

Golden 451

Chapter 451-452 Ming Biao (Part 8)

Both of them had just witnessed the ridiculously high prices fetched at this rough stone auction. Although neither was entirely confident that the stone would yield jadeite, they were unwilling to give up, and an auction between them began.

"Each bid must be at least 1,000 euros. You two may begin bidding..."

Hu Rong remained calm. An auction of such a small amount was hardly of interest to him. He was currently running a jewelry company in Taiwan, and he wouldn't have bothered coming here if it weren't for the practical benefits of his jade mines.

"100,000 euros..." The person on the left wanted to take the initiative and immediately added 19,000 euros.

"105,000 euros..." The person on the right hesitated for a moment, but did not give up and added another 5,000 euros.

"110,000..." The first person to make a bid called out the price without hesitation.

"I give up..."

The group came to Myanmar to make money, not to vent their anger. The price of 110,000 euros was equivalent to more than 1 million RMB, which was a bit too high for the mediocre quality of the jade. The other person wisely chose to back down.

"Xiao Rui, come on, I'll introduce you to the next person..."

Seeing that the auction ended so quickly, the crowd of onlookers scattered immediately. Fang Yi pulled Zhuang Rui aside and was about to go up and greet Hu Rong when suddenly a voice in the hall told Fang Yi to go and complete the auction procedures.

Hu Rong, who was packing her things at the table in preparation for leaving, looked up when she heard the sound. She saw Fang Yi, smiled at her, waved for Fang Yi to go and complete the formalities, and made a gesture to make a phone call. In Zhuang Rui's eyes, his mother-in-law and the other party seemed to be very familiar with each other.

However, this also caused Zhuang Rui to miss the opportunity to meet this legendary figure. After Fang Yi completed the formalities, Hu Rong had already left the auction house. Zhuang Rui waited for another 10 minutes and heard his name called on the loudspeaker before he went to complete the auction formalities.

There are several payment methods. Buyers can sign the "Winning Bid Contract" on the spot, but they do not have to pay immediately. As long as the buyer transfers the money to the designated account in Myanmar within three months, they can request the other party to deliver the raw stones free of charge.

Alternatively, their guarantee company in Myanmar can make the payment; of course, this money must be settled between the two parties beforehand.

The last option is to pay the full amount on the spot. If the value of the rough stone is over 300,000 euros, you can become a distinguished guest of the Myanmar jade auction. You will receive priority invitations and many preferential policies in the next jade auction.

The price of Zhuang Rui's rough stone was exactly 300,000 euros. He paid the full amount and asked the other party to ship it to his villa in Pengcheng. The villa was a secluded place where no one would bother him, and it had a complete set of stone-cutting tools. It was the best place for Zhuang Rui to cut the stone.

After signing the contract and paying the money, Zhuang Rui filled out a form and left his phone number at the staff's suggestion. This way, even without using the name of the domestic jade association, Zhuang Rui would be qualified to participate in the Myanmar jade auction, and would be one of the most distinguished guests invited by the government.

After these procedures were completed, Zhuang Rui was escorted out by two Burmese soldiers armed with live ammunition. This made Zhuang Rui's heart pound. Being escorted by soldiers to participate in an auction was a first for him.

To walk from the auction house to the entrance of the Myanmar National Jade Exchange Center, one needs to pass through the rough stone area. Zhuang Rui discovered that the once bustling place was now deserted, except for patrolling groups of soldiers; not a single rough stone merchant could be seen. It had been cleared out.

"Brother Zhuang, you're out..."

As Zhuang Rui walked out of the jade trading center, he saw Peng Fei coming to greet him, while Qin Haoran and his wife stood not far away, next to the minibus that had brought them there that morning.

When Qin Haoran saw Zhuang Rui come out, he waved and said, "Let's go back to the hotel, we'll have dinner together tonight..."

