

Golden 133

Chapter 133 The Difference Between Wool

Hall D is about the same size as Hall A, where Qin Xuanbing's booth is located. However, the exhibits for sale here are not finished jewelry pieces, but mostly jadeite rough stones and other raw jade materials.

The number of people in this exhibition hall was relatively small. Most of the people wandering around the various booths were processors or investors. It is worth noting that since the beginning of 2000, the market price of jade has been rising steadily. This has led many people with some spare funds to invest in the industry, buying and hoarding good raw materials so that they can make a fortune when the market rises again.

After entering the exhibition hall, Gu Lao said to Zhuang Rui and Liu Chuan, "These are all merchants from Chaoshan and other places in Guangdong. Most of the stones they brought are semi-gambled rough stones. Xiao Rui, you can wander around as you like, but don't make any purchases casually. If you see a stone you like, tell me. You two girls, come with me."

After giving Zhuang Rui some instructions, Old Gu left with Lei Lei and Qin Xuanbing, leaving only Zhuang Rui and Liu Chuan there. The two looked at each other, somewhat at a loss. They knew absolutely nothing about gambling on stones. However, as Old Gu had just said, this thing was all about luck. So the two of them walked together and wandered around.

Hall D was large, but less crowded. The white and black lions, who had been cooped up in the booth of Hall A for a while, started running around excitedly. After Zhuang Rui's spiritual energy conditioning, these two Tibetan mastiffs, although fierce in appearance, lacked the inherent ferocity of Tibetan mastiffs. Except when their owners were attacked, the white and black lions rarely attacked others. This was why Zhuang Rui and Liu Chuan felt safe bringing them to crowded places.

There weren't many exhibitors selling raw jadeite here, only three or five, clustered in a corner of the exhibition hall, occupying about a few dozen square meters. Their participation in this trade fair had significantly reduced costs; they didn't build any booths or stands, just a rope cordon around an area of about ten square meters, then placed a table there—that was their booth. Inside the rope, stones of various sizes were displayed on the ground, and quite a few people were there, some with magnifying glasses, others with powerful flashlights, carefully examining them.

These stones range in size from one or two square meters and weighing hundreds of kilograms to as small as a fist. They are arranged in several rows according to their size. In front of the table where the boss is sitting, there is a simple wooden frame with stones on it. There are not many stones, only about seven or eight on each frame. They must be the better quality rough stones.

Next to each booth selling raw materials, there were several cutting and grinding machines of various sizes. Looking at these professional machines, Zhuang Rui recalled what he had done a few days ago and couldn't help but feel ashamed.

Zhuang Rui and Liu Chuan knew nothing about it, so they simply went over to see how others identified these raw materials.

Zhuang Rui and Liu Chuan approached a middle-aged man squatting on the ground. After examining the stones for less than three minutes, the owner, who was sitting at the only square table in the rough stone booth, called out to them, "You two, are you new to the business? Come on, take a look at these stones and see how they are doing."

The two men looked at it for a few minutes but couldn't figure it out. After hearing the boss's greeting, they went over and saw a few chairs by the square table. They had been standing all morning and were a little tired, so they sat down without ceremony.

"Boss, are all these stones yours? By the way, how did you tell we're both newbies?"

The jadeite rough stone merchant, who looked only a few years older than Liu Chuan and Zhuang Rui, chuckled and said, "The question you asked is just layman's talk. This isn't called a stone, it's called rough stone. Also, in this business, there's a first-come, first-served rule. No one is allowed to interfere when someone else is looking at a rough stone. Only after someone else has finished looking at it or doesn't want it can others examine it. You two squeezed in next to others as soon as you arrived. Do you think I wouldn't notice?"

"Hehe, we're not newcomers to the industry."

Zhuang Rui felt a little embarrassed by what the boss said and explained, "We're complete novices. We heard there are jadeite rough stones here, so we came here specifically to take a look. Please forgive us if we've offended anyone in any way."

The young boss laughed upon hearing this and said, "It's alright. My surname is Yang, and my given name is Hao. It's fate that you've wandered into my stall. Let's be friends."

Seeing Yang Hao's generosity, Liu Chuan and Zhuang Rui introduced themselves. Yang Hao fiddled with the tea set on the table and chatted with the two of them, ignoring the customers who were identifying the raw jade. This business attitude made Zhuang Rui and Liu Chuan a little suspicious.

"Hehe, they are all experts. They won't buy it just because you say a few nice words. That saves me from wasting my breath. If they like it, they buy it. If they're not sure, they can look at another piece of rough. In our line of work, we don't need to say much. Of course, for customers like you two, if I can persuade you to spend money, I don't mind saying a few more words."

