

## Golden 181

### Chapter 181 Red Jade and Green Jade

"What's up, young man? Got your eye on that rough stone?" A sly glint appeared in Boss Yu's small eyes. 68kj.

"No, since this piece of raw jade is a family heirloom of Mr. Yu, it's best to leave it there."

Although the warehouse was dimly lit, Zhuang Rui did not miss the expression in Boss Yu's eyes. "Damn it, it's hereditary. It's probably just something someone else picked up and couldn't bear to throw away." Zhuang Rui didn't actually use his spiritual energy to examine the rough stone. After hearing what Boss Yu said, he lost even more interest.

"Hehe, out with the old, in with the new, right? If you're interested, young man, why don't you take a look first? I'll be a spendthrift for once." This Boss Yu's skin was exceptionally thick; he said these words without batting an eye.

"Forget it, that stone is more like a latrine pad than a jadeite rough. By the way, Mr. Yu, what's the price of this rough stone I picked out?"

Zhuang Rui ignored what the boss said. He thought, "You think you can sell a broken stone used as a stepping stone for money? I've never seen such a shrewd merchant."

Upon hearing this, Boss Yu glanced at the rough jade stone Zhuang Rui had picked out and muttered, "Young man, you have a good eye! The outer skin of this rough stone is quite impressive. Don't be fooled by the rough surface; there are subtle signs of pine flower hidden in this grayish-white area. If you rub it, you might find some green jade..."

"Stop, stop, Mr. Yu. If you're going to talk like that, I won't even ask about the price of this rough stone. You can keep it and polish it yourself. This stone is so bad, yet you call it full of pine flower and python patterns. Do you really think I don't know anything about jade?"

Before the boss could finish speaking, Zhuang Rui was already furious. The rough stone's surface was grayish-white with a slight yellow tinge, which only confirmed it came from the old Hpakant mine, but it

didn't seem to indicate any good quality. If the white color could penetrate the stone and produce white cotton-like inclusions, it might be possible to find jadeite, but even then, the quality wouldn't be very high.

However, the white color with a yellowish tinge makes it virtually impossible for white cotton to appear, and there's not a trace of pine flower pattern. Boss Yu's words are just empty talk and flowery language, how could Zhuang Rui not be angry? Besides, the layer of jade in this rough stone is only good for fooling people when polishing the stone; it's not worth much at all. Whether Zhuang Rui buys it or not doesn't matter.

"Hey young man, we haven't even discussed the price yet. If you don't think it's right, we can discuss it further."

After hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Boss Yu knew that this young man was not someone who could be easily fooled. So he stopped promoting that piece of jade as a gamble. The two types of people you should avoid in business are those who are particularly knowledgeable and have strong professional knowledge. It's best to tell the truth to these kinds of people and not try to deceive them.

Another type of person is completely clueless. No matter how eloquently you speak, even if you spit your fill of words, they won't buy it. They'll start haggling and don't follow the rules at all. They can leave you speechless. Boss Yu is afraid that Zhuang Rui is this type of person.

"Let's wait until Brother Song and the others have made their choices, then we'll look at them together..."

Zhuang Rui was too lazy to negotiate the price with this unscrupulous merchant anymore. Although Master Peng's ability to assess raw materials was not as good as his own, his understanding of the prices of these raw materials was far superior. He would let him see how much they were worth later.

"Okay, we'll do as you say, young man."

Boss Yu was very agreeable this time. He and Zhuang Rui had the same idea. Master Peng came with you. Once he sets a price, this young man in front of you shouldn't try to haggle.

"Boss Yu is from Henan, right? His accent hasn't changed; it's somewhat similar to the accent from my hometown..."

Zhuang Rui asked casually, seemingly without thinking, using the Pengcheng dialect. Pengcheng borders Henan, Shandong, and Anhui provinces, resulting in a similar accent.

"Hey? Young man, are you from Henan? You're right, I'm from Henan. I came to Guangdong to make my way in the world in the early 1990s, and more than ten years have passed in the blink of an eye..."  
Hearing Zhuang Rui's familiar accent, Boss Yu stopped pretending to speak Mandarin and simply started speaking Henan dialect with Zhuang Rui.

"Boss Yu is really amazing. In just over ten years, he has built such a large business. Has he not been back to his hometown in Henan all these years?" Zhuang Rui continued to steer the conversation.

"Why didn't he go back? Grandpa is still in the countryside in Henan, where he likes to grow vegetables and raise chickens. He absolutely refuses to come here, saying that the people here speak gibberish. Grandpa is getting old, and I have to go back to visit him every year now..."

It was a rare treat to meet someone from the same hometown, so Boss Yu started chatting away with Zhuang Rui.

"Oh... so the old man is also in the raw material business. It's been passed down for two generations."

Zhuang Rui drawled out his words, looking at the rough stone under the shelf, with a knowing look on his face. He didn't actually want the rough stone, but he couldn't stand the boss's habit of talking nonsense.

"Hehe, young man, you're quite the joker. This is just business jargon. That piece of rough jade really did come from the old mine pit at Mukan Factory. It's been here with me for seven or eight years. If you're interested, the price is negotiable. Take a look first, and I'll go and call Boss Song."

Boss Yu chuckled, his face showing no embarrassment at being exposed. However, he felt that Zhuang Rui was quite shrewd, having quietly set a trap for him. Therefore, he dared not say anything more to Zhuang Rui, apologized, and then went to distribute cigarettes to Song Jun.

Zhuang Rui had looked at all the rough stones on the ground. Although some contained jadeite, the quality was only average. Moreover, the outer skin of those rough stones was quite good. Presumably, the unscrupulous boss would ask for a high price, so Zhuang Rui didn't pick out those rough stones. As for the semi-rough stones, he had no interest in them at all. He simply sat on the rough stone he had just picked up and started smoking.

Zhuang Rui sat facing the rough jade stone that was being used as a support. In the dim light, and with the smoke swirling around, the stone became even more difficult to see. Out of boredom, Zhuang Rui released his spiritual energy to see what was inside this so-called old mine jade stone.

The appearance of this rough stone is extremely inconspicuous. The entire stone is a brownish-red color. Perhaps due to the long time that has passed, the brown color has turned somewhat black. The surface of the stone has no features whatsoever. There is not a trace of pine flower or python pattern, and it does not show at all that this is a jadeite rough stone.

After Zhuang Rui's eyes peered through the stone, he discovered that beneath the dark brown surface, there were some translucent and slightly transparent white spots that formed strips that enveloped the entire stone, extending inwards like silk threads.

"White cotton???"

Zhuang Rui was somewhat surprised that such a stone actually contained white cotton. As everyone knows, "white cotton" in jadeite is mostly caused by uneven color distribution within the jadeite itself. In other words, most rough stones with white cotton will contain jadeite, regardless of its quality.

This discovery piqued Zhuang Rui's interest in the rough stone, and he immediately focused his attention to examine it further. Instead of trying to see through the stone all at once, he proceeded layer by layer, like rubbing a stone. This not only allowed him to understand the structure inside the rough stone but also increased the enjoyment of his treasure hunt.

About seven or eight centimeters further in from the side where Zhuang Rui was standing, a thin layer of pale red "mist"-like crystals came into Zhuang Rui's view. Zhuang Rui's heart tightened involuntarily, and he subconsciously put the cigarette in his hand into his mouth and took a big drag.

It is known that if there is "fog" in the rough stone, nine times out of ten it contains jadeite. Generally speaking, the jadeite under the white fog must be a top-quality jadeite that is "pure", "bright", "sunny" and "even". However, Zhuang Rui had never heard of red fog before, and his heart was filled with anticipation.

Looking down, the red intensified, and suddenly, an indescribable crimson appeared before Zhuang Rui's eyes. It was an extremely alluring and dazzling red, like a fiery sunset, stimulating Zhuang Rui's optic nerves. For a moment, Zhuang Rui's thoughts seemed to stop, and he was completely immersed in this bright color.

"Ouch..."

Without noticing, the cigarette butt burned to the very end, causing Zhuang Rui to cry out, which attracted the attention of the people who were still looking at the raw materials.

"What's wrong, Zhuang Rui? Is something the matter?" Song Jun asked.

Zhuang Rui forced himself not to look at the rough stone at the bottom, and said in a normal tone, "It's nothing, Brother Song. I'm thinking about going to Shanxi at the end of the month, and I have some things to tell Da Chuan. Have you guys picked out the stones yet?"

"It'll be ready soon, there are still three or five pieces left to look at," Song Jun replied, but Master Peng didn't even look up, still staring at the rough stones in his hand.

Seeing that no one was paying attention to him, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but turn his gaze back to the rough stone. Although he knew the saying that red jadeite is called "fei" and green jadeite is called "cui", Zhuang Rui had always thought that jadeite should be green. However, the jadeite in the rough stone in front of him had obviously overturned his understanding.

In fact, jadeite originally comes in a variety of colors. As the ancients said, "Jade has five colors," but jadeite has six colors. With the addition of purple, it becomes six colors: green, purple, white, yellow, red, and black. In fact, the colors of jadeite are far more than these. Its variations and combinations are very rich and colorful. Even within the same color of green, there are great variations, such as emerald green, bright green, bean green, and oily green.

Since green is the most common color, jadeite has always been considered the most prized. However, in recent years, the other five colors have also become increasingly popular, with red jadeite being the most valuable.

## Chapter 182 The Rift

Jadeite's popularity in China is relatively short. Although it appeared quite early, it only gained widespread recognition and acceptance during the late Qing Dynasty and early Republican era.

The rise of jade fashion must be mentioned in connection with two famous women who led this trend. Both of them were influential figures in modern Chinese history: Empress Dowager Cixi of the Qing Dynasty, who ruled China for half a century, and Soong Mei-ling, who was once the "First Lady" of the Kuomintang.

Empress Dowager Cixi of the Qing Dynasty was fond of jade carvings throughout her life. After her death, many jade carvings and rubies and sapphires were buried with her. Among them were two jade watermelons with green skin, red flesh, black seeds and white veins, which were worth 5 million taels of silver at the time.

Two jade cabbages, with green leaves and white stems, each with a green grasshopper perched on its heart and two yellow bees beside the leaves, were worth 10 million taels of silver. This shows the extent of Empress Dowager Cixi's love for jade and also demonstrates the extreme extravagance of this "ruling from behind the curtain" ruler. However, all of these items were later looted by Sun Dianying. One of them is now in the National Palace Museum in Taipei, while the whereabouts of the other jade cabbage are unknown.

Soong Mei-ling's love for jadeite was also well-known. In the 1930s, a jadeite tycoon in Beijing acquired a piece of jadeite with exceptional color. He found a skilled craftsman to carve it into a pair of bracelets. The bracelets were unique in design, with a vibrant and translucent quality, like water. Du Yuesheng, the leader of the Shanghai Green Gang, bought the bracelets for 40,000 yuan. When Soong Mei-ling saw the jadeite bracelets worn by Du's wife, she fell in love with them at first sight and couldn't bear to part with them. Du's wife had no choice but to part with her beloved bracelets and give them to Soong Mei-ling.

At Soong Mei-ling's 100th birthday banquet in 1997, this renowned woman, with her traditional hairstyle and black cheongsam, appeared before many guests and media, stunning everyone. She wore a complete set of jade jewelry: jade earrings, a jade beaded necklace, a jade bracelet, and a jade ring. The entire set of jade jewelry was of the highest quality in color and texture. Adorned with this jade jewelry, even at a hundred years old, she remained elegant and dignified, exuding grace and nobility.

According to some experts, the jadeite jewelry worn by Soong Mei-ling alone is worth over 100 million RMB, demonstrating her deep affection for jadeite.

Because of the love these two famous figures in modern times had for jadeite, jadeite has thus earned the reputation of "King of Jade".

The jadeite favored by the two women above is high-quality green jadeite. Therefore, in the early days of the jadeite craze in China, people highly valued green jadeite. In the 1980s and 1990s, green jadeite rough was several times or even dozens of times more expensive than jadeite of other colors. This is because jadeite of other colors is usually mixed with other colors, so many people looked down on jadeite of red, yellow, blue, purple and other colors.

However, in recent years, jadeite with a single, pure color has gradually become sought after, especially the blood jade bracelet made of the top-grade red jadeite "cockscorn red", which can cost tens of millions of yuan. It is even rarer than jadeite jewelry made of glass-type imperial green.

The reason Zhuang Rui was dumbfounded when he saw this rough jade was because he knew the value of red jade. Not long ago, when he was still working at the pawnshop, a multinational auction jointly operated by China Overseas and overseas sold a pair of blood jade bracelets made of top-quality red jade. The two bracelets were sold for RMB 13.88 million.

Zhuang Rui had the opportunity to observe the pair of bracelets up close. Their color and texture were extremely similar to the red jade in the rough stone. Perhaps because the jade in the rough stone was larger, Zhuang Rui even had a feeling that the color of the bracelets was not as bright and vivid as the jade in the rough stone.