After getting on the bus, since Zhuang Rui wasn't there, Song Jun and Fatty Ma were too embarrassed to hitch a ride and had already taken the bus provided by the organizing committee back to the hotel. On the bus were Zhuang Rui, Peng Fei, Qin Haoran and his wife, and the four jade gambling masters.

"Uncle Qin, it's only 6:10, how come everyone's gone so quickly?"

Zhuang Rui voiced his question: Although they said they'd finish reviewing bids at 6 PM every day, wasn't this efficiency a bit too high?

"How could it not be clean? Those soldiers came with guns to drive people away. Myanmar is under military rule, so many things aren't very democratic. Alright, we've had a good day. Let's have dinner together tonight to celebrate..."

Qin Haoran smiled and explained to Zhuang Rui that Qin's Jewelry had won three pieces of rough jadeite today. Qin Haoran was very happy. Normally, as long as one of the three pieces turned out to be a good deal, they wouldn't lose money. After all, the jadeite jewelry market is booming and prices are rising rapidly.

"By the way, Xiao Rui, why are you so pessimistic about that number 1888?"

After the car started moving, Fang Yi suddenly remembered this matter. The final winning bid for that piece of material was more than five million, which is more than fifty million RMB, indicating that others were still very optimistic about it.

After Fang Yi asked about this, the jade gambling masters also looked at Zhuang Rui. They had recommended that rough stone to Fang Yi after unanimously believing it had a chance of winning. They also wanted to hear Zhuang Rui's reasons for not letting her gamble on that stone.

“I examined that rough stone. Although the crack is quite fine, it tends to extend inwards, and the color of the visible veins is inconsistent. Even if the jade inside isn't damaged by the crack, its quality won't be very high, and there's a high chance it will be a dud. It's not worth the gamble...”

Zhuang Rui's words were quite conventional, and although the jade gambling consultants were indignant, they couldn't say anything to refute him. After all, the stone hadn't been cut open, and no one dared to guarantee whether it would be a good or bad investment.

"Hey, really? Okay, I'll go a little earlier tomorrow to get a good spot..."

Qin Haoran's phone suddenly rang. After exchanging a few words and hanging up, Qin Haoran looked at Zhuang Rui and smiled: "We'll know whether there's any jadeite or not soon enough. That piece of jade was bought by a jewelry company in mainland China. The Myanmar side decided to give them some preferential treatment on the condition that the stone must be cut on-site at this public auction. Let's go early tomorrow and get a good spot to take a look..."

In order to expand the influence of the jade auction and attract more funds to Myanmar, the Myanmar organizing committee often encourages people who have won high-priced bids for rough stones to come and have them cut open on-site. If they can win the gamble and find high-quality jade, it will inevitably set off another buying frenzy at this auction.

Of course, if the gamble goes wrong on-site, it will naturally have a negative impact. Therefore, the organizing committee is very selective in choosing the rough stones to be cut on-site. This time, they selected rough stone number 1888. I don't know what benefits they gave the buyer to get him to agree to cut the stone tomorrow.

Several jade gambling masters showed excitement on their faces after hearing Qin Haoran's words. They were somewhat skeptical of Zhuang Rui's reasons, but they couldn't refute them. They had heard that the stone could be cut tomorrow, and they were eager to see Zhuang Rui make a fool of himself. They thought, "You think that stone will be a bad bet? If this one is a good bet, where will you put your face?"

Zhuang Rui smiled and nodded in agreement to go early tomorrow. His expression remained normal. What a joke! If that broken stone could be gambled away, Zhuang Rui would be willing to grind it into powder and swallow it all.

Before returning to the hotel, Zhuang Rui received calls from Song Jun and Fatty Ma, inviting him to dinner. However, he naturally declined. He had already refused his mother-in-law's invitation yesterday, so he had to make a good impression today. Besides, he still had things to discuss with them after dinner.

For dinner, they had a typical Burmese feast, with dishes including Burmese prawns, fried eggs, and various seafood. The staple food was rice and steamed sticky rice cakes, which Zhuang Rui ate with great relish.

