

Golden 146

Chapter 146 Taking Office

"I was just about to thank you guys. If you hadn't arrived in time, I'd probably be meeting my maker by now. In a few days, I'll treat you all to drinks. Please do me the honor of joining me then!"

Zhuang Rui quickly bowed deeply to express his gratitude for their concern. After waking up, he heard from Uncle De that after the bullet grazed his eye that day, if the bank staff hadn't arrived quickly, the assailant might not be standing here today if he had fired another shot.

"Hey, this little guy is so cute."

A security guard saw the white lion following Zhuang Rui and reached out to stroke its head. Unexpectedly, the white lion suddenly charged, and the guard, who was about 1.8 meters tall, was knocked to the ground. Keep in mind that the white lion was only two months old and about the size of a German Shepherd, but its strength was terrifying. When Zhuang Rui was playing with it, he would often be pinned down by it.

At this moment, the white lion's fur stood on end, and its large mouth was half-open, aimed directly at the man's throat. The person next to it had no doubt that this bite would definitely tear the man's throat apart.

"White Lion, come back!!!"

Zhuang Rui was startled and quickly put down what he was holding on the table next to him. He rushed forward, hugged the white lion's big head, and whispered words to comfort the little guy. The cashier was already stunned and lay on the ground, unable to get up for a long time.

"Brother Zhuang, is that a Tibetan Mastiff? Wow, it's really powerful. If it had been here that day, even three more robbers would have been useless." Only after the white lion calmed down did the people around come back to their senses and praise the white lion. At this moment, the white lion was lying obediently at Zhuang Rui's feet, as docile as a pet dog, showing no trace of the violent murderous aura it had just displayed.

Zhuang Rui looked at the little white lion with a hint of helplessness. The little guy's usual docile demeanor sometimes made Zhuang Rui almost forget that it was a snow mountain mastiff king. It only revealed a hint of ferocity when it felt offended. It was alright now that Zhuang Rui was around; if he weren't, the little guy would definitely bite without hesitation.

"Manager Zhuang, please have some tea."

After the cashiers finished their handover, they all said goodbye and left. The huge pawnshop was empty except for the two security guards. At this moment, Xu Ling brought over a cup of tea and looked at Zhuang Rui timidly, looking pitiful. Her once frizzy hair, which was comparable to a white lion's, was now straightened, making her look much more comfortable than before.

"Okay, thank you. You can go ahead with your work. Has Uncle De arrived yet?"

Zhuang Rui accepted the tea and politely declined. He was puzzled. Logically speaking, the handover of money was the cashier's job. Xu Ling left early on the day of the incident, which could be considered dereliction of duty. He was surprised that she was not dismissed and was even allowed to continue in the position of cashier. Zhuang Rui was a little confused.

"Manager Zhuang, Uncle De hasn't arrived yet, but judging from the time, he should be here soon."

Xu Ling answered Zhuang Rui's question cautiously. For some reason, Zhuang Rui seemed much more dignified than before when she saw him this time, and he had a lot of the air of a leader. This kind of temperament was obviously not formed by Zhuang Rui wearing a suit.

"Xiao Zhuang, you've become a manager now, and you still arrive at work earlier than this old man. Not bad, hehe..."

Uncle De's hearty laughter came from the doorway, and Zhuang Rui hurriedly went to greet him. Uncle De was wearing an old-fashioned blue robe and a mandarin jacket, with cloth shoes on his feet. He was in good spirits and had a somewhat otherworldly air about him.

"Hey, this little guy is pretty good. Where did you get him, Xiao Zhuang?" Uncle De looked at White Lion with a serious expression on his face. His eye for talent was far superior to that of the other security guards. He could tell at a glance that White Lion was extraordinary.

"Uncle De, it's a long story. I also brought you some nice items; please take a look.

Zhuang Rui replied with a smile that Uncle De usually treated him like a junior member of the family, and Zhuang Rui also respected Uncle De very much.

"Oh, it seems you've really figured it out. In our antique business, it's not just about fighting against the heavens, but even more so against people. There's endless fun in it. Come on, let's go to your office and have a good chat, you and I."

Uncle De waved his hand, signaling Zhuang Rui to take the things, and went upstairs first.

The pawnshop has two floors. The first floor is the lobby and cash collection area, and there is also a forfeited pawn section in one corner. However, since the robbery, the forfeited pawn section has been moved to the second floor. There are security guards at the entrance of the staircase leading from the first floor to the second road.

Besides a section set aside for the sale of forfeited pawned items, the second floor also housed the offices of several appraisers and the manager. Uncle De used to be the manager of the pawnshop, so the room with the sign "Manager's Office" had never been used. Knowing that Zhuang Rui was about to start work, Uncle De had that office cleaned up.