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui and the other person's questions, Yang Hao laughed. Like Zhuang Rui, this person had a very comfortable temperament. Even though they had just met, their jokes didn't feel abrupt or offensive.

"Brother Yang, are there good and bad grades among these rough stones? I see that these booths all have this rack set up. Does that mean the rough stones on the rack are better than those on the ground? How can you tell the difference?"

Zhuang Rui wouldn't pretend to know what he didn't. It was rare to meet a boss who was about his age and quite talkative, so he naturally asked the questions that were on his mind.

"Gentlemen, as you all know, there is currently no instrument in the world that can see through the inside of a jadeite rough stone. So, no one can guarantee whether there is jadeite inside a rough stone or what its grade is. Therefore, buying rough stones is called gambling on stones."

There are two types of rough jade gambling: semi-gambling and full-gambling. Semi-gambling involves cutting a piece off the rough stone, called "opening a window," or polishing away a small portion of the outer skin, called "rubbing the stone." Whether it's opening a window or rubbing the stone, the purpose is to reveal the green inside. If green is revealed, it proves that there is jadeite inside the stone. The buyer can then judge the quality and color of the jadeite based on the revealed green. This type of gambling is called semi-gambling.

As Yang Hao spoke, he picked up a basketball-sized, oval-shaped rough jade from the shelf in front of the table and pointed to the cut on one side, saying, "This is a semi-gamble rough jade. You see, the cut has already revealed green, and the water content is quite good. Generally speaking, the closer to the core of a jadeite rough jade, the better the jadeite's quality and color. Of course, there are many exceptions. This rough jade might contain glass-like jadeite, or it might be dog shit jadeite. However, it is certain that there is jadeite inside. The reason why it is called a semi-gamble is because we are gambling on the grade, color, shape, and size of the jadeite inside."

"Brother Yang, how much is your piece of raw jade worth?"

While observing, Zhuang Rui had thoroughly examined the basketball-sized rough stone. Apart from about an inch of green on the edge, the stone was entirely white inside, with no jadeite at all. It wasn't even a piece of dog poop, let alone glass-type jadeite.

"Hehe, this rough stone is quite good. Judging from the direction of the pine flower pattern, if jadeite is found inside, it should at least be of the icy type. It should be no problem to get a dozen or so cabochons or three to five bracelets. I'll price it at three million."

Yang Hao answered, touching the stone in his hand. Zhuang Rui gasped. This was indeed a gamble. Neither he nor Liu Chuan had said they wanted to buy it, and the shop owner knew they didn't know anything about it and wouldn't lie to them. In other words, Yang Hao really thought so. Even the shop owner selling the rough stone had misjudged it. If anyone bought this rough stone, they would lose a fortune.

After placing the semi-gambled rough stone back on the shelf, Yang Hao pointed to a pile of dark stones on the ground next to the shelf and said, "These are the fully gambled rough stones. They are much cheaper than the semi-gambled ones. However, whether they contain jadeite depends entirely on the buyer's eye and luck. Of course, the quality of fully gambled rough stones also matters. Some fully gambled rough stones with excellent python patterns and pine flower patterns can be just as expensive as semi-gambled ones. So, you two, how about giving it a try?"

Yang Hao seemed to be a talkative person. Perhaps he was also quite bored sitting here. Knowing that the two people in front of him knew nothing about jadeite rough, he simply started explaining to them from the very basics.

"Come on, Brother Yang, this piece of junk you're selling for three million? Even if I sold all two hundred pounds of these, I still couldn't afford it. Can you give me a discount? A few dozen yuan each, I'll buy a few and cut them up for fun..."

Liu Chuan waved his hand and said casually, "Unlike Zhuang Rui, who is always humble when meeting people of similar age, Liu Chuan will definitely act as the older brother."

However, judging from Liu Chuan's appearance and demeanor, Yang Hao could tell that this person genuinely didn't know anything and wasn't there to cause trouble, so he wasn't angry when he heard this. He was just a little amused and exasperated, "A few dozen yuan worth of raw material, do you think it's like buying cabbage at the market?"

"Brother Liu, please don't joke with me. These rough stones, whether they are semi-gambled or fully gambled, were all transported from the jade mines in Myanmar. They all have the potential to contain jade. Not to mention the price I paid for these jade stones, or the shipping costs from Myanmar to China, just the cost of renting a car in Guangdong to bring them here was considerable. If I sell them for tens of yuan each, I can't even earn back the gas money."