Zhuang Rui took out a cigarette from his pocket, his hands trembling slightly as he lit it. After inhaling the smoke deeply, perhaps due to the nicotine, his excited emotions gradually calmed down. He didn't rush to look at the rough jade again, but quietly finished his cigarette before turning his gaze back to it.

This time, Zhuang Rui was much calmer. He was no longer attracted by the bright red color. Instead, he observed the distribution of red jade in the entire rough stone and then quickly withdrew his spiritual energy.

Even though Zhuang Rui had calmed down earlier, his heart was still pounding like a drum, as if it was about to jump out of his throat. Zhuang Rui quickly stood up, went back to the pile of rough stones, found the drink he had left, and gulped it all down in one go before he calmed down again.

Zhuang Rui is usually a very composed person, and he has seen a lot of the world. Even Ma Pangzi's forty million had never excited him so much. But the scene he just saw made his heart race and his blood boil just by thinking about it for a moment.

This piece of rough jade measures between 40 and 60 centimeters in length and width, making it quite a large piece. A rough estimate suggests it weighs over 100 kilograms. What Zhuang Rui saw was that in the middle of this piece, about one-third of the way up to the size of two footballs, was entirely composed of top-quality red jadeite that was almost transparent and had a bright, lustrous sheen.

To the lower right of this piece of red jadeite, there is a small area separated by red mist, which is also red jadeite, but the water content is not as pure, and there is a slight brownish tinge in the red. In other words, this piece of rough jadeite weighing more than 100 kilograms can yield at least 30 kilograms of top-quality red jadeite.

Zhuang Rui quickly calculated in his mind that the large piece of red jade should yield at least twenty pairs of bracelets, and the remaining material could easily be carved into a hundred or so pendants and playthings. These items alone were already worth hundreds of millions, not even counting the piece of jade next to it that wasn't of very good quality.

Although Zhuang Rui was not short of money after gaining his superpower, and could even refuse Ma Pangzi's offer of 40 million to buy the white lion, he could no longer remain calm in the face of this top-quality jadeite worth hundreds of millions. Anyone else would probably find it hard to resist such a temptation.

In fact, Zhuang Rui's calculation of the value of this rough jade was somewhat off. A pair of top-quality red jadeite bracelets made of blood jade could indeed fetch tens of millions of yuan at auction, but if more than twenty pairs of blood jade bracelets appeared at the same time, their price would definitely drop sharply. So if he wanted to sell them at his desired price, he could only release one pair every few years. If he wanted to sell all twenty-odd bracelets, it would probably take decades.

At this moment, Zhuang Rui naturally wouldn't be thinking about these things. Right now, all he could think about was how to buy this rough jade. If it weren't for the remaining rationality in his mind telling him to stay calm, Zhuang Rui would have even wanted to throw all his money at it and take the rough

jade away immediately. As long as this rough jade didn't belong to him, Zhuang Rui wouldn't feel at ease for a moment.

"Boss Yu, these are the pieces. Let's take them out and put them together first."

Song Jun's voice rang out in the warehouse. Then, Boss Yu and the broker with the mustache pushed a simple luggage cart, put the few rough stones that Master Peng had selected and marked onto the cart, and pulled them together to a table by the door.

"There are five rough stones in total, and three of them are in very good condition. The total weight is 140 kilograms. Master Peng is an expert, so I don't dare to set a price randomly. The total is 6.6 million. Everyone wants good luck. What do you think, Mr. Song?"

Boss Yu held a calculator in his hand, looking at each of the half-finished rough stones on the ground, pressing the keys rapidly. After a while, he calculated this number.

Zhuang Rui also went over and looked at the pieces of raw jade that Master Peng had selected.

These are all semi-rough stones with windows opened. Judging from the green color revealed by the polishing, they all have excellent qualities. Among them, the green color revealed by polishing three stones has reached the level of icy jade. Moreover, these three rough stones are not small, each weighing around 40 kilograms. If the green color revealed by polishing can penetrate deeper, even by only 7 or 8 centimeters, it should be possible to extract two or three icy jade bracelets, which would be a sure profit.

However, the green areas on these rough stones all have very fine "cracks," which makes the situation uncertain. There's a saying in the jade gambling circle: "We're not afraid of big cracks, but we're afraid of small cracks."

Cracks and fissures are extremely harmful to jadeite. Large cracks are easy to observe and their impact on jadeite is easy to see. However, fissures are small and change easily, sometimes large, sometimes small, sometimes deep, sometimes shallow, making them difficult to detect. Because of their hidden and changeable nature, fissures are difficult to grasp, hence the saying "It's not the large cracks that are scary, but the small fissures."

However, with risk comes opportunity. Jadeite rough is unpredictable. Rough stones with cracks are extremely risky, as the jadeite structure inside may be destroyed by these cracks. However, these cracks may also be post-formed cracks. Post-formed cracks refer to cracks that form after the jadeite is formed. Such cracks do not affect the jadeite inside and have a very high probability of producing top-quality jadeite.

Most people gamble on stones mainly on color, but there are also those who gamble on type or location. Some people with a strong speculative mentality gamble on cracks and fog. Although this is very risky, the price of rough stones with cracks is generally not very high. If the gamble pays off, the returns are quite high and proportional to the risk. Obviously, Master Peng can be considered one of these people.

After examining the fine cracks on the rough stones with his flashlight, Zhuang Rui released his spiritual energy to look inside. Upon seeing this, he was immediately impressed by Master Peng, who was a man of few words and somewhat dull-witted.

Through his spiritual energy, Zhuang Rui saw that the green color of the three rough stones appeared about four or five centimeters below the cracks, and the cracks disappeared. The jadeite inside was also of good quality, with two pieces almost reaching the glassy level, and the other piece being slightly inferior to the icy level. Even so, he was confident that these three rough stones could be sold for tens of millions of yuan once they were cut open.

"Boss Yu, this price is a bit unfair..."

Just as Zhuang Rui squatted down to examine the rough stones, the other side started negotiating the price. Master Peng was an expert at examining rough stones, but haggling was what Boss Song, Song Jun, excelled at.

Chapter 183 Asking for an exorbitant price, bargaining on the spot

"Boss Yu, you must know the risks of gambling on cracks better than I do. To be honest, I'm not sure if I'll buy these three rough stones. Whether they'll rise or fall after cracking is anyone's guess. You're offering over six million, which clearly shows you're not being sincere..."

Song Jun's smiling face tightened upon hearing the price quoted by Boss Yu. This rough stone vendor was outrageous; he was charging nearly 50,000 yuan per kilogram for a mere 1.5 pieces of rough stone. At that rate, he might as well bid at the auction the day after tomorrow. (69shux.com)

"Mr. Song, that's not how it works. You've seen the open windows on these three rough stones; they're all bright green. As long as the green seeps in, it's a sure thing. The price isn't high at all." Although Mr. Yu spoke slowly and deliberately, he remained unyielding about the price.

"What if it doesn't penetrate? Gambling on stones is all about luck, but Boss Yu, the price you're offering is too unfair. A semi-rough stone with cracks, and it's only of the icy type, at 50,000 yuan per kilogram— if you can sell it, I, Song Jun, will buy up all the rough stones in your warehouse, what's wrong with that!"

Song Jun was getting a little angry. This skinny old man was obviously trying to rip them off. In fact, Song Jun didn't quite understand the ins and outs of inspecting smuggled goods, which was why he got angry.

In Pingzhou, there are generally three channels for gambling on rough stones. The first is the so-called "Jade Bidding and Trading Fair" held by the government, where the rough stones are all placed there and the highest bidder wins. This is a sealed bid. The second is an open bid, where many people may be interested in a piece of rough stone, so they bid on it on the spot, and naturally the highest bidder wins. This method is the most exciting because the person who buys the rough stone will often cut it on the spot. Whether the gamble goes well or not depends on one cut, and it is the most exciting thing for onlookers to watch.

Another method involves viewing smuggled goods. Prices here are not very transparent; often, raw material merchants ask for exorbitant prices, and buyers haggle on the spot. However, the final price is generally agreed upon by both parties. But Song Jun was clearly getting impatient, and his tone wasn't very pleasant.

"Ahem... Mr. Song, Mr. Yu was just saying that. There's still room for negotiation on the price. Let's discuss it calmly and not get angry..."

Seeing the tense situation, the broker with the mustache quickly stepped in to smooth things over. Song Jun's expression softened, but he refused to negotiate with Boss Yu anymore. He gestured to Master Peng, signaling him to go up and talk.

"These three pieces of rough jade with cracks are worth 20,000 yuan per kilogram, and the remaining two are worth 10,000 yuan each..."

Master Peng was clearly not good at negotiating prices; his tone was even more curt than Song Jun's. After quoting the price, he didn't say anything more. Under the dim, swaying light, Boss Yu's face appeared to be unpredictable, shifting between light and shadow.

“Master Peng, isn't this price a bit too low? At this price, I can't even cover the cost of bringing it back from Myanmar. How about we offer the rough stones with cracks for 30,000 yuan per kilogram, and the remaining two pieces for 10,000 yuan per kilogram, as you said?”

After thinking for a while, Boss Yu gritted his teeth and said, his face looking as if someone had poked his anus with a stick, displaying an expression of unbearable pain.

“The risk of three cracked pieces is too high, and 30,000 is not worth it. As for Myanmar, I have lived there for more than ten years, and I know a thing or two about this business, Mr. Yu. This is the price. If you don't agree, you can keep it for others to see, and we will buy the remaining two and a half pieces of rough jade.”

Master Peng remained as stern as ever, sticking to his quoted price.

Boss Yu knew he had met a discerning person. He understood the meaning behind Master Peng's words and realized that these few rough stones were leftovers from other people's inspections. If that were the case, five or six groups of people had come to the warehouse in the past few days, and none of them were sure about these three and a half rough stones. Some people had offered prices, but the highest they had offered was 15,000 yuan per kilogram. The price that Master Peng mentioned was already the highest.

After thinking it over in his mind, Boss Yu realized that while there were people who gambled on rough stones, there weren't many. Rather than keeping these rough stones in his hands, he decided to sell them. He said, "Alright, this is our first transaction. There's plenty of time in the future. Consider this my way of making friends with you all. Let's settle on Master Peng's price. Would you like to pay in cash or by bank transfer?"

In places like this, checks are not accepted, not even cash checks. These raw material merchants won't accept them, which is why Boss Yu asked that question.

"Transfer the money, Mr. Yu, please calculate the price..."

As soon as Song Jun said this, the atmosphere in the warehouse immediately eased. Seeing that the deal was done, a smile immediately appeared on Song Jun's face. With his shrewdness, his anger just now was obviously an act. However, Zhuang Rui did not see it and was still thinking to himself that Song Jun's face changed too quickly.

"The three cracked rough stones weigh a total of 101 kilograms. Let's leave the odd amount out and say 100 kilograms. The other two pieces weigh 40 kilograms in total, for a total of 2.4 million."

Mr. Yu quickly calculated the price with a calculator, then opened the drawer of the table by the door. Inside were four bank POS machines connected to the wall, including those from the Bank of China, China Construction Bank, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, and Agricultural Bank of China—truly a complete collection.

"Mr. Yu, don't be in such a hurry. I still have a piece of raw jade that I haven't examined yet."

Zhuang Rui was a little annoyed. Did he think he didn't have to spend money when he bought things? They were ignoring him completely.

"Hehe, young man, don't be in a hurry. I've looked at this rough stone. In front of Master Peng, I won't mince words. Although this rough stone isn't very good, it's still from the old mine in Pak Kong. It's six thousand yuan per kilogram. What do you think?"

When Boss Yu was chatting with Zhuang Rui earlier, he had already seen through this rough stone. To be honest, he was not optimistic about this completely gambled stone, otherwise he would have already cut a window or polished out an edge.

"Mr. Zhuang, this piece of jade doesn't have much of a gamble..."

Master Peng squatted down and carefully examined the rough stone that Zhuang Rui had brought out. He slowly shook his head, his meaning clear: it wasn't even worth six thousand yuan. However, Zhuang Rui wasn't his boss, so he couldn't be too explicit.

“Master Peng, you know the price of this old mine material. I’m not asking for it blindly.”

Upon hearing this, Boss Yu became somewhat anxious. He had quite a few such raw stones, and if he couldn't sell them, they would all be stuck in his hands. Although the price of six thousand yuan per kilogram wasn't very high, this piece of raw stone should weigh more than twenty kilograms, which would be worth at least more than one hundred thousand yuan.

"Six thousand yuan per kilogram, twenty kilograms would be 120,000 RMB! Forget it, I'd better not. Boss Yu, I just wanted to indulge my passion for stone cutting, but spending over 100,000 yuan on a single stone is too extravagant. Forget it, forget it..."