Pushing open the office door, Zhuang Rui was greeted by a very impressive executive desk with a brand-new computer on it. To the right of the desk was a row of circular sofas surrounding a transparent teapot. After walking around, Zhuang Rui discovered that the office also had a restroom and a small lounge where one could take a nap at noon.

"How about it, Xiao Zhuang? This office is much better than my old man's. Does being the manager feel good?" Uncle De teased, seeing Zhuang Rui's delighted expression.

"Uncle De, that's too kind of you. How about we switch places?" Zhuang Rui quickly said.

"No, this is fine. I'm not comfortable sitting in this chair. Come on, let me see what you've brought."
Uncle De shook his head. His office was decorated in a classical style and filled with all kinds of genuine and fake antiques. He liked to stay in that kind of atmosphere.

"Uncle De, let's chat and see. I'm completely clueless about this manager position. You must give me some pointers. Otherwise, you should take over the manager's position."

Zhuang Rui chuckled and closed the door first, then put the things he was carrying on the coffee table. His experience was far too limited; without Uncle De's support, he probably wouldn't be able to hold down the manager's position.

"Huh? Xiao Zhuang, didn't you say you only had one couplet with the word 'generous'? Where did this purple clay teapot come from? I feel like I've seen it at someone's place before. Wait a minute, let me think..."

Uncle De didn't stand on ceremony and opened the wooden box that Zhuang Rui had brought. He was stunned when he saw the eleven-piece set of purple clay teapots. After regaining his senses, he immediately picked up the teapot and examined it carefully. Zhuang Rui didn't say anything. Seeing an electric kettle in the room, he got up and filled it with water from the water dispenser and started boiling it.

"Hey, I just remembered! Isn't this that old 'money-grubbing' guy's stuff? How did it end up in your hands?"

Uncle De slammed his large, veiny hands on the coffee table, startling Zhuang Rui who was boiling water. Even the white lion that had been lying at the door since entering the house suddenly stood up and let out a low growl.

Zhuang Rui quickly went over and checked the coffee table. Luckily, the glass was quite thick; otherwise, he would have smashed it.

"Uncle De, you have to be careful. It's not a big deal if the coffee table breaks, but it would be a real shame if you hurt your hand."

"I already said I don't like this damn office. Why not use a perfectly good wooden table instead of these broken glass things? By the way, Xiao Zhuang, was I right? This set of teapots should have been brought by Zhu Kexin to the National Arts and Crafts Conference in 1953. I saw it in the hands of that old geezer Qian Yaosi."

Uncle De complained a few times, his eyes fixed on Zhuang Rui, waiting for him to give an answer. Zisha (purple clay) objects belong to the miscellaneous category. Uncle De had immersed himself in this field for decades and was confident that he would not be mistaken.

Upon hearing this, Zhuang Rui was filled with admiration for Uncle De. In less than three minutes, Uncle De had not only explained the origin and history of the teapot perfectly, but also its source. Such skill was not something that Zhuang Rui, who could only distinguish between genuine and fake, could fake.

"You're absolutely right. This item is the prize I won in my bet with Manager Qian. I bet the old man is still feeling the pinch right now."

Zhuang Rui gave Uncle De a thumbs up, and then recounted his experience of visiting the Confucius Temple Antique Market. Of course, he couldn't mention the supernatural power in his eyes. Zhuang Rui only mentioned that when he picked up the purple clay teapot, Manager Qian's eyes looked a little flustered, which was how he won the bet.

"Good! Good!! Well won!!! That old man is like a greedy pig, once something gets into his hands, it only goes in and never comes out, unless you pay for it. If you want to trade it, there's no way. I never thought he would fall into your hands. Good, next time I see that old man, I'll definitely give him a piece of my mind."

Uncle De seemed to have some grudge against Qian Yaosi, but at this moment he was laughing heartily, and the wrinkles on his face were smoothed out. Judging from his appearance, he was probably happier than if he had drunk honey.

After laughing at Qian Yaosi, Uncle De said to Zhuang Rui, "Come on, bring out your old dzi bead and let Uncle De take a look."

If you were to ask Zhuang Rui who he trusted most, Uncle De would definitely be one of them. After spending more than a year with him, Zhuang Rui knew that the old man was kind to him purely out of love and care, without any ulterior motives involved. So, upon hearing this, he took off the dzi bead bracelet without hesitation and handed it to Uncle De.

Uncle De waved his hands repeatedly, saying, "Put it on the coffee table; I won't handle this item." It seems that Uncle De was also aware of the taboo surrounding dzi beads.

Just then, the water in the electric kettle boiled and beeped. Zhuang Rui quickly went over and unplugged it. Suddenly, his cell phone rang in his pocket. Zhuang Rui took it out and saw that it was an unfamiliar local number from Zhonghai. Without thinking much, he pressed the answer button.

"Hello, are you Zhuang Rui? This is Miao Feifei..."

The female voice coming from the phone left Zhuang Rui completely confused. Who was Miao Feifei?