

## Golden 12

### Chapter Twelve: Anomaly

Every time Zhuang Rui used his spiritual energy, a bluish-green light would appear before his eyes, but this was invisible to outsiders. However, if someone stared intently into his eyes, they might notice the double pupils within them. Since Liu Chuan was sitting behind him, Zhuang Rui raised his arm, holding the book higher to block the old woman's view.

Zhuang Rui casually released the spiritual energy from his eyes. He didn't pay much attention to the tattered old book in his hand, just taking a look with the mentality of "better to kill the innocent than let the guilty go free." However, the moment the spiritual energy in his eyes touched the cover of the book, Zhuang Rui was shocked. He discovered that an aura far more powerful than the spiritual energy in his eyes instantly merged into the spiritual energy in his eyes and then returned to Zhuang Rui's eyes.

What is a surprise? It's when something develops in a way that is beyond your expectations. Of course, such an unexpected event should develop in a positive direction. Zhuang Rui experienced this firsthand.

The surprises continued. The spiritual energy that had been dormant in Zhuang Rui's eyes, only circling around his eye socket when he used it, suddenly began to rotate rapidly after merging with the aura of the book. Strands of spiritual energy continuously flowed into Zhuang Rui's eyeballs. There was no pain, only an indescribable tingling sensation. Zhuang Rui resisted the urge to rub his eyes and tightly closed them.

If someone could see Zhuang Rui's eyes at this moment, they would notice a faint orange-yellow shimmering within his tightly closed eyes, but it only lasted a few seconds before disappearing back into Zhuang Rui's eyes.

The spiritual energy in his eyes was still spinning rapidly, constantly merging into Zhuang Rui's eyeballs. Slowly, Zhuang Rui discovered that he could clearly see his pupils and the wisps of pale yellow spiritual energy in his eyes. All the wisps of spiritual energy poured into one of his pupils, and the pupil, which was originally slightly bluish-green, slowly turned pale yellow after the large amount of spiritual energy merged into it. Then, it emitted a powerful suction force, instantly sucking all the spiritual energy in Zhuang Rui's eyes into it.

The eye that had absorbed all the spiritual energy suddenly emitted a blinding yellow light, causing Zhuang Rui's eyes to fill with twinkling yellow stars. After an unknown amount of time, the light

dissipated, and Zhuang Rui discovered that his two eyes had merged back into one, and all the strange phenomena in his eyes had disappeared.

The tingling sensation in his eyes had disappeared, replaced by an indescribable pleasure, like taking a hot bath after a day of rolling around in the mud, washing away all the grime, or like a traveler who had been without water for three days in the desert suddenly discovering an oasis and drinking to his heart's content. The cool sensation in his eyes made Zhuang Rui feel lightheaded and otherworldly.

"Hey bro, are you alright? How's my book? Hey bro, say something! That's weird, why did you close your eyes while reading..."

A clear, ethereal voice, seemingly from afar, rang in Zhuang Rui's ears, instantly bringing him back to reality. Reluctantly opening his eyes, Zhuang Rui was startled by a wrinkled face. He thought to himself that if he didn't open his eyes, the old woman's hand might touch his face.

"Uh...madam, what did you just say?"

Zhuang Rui heard a voice beside him, but he didn't understand what it said.

"Wood, that old lady asked you if her book was a treasure. What was wrong with you just now? You were holding up a tattered book in front of you for ages, and you wouldn't answer when I called you. What's wrong? Is your head injury still not healed? Shouldn't you go to the hospital for a checkup...?" Liu Chuan stopped playing the game, pulled up a chair and sat down in front of Zhuang Rui, asking with a worried look.

"It's nothing, I just had a headache for a bit, it probably hasn't fully healed yet, but I'm fine now, no need to go to the hospital..."

Zhuang Rui didn't know how to explain it to this guy. What happened to him was too fantastical. If word got out, he would probably be taken to the Academy of Sciences for dissection immediately. He could only use a headache as an excuse.