After hearing what Boss Yu and Master Peng said, Zhuang Rui counted on his fingers and shook his head repeatedly, looking as if he knew nothing about gambling on stones.

“Young man, that’s not how you do it. If you can find jade in here, it’ll be worth more than 120,000 yuan. Even if you only find a piece of jade the size of a fist, you’ll break even. Plus, you can get some fun with it. It’s a win-win situation, isn’t it?”

Even Boss Yu himself didn't quite believe what he said. The performance of this piece of rough jade was really poor, and the possibility of it turning green was extremely small. Otherwise, it would have been picked up by someone else long ago.

Zhuang Rui looked hesitant, glanced at the raw material on the ground, and turned to Song Jun, asking, "Brother Song, what do you think? Should I buy it or not?"

"Alright, kid, don't ask me. Make your own decision, or I'll end up complaining if you cut things down too much." Song Jun ignored Zhuang Rui's question. Although 100,000 or so wasn't a lot, he wasn't willing to help Zhuang Rui make this decision.

"That's true. A single cut and you've lost tens of thousands. That's not satisfying at all," Zhuang Rui muttered to himself.

"I guess I'm just unlucky. How about this, young man, I'll give you a little something extra?"

When Boss Yu saw that Zhuang Rui still preferred not to buy, he became a little anxious. Even a small amount is still something. Besides, more than 100,000 yuan is not a small sum. Even though the raw material didn't look good, it cost him tens of thousands of yuan to bring it back from Myanmar.

"Add-on? What add-on?" Zhuang Rui asked, feigning confusion.

Boss Yu pointed to the stone at the foot of the shelf and said, "Look, that piece, the rough stone you just looked at, together with this one, is worth seven thousand yuan per kilogram. How about that? I only charged you one thousand yuan per kilogram for that one. Isn't that a freebie?"

Upon hearing this, Zhuang Rui was overjoyed. He had been putting on an act all day, trying to steer the conversation toward the raw jade, but he hadn't expected Boss Yu to bring it up himself.

"Stay calm, you must stay calm."

Zhuang Rui kept reminding himself, but put on a nonchalant look and said, "Boss Yu, I'm young and I might not speak very well. Please don't take offense. Your broken rock is only good for filling out a latrine. You're thinking of selling it for money?"

Zhuang Rui's words were somewhat hurtful, and Boss Yu became agitated upon hearing them. He called for Xiao Huzi to lend a hand, and they took several semi-rough stones from the shelf near the corner to the ground. Then, he bent down and pulled out the fully rough stone.

To be honest, this Boss Yu, despite his lean build, is quite strong. He managed to move and pull a boulder weighing over 100 pounds out from under the shelf, though he was also covered in sweat and panting heavily.

"Young man, let Master Peng take a look. If this isn't raw material from the old mine pit at Damukan Factory, may I, Lao Yu, be struck by lightning if I'm lying."

Boss Yu didn't seem to be faking it; he was genuinely angry. No wonder, these rough stones were his treasures. Although this one was of poor quality and showed no signs of being jadeite, he had indeed gotten it from an old mine in Myanmar.

Chapter 184 Wishes Fulfilled

"The outer skin is brownish-black with a slight yellow tinge, which resembles rough jade from the old mines of Damukan. However, Mr. Zhuang, most of the rough jade from Damukan is multicolored jade. Although they do produce top-quality red jade,..."

After squatting on the ground for a while, Master Peng stood up and shared his opinion, but he only said half of it, clearly not very optimistic about this large piece of rough jade.

Although the price of 1,000 yuan per kilogram is not expensive, the raw material is huge. Even if we calculate based on 50 kilograms, it would still cost 50,000 RMB.

"Is this rough stone really a raw material? The kind that can yield jadeite?"

Zhuang Rui's words left everyone speechless. There is no instrument in the world that can see through the outer layer of a rough stone, and no one dares to guarantee that a piece of rough stone will definitely contain jade. This is why it is called gambling on stones.

"It is indeed rough material from the old mine pit of Damukan Factory, but whether it can yield jadeite is hard to say," Master Peng said honestly.

"Young man, I didn't lie to you, did I? Old Yu has been in the raw material business for almost twenty years, and his reputation is impeccable."

Boss Yu had just caught his breath. If it weren't for that rough jade worth over 100,000 yuan, he wouldn't have bothered talking to Zhuang Rui.

"But I keep feeling like I'm spending money on a worthless stone, it's really bothering me. How about this, Mr. Yu, I won't haggle over the other rough stone which is 6,000 yuan per kilogram, but you said this rough stone is a bonus, 500 yuan per kilogram, so I'll take both of them. I'll find a place to cut them open later, just to practice my skills."

Zhuang Rui remained calm, as if he were simply haggling over a price in a normal business transaction, without showing the slightest fluctuation in his expression.

"Alright, I'm having a clearance sale today, even if it means I lose money."

Boss Yu gritted his teeth and agreed to Zhuang Rui's offer. The piece of rough jade that was included as a bonus weighed over 110 kilograms. He had kept it for seven or eight years. During that time, at least fifty or sixty people had looked at it, but they all lost interest after just one glance. Boss Yu had even considered cutting it open himself, but that would mean he would bear the risk, which is a big taboo for rough jade merchants. That's why he had kept it until now. Now, by selling it at a lower price, he could finally put his mind at ease.

"The rough jade from the Damukan factory weighs 58 kilograms and costs 29,000 RMB. The rough jade from the Pak Kong factory weighs 26 kilograms and costs 156,000 RMB. Together, the total is 185,000 RMB. Young man, am I right?"

Boss Yu calculated the price of the two rough stones on his calculator, but since he wouldn't make much profit from them, he didn't suggest rounding down the 5,000 yuan.

"That's right, Brother Song, should you go first or should I go first?"

Zhuang Rui nodded, took out his bank card from his wallet, and turned to ask Song Jun a question.

"You little rascal, you're practically throwing money away! You go first..."

Song Jun glared at Zhuang Rui with annoyance. In his opinion, the two rough stones that Zhuang Rui bought had no room for appreciation, whether they were hoarded or cut into stones. They were just two pieces of money-losing goods.

"Hehe, Brother Song, you don't know, after that kid Da Chuan made more than ten million from cutting stones, he's been nagging me on the phone all day long. Let's cut a rough stone worth tens of millions to annoy him too."

Zhuang Rui walked to the table with a simple smile, swiped his card, entered the amount of 185,000 yuan, and then entered the password. The transaction was then completed, and the two rough stones at his feet now belonged entirely to Zhuang Rui.

Credit card transactions are much more convenient than cash transactions. At least for Song Jun's two million yuan, if it were all in cash, it would probably take several hours to count the money. While waiting for Song Jun to swipe his card, Zhuang Rui took out his phone and called Zhou Rui, telling him the address of Boss Yu's store and asking him to drive his Grand Cherokee over.

"What, are you planning to put these two rough stones in the car and take them back?" Song Jun asked with a surprised look after hearing Zhuang Rui's phone call.

"Yeah, I have nowhere to put it. I'll just put it in the car. The hotel's security system is pretty good. Besides, with its size, it's hard for him to steal it without two people," Zhuang Rui replied matter-of-factly.

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Song Jun said, half-laughing and half-crying, "Do you even know that there's such a thing as baggage handling? Can't you just come up with the money for a few bags?"

Zhuang Rui really didn't know that these raw materials could be shipped. He thought that since these things were so valuable, the buyer would definitely rent a car to take them back. He didn't expect that they could actually be shipped.

Pingzhou has logistics companies that specialize in serving these raw material merchants. They are willing to handle the shipping of even the most expensive raw materials, although the shipping fees are exorbitantly high. Of course, if the raw materials are lost, they will compensate according to the insured amount on the shipping document.

"Forget it, I'm going to drive back anyway. These two pieces of rough jade aren't very big, so I'll just take them back together. Maybe I'll be in a good mood and unravel them here in the next couple of days."

Zhuang Rui thought for a moment and decided to take the rough stone back himself. Firstly, he was really worried about letting a logistics company transport that stone worth over 100 million yuan. Secondly, he wanted to gather a large crowd to polish the rough stone, which revealed green underneath, hoping to sell it if possible.

"Whatever you want..." Song Jun didn't take the more than 100,000 yuan worth of raw materials seriously.

"Come on... come on, gentlemen, have some watermelon. It's unbearably hot today."

After finishing their business, Boss Yu called his wife to bring over a plate of watermelon. The temperature in Guangdong in June was already as high as 35 degrees Celsius. Even with the air conditioning on, everyone was still sweating profusely. Eating the frozen watermelon was indeed much more refreshing.

After finishing the watermelon, Boss Yu made another phone call, this time to ask the logistics company to come and handle the shipping procedures. Due to the special nature of jade gambling transactions, some logistics companies offer 24-hour door-to-door pickup, which is much more convenient and flexible than shipping within the mainland.

"Boss Yu, please open the door, my car is here."

The group moved the raw materials onto a cart and had just set them up in the yard when they heard the sound of a car parking outside. Then Zhuang Rui's phone rang.

"Okay, I'm coming." Boss Yu first locked the warehouse door, walked to the door and looked through the peephole before opening his own front door.

As soon as the door opened, a white shadow darted past Boss Yu, startling him so much that he stumbled and almost fell. Looking back, he saw a Tibetan mastiff the size of a calf pouncing on Zhuang Rui.

"This...this, Big Yellow, Second Yellow, go!"

Boss Yu reacted quickly, immediately calling his two wolfhounds to help Zhuang Rui. However, he found that his two Kunming dogs, which had always been very brave, were now hiding by the wall with their tails between their legs. When he looked at Zhuang Rui, he saw the Tibetan Mastiff affectionately sticking out its tongue and licking Zhuang Rui's face.

"You scared me half to death! Damn it, you two beasts eat plenty of meat usually, but you let us down when it matters. You good-for-nothings."

Boss Yu patted his chest. He now knew that the Tibetan Mastiff must belong to Zhuang Rui. However, when he looked at his own two wolfhounds, he couldn't help but feel depressed. They were all dogs, but why were they so different?

"Hehe, Boss Yu, I'm drooling over that Tibetan Mastiff. You know, someone offered 40 million RMB, but that kid still didn't sell it." Song Jun was also a little surprised when he saw the size of the white lion. In just a few months, the white lion's size was already not much different from that of an adult Tibetan Mastiff.

"Forty million? Goodness..."

Upon hearing this, Boss Yu, the man with the mustache, and Master Peng all looked at the man and dog with much more seriousness, and their evaluation of Zhuang Rui was raised to an even higher level.

"Brother Zhou, give me a hand and help me put this piece of raw jade on the car."

Zhuang Rui called out to Zhou Rui, who came in after him, and the two of them struggled to lift the rough stone weighing more than fifty kilograms and walked outside the gate.

"What? Aren't you going to put it in the trunk?"

Zhou Rui noticed that Zhuang Rui hadn't opened the trunk, but instead opened the back door, and asked curiously.

"Put it in the middle of the car; this stone is quite heavy."

Zhuang Rui made up a lame excuse, got into the car, first lifted the back seat, then put the piece of wool under the seat, and then put the seat back. Because of the cover on the seat, it was not visible from the outside that there was a stone weighing fifty or sixty pounds under the seat.

"You little rascal, you're being so careful with such a broken rock."

When Song Jun came out and saw this, he shook his head dismissively.

"You worthless rock. If you knew about the red jade inside, you probably wouldn't think that way."

Zhuang Rui didn't answer. After looking around the Grand Cherokee from all sides, he finally felt relieved. Unless someone stole the car along with it, no one except the people present would know that there was a piece of raw jade hidden in the car.

After placing the red jadeite rough stone, Zhuang Rui carried the more than 20-kilogram Hpakant rough stone to the trunk. He wanted to clean it up and sell it as soon as possible.

The group waited in the yard for a while, and then the logistics company that Boss Yu had called arrived. After taking photos of Song Jun's rough stones, sealing them, and completing the relevant procedures, they loaded them all onto the truck and drove away.

"Xiao Linzi, next time find a more straightforward boss. This one is just too slow."

After leaving Boss Yu's house and arriving at the jade market, Song Jun took out more than ten pink banknotes from his bag and handed them to the broker, Little Mustache.

After taking the money, the man with the mustache said repeatedly, "Of course, I will definitely make sure Mr. Song is satisfied next time. I will call you again after I have made the arrangements tomorrow."

"No, I'll collect the money next time Boss Zhuang wants to inspect the goods alone."

Seeing Song Jun's actions, Zhuang Rui counted out a thousand yuan and handed it to the man with the mustache, but the man pushed it back and casually handed Zhuang Rui a business card with his contact information on it.

"Brother Song, this family doesn't have many rough stones. Are they saving the good ones for the jade gambling convention?"