"Peng Fei, you go back to your room first, I'll be back later..."

Zhuang Rui ate at a table with Qin Haoran and his wife, while Peng Fei ate at a table with several jade gambling consultants. After the meal, Zhuang Rui greeted Peng Fei and then took the elevator with Qin Haoran and his wife to their room.

"Xiao Rui, what's wrong? Can't we talk about it during dinner?"

Just now at the dinner table, Zhuang Rui was acting mysteriously, saying he had something to discuss, which made Qin Haoran and his wife lose their appetite for the entire meal. They had no idea what Zhuang Rui wanted to talk about.

"The people there are a bit mixed, and Uncle Qin, Aunt Fang, if you two trust me, I'll continue. If you don't trust me, then there's no need to mention this matter..."

Zhuang Rui wanted to tell them that the giant red jadeite rough stone had a chance of yielding a good return, but he didn't trust the jadeite gambling consultants. He had previously asked Qin Haoran, and these consultants were all seasoned veterans who would work for whoever paid them, spending years at various jadeite auctions in Myanmar and China.

Zhuang Rui was afraid that if he told Qin Haoran and his wife, they might bring several jade gambling consultants to look at the stone again, which might cause unforeseen complications and lead to a lot of unnecessary trouble. If that were the case, Zhuang Rui would rather keep it to himself than tell them.

Actually, if his mother-in-law hadn't asked him to look at that rough stone before, and he hadn't acted dismissively at the time, Zhuang Rui wouldn't have mentioned it at all, and would have just kept quiet and secretly bought it.

However, Zhuang Rui had already warned Fang Yi that the rough stone was bound to be worthless. If he secretly bid on it, Fang Yi would definitely find out later. He would be blatantly deceiving his mother-in-law. After much consideration, Zhuang Rui decided to reveal a little bit to them. Of course, he would never tell them the secret in his eyes.

In fact, Zhuang Rui's Beijing Qin Ruilin store and Qin's Jewelry share the same fate. If Qin's Jewelry is poorly managed and has insufficient supply, the other products in his store will definitely be greatly affected. This is the main reason why Zhuang Rui decided to share resources with Qin's Jewelry.

Seeing Zhuang Rui's serious tone, Qin Haoran and his wife were momentarily surprised. After exchanging a glance, Fang Yi said, "Xiao Rui, we're all family. Just say what's on your mind. Your aunt and uncle trust you, of course..."

Zhuang Rui gave a wry smile and said, "Auntie, if I tell you, you two can't go back and look with those craftsmen. If word gets out, the price of that rough stone will definitely skyrocket..."

Qin Haoran's eyes lit up upon hearing this, and he asked, "Which piece of material? Open bidding or closed bidding?"

"What's the rush? Let Xiao Rui finish speaking..." Fang Yi rolled her eyes at her husband, then looked at Zhuang Rui thoughtfully, as if she had thought of something.

Zhuang Rui smiled and said, "It's Ming Biao, Aunt Fang. Do you remember that red jadeite rough with the crack on the back?"

"I remember, it's the piece of jade that you said would definitely collapse if you cut it open, right?"

Fang Yi became even more certain of her thoughts. She had felt that Zhuang Rui was being somewhat pretentious. Based on her understanding of Zhuang Rui, although her future son-in-law was young, he was very steady in his actions. However, his remarks about taking a place in the Mingbiao District this morning were somewhat out of character for him.

"Although the crack on that rough stone is a bad one, the polished surface on the other side has a red mist, and the color of the red mist is slightly yellowish. Uncle Qin and Aunt Fang know that I once cut out blood jadeite, right?"

"I know, I know, please continue..." The bracelet that Zhuang Rui gave her was in Fang Yi's hands, so how could she forget about it?

"The presence of red mist doesn't necessarily mean there's red jadeite inside, but based on my experience, if the red mist contains yellowish crystals, there's almost certainly top-quality jadeite inside the stone. I've observed this carefully during the stone-cutting process, and this is absolutely certain..."

