guodong had such questions.

"Hehe, I found some treasures at the antique market recently and made several million yuan by reselling them. Sister, brother-in-law, don't worry about money. Our lives will only get better and better from now on."

Zhuang Rui didn't intend to hide this from his sister's family; he had just been busy lately and hadn't had time to mention it. Now that Zhuang Min had asked about the money, Zhuang Rui just casually brought it up.

"Xiao Rui, is what you're saying true? It sounds like I'm listening to a story."

Zhuang Min could sense that her younger brother had changed a lot recently, but she still couldn't believe that her brother, who had always been earning a fixed salary, was now dealing in antiques.

"Hey, sis, that's a novel question. I'm just making up stories to amuse my daughter when I'm bored. Mom knows about this, but she hasn't had time to tell you. If you don't believe me, go ask Mom." Zhuang Rui's words put Zhuang Min and her husband at ease. Although the money belonged to Zhuang Rui, they were siblings, and helping each other out was only natural.

"Okay, then I'll go to my workplace tomorrow and resign. But Xiao Rui, you'll still be the owner of this auto repair shop. I'll just consider myself working for you. I'll bring two apprentices with me to work together. Is that alright?"

Zhao Guodong also made up his mind. He was very good at auto repair, and could handle both big and small vehicles. He also liked to think about it in his spare time. Problems that others couldn't solve were not difficult for him. He was considered a key member of the company's auto repair team. However, he was usually quiet and not well-liked by his superiors.

"No, brother-in-law, we brothers should keep clear accounts. There's a type of investment called venture capital now, where I put in the money, only own shares, and don't participate in management. If we make money, I get a share of the profits; if we lose money, it's all on me."

Let's follow this model. I'll contribute 200,000 yuan, taking a 30% stake, and you'll contribute your technical expertise, taking a 70% stake. However, brother-in-law, if you bring two apprentices to work together, I think it's appropriate to give them each a small share, about 50% each. But that share will have to come from your contribution."

Zhuang Rui proposed opening a car repair shop, his original intention was just to make his sister's family's life a little easier. However, he knew that if he didn't take a share, his somewhat stubborn brother-in-law would definitely not agree, so he proposed this plan.

"This...this isn't appropriate, Xiao Rui. How about you take 70% of the shares, and my two apprentices and I take 30%?"

Zhao Guodong felt that if the shares were divided like this, he would be taking advantage of his brother-in-law, who would only get 30% of the money. After thinking about it, Zhao Guodong proposed a new way to distribute the shares.

"Let's divide it as I suggested, brother-in-law. I won't have much time to stay in Pengcheng in the future. The auto repair shop is all relying on you. Whether my investment can generate more money in the future depends on you, brother-in-law. Besides, the family still depends on you."

Zhao Guodong knew that his brother-in-law was taking care of him, but he was not good with words and could not say anything nice. He could only nod heavily and say, "Xiao Rui, don't worry. I will look for a site tomorrow. There is an abandoned warehouse over there on the national highway. I will go and take a look tomorrow. If it is suitable, I will rent it and use it as a factory. You don't need to worry about the family. Your brother-in-law will take good care of them."

"Hurry up and eat. You've been talking all this time, and the food is getting cold. Nannan, go wash your hands, you little crazy girl."

Zhuang Min was very happy to see that her husband had finally come to his senses. She brought out the soup that was simmering on the stove, and also took a bottle of white wine for the two brothers to drink, while she went to take care of her daughter.

Having made up his mind, Zhao Guodong felt much lighter, as if a huge weight had been lifted off his shoulders. He picked up the wine bottle, poured himself and Zhuang Rui a full glass, clinked glasses, and downed the glass in one gulp. He then said to Zhuang Rui, "Xiao Rui, if this deal goes through, I'll go to Nanjing in a few days to buy the equipment. It's a bit more expensive in Pengcheng. Let's go together then. It's on your way to Zhonghai too."

Sure, if Da Chuan buys a car in Nanjing, we can go together. It's faster on the highway and we won't have to squeeze onto the train. But brother-in-law, you need to get the factory settled as soon as possible. As for the business license and stuff, I'll call Da Chuan later and ask him to handle it. He's got connections."

Zhuang Rui and Liu Chuan had agreed that after mentioning the Hummer in Nanjing, Zhuang Rui would drive Liu Chuan's car to Zhonghai. Now, after hearing what his brother-in-law said, Zhuang Rui was thinking of letting his brother-in-law drive Liu Chuan's car, but he still needed to talk to Liu Chuan about it, so he hadn't mentioned it to Zhao Guodong yet.

"Finishing a factory is easy. There are plenty of them along the national highway. There are many vehicles coming and going there, and many of them break down. You can't go wrong by setting up a factory there. As long as the equipment is in place, you can start operating at any time."