Half an hour later, Song Jun and Zhuang Rui, who had returned to their room and taken a shower, sat in the hotel's coffee shop. The reason was that Song Jun wanted to talk to his younger brother a bit more, as he didn't want to see Zhuang Rui invest his hopes of buying a villa in gambling on jade.

"This boss has quite a few good things on hand. He has two more warehouses like this one elsewhere. He's quite a 'big shot,' and I imagine he's one of the less popular figures in Myanmar," Song Jun chuckled dismissively.

"What does this have to do with Myanmar?" Zhuang Rui asked curiously.

"Nonsense, of course it's related to Myanmar. Myanmar has relatively strict rules regarding jadeite rough stones, requiring them to be sold through the jadeite gambling convention. However, good rough stones are already targeted by many Chinese buyers before the jadeite gambling convention is held in Myanmar."

Every "big player" involved in the trade of raw jade stones must have their own secret channel to bypass Myanmar customs. This is because truly good raw jade stones are not exhibited at the Yangon jade gambling convention. Therefore, some people take the risk of transporting good raw jade stones to China in advance instead of participating in the jade gambling convention. According to Myanmar regulations, this is considered smuggling. Boss Yu is probably one of these people.

Actually, the price of jadeite in China was driven up by these rough jadeite merchants from Pingzhou. We entered the market too late..."

After listening to Song Jun's words, Zhuang Rui finally understood the true situation of jade gambling in Pingzhou, which was much more complicated than he had imagined.

In the 1980s, jadeite was not worth much in Myanmar because jade culture was only found in China. Later, merchants from Pingzhou discovered jadeite in Myanmar and smuggled it to China, where they set high prices.

However, a few years ago, a dispute arose among several Chinese who monopolized the Pingzhou market over the distribution of profits. Someone exposed the matter, and only then did the Myanmar government begin to seriously investigate.

Since then, Myanmar has required that rough stones be traded only in the trading hall in Yangon. As a result, companies that import rough stones are no longer as ostentatious as before. However, due to the channels that have been established in the past, people who specialize in smuggling rough stones still gather in Pingzhou. These smuggling companies have established connections in Myanmar and transport goods directly by truck.

Although there are still some risks involved in smuggling raw stones, once they are successfully transported to China, it is generally a sure thing to make a profit.

"By the way, brother, listen to what Brother Song says: in the world of jade gambling, people always report good news and never bad. All you hear are stories of winning big, but there are countless people who have lost everything gambling."

Your last encounter with Da Chuan was purely lucky, but luck can't keep following you every time, can it? You've bought those two stones, but you should probably limit your spending in the future and know when to stop.

After chatting for a while, Song Jun remembered the purpose of his invitation to Zhuang Rui and earnestly offered his advice.

Chapter 185 Jade Cicada

"I understand, Brother Song. I'll only put up a maximum of five million to try my luck at the Pingzhou Jade Gambling Conference; I won't invest all my funds..."

Zhuang Rui appreciated Song Jun's advice; if someone wasn't genuinely looking out for you, there's no need to say things that might offend them.

"Okay, as long as you know what I mean. It's late, go to sleep. I'll call you first thing tomorrow morning and take you to see the Ghost Market." Song Jun called the waiter over, paid the bill, and said to Zhuang Rui with a smug look on his face.

"Hehe, Brother Song, I've already been there, and I even had some success..."

Zhuang Rui told Song Jun about the set of Ru ware porcelain fragments he had found in the ghost market. He planned to sell the item after it was repaired, so he wasn't afraid of others finding out.

"You...you mean, you found a complete fragment of Ru ware porcelain?!"

Song Jun, who had just stood up, slumped back down after Zhuang Rui's words, his face filled with disbelief. After receiving Zhuang Rui's affirmative reply, he shook his head repeatedly and said, "I didn't say anything earlier. You can gamble as much money as you have. Damn, your luck is just too good."

On the way to the elevator, Song Jun kept his eyes fixed on Zhuang Rui's left wrist, muttering to himself that he would go to Tibet when he had time and definitely get a bracelet blessed by a living Buddha. In his opinion, Zhuang Rui's good luck was undoubtedly brought by this string of old dzi beads.

...

Perhaps spurred on by Zhuang Rui's good luck, the next day, Zhuang Rui was still half asleep when he was woken up by a phone call from Song Jun, who invited him to stroll around the ghost market. Looking at the time, it was only three o'clock. Helpless, Zhuang Rui got up, washed up, and took Bai Shi to the hotel entrance to meet Song Jun.

This time, Song Jun didn't bring Master Peng with him; he came alone. Clearly, his expertise in antiques was superior to Master Peng's.

On Jade Street, there was only one street lamp every ten meters or so, and they were all energy-saving lamps. After midnight, the light was very dim. Song Jun and Zhuang Rui were considered early. At this time, people had already set up stalls on both sides of Jade Street, and some people had just arrived and were spreading out their stalls on the ground.

Since the Pingzhou Jadeite Gambling Conference is officially opening tomorrow, this "ghost market" is also on its last day. People who are looking for bargains are getting up early, and there are more people browsing the ghost market on the jade street than there are stalls.

To Song Jun's dismay, his powerful flashlight drew a barrage of curses the moment he turned it on, while Zhuang Rui's small flashlight went unnoticed. Seeing this, Zhuang Rui casually handed his flashlight to

Song Jun. To him, those antiques imbued with spiritual energy were like fireflies in the night; as long as they existed, they couldn't escape his eyes, regardless of day or night.

"Brother, let's handle this separately. Contact me by phone if anything comes up."

The jade street is over 2,000 meters long. Although there aren't many vendors at the moment, there are still forty or fifty stalls. Song Jun then separated from Zhuang Rui and wandered around on his own.

Without a flashlight, working under this dim light wouldn't add much experience, so Zhuang Rui was too lazy to examine each item one by one. Instead, he simply released the spiritual energy in his eyes at each stall, enveloping all the items there. In this way, as long as there were antiques among them, they basically wouldn't escape his eyes.

What frustrated Zhuang Rui was that after looking at four or five stalls, he hadn't found anything of value. Occasionally, there would be one or two items containing a faint spiritual energy, but when Zhuang Rui picked them up, they were just porcelain pieces made in the late Qing Dynasty folk kilns, worthless. Moreover, the stall owners knew their value and casually quoted prices higher than those in auction houses. Zhuang Rui didn't even bother to haggle and went straight to the next stall.

"Hey bro, how come you figured it out so fast?"

Zhuang Rui and Song Jun started looking at things on opposite sides of the street. Less than an hour later, Zhuang Rui turned to the other side of the street and bumped into Song Jun at a stall.

"Did you give me the flashlight? You can't see clearly anymore. You should take it. My eyesight is better, bro."

Song Jun was a little embarrassed and handed the flashlight in his hand to Zhuang Rui.

"No, Brother Song, you take it. I'm here to accompany the Crown Prince in his studies today."

Zhuang Rui didn't take the flashlight. He had already looked at more than twenty stalls and hadn't found a single good item. He had basically given up hope. It seemed that finding something good in this ghost market depended on luck.

"Then I won't stand on ceremony."

While talking, Song Jun continued to observe the items he had been looking at. After about seven or eight minutes, Song Jun reached out his hand to the stall owner. Because it was dark, Zhuang Rui did not see their gestures, but Zhuang Rui did see clearly when Song Jun took out money. He handed two unopened RMB bills to the stall owner.

Zhuang Rui was taken aback. Spending 20,000 yuan on something in a place like this was either a huge profit or a huge loss. The thing didn't seem to be very big, and Song Jun was holding it in his hand. Zhuang Rui couldn't see it for a moment, so he couldn't help but ask, "Brother Song, what did you buy?"

"Hehe, bro, you really are a lucky charm! I just came over and I've already found something good. Come on, I'm not looking anymore, let's go back to the hotel.

Song Jun looked excited and pulled Zhuang Rui to head back, no longer wanting to look at the remaining stalls. There's a reason for this; once collectors have found a good item, they generally won't continue looking, because the excitement of finding a bargain can easily affect their subsequent judgment.

"Hey Song, I haven't finished reading yet. Okay, don't pull me, I'll go with you, alright?"

Zhuang Rui wanted to see the remaining stalls, but Song Jun dragged him back to the hotel.

"Brother Song, what treasure is it that's making you so excited? I haven't gotten anything at all." After sitting down at the hotel, Zhuang Rui asked, his tone tinged with complaint. Today was the last day of the Ghost Market; once it was gone, it was gone forever.

"Don't rush, I need to take another look."

Song Jun's words almost made Zhuang Rui stumble. Good heavens, it turns out that Boss Song bought it without even realizing it.

The main lights in the hotel were turned off, but no one would question turning on a powerful flashlight. Song Jun placed the object in his hand on the coffee table in front of the sofa, then turned on the flashlight and shone the bright light on the object.

"What is this thing?"

What appeared in Zhuang Rui's eyes was just a reddish object about the size of a thumb, covered in mud, making it impossible to tell what it was.

"Hehe, of course it's good stuff." After looking at it for a while, Song Jun picked up the item from the coffee table and handed it to Zhuang Rui.

"Damn, this cicada is worth 20,000?"

When Zhuang Rui got his hands on it, it took him a lot of effort to realize that it was a cicada carved from jade. The color on it was so deep that it was hard to tell without careful observation.

"You don't know anything. This is called a jade cicada, and it's just a burial jade from the Han Dynasty. It's very precious..." Song Jun replied irritably.

Upon hearing Song Jun's words, Zhuang Rui took it to heart and examined it carefully. The jade cicada was only three or four centimeters long and about two centimeters wide. It had large eyes and a narrow, elongated trapezoidal body. There was a tiny, almost invisible hole in the center of the cicada's head, presumably for threading a rope through it.

This jade cicada is made of good material. Zhuang Rui thinks it is made of Xinjiang white jade, but it is covered with deep red stains. The cicada's body is carved into a regular rhombus shape, with a simple and concise image. The head, wings and abdomen are carved with thick incised lines, and it is completed with just a few strokes. The carving technique is very concise. The two wings on the back of the cicada are symmetrical, like lung lobes. The overall shape is very regular.

"Brother Song, is this what you call oral sex?"

Zhuang Rui played with the jade cicada in his hand and asked Song Jun about it. He knew that jade cicadas were usually placed in the mouths of the dead to symbolize purity, transcendence, resurrection, and rebirth, but this was the first time Zhuang Rui had seen it with his own eyes.

In ancient times, jade cicadas had three uses: first, they were worn on hats as a high-class decoration; second, they were strung on ropes and hung on the body as ornaments; and third, they were burial objects, which was the most common use of jade cicadas, placed in the mouths of the deceased.

From the Hongshan Culture of the Stone Age, for over 5,000 years, people have held a deep fascination with cicadas, stemming from our ancestors' pursuit of immortality. Some experts believe that the transformation of a cicada from larva to adult involves metamorphosis, a rebirth. Holding a cicada symbolizes being reborn, a fresh start.

"Yes, this is what was in the mouth of the deceased who had his 'jade plugged in nine orifices'... Jade cicada, brother, we're really lucky today. This is a genuine Han Dynasty eight-cut jade cicada. Damn, that kid at the stall must have dug it out of some Han Dynasty tomb." Song Jun was still very excited and even swore, showing that he was extremely satisfied with finding this item.

"Jade plugs the nine orifices" means that after a person dies, a piece of jade is inserted into the nine orifices of the body. These are all very particular. The jade is placed in the hands of the dead person, called "jade grip", and the jade is also covered in the eyes, called "jade closing eyes". The jade in the mouth is called "jade mouth".

As for the "Han Eight Cuts" mentioned by the Song army, it refers to a jade carving technique created by this jade cicada. Specifically, it refers to the type of jade funerary object from the Han Dynasty where the craftsmanship was applied only to the back of the cicada. Broadly speaking, jade funerary objects with craftsmanship applied to both the back and abdomen can also be considered "Han Eight Cuts." This carving technique was lost after the Han Dynasty, so a genuine Han Eight Cuts jade cicada is extremely precious in terms of both its artistic value and its contribution to the study of the craftsmanship at that time.

While handling it, Zhuang Rui had already examined it with his spiritual energy and confirmed that it was indeed an artifact from the Han Dynasty. It did contain spiritual energy and was a deep purple color, although the amount was not very large. However, as Zhuang Rui handled it, he seemed to feel the spiritual energy within it slowly increasing.

This discovery piqued Zhuang Rui's interest. If his feeling was true, it meant that the formation of spiritual energy within these antiques was definitely related to the nourishment and handling by the human body.

"Brother Song, I was just thinking of finding a nice piece of jade to play with. How about I have this jade cicada? Name your price." Zhuang Rui wasn't sure if the feeling he had just experienced was his imagination. Besides, he had been looking for a good piece of jade to play with. This jade cicada had three different colors of patina and the jade quality was not bad, which barely met Zhuang Rui's requirements.

Song Jun paused for a moment after hearing Zhuang Rui's words, then looked at Zhuang Rui with a half-smile and asked, "What's up, brother? You've got your eye on this thing?"