Although Zhuang Rui spoke with absolute certainty, it was all nonsense. The idea that red mist turning yellow indicates the presence of top-quality jadeite was just a fabricated excuse.

The art of gambling on rough stones is basically three parts insight and seven parts luck. No matter how skilled a stone gambling master is, it is common for them to misjudge and lose money on rough stones. So-called experience is nothing more than the accumulation of experience over a long period of cutting and quarrying stones. There is no definitive conclusion on this, and no one dares to make a guarantee.

Therefore, when Zhuang Rui said this, even Qin Haoran, who was quite knowledgeable about jade gambling, had his eyes light up. Although he had never heard of such a saying before, it was based on Zhuang Rui's experience and was more credible than those rumors. In other words, there was a very high probability that the material would yield top-quality jade.

"Xiao Zhuang, according to your estimate, how much jade can be extracted from that piece of material you mentioned?"

Qin Haoran wished he could sprout wings and fly to the jade gambling venue right now to take a good look at that rough stone. However, he knew that not only could he not go now, but even tomorrow, he would have to avoid that piece of material, or at least not show anything when he looked at it.

"Aunt Fang has seen that rough stone. It weighs over a ton, but the flaws will definitely affect the jade inside. I estimate that it should yield about 30 to 50 kilograms of jade. Moreover, the quality of this jadeite should at least reach the icy type, and who knows, it might even yield a glassy type..."

Zhuang Rui wasn't afraid to speak the truth. With the title of director of the Jade Association, he naturally had to have some real skills. He hadn't dared to admit it before because he was too inexperienced.

But now it's different. With the title of expert, winning another stone in the gambling world can solidify his position in the jade gambling circle and let the old guys in the jade association know that Mr. Gu's recommendation for him to serve as a director of the jade association was not a nepotism.

"Thirty to fifty kilograms of jadeite of icy quality or better, colorless jadeite and red and yellow jadeite jewelry are very popular in the market right now. Jewelry of the same quality can even be more expensive than green jadeite. If it can reach the glassy quality, then thirty to fifty kilograms of raw material would be worth around two hundred million. If it were made into jewelry, it could sell for at least four hundred million..."

At first, Qin Haoran was only quietly analyzing the price of the raw materials that Zhuang Rui mentioned, but the more he talked, the more excited he became, and the louder his voice became. In the end, he even stood up and kept pacing around the hotel room, feeling extremely excited.

Qin's Jewelry is facing a shortage of jadeite raw materials and a lack of product supply. This time, it has mobilized nearly 1 billion yuan of funds, intending to cast a wide net and catch more fish. It is willing to lose some money rather than let the jewelry store run out of jadeite products. This trip to Myanmar is with the intention of losing money to gain publicity.

In fact, it's not just Qin's Jewelry that does this; most other jewelry companies have the same idea: first, acquire a batch of raw materials, then relatively increase the market price of jade jewelry, and gradually achieve a balance between income and expenditure. However, in the early stages, they will definitely lose some money. Of course, if they have incredible luck and make a huge profit, that's another story.

However, with the piece of jade that Zhuang Rui had his eye on, Qin's Jewelry's situation immediately changed. If they could acquire this piece of red jade, they wouldn't have to worry about the raw materials for high-end jadeite jewelry for the next few years. The focus of this Myanmar jade auction could then be placed on mid- to low-grade rough jade, which was relatively easy to acquire.

Of course, Qin's Jewelry has been able to thrive in Hong Kong for nearly a century due to its inherent strengths, but it's best not to use that trump card unless absolutely necessary.

"Xiao Rui, we won't be able to get that piece of material at the auction tomorrow, will we?"

"No, according to the auction numbers, it should be auctioned the day after tomorrow..."

"Alright, I'll go check out that piece of material myself tomorrow. We'll discuss the bidding strategy again tomorrow night to make sure everything goes perfectly. I need to take this call..."