Zhao Guodong is naturally very familiar with the industry he has been in for over ten years.

"By the way, brother-in-law, do you know of any machines that can cut rocks?"

Zhuang Rui had a sudden thought. If a car is in an accident and the door can't be opened, wouldn't you need to use tools to cut the iron door open? Maybe those tools can even cut through stone.

"Cut stones? Yes, the factory's cutting machine can do that. Why are you asking?"

Zhao Guodong took a sip of his drink and answered casually.

"It's nothing, brother-in-law. Do you have any smaller tools, the kind you can hold in your hand?"

Zhuang Rui certainly knew that the cutting machine could cut through the stone, but if he could get his stone out, he wouldn't need to find Zhao Guodong; he could just find any stone carving factory.

"Smaller tools? We do have those. There's an electric cutter with a grinding wheel and diamond gears. Those things can even cut through sheet metal, so cutting stone shouldn't be a problem, right? But Xiao

Rui, the gears on those saws are very small, about the size of your palm. How big of a stone do you want to cut?"

Zhao Guodong thought for a moment. His team did have a certain tool, but he didn't know what Zhuang Rui used it for or whether it was usable.

"The smaller the better, brother-in-law. Can we borrow that tool?" Zhuang Rui was overjoyed. A smaller tool would be easier to use. A larger one would probably damage the jade inside, like that electric drill.

"I can, but I'm resigning tomorrow. If you're not in a hurry, I'm going to buy one when I go to Nanjing in a few days. Is that okay?"

Zhao Guodong hesitated. He was quitting tomorrow, and if he went to borrow something now, he was afraid people would say he was taking advantage of his company.

"Does Pengcheng sell them? Are they expensive?"

Zhuang Rui asked, explaining that he had visited several hardware stores in the past few days, but none of them sold this kind of tool; otherwise, he would have bought it long ago.

"Yes, these things aren't expensive. The better ones are a little over a thousand yuan, and the average ones are only a few hundred yuan. You can buy them at a mold shop. There's one on Jianguo Road." Zhao Guodong couldn't figure out what his brother-in-law was up to, but he still told him what he knew.

"Hehe, it's nothing. Come on, brother-in-law, let's have a drink."

Zhuang Rui was in a great mood. He had been looking for the tool for several days and finally found out about it from his brother-in-law. After dinner, Zhuang Rui planned to buy the tool back and give it to his brother-in-law after he finished using it. Since the repair shop could use it, it wouldn't be a waste.

After eating and drinking his fill, Zhuang Rui slipped out, leaving the little white lion with Nannan, and went to the grinding wheel shop that Zhao Guodong had mentioned, where he bought an electric grinding wheel tool.

This tool is small, only about the size of a baby's arm, and similar to an electric drill. It is driven by an internal motor, but instead of a drill bit, it has a diamond grinding wheel at the front. This thing has a wide range of uses and is specifically designed for cutting delicate items.

Zhuang Rui plugged in the power supply at the mold shop and tested it. The sound wasn't loud. After thinking for a moment, Zhuang Rui went to the bank and withdrew 150,000 yuan. After returning home, he gave 200,000 yuan to his brother-in-law. He didn't care to listen to his brother-in-law's analysis of the situation after the factory opened. He went straight home, crawled into the storage room, and locked the door.

In the past few days, Zhuang Rui has also done some research. He has learned that jadeite is mined from rocks and is divided into many types. The best is the old mine jadeite of the glass type. A cabochon made from this type of jadeite is often worth millions.

Zhuang Rui also visited several jewelry stores in Pengcheng, but the most expensive jadeite ornaments there were only worth a little over 100,000 yuan. When Zhuang Rui compared them with the jadeite in his own black lump stone, he found that the spiritual energy contained in the finished jadeite sold in Pengcheng was very thin, far inferior to the jadeite in his own stone.

In fact, the rough stone in Zhuang Rui's hand would be worthless in the eyes of a jade gambling expert, because it had neither pine flower nor python skin, but only some black and blue moss of varying sizes and shapes. In the eyes of an expert, such a stone could not possibly contain jade. It is unknown how Zhuang Rui's grandfather obtained these rough jade stones, yet the jade in them was brought to light in Zhuang Rui's hands.

"Hey, it really works."

Zhuang Rui found a wooden box to place underneath, stepped on the rough stone, turned on the electric grinder, and began grinding the rough stone. He could clearly see the inside of the rough stone, so he didn't care about anything else and just cut directly towards the middle of the stone.

Stone chips flew everywhere, many of them splashing onto Zhuang Rui's face, causing a slight stinging pain. However, Zhuang Rui couldn't care less at the moment. Suddenly, Zhuang Rui turned off the electric grinder. With the hissing sound of the grinder spinning, he picked up the slightly hot stone. A captivating green hue came into Zhuang Rui's eyes from the gap cut by the grinder.