"What's wrong? What's the explanation for this?" Zhuang Rui asked, noticing Song Jun's strange smile.

"There's no official explanation, but this thing is quite expensive."

"Hey, Brother Song, I didn't say I wouldn't give you the money. Just tell me how much it is, that's all."

Zhuang Rui was puzzled. It was just a small trinket from the Han Dynasty, so small in size, how much could it be worth?

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Song Jun straightened his expression and said, "Alright, let me put it this way. Just a few months ago, an old friend of mine brought back a jade cicada with eight Han dynasty carvings from overseas. The quality, jade texture, and patina of that jade cicada are far inferior to mine. He spent 200,000 yuan to buy it back then. What do you think is a suitable price for mine?"

"Two hundred thousand? That's really not cheap..."

Zhuang Rui was taken aback when he heard the price. It wasn't that he couldn't afford that much money, but rather that he had never spent so much on a bargain before. He was now wondering whether it was worth spending 200,000 yuan to buy this thing to play with.

"Okay, Brother Song, that guy spent 200,000, how about I pay 300,000 for yours? If you agree, I'll transfer the money to you at a bank when it's light."

After thinking about it for a while, Zhuang Rui decided to buy it anyway. Ancient jade is extremely rare, and this jade cicada has three different colors of patina. If it is properly polished, its value will probably be far more than 300,000 yuan.

"Hey bro, don't rush me. My friend spent \$200,000. I don't want your \$300,000. Give me \$250,000 and you can take this thing."

After Zhuang Rui expressed his desire to buy it, Song Jun slowly explained that Zhuang Rui then realized why Song Jun had that expression earlier. It turned out that such a tiny trinket was worth a third of his wealth.

"Come on, Brother Song, you're deliberately trying to provoke me. Don't try to provoke me. I can't take a beating, can I?"

As Zhuang Rui spoke, he handed the jade cicada back to Song Jun. He had gritted his teeth for a long time when Song Jun had asked for 300,000 dollars, but when it was exchanged for 250,000 US dollars, Zhuang Rui didn't even need to think about it and returned the item directly.

This thing is nice, and Zhuang Rui also wants to figure out if the spiritual energy inside this object can really be increased by playing with it. But he's not going to spend over 2 million to do an experiment. Besides, with these eyes, Zhuang Rui doesn't believe he won't be able to find some good antique jade in the future.

Chapter 186 Conflict (Part 1)

"Hey, smoking isn't allowed here. I'm talking to you, looking around like that.

Zhuang Rui had just slipped into the airport exit hall to light a cigarette, but before he could even take two puffs, he was stopped by a tourist overflowing with a sense of public service.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'll leave now."

Zhuang Rui looked at the middle-aged woman with a thick waist in front of him, apologized repeatedly, and quickly walked to the door of the exit. Looking at the heavy rain outside, he felt very depressed.

This was the second time Zhuang Rui had come to the airport to pick someone up in three days. Today, the third and second sons arrived in Guangzhou from Shaanxi and Beijing respectively. Fortunately, their flights were only a little over an hour apart; otherwise, Zhuang Rui would have had to make another trip.

Guangdong experiences frequent thunderstorms in the summer. This morning, when I was browsing the ghost market, there were still stars in the sky, but only seven or eight hours later, it's already pouring rain. The flight is definitely going to be delayed again. Zhuang Rui got bored waiting in the car, so he simply came to the exit hall to wait.

Thinking about what happened that morning, Zhuang Rui was still a little conflicted. Just because he started wandering in the wrong direction, such a precious jade cicada with eight cuts from the Han Dynasty slipped through his fingers. Although Zhuang Rui was somewhat unwilling, he later returned to the Ghost Market and searched around again, but he did not find anything of value.

"Hey, over here..."

While Zhuang Rui was lost in thought, he suddenly heard a familiar voice. Looking in the direction of the voice, he saw Lao San waving at him. The girl standing next to him was Zhang Rong, Lao San's girlfriend. Zhuang Rui knew her well; they were classmates from the same year of university.

"Honey, I knew it! The youngest brother would definitely come to pick us up no matter the weather." Zhuang Rui had just walked up to the third brother when he heard the third brother whispering to Zhang Rong.

"Brother Fa, it's been two years since I last saw you. You've leveled up! Ah Rong is now your wife. When are you going to give out wedding candy to the brothers? No, I should say when are you going to give out red eggs to us brothers?"

Red eggs are only given after a baby is born in mainland China. Zhuang Rui's words made Zhang Rong's fair face instantly turn red. The third brother, however, just grinned sheepishly and didn't refute, saying with a grin, "We've set our wedding for June 18th. We'll hold the wedding banquet after we get back from here."

"Well, Brother Fa, you've pulled a surprise attack! So you've taken Lao Si's money for your honeymoon? We'll see how Lao Si deals with you later."

Zhuang Rui was somewhat surprised to hear that his third brother was getting married soon, but it made sense. His third brother and Zhang Rong had been dating for three years in college, and counting the two years since graduation, it had been five years, so it was time for them to get married.

"We still have to wait here for a while. The second brother's flight probably won't arrive for another hour. Come on, let's go over there and rest for a bit." Zhuang Rui looked around and saw a few rows of plastic chairs in the corner. He beckoned the third brother and Zhang Rong to go over there, but he didn't notice that from the crowd who had just disembarked, a pair of eyes were staring at him with resentment.

Xu Wei's feelings for Zhuang Rui went beyond mere resentment; he practically hated Zhuang Rui to the core. Back in Pengcheng, Zhuang Rui caused him to fire the British jewelry designer he had personally hired, resulting in a significant drop in his reputation within the family. Although the main reason was Qin Xuanbing, Xu Wei also blamed Zhuang Rui for this.

The second time was at the jade exhibition in Nanjing, where he met Zhuang Rui again. Not only did he lose millions gambling on stones, but he also offended Wang Yigun, a local tyrant in Nanjing. Later, Wang Yigun made things difficult for him in many ways, and the family's business in Nanjing became very difficult. It was because of this incident that Xu Wei was transferred from the position of general manager of Xu's Jewelry in South China to general manager in Northwest China.

Although Xu Wei's transfer didn't change his rank or benefits within the company, the disparity in wealth between the two locations—one in the Yangtze River Delta and the other in the newly developed Northwest—was obvious. This transfer also signaled Xu Wei's marginalization by his family.

Given Xu Wei's magnanimity and emotional intelligence, he naturally believed that his gambling on stones was instigated by Zhuang Rui and others, and that he had encouraged Wang Yigun to deal with Zhuang Rui as a matter of course. There are always some people in this world who are very good at discovering their own strengths and covering up some minor flaws.

"Da Biao, boss, I've met someone I don't like. Can you teach him a lesson?"

Xu Wei hid behind the crowd and spoke to a fierce-looking man next to him.

The man Xu Wei called Da Biao looked to be in his early thirties. He had a scar on his face, running from his eye to his lip, which looked like a worm crawling across his face, adding to his fierce appearance. His large hands had thick calluses on the knuckles, clearly indicating that he was a trained fighter.

"Sever an arm or a leg? Boss, you decide."

Da Biao stuck out his tongue and licked his lips, a sinister and cruel look appearing in his eyes.

"No, you don't need to do that. If something happens, won't you get involved too?"

Xu Wei was startled by Da Biao's words. He did want to break Zhuang Rui's arm and leg, and he wasn't afraid that Da Biao would be implicated. Even if Da Biao went to jail, it wouldn't have anything to do with him. The key thing was that he was afraid that this matter would implicate him, which would be troublesome. Cold-hearted people are often the ones who think the most about themselves.

"Boss, it's alright. Just give him an internal injury and keep him bedridden for ten days or half a month. It's easy." Da Biao hadn't heard anyone groan and beg for mercy under his command in a long time, and a hint of excitement appeared on his face.

"Is this... okay?"

Xu Wei looked at Da Biao with some doubt. If he could inflict internal injuries on Zhuang Rui, he would be more than happy to do so.

Xu Wei usually travels alone, but last time in Nanjing, he not only lost everything gambling on stones, but was also beaten up by some local thugs hired by Wang Yigun. He suffered a double blow, both physically and mentally. As a result, after arriving in the Northwest, Xu Wei immediately used his connections to find a bodyguard.

This man named Da Biao was introduced to Xu Wei by a client. He was said to be very skilled in martial arts, but he came from a poor family and went astray. He spent seven or eight years in prison and was a prison bully. After his release, he had no special abilities or skills, but relying on his fighting skills, he gathered a group of thugs and hooligans to collect protection money on the streets.

As for Xu Wei's client, he was originally a neighbor of Da Biao's family. However, Da Biao's over sixty-year-old mother came to plead for him. Knowing that Da Biao was ruthless and cruel, she thought he was the perfect candidate to be a bodyguard, so she introduced him to Xu Wei.

Da Biao was quite satisfied with his new identity as a bodyguard. He ate and drank well with his boss every day and frequented high-end hotels. The women who used to look down on him would now strip naked and lie on his bed if he was interested. Da Biao felt that he had wasted the previous thirty-odd years of his life and this was the kind of life he should be living.

Of course, Da Biao also fully demonstrated his fighting prowess. The guy who offended the boss a few days ago had all his teeth knocked out by him. The boss was very satisfied with his performance and gave him 10,000 yuan. This money was much easier to earn than collecting protection money.

"Boss, just you wait and see..."

As he spoke, Da Biao lit a cigarette and sauntered toward Zhuang Rui. In his mind, he was already thinking about what reward his boss would give him that night. Guangdong was much more open than his hometown, and Da Biao was already fantasizing about finding a few girls to relieve his pent-up desires that night.

Finding a fault to teach someone a lesson was a piece of cake for Da Biao. Just as he walked past the chair where Zhuang Rui was sitting, he took the cigarette out of his mouth with his left hand, flicked the cigarette butt hard with his index finger, and it flew onto Zhuang Rui's trouser leg.

"Hey, friend, your cigarette butt burned my pants..."

Zhuang Rui, who was having a lively conversation with the third brother, suddenly felt a heat on his thigh. He then realized that a cigarette butt had just slipped off his pants. Clearly, the person holding the cigarette was the culprit.

Zhuang Rui was a little annoyed. He was just smoking a cigarette and someone was talking about it. While this guy was smoking, the chubby-waisted auntie from earlier had disappeared. Zhuang Rui didn't mean anything by stopping the scarred man; he just wanted him to apologize.

"Really? I'm so sorry, let me knock the ash off for you."

A smile appeared on Da Biao's face. Before Zhuang Rui could reply, a large hand slapped Zhuang Rui's right leg, right at the knee joint. The sound of the slap was so loud that even the third brother next to him could clearly hear it.

Ouch!

Caught off guard, Zhuang Rui felt a piercing pain in his right leg, especially his knee, which felt as if it were broken. He couldn't help but cry out. He immediately realized that this person was looking for trouble. Zhuang Rui reacted quickly, and with that thought, he kicked his left leg towards the person's face.

"Hey bro, damn it!"

The third brother practiced the family's Red Fist style since childhood, which emphasizes practical combat. He often got injured when sparring with his fellow disciples. The sound coming from Zhuang Rui's right leg made him immediately realize that his bone was broken.

Although the third brother was honest and kind, he became furious when he saw his brother's leg crippled in front of him. Just as Zhuang Rui kicked out with his left foot, the third brother jumped up from the chair, used his waist and hips to punch the man in the chest.

Da Biao struck Zhuang Rui's right knee with a palm strike. Upon hearing the crisp sound, he knew he had succeeded. He merely shifted his body slightly to the side to dodge Zhuang Rui's kick, but unexpectedly, a gust of wind came from the side. Before Da Biao could even see clearly, he was struck solidly in the chest by a punch.

As if hit by a speeding train, Da Biao's body flew backward two or three meters as if it were made of paper. Because the ground was slippery, his body slid for more than ten meters after landing, and blood kept spilling from his mouth.

#### Chapter 187 Conflict (Part Two)

This brief conflict was like a flash of lightning, happening quickly and ending even faster. Da Biao, though fierce, was coughing up blood from Lao San's punch, but he forced himself to his feet and ran quickly towards the arrival hall entrance, disappearing into the crowd in the blink of an eye.

"Hey kid, what's wrong? Is it serious?"

The third brother, mindful of Zhuang Rui's injuries, didn't dare chase after him. He had clearly heard the crisp sound just now; it must have been a broken bone.

"Third Brother, I'm alright..."

As Zhuang Rui spoke, his eyes scanned the crowd. This must have been done by someone who knew him; otherwise, who would have gone to such lengths for no reason?

"Damn it, it's that bastard!"

Suddenly, a familiar figure flashed in Zhuang Rui's sight and then disappeared at the entrance of the hall.

"It's Xu Wei! Ouch..."