As the saying goes, the business world is like a battlefield. Qin Haoran was like a general who commanded with composure. He settled the matter involving the flow of hundreds of millions of yuan in just a few words. However, just as Qin Haoran was speaking with great enthusiasm, the cell phone on the table rang.

"Ah Rong? You're coming? Welcome, welcome! I'm in my room, um, you know the room number, so I won't pick you up..."

After finishing the call, Qin Haoran looked very pleased. The visit of an old friend, coupled with Zhuang Rui solving such a big problem for him, made Qin Haoran quite excited.

"Uncle Qin, since you have guests, I'll take my leave now..."

Zhuang Rui wasn't worried about Qin's Jewelry monopolizing the profits. After all, he would get at least half of that material. The sale of top-quality jadeite jewelry has a cycle. Maybe he would find some good pieces again in a year or two. Besides, there are two or three jadeite auctions in Myanmar every year.

"Xiao Rui, no need to leave. Let me introduce you to this person. This gentleman is a leading figure in the Myanmar jade industry..." Qin Haoran introduced him, and Zhuang Rui, upon hearing that the person who came was Hu Rong, immediately wanted to get to know him.

After asking Qin Haoran, Zhuang Rui learned that the Qin family in Hong Kong and the Hu family in Myanmar had been close friends for generations and were also closely related. Qin's grandfather's younger sister was Hu Rong's grandmother and Qin Haoran's aunt, and the two families visited each other frequently.

"Uncle Qin, Aunt Fang, I'm so sorry I can't visit you and Aunt Fang today because it's my turn to supervise the conference..."

As soon as the jade tycoon entered the room, he greeted Qin Haoran and Fang Yi with the courtesy due to a junior. Hu Rong was more than ten years younger than Qin Haoran and his wife, and in terms of age and seniority, they were both juniors.

"It's alright, Rong, let me wrap this up for you. This is your sister Xuanbing's boyfriend. He's the newly appointed director of the National Jade Association. You two should keep in touch..."

Qin Haoran pulled Zhuang Rui over and introduced him to Hu Rong. When Hu Rong heard Qin Haoran's words and saw how young Zhuang Rui was, he was stunned. He had only joined the Myanmar Jade Association at the age of thirty-five, and a few years ago he was already considered one of the youngest. He did not expect that Zhuang Rui was much younger than him, and he looked to be only twenty-six or twenty-seven years old.

Hu Rong was familiar with the personnel system in the country. In a department like the Jade Association, there were only three ways to become a director: first, one had to run a sizable jewelry company; second, one had to be an expert in jade and be considered an authority; and third, one had to have a strong background.

Regardless of which of these three types of people Zhuang Rui belongs to, he is not to be underestimated. Hu Rong immediately took out his business card and exchanged it with Zhuang Rui. He and Qin Haoran and his wife often kept in touch. Then everyone sat down and started chatting.

Qin's Jewelry's so-called trump card is actually the Hu family in Myanmar. However, in recent years, the Myanmar military has strictly restricted the export of jadeite rough stones. Any smuggling activities are severely punished. Even if the victim is from Myanmar, they will be sentenced without mercy, with the most serious penalty being the death penalty.

Therefore, although the Hu family is a prominent family in Myanmar with a history of over a century, even if it meant taking on a risk, Old Master Qin was unwilling to use this connection lightly.

“Uncle Qin, before I came, my father instructed that you and Auntie should visit Myitkyina and Hpakant when you have time. I recently prepared a batch of raw materials, and I've arranged the route. They will be shipped from Thailand and then sent to Hong Kong...”

Hu Rong's purpose in coming here was to accomplish this task. They also knew that, apart from Myanmar, jewelry companies were facing a shortage of jadeite raw materials. Given the relationship between the two companies, the Hu family in Myanmar would naturally not sit idly by. What he had just mentioned was actually smuggling jadeite rough.