"Young man, are you alright? No wonder you were staring blankly at the book for so long, you must be out of your mind..." the old lady muttered with a face full of sympathy, but Zhuang Rui almost couldn't catch his breath when he heard her. What kind of talk was that?

"Yes, yes, ma'am, this kid has been mentally ill since he was little. You should stay away from him. When he has an episode, he will bite people. Last time he almost bit the dog in my shop..."

Liu Chuan, who was listening nearby, laughed heartily and even fanned the flames, as he rarely saw Zhuang Rui make a fool of himself.

"Then...then I won't sell my book, sir, please give it back to me."

The old lady was easily swayed and actually believed Liu Chuan's words. She took a few steps back, but her eyes were fixed on the book in Zhuang Rui's hand, as if she was afraid that he would have a seizure and tear it up.

Zhuang Rui looked at the book in his hand with a mix of amusement and exasperation. He no longer felt that it was a tattered book; it was practically a priceless treasure. He wanted to examine it again, but Liu Chuan and the old lady were both watching him. Moreover, he didn't know what would happen if he used his spiritual energy again after the strange change in his eyes, so he didn't dare to use his spiritual energy to examine it rashly. However, he really couldn't bear to return the book.

"Auntie, you're selling this book, right? How much are you looking to sell it for? Name your price, and if it's right, I'll buy it..."

After much thought, since he wanted to keep the book, he might as well buy it himself. He felt that he had already gotten a great deal by replenishing his spiritual energy. Moreover, Zhuang Rui subconsciously felt that the book was a good thing and its value was definitely much higher than the couplets in his home. The reason was simple: the spiritual energy contained in the book was far greater than that of the couplets.

"Wood, come out here, I have something to say to you, come here..."

Liu Chuan, who had been watching the commotion from the sidelines, changed his expression after hearing Zhuang Rui's words. Without waiting for Zhuang Rui's reply, he pulled him outside the shop without further ado.

"What are you doing? Shh... It's so cold. Let's talk inside..."

As soon as he stepped out of the store, he felt the cold wind blowing straight down his neck, making Zhuang Rui shiver several times. He turned around and was about to push the door open to go back into the store.

"Let me finish speaking before you go in..."

Liu Chuan grabbed Zhuang Rui and said, "Hey, you little rascal, I've been in this market for four or five years now. I've seen people selling books, and even people selling living people. I'm not saying you're ignorant, but I could talk about this old lady's story for three days and three nights, and I could make her sound ten times worse than her."

Listen to me, let her say what she wants, we'll just treat it as a joke and move on. Don't get carried away and actually spend money to buy that rubbish book. If word gets out on the street that my brother was scammed by an old lady, I, Liu Chuan, can't afford to lose face like that..."

So that's why Liu Chuan pulled him out. Zhuang Rui was relieved. The book was definitely a rare and valuable ancient book, and it was handwritten by a famous person. Although Zhuang Rui hadn't learned about this industry at the pawnshop, he knew that the price of the item wouldn't be low. He just didn't know how to explain it to Liu Chuan.

Zhuang Rui pondered for a moment, but couldn't come up with a good excuse, so he simply said, "You scoundrel, you know what I do for a living in Zhonghai. When it comes to playing with dogs, raising fish, and fighting crickets, I admit I'm not as good as you. But when it comes to appraising antiques and having a discerning eye, you're far inferior to me. I don't care if the story is true or false, but that book is a good thing, absolutely valuable. Have you ever seen me squander money since I was a child? Trust me, you won't regret it."

Zhuang Rui was just talking nonsense. If he didn't use the spiritual energy in his eyes and relied solely on his eyesight to identify it, he probably would have thrown that tattered book into the stove and burned it.

"Really?" Liu Chuan muttered to himself, looking skeptical, as he followed Zhuang Rui back into the shop.