Zhuang Rui instantly understood what was going on. Enraged, he stood up to chase after the man, but forgot that his right leg had been slapped hard by the man, and he sat back down in pain.

"Who is Xu Wei? Don't get agitated, little brother. If they dare to come again, I'll take care of them." The third brother also realized that Zhuang Rui had encountered an enemy.

"It's alright, Third Brother, my legs are just numb, they'll be fine in a bit."

As Zhuang Rui spoke, spiritual energy seeped into the skin of his legs. With a cool sensation, the excruciating pain gradually subsided. Before long, Zhuang Rui could no longer feel the pain. He tried to stand up and take a few steps, and found that he was completely healed.

"Hey, are you really alright? Don't push yourself too hard." The third brother was still a little worried. That palm strike just now showed that the other party was a trained fighter. How could he be alright so quickly?

"It's really alright, Third Brother, look..."

Zhuang Rui paced back and forth a few times before the third brother finally felt relieved.

"Zhuang Rui, who was that person just now? Why was he targeting you?"

Zhang Rong was terrified. Although it was only a short moment from when Da Biao slapped Zhuang Rui's leg to when Lao San injured him, Zhang Rong was right next to him and saw it all clearly. Even when Da Biao vomited blood, it didn't escape her eyes.

"He's a petty person, it's alright, sister-in-law, you don't need to worry about this."

Zhuang Rui cursed Xu Wei's ancestors to the eighteenth generation in his heart, but he didn't want his third brother to get involved in this matter. After all, his third brother was a civil servant, and it wouldn't be good if his unit found out that he was involved.

"I punched that guy just now. He probably won't be able to get out of bed for three to five months. Old man, just be careful when you go out."

Seeing that Zhuang Rui was unwilling to say more, the third brother did not press further. He knew his own fists well; that punch had been very solid and would definitely have broken several ribs. If the opponent tried to escape, his internal injuries would only worsen.

Zhuang Rui wasn't worried about what the man would do to him in the future. After all, it was a society governed by law, and Xu Wei wouldn't dare hire someone to kill him. However, Xu Wei's behavior made Zhuang Rui's teeth itch with hatred. He was determined to make Xu Wei taste the power of a fist when he had the chance to see him. Although he had already mentally attacked Xu Wei several times, Zhuang Rui didn't mind making him feel the pain physically as well.

"Boss...the person who offended you has been walking on crutches for the past few months. But I didn't expect him to have a martial arts expert by his side. I...I was seriously injured by him."

Inside a taxi speeding through the heavy rain, blood continued to spill from Da Biao's mouth as he spoke. This deal had been a loss; he knew in his heart that his injuries, if not treated for at least six months, might leave him with serious chronic conditions.

"Okay, not bad, Da Biao. Take this money and go to a hospital to keep an eye on things. I'll call you again if anything happens."

Xu Wei took out three dollars from his bag and threw them to Da Biao. He felt extremely pleased. Just thinking about Zhuang Rui leaning on his crutches made him want to laugh. As for Da Biao, as long as he didn't die, a little injury was nothing. Thirty thousand dollars was enough to get rid of him.

"Damn it, why did the weather suddenly turn so cold in June? That kid surnamed Zhuang, he wouldn't know I did this, would he? Definitely not, I didn't even show my face..."

After arriving in Guangzhou, Xu Wei had a taxi take Da Biao to the hospital. He got out of the taxi and hailed another one. As soon as he got out, he shivered and quickly gave the driver an address. They headed to the hotel he had booked in advance. In Xu Wei's view, this matter was done flawlessly. As long as Da Biao did not appear by his side, even if Zhuang Rui saw him, he would have no evidence to prove that he had hired someone to deal with him.

Zhuang Rui didn't have time to deal with Xu Wei at the moment. They were being questioned at the airport. Although the commotion wasn't big, it still alerted the airport police. However, the party responsible for the incident had already left, and no one had reported the incident. According to the airport surveillance footage, the fault did not lie with Zhuang Rui and his group. Therefore, after a statement was taken, the matter was dropped.

After this delay, the second brother's flight arrived, and the group had a lively reunion. Zhuang Rui didn't mention what had just happened and drove back to Pingzhou with the second brother.

Wei Ge and Lao Si had been waiting anxiously at the hotel. When Zhuang Rui brought the people back, they immediately drove to Guangzhou to welcome Lao San and his wife, as well as Lao Er and the others. As soon as Wei Ge and Yue Jing met, they naturally started bickering. However, the people listening nearby all felt a faint warmth.

After dinner, the group went to a karaoke room and partied until after 1 a.m. before returning to the hotel. During this time, Fatty Ma and Song Jun each tried to contact Zhuang Rui to ask him to look at the raw materials, but Zhuang Rui declined both times. Yue Jing and Lao San only had two days together this time, and they didn't know if they would have the chance to get together again, so Zhuang Rui cherished this gathering very much.

...

Nothing was said that night.

The next morning, Zhuang Rui was woken up by his phone ringing incessantly, whether because he was tired from using spiritual energy the day before or because he was still hungover from drinking too much. When he picked it up, he saw that there were more than twenty missed calls. In addition to the people in Pingzhou, his brother-in-law Zhao Guodong had also called four or five times.

After washing up, Zhuang Rui picked up his phone and called his brother-in-law back.

"Hey, is this Xiao Rui? I've been calling you since yesterday, but no one answered. Your sister was so worried." As soon as the call connected, Zhao Guodong's voice came through the phone.

"Brother-in-law, I'm fine. I had a class reunion yesterday, and after dinner I went to karaoke. It was a bit noisy, so I didn't hear the phone ring. What's up?"

Zhuang Rui held the phone in one hand and pressed his temples hard with the other. It seemed he should drink less alcohol in the future. Although spiritual energy could cure illnesses, it couldn't cure drunkenness.

"Here's the thing, Xiao Rui. Business at the repair shop is pretty good right now, but the workshop is a bit small and we don't have enough manpower. We can only repair some large semi-trailers. We don't repair many family cars, which have higher profit margins. This area has great potential in the future."

Your sister and I discussed it and decided to rent the adjacent warehouse and combine it into one factory. Currently, this half is used for truck and freight vehicle repair, and the other half will be used for car repair. We'll also set up an auto detailing center. When I went to Nanjing last month, I found that the auto detailing business is quite successful and has extremely high profit margins.

After being the owner of the repair shop for a few months, Zhao Guodong became more efficient in his speech and actions. He analyzed the market situation for Zhuang Rui over the phone, speaking in a very organized manner.

However, Zhuang Rui was clearly not in the mood to listen to these things. He patiently waited for his brother-in-law to finish speaking before saying, "Brother-in-law, is it that you don't have enough money? How much money do you need to expand the scale? I'll transfer another 1 million to you. You can make these decisions from now on. You don't need to ask me. I know nothing about this industry, so asking me is pointless."

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Zhao Guodong quickly said, "Xiao Rui, we have enough money. Last month, the repair shop's net profit reached 480,000. Renting a warehouse and making some renovations won't cost much. Your sister and I are thinking that you should quit your job at Zhonghai now and come back home to work at the repair shop. You went to university and have broad experience. You would definitely be much better than me as the boss."

After all that commotion, it turned out that it was his older sister and brother-in-law who were worried that he would lose his job, so they thought of expanding the repair shop and letting him manage it. This idea must have come from his older sister. Speechless, Zhuang Rui also felt the warmth brought by his family and couldn't help but feel a surge of warmth in his heart.

"Brother-in-law, let's not talk about this anymore. Although I no longer work in Zhonghai, I'm even busier than before. I'm currently in Guangdong, and I'm going to Shanxi with Dachuan in the middle of the month. I really can't take care of the family business."

As for the repair shop, you should handle it yourself. Don't be afraid to spend money. The more market share you can capture now, the bigger the repair shop's business will become as more private cars there are. Just go for it.

As Zhuang Rui was speaking, there was a knock at the door. Zhuang Rui quickly said into his phone, "Brother-in-law, I can't talk to you anymore. I'm busy today, so I'll hang up now."

Hearing the busy tone on the phone, Zhao Guodong felt somewhat helpless. This brother-in-law was becoming more and more incomprehensible to him. However, he hadn't completed the task assigned by his wife, and Zhao Guodong was now thinking about how to explain it to Zhuang Min when he got home.

Zhuang Rui didn't care what Zhao Guodong thought. As soon as the door opened, seven or eight people rushed in, startling the white lion so much that it jumped out from beside the bed. If Zhuang Rui hadn't shouted early, the second and third brothers, who were unfamiliar with the place, would probably have been pounced on by it.

"Hey guys, it's only eight o'clock, what are you all doing?" Zhuang Rui asked helplessly, looking at the room full of people.

"Nonsense, of course we're going to gamble on stones! Isn't today the opening day of the Stone Gambling Conference?" The second brother's words represented everyone's thoughts, and everyone in the room nodded in agreement.

#### Chapter 188 Jade Bidding and Trading Fair

Zhuang Rui spotted Song Jun, who had just strolled in from the door, and quickly asked, "Brother Song, you're not going to join them in the fun, are you?"

Yesterday, when Wei Ge told these guys about Zhuang Rui's jade gambling trip in Nanjing, they immediately got incredibly excited, like they'd been injected with adrenaline. Even the usually composed third brother was eager to try, taking out the 5,000 yuan he'd saved for his honeymoon trip, saying he wanted to invest and have Zhuang Rui gamble for him.

The hopeful expressions on Lao San's and Zhang Rong's faces still send chills down Zhuang Rui's spine. If he lost the bet, who knows what kind of shock Lao San would suffer? Zhuang Rui was so frightened that he didn't dare to take the money from Lao San at that moment.

Early in the morning, after failing to reach Zhuang Rui by phone, several people came to his door one after another, as if they were afraid that if they were late, all the good stones would be taken. Song Jun, on the other hand, also came to his room early in the morning, which surprised Zhuang Rui. He was not as impetuous as these guys.

"Why are you going so early? To listen to the boss speak? Go have breakfast first, then I'll hitch a ride with you..."

Song Jun's words left Zhuang Rui somewhat confused, so he asked, "Brother Song, are we still driving?"

"Nonsense, with such a narrow space as Jade Street, do you think you can set up several stalls? Let's go, it'll be about time after breakfast. By the way, with so many of you going, how many invitations did you manage to get?"

"An invitation? What's that?" Zhuang Rui wondered if he was still drunk, asking so many strange questions so early in the morning.

"This jade gambling convention isn't for ordinary tourists; it's specifically for jade merchants from all over the country. You need an invitation from the organizers to get in, and each invitation allows you to bring two people. How are you going to get in without an invitation? Let me make this clear: I only have one invitation, so besides Master Peng, I can only bring one more person."

Actually, what Song Jun said wasn't entirely true. In the first few days, it was indeed mostly jade merchants from various regions who came to gamble on rough stones. However, towards the end of the stone gambling event, it would also be open to tourists, but the chances of finding good rough stones would be much lower.

Zhuang Rui was surprised to find that there was such a thing as a gambling stone event, and he became anxious. These guys were all eager to see it for themselves, and he couldn't just go in with the Song army and leave his friends outside, could he?

"Lei Lei, by the way, Lei Lei must have an invitation. Let her take two people in, and then ask Old Master Gu for a solution. We've come all this way, we should at least let the brothers go in and see what it's like." Thinking of this, Zhuang Rui took out his phone, ready to call Lei Lei to ask.

Just as Zhuang Rui was about to make a call, Wei Ge stepped forward and said weakly, "Old man, I just remembered something. Yesterday, Grandpa Gu had someone bring you a few invitations. I thought they were for inviting you to dinner or something, so I didn't pay attention to them and just left them somewhere."

Upon hearing this, Zhuang Rui didn't bother calling Lei Lei anymore and instead called Grandpa Gu directly. It seemed a bit noisy on Grandpa Gu's end, with the sound of firecrackers and cheers from a lion dance. Zhuang Rui asked around and found out that Grandpa Gu had indeed prepared three invitations for him and had them delivered.

After hanging up the phone, Zhuang Rui looked at Yang Wei and said, "Brother Wei, if you can't remember where you put the invitation, you'll incur everyone's wrath. Don't blame me for not helping you..."

"Stop wasting time talking to him, brothers, let's fight first..."

The Beijing bureaucrat finally found an opportunity to deal with the boss, and led the charge. The brothers, all used to causing trouble, rushed forward together. The second brother even pulled the blanket off Zhuang Rui's bed and covered him up, giving Wei Ge a good beating. The room was immediately filled with howling and screaming.

"Holy crap, is this for real? Who grabbed my little penis just now? I'm really panicking, bro! Stop, stop hitting me! I remember where the post is.

When the blanket was pulled back, Wei Ge stood there with his hair in a mess like a bird's nest, looking grief-stricken.

"Hey guys, stop fooling around. We've got a invitation, let's go now. If we're late, all the good rough stones will be taken." Song Jun's voice came from the doorway.

"Don't look at me, I'll go get it right now, okay?" When Wei Ge saw that Yue Jing was looking at him with ill intent again, he quickly slipped out and ran to his room to get the invitation.

...

"Brother Song, how much further?"

As Zhuang Rui drove, he glanced at Song Jun sitting in the back seat through the rearview mirror. Only Song Jun and Master Peng were in his car; the front passenger seat was naturally occupied by Bai Shi. Zhuang Rui was afraid that something like yesterday would happen again, so he might have to bring Bai Shi along.

"We're almost there. See that? It's over there with the shed up ahead." Song Jun pointed to the side of the road ahead, signaling Zhuang Rui to park the car there.

This Pingzhou jade gambling convention, officially known as the "Jade Bidding and Trading Fair," was first held in Pingzhou in 2003 and received rave reviews, attracting jade merchants from China and Myanmar. It has basically replaced the traditional bargaining method of jade trading. Although this is only the second time that the Pingzhou Jade Association has held the event, its influence has far surpassed that of Tengchong, the holy land of jade gambling in Yunnan.

This "Jade Bidding and Trading Fair" not only brought together jadeite rough merchants from all over the country, but also attracted several well-known jadeite trading groups in Myanmar to set up offices in Pingzhou and directly transport rough stones to Pingzhou to participate in this jade gambling event. As a result, its influence has risen sharply, which has not only facilitated many jade manufacturers in China, but also increased the value and economic benefits of the raw stones.

The organizer, Pingzhou Jade Association, rented a large open-air warehouse as the venue for the trade fair. After Zhuang Rui parked his car outside, he got out with Bai Shi. Looking around, he saw many luxury cars parked in this open space, which served as a parking lot. There were even several Hummers like the one Song Jun drove.

The ground at the entrance of the venue was covered with a thick layer of firecracker paper scraps. A huge red banner hung at the entrance, which read "The Second Pingzhou Jade Bidding and Trade Fair". Zhuang Rui and his group seemed to have arrived a little late. There was a long queue at the entrance, with people holding invitations and ready to enter.

Zhuang Rui had three invitations, making a total of seven people including Zhou Rui. With Song Jun's invitation, he could bring one more person in, so all of his people could get in.

"Excuse me, sir, your pet cannot enter." Just as Song Jun and the others had their invitations checked and were about to enter, Zhuang Rui, who was walking at the back, was stopped by the event staff.

"Do you have a rule that pets aren't allowed inside?" Zhuang Rui asked, narrowing his eyes and looking displeased.

"No, but..."

"Since there isn't one, please move aside. My pet doesn't bite. Of course, if anything happens, I'll take full responsibility."

Zhuang Rui rudely pushed away the man's hand that was blocking him and led Bai Shi inside. Although the staff member wanted to stop him, he was terrified after being glared at by Bai Shi and no longer had the courage to reach out.

Zhuang Rui wasn't usually such an unreasonable person, but firstly, he was afraid of encountering something like yesterday's incident and suffering a loss for no reason. Secondly, many of the people attending this jade gambling conference brought pets. The person who went in earlier even brought a Pekingese dog. Although the white lion was a bit bigger, it was still a pet, wasn't it? In terms of value, who would dare say that their pet was more valuable than the white lion?

"Hey, not bad, you're pretty cool now, aren't you? You've got money in your wallet, so you're really standing tall. When we go to Beijing sometime, I'll take you to play with reversing cars on Chang'an Avenue."

The second brother, walking beside Zhuang Rui, patted Zhuang Rui's shoulder forcefully as a sign of encouragement.

There are indeed a group of spoiled rich kids in Beijing who, after drinking too much at night, act arrogantly on Chang'an Avenue. Some fearless traffic police will drag them into the station, but once they are arrested, they can be released with just one phone call. After this happens a few times, the

traffic police simply stop asking questions. As long as there are no foreign affairs activities, they let them do whatever they want, since their lives are ultimately their own.

Upon hearing this, Song Jun, who was walking in front, turned around and laughed and scolded Yue Jing, "Hey kid, are you all grown up yet? Trying to be like those brats. Do you want me to teach you a lesson for your old man?"

"Uncle Song, Grandpa Song, I was just saying. You know, I've always been an honest kid, I would never tattle on someone." After hearing Song Jun's words, the second brother quickly shrank his neck. His father's grandfather and Song Jun's grandfather were of the same generation, so he was a generation younger than Song Jun. Therefore, since he met Song Jun yesterday, he had been completely under Song Jun's thumb.

"You little rascal, if you want to get into officialdom, you'd better be more composed in your daily life." Song Jun said to his second son in a light tone. If it weren't for his relationship with Zhuang Rui, he wouldn't have bothered to say it.

"I know, Uncle Song, I'm just more relaxed when I'm with my classmates." The second brother bowed and scraped, displaying the obsequious manner typical of officials who fawn over their superiors and bully their subordinates.

"Second brother, you should learn more from third brother. Look at him, how steady he is... Holy crap, are all these stones jade???"

Wei Ge originally wanted to use Song Jun to teach the second brother a lesson, but before he could finish speaking, he had already arrived at the venue of this jade gambling conference and was immediately shocked by the grand scale of the venue.

Hundreds of raw jade merchants participated in the exhibition, including major jade merchants from Myanmar. The hundreds of temporary tents alone were dazzling, not to mention the mountains of raw jade in each tent, which made the boss's eyes light up and he wished he could pounce on them and take a bite.

"Alright, Zhuang Rui, today is open bidding, feel free to look around. The tools on those stalls are free to use, and you can cut stones on the spot. But brother, you should take it easy, or you might end up penniless before you even make back the money for the house."

Although Song Jun wasn't in the jade business, he was still quite excited after entering the area. After giving Zhuang Rui a few instructions, he pulled Master Peng along and disappeared into the crowd.

#### Chapter 189 Jade Gambling Fund

"Brother Song, I have something else to ask you..."

Before Zhuang Rui could finish speaking, Song Jun had already disappeared from his sight. Shaking his head helplessly, Zhuang Rui said to the guys behind him, "This is my first time here too. You guys go wander around. It's fine to cut up stones that cost a few hundred yuan if you want, but definitely don't buy anything more expensive."

Gambling on rough jade is just like gambling with real money; nine out of ten times you lose. Don't be fooled by the abundance of rough jade here. If even one-tenth of the stones contain jade, that's considered very good. Guys, in the world of jade gambling, good stories always circulate, bad ones don't. You only hear about overnight riches, but the reality is that far more people lose.

The third brother curled his lip upon hearing this and said, "I would like to buy it, but I've already given you the money. That's half a year's salary for me and your sister-in-law."

Zhuang Rui was both amused and exasperated upon hearing this. He did indeed have 50,000 yuan in his bag, 15,000 of which was his own, and the rest was pooled together by these guys, euphemistically called a "stone gambling fund." They even appointed Zhuang Rui as the chairman of the fund's board of directors and made it clear from the outset that if they won a bet on a stone bought with the 50,000 yuan, they would split the profits equally, and if they lost money, Zhuang Rui would cover it all. The vote was four to one, so Zhuang Rui had no choice but to obediently take on the role of leader.

Actually, this was just a bunch of guys having fun. Although the third brother's family wasn't well-off, he didn't really expect Zhuang Rui to win big. Zhuang Rui, on the other hand, was serious. Yue Jing and the third brother were both civil servants, and Yue Jing, needless to say, didn't need the money. However, if the third brother had more money, it would be beneficial for his future career development. Although 50,000 yuan wasn't much, Zhuang Rui was still confident that he could find a treasure.

"Hey, let's go take a look around. If you buy any stones and plan to cut them open, be sure to call us!"

After discussing it, Wei Ge, Yue Jing, and Lao Si decided to form a trio and wander around on their own. As for Lao San and his wife, they felt it was more reliable to stick with Zhuang Rui, so they split into two groups, one on the left and one on the right, entering the venue separately.

Although Zhuang Rui had experienced jade gambling before, he was still a little at a loss in this situation because the scene was too grand. Hundreds of simple sheds were set up in the huge venue, and countless jade rough stones were placed in various stalls. The whole place was a world of stones, with tens of thousands of rough stones piled up here, creating a spectacular scene.

At the entrance of each stall, there is a banner that lists the company to which the stall owner belongs. Nowadays, the industry is being promoted to be more standardized, and most of these raw material merchants, large and small, are affiliated with some company.

Zhuang Rui discovered that although there were many jadeite rough stones here, most of them had been cut with "small windows" or "small doors," making them "semi-gamblers." Only a small portion of the rough stones were "fully gamblers." Among the stalls he visited, the "semi-gamblers" old-mine rough stones with green jade were the most popular, while the fully gamblers were rarely sought after.

Another strange phenomenon was that many people were taking photos or writing on some rough stones with digital cameras and banknotes. These rough stones all had Arabic numerals written on them. Zhuang Rui was a little confused. He looked at a rough stone that looked pretty good for a long time, but no one made a bid for it.

"Hey, why are all these people just looking and not buying?"

The third brother was also a little confused. In his eyes, all the stones were pretty much the same, except that some of them had strange colors.

Zhuang Rui thought for a moment. He realized that if he asked the stall owner, he would be embarrassed. Song Jun was probably nowhere to be found by now, and he might not be in the mood to answer. "Oh right," Zhuang Rui thought of someone and immediately took out his phone to look up a phone number.

"Brother Yang, do you remember me? I'm Zhuang Rui. We met at the Nanjing International Jewelry Fair."

Fortunately, Zhuang Rui had written down Yang Hao's phone number. He had a good impression of the young rough jade merchant, and figured Yang Hao would likely attend a major jadeite event like the one in Pingzhou. So Zhuang Rui called him.

"Of course I remember, you're the lucky charm..."

Yang Hao realized he had misspoke, chuckled, omitted the word "cat," and continued, "Brother Zhuang, what's up with calling me now? I'm in Pingzhou now. I did a good job in Nanjing last time, and my family wants me to look after the stall by myself this time."

Just as Zhuang Rui had expected, Yang Hao was indeed in Pingzhou. Moreover, Yang Hao sounded slightly excited on the phone, probably because he had the opportunity to take charge on his own.

"I'm also in Pingzhou, and I'm right here in the jade gambling venue. Are you there?" Zhuang Rui asked.

"Yes, yes, I'm here too, stall number eighty-three. Hey, come over here quickly, my cousin is here too. I told him about your performance last time, but he didn't believe me." Yang Hao's voice was filled with surprise as he quickly gave Zhuang Rui his stall number.

The booths in the venue were arranged in rows of ten. Zhuang Rui walked down to the eighth row and saw Yang Hao standing under the tent, looking around.

"Hey, Brother Zhuang, over here..."

At the same time, Yang Hao also saw Zhuang Rui and quickly waved for them to come over.

"Come on, have a slice of watermelon first. It's so hot today. This is my cousin, Yang Jun. Brother, this is the Boss Zhuang I was talking about. He cut out a piece of jade worth more than 20 million yuan."

Summer in Guangdong is unpredictable. Yesterday it was stormy and rainy, but today it's sunny and blazing. After Zhuang Rui and the others entered the shed, Yang Hao took out a watermelon from under the table, cut it open, and handed it to Zhuang Rui and the others one by one.

"Old man, you still have jade worth over 20 million?"

Yang Hao's cousin didn't react yet, but the third brother was frightened by Yang Hao's words. In his opinion, the jade that Zhuang Rui cut out naturally belonged to him.

"That was a rough stone my childhood friend bought. I helped him unravel it. I didn't make more than 20 million from it," Zhuang Rui replied somewhat helplessly. If he had seen the rough stone earlier, he wouldn't have had to worry about the money for this villa.

"Hehe, let's not even talk about 20 million. If you can cut out 2 million today, then my trip to Guangdong won't have been in vain." The third brother said with a simple smile. The 5,000 yuan in Zhuang Rui's pocket was a real savings from his monthly salary. After hearing about Zhuang Rui's past achievements, the third brother had even more confidence in Zhuang Rui.

"Brother Zhuang, you'd better pick out a piece from my rough stones for on-site cutting later. If you can find jadeite inside, I'll truly admire you..." After the group finished eating the watermelon, Yang Hao took out cigarettes and offered one to Zhuang Rui and Lao San with a grin. Zhou Rui, who didn't smoke, refused.

"Don't make me uncomfortable. Last time, I bought three pieces and only got two green ones. That was just good luck," Zhuang Rui replied with a smile.

"Young man, these stall owners, their good stuff gets picked up by others, don't they feel bad?" The third brother was a little confused. If it were him, and someone bought his valuable raw materials cheaply, he would definitely feel bad for days.

The third brother spoke a little loudly, which Yang Hao overheard. He then explained, "Brother, that's not how it works. We only deal in raw materials. The profits we make are already included in the raw material price. If a customer can find jadeite, it's because the customer has a good eye and is lucky. Besides, with so many stalls, it's good for business if any stall cuts out green jadeite."

Last time in Nanjing, Yang Hao brought some raw jade to the exhibition, intending to sell it all during the ten-day event. However, after Zhuang Rui's incident, all the raw jade was sold out in just half a day. That's the reason.

"By the way, Brother Yang, there's something I'd like to ask you. I've come to several stalls, and all the raw jade pieces I've seen are divided into two piles. What are the numbers written on those pieces for?" Zhuang Rui had also seen some raw jade pieces with numbers written on them at Yang Hao's stall when he entered the shed earlier, so he figured he could help answer this question.

"Brother, is this the lucky cat you were talking about?"

Before Yang Hao could answer, Yang Jun, who was only eighteen or nineteen years old, nudged his cousin and asked in a low voice, his face full of disdain.

"Brother Zhuang, you're not joking with me, are you?" Yang Hao was somewhat amused and exasperated by Zhuang Rui's question.

Seeing the expressions on the two brothers' faces, Zhuang Rui knew he had asked something unrelated to their expertise again, and said irritably, "If I already know, why would I ask you? Tell me if you want, or don't."

"Alright, I told you so. I really admire you, buddy. Last time when we were gambling on stones, you didn't know anything, but you still managed to cut out two pieces of rough stones with green in them. I guess you're lucky this time too."

"Alright, hurry up and tell me." Zhuang Rui was a little annoyed. His buddies all had real skills, they weren't just relying on luck.

Yang Hao suppressed a laugh and said seriously, "This Pingzhou Jade Bidding and Trading Fair will last for five days. There are two types of transactions: open bidding and sealed bidding. Open bidding refers to the rough stones without numbers, and everyone can choose and bid freely. As for the rough stones with numbers, they are sealed bidding rough stones. Guests can write down the numbers of the rough stones they like based on their appearance, and then submit a unified bid three days later. The highest bidder wins."

After hearing Yang Hao's explanation, Zhuang Rui finally understood. It turned out that even if he liked the numbered raw materials, he couldn't buy them on the spot; he had to submit a unified bid. This was quite an eye-opener for him.

However, this means that the raw material dealers will categorize the best-performing raw materials into the sealed-bid section, making the remaining open-bid raw materials much more gamble-worthy, but the prices will still be relatively low, which is perfect for Zhuang Rui, who is currently short of money, to gamble on.

As Zhuang Rui was pondering the pros and cons of this method of gambling on rough stones, Yang Hao spoke up, "Brother Zhuang, I've brought quite a few good rough stones this time. Besides the sealed bids, there are also several pieces that performed very well in the open bids. How about buying one and cutting it open?"

Chapter 190 Dried Green Seedlings

"Okay, I'll take a look first. Third brother, you and sister-in-law should take a look too. If you see anything you like and it's cheap, you can buy it and cut it up for fun. If you're lucky, you might even make a profit.

Zhuang Rui stood up and said to the third brother beside him, "As for Zhou Rui, he has no interest in gambling on stones. The sun is blazing outside, so it's better to sit in the shed and cool off."

"White Lion, go inside and wait for me..."

When Zhuang Rui came out of the shed, he saw that Bai Shi had also come out. He quickly gave instructions, because he was afraid that Bai Shi would disturb the customers at Yang Hao's stall. As they walked along the way, almost everyone who saw Bai Shi's big figure hurriedly moved aside to make way for Zhuang Rui and the others.

This was the first time that Lao San and Zhang Rong had ever seen so many jadeite rough stones. Although not every rough stone contained jadeite, there was no guarantee that a valuable piece of jadeite might be found inside. Yesterday, Lao San and Zhang Rong had also brushed up on their knowledge about jadeite rough stones. Now, ignoring the scorching sun overhead, they crawled into the pile of stones and started rummaging through them.

Zhuang Rui was also quite excited. This was a big event! Listening to the shouts and bargaining around him, it felt as lively as a vegetable market. The unique charm of this ancient and primitive way of trading made Zhuang Rui feel incredibly excited and thrilled.

When looking at stones during the day, a flashlight is unnecessary, but a magnifying glass is still needed because some rough stones have very small cracks, some even as thin as a hair, which are difficult to spot without a magnifying glass. Moreover, the magnifying glass that Zhuang Rui brought this time was different from the previous ones; it was a black-framed magnifying glass with a copper handle, about the size of an adult's palm.

“Brother Zhuang, the jade I brought this time was all obtained through connections from the Bai Bi factory in Myanmar. They are all top-quality goods.” Yang Hao naturally knew who the big customer was, and he ignored the third couple who had entered the rough jade area first. Instead, he followed closely behind Zhuang Rui.

"Old mine seed from Baibi Factory?"

Upon hearing this, Zhuang Rui carefully examined the rough stones on the ground. Most of these stones had a grayish-yellow outer skin and were quite rough. Zhuang Rui picked up a stone weighing over ten kilograms and rubbed it against his palm. It felt rough and prickly. Furthermore, these stones were quite large, somewhat similar to the rough stones produced by the Baibi factory.

Since inspecting the goods at Boss Yu's house that day, Zhuang Rui has humbly sought knowledge from Master Peng about the Burmese jadeite mines. He knows that Bai Bi Factory is an old mine with a history of two or three hundred years, famous for producing blue-flowered jadeite, and occasionally it will unearth some extremely high-grade bright green-flowered jadeite.

"It's true that it's old mine material from Baibi Factory, but boss, the quality of these rough stones you've marked is really poor, isn't it?" As Zhuang Rui was looking at the rough stone in his hand, a voice rang out beside him. Zhuang Rui looked in the direction of the voice and saw a thin, middle-aged man wearing glasses squatting on the ground looking at a very large rough stone, shaking his head incessantly.

There were seven or eight people looking at the rough stones at Yang Hao's stall. After hearing this, they all gathered around. They weren't just there for the fun of it; they were just there to learn a lot from listening to others comment on the rough stones at this national gambling stone conference.

Seeing that he was surrounded by people, the middle-aged man wearing glasses was a little smug. He pointed to the rough stone at his feet, which weighed about one or two hundred kilograms, and said, "It is true that Baibi Factory produces large pieces of jade, but look at this rough stone. There is a big crack in the middle. If you continue to cut it, we can also see something. But if you stop cutting at the crack and no green jade appears, all the risks will fall on us."

Zhuang Rui squatted down and examined the rough stone. It was a completely gambled rough stone with a grayish-yellow outer skin. However, in the middle of the rough stone, there was a crack about the size of a small finger. Even with the crack facing the sunlight, it was impossible to see any green inside.

However, the surface of this rough jade stone, completely undeveloped, is covered with sparse, dotted patterns resembling pine flowers, making it difficult to discern its true nature. Generally, green jade appears beneath these patterns, and if the green could connect, it would be quite good. But the cracks and fissures are truly alarming, making the gamble extremely high. One cut could result in either wasted stone or a huge profit. Presumably, Yang Hao won't set a low price for it.

"Gentlemen, we're in the raw jade business. These stones are naturally like this; no one can say for sure whether there will be jade inside. It's a gamble, but the profits are also high," Yang Hao quickly explained when he saw the crowd discussing it.

"Brother Yang, how much do you want for this rough stone?" Zhuang Rui stood up and asked Yang Hao. The people around him also perked up their ears. There were quite a few people looking at the rough stone, but so far, Zhuang Rui was the only one at Yang Hao's stall asking about the price.

"Eight hundred thousand. The outer skin of this rough stone is quite good. As everyone knows, the pine flower pattern is the manifestation of the jade meat on the surface of the rough stone. If it weren't for this crack, this piece of rough stone would definitely have been designated as a closed bid."

Yang Hao is right. High-risk, high-return rough stones mean high potential profits. If the green jadeite can be cut out from the cracks in this rough stone, the price will be huge. If a piece of rough stone weighing one or two hundred kilograms can be found with a palm-sized piece of jadeite with good texture and clarity, it's a sure thing. However, it's also possible that the cracks will destroy the inner structure of the rough stone, turning it into a piece of waste.

"Eight hundred thousand?"

Zhuang Rui remained silent, having already examined the internal structure of the rough stone with his spiritual energy. It did indeed contain jadeite, but it wasn't formed from the crack or on the back of the pine flower pattern. Instead, it was located in the upper right corner of the rough stone, where a continuous piece of jadeite was present. The color was a deep, pleasing green, pure and unblemished. Although the transparency was slightly lacking, the quality should be comparable to dry green jadeite, and the piece was quite large. Some white cotton-like inclusions divided it into two pieces, which together were about the size of a football.

Beneath the pine flowers, a few green shoots also appeared, but they didn't form a continuous patch and weren't of much value.

Zhuang Rui did some mental calculations. Although the quality of dry green jadeite wasn't very high, it was still mid-range jadeite. It could be carved into jade pendants, bracelets, and some playthings. These were the mainstays of many ornaments in jade shops and were quite popular. If he bought it for 800,000 yuan, he should be able to sell it for around 1.5 million to 2 million yuan.

"Want to bet or not?"

Zhuang Rui hesitated. To be honest, he didn't think much of this rough stone, and he didn't know if anyone would offer to buy it after he cut it open. If no one bought it, then he would have 800,000 yuan sitting in his hands.

"Young man, 800,000 is no small amount. Even if there is jade, it is still uncertain whether it is worth 800,000."

The third brother came over and saw that Zhuang Rui seemed to want to buy it, so he couldn't help but try to dissuade him. In the third brother's mind, he was similar to Zhuang Rui a few months ago, whose knowledge of jade was limited to the pendants sold in ordinary shopping malls for tens or hundreds of yuan each.

"Third Brother, fortune favors the bold. I'm betting that there'll be green underneath this pine flower pattern. Brother Yang, I'll take this rough stone. Let's go transfer the money."

The third brother's words actually made Zhuang Rui more determined. Even a small mosquito is still meat. Even if it can only be sold for 1 million after being cut open, he will still make a profit.

Yang Hao's face lit up with joy upon hearing this, and he was about to reply when the middle-aged man beside him interrupted, saying, "Young man, I was the one who saw this rough stone first, you..."

Yang Hao chimed in, "This piece of jade is open for bidding; everyone can make an offer." His meaning was clear: if you wanted to buy it, you could bid, but it would have to be higher than 800,000. Competition was exactly what Yang Hao wanted to see.

"Wait... let me take another look."

The middle-aged man had just said that the rough stone wasn't looking good, which seemed to indicate he was planning to negotiate the price. Now that Zhuang Rui wanted to buy it, he hesitated a bit. He squatted down and looked at the pine flower pattern again. After three or four minutes, he stood up and said to Yang Hao, "This rough stone is too risky. I'll only offer 850,000 at most. If you want it, young man, you can take it for more than that."

As soon as the middle-aged man said this, all eyes of the onlookers turned to Zhuang Rui. The third brother kept nudging Zhuang Rui from behind, telling him not to buy. Zhuang Rui hadn't expected someone to raise the price. After hesitating for a moment, he said, "What this brother said is right. This stone is a bit of a gamble. I originally only wanted to bet 800,000. Since you've offered 850,000, then I won't take it."

If the jade inside this stone were glassy or icy, Zhuang Rui would dare to bid 1.7 million, let alone 850,000. But since it's dry green jade, Zhuang Rui really didn't know how much it was worth. He wasn't sure, so he didn't bid any further.

"Zhuang Rui, you really scared me! You spent 800,000 on a piece of junk? You're really rich now."

Seeing that Zhuang Rui didn't bid again, Zhang Rong, who was standing next to the third brother, breathed a sigh of relief. Zhuang Rui couldn't help but find it a little funny. The two of them seemed to be even more nervous than he was. But then he thought about it again. Just a few months ago, hadn't he had the same thought?

Yang Hao was somewhat disappointed. He had been hoping that Zhuang Rui would raise the price further, but unexpectedly, Zhuang Rui didn't want it. However, he was still very grateful to Zhuang Rui. If Zhuang Rui hadn't made the first offer, he didn't know if the middle-aged man would have bought it. Even if he had, he probably would have lowered the price.

This Pingzhou jade trade fair also received strong support from various banks. There were card payment points set up by the banks every few shops. If the transaction amount was relatively large, both the buyer and seller could go there to transfer money. At this moment, Yang Jun was watching the stall, while Yang Hao accompanied the middle-aged man to transfer money.

Not long after, the two returned to their stall. Yang Hao pointed to the rough stone and said to the middle-aged man, "Sir, would you like to have it cut on the spot, or would you like someone to help you with the shipping procedures? If you want it cut, we have a full set of tools."

"Let's unravel this on the spot..."

The middle-aged man didn't seem to be in the jade business; he seemed more like a professional jade gambler. The crowd that had been watching the spectacle hadn't dispersed yet, and upon hearing that someone wanted to have a stone cut, they all gathered around.