Despite being relatives, the Hu family's fundamental principles remain unchanged. For generations, they have been in the business of trading raw stones, and their rule is to never gamble on stones. They only polish the stones that show good potential, cut out a window, and sell them. So even when they sell to the Qin family in Hong Kong, it is still raw stone, not jade.

Hu Rong was actually somewhat resistant to this rule because he had been running jewelry companies in Southeast Asia and Taiwan in recent years. However, since his father was still alive, he dared not break the rule, so he could only sell the raw stones to Qin Haoran through smuggling.

The route from Myanmar into Thailand is mostly through tropical jungles and mountains. Carrying those raw stones across these mountains is no easy task, but it's unavoidable because the smuggling of raw stones from Myanmar into China is strictly controlled. Even the slightest mistake could have disastrous consequences for the Hu family.

Of course, they don't need to do this kind of thing themselves; there are people like that available below.

“Arong, I appreciate your kindness, Uncle, but the situation in Myanmar is very tense right now. Let’s not cause any problems at this time. If we really can’t hold on, then we’ll ask you for help...”

Before Zhuang Rui mentioned that rough jade, Qin Haoran would have gone to Hpakant even if it was risky. But now the situation is different. At least Qin's Jewelry doesn't need to rush to stockpile high-grade jadeite raw materials. They can just bid on mid- to low-grade ones at the public auction.

In the sealed-bid area of this public auction, there are still many materials that have been cut open and have little gambling potential; at most, it just costs a little more money.

"Uncle Qin, don't worry about it, we've already made arrangements..." Hu Rong thought Qin Haoran was worried about being found out, so he quickly explained again.

Qin Haoran smiled, waved his hand, and said, "Arong, we really don't lack raw materials for the time being. Given the relationship between our two families, why would I be so polite?"

"Yes, Uncle Qin is right. If you encounter any difficulties in the future, you must tell us. By the way, Grandma misses you all too. Let's not talk about the raw materials. After the auction, Uncle and Aunt, why don't you come home with me to visit?"

Seeing Qin Haoran's resolute attitude, Hu Rong stopped talking about smuggling. His grandfather had passed away, but his grandmother was still alive, and out of courtesy, he wanted to invite Qin Haoran to his home.

"I probably won't have time this time. I'll visit Auntie next time. Or how about this, let Xiao Rui go with you. He's never been to a jade mining site before, it would be good for him to broaden his horizons..."

Qin Haoran thought that if he won the bid for that piece of red jade, some of the family's business strategies would have to be changed. They would need to cut the red jade into jewelry as soon as possible and put it on the market to seize the initiative.

Time was of the essence. As the current head of Qin's Jewelry, Qin Haoran didn't have time to visit the Hu family. However, he did send Zhuang Rui out. It wouldn't hurt for a young person to broaden their horizons. Of course, Qin Haoran didn't care whether Zhuang Rui was busy or not.

"Brother Hu, is Hpakant in the Myitkyina region?"

Zhuang Rui had taken note of the name Myitkyina when he heard it from Hu Rong, because the map on his memory card was located there.

Chapter 453-454 Ming Biao (Nine)

"Yes, Hpakant is in the Myitkyina region, which is also the area with the highest concentration of jadeite mines in Myanmar. Almost all the rough jadeite is mined from there..."

Hu Rong smiled, categorizing Zhuang Rui's question as a young person's curiosity about jade mines, and continued, "Actually, jade mines are quite similar to other resource mines. If you have time, young Zhuang, after this public auction is over, I'll take you to see them..."

"Great! Thank you so much, Brother Hu. I have a jade mine in Xinjiang, and I'm wondering what the difference is between the two. I was just thinking of going to check it out..." Zhuang Rui quickly nodded in agreement. Having Hu Rong lead the way to the Myitkyina region would be much more convenient than him and Peng Fei venturing in recklessly.

Zhuang Rui had previously inquired and learned that private mine owners in Myanmar have extremely strict management of jade mines.

Because Myanmar has been plagued by war for many years and is close to the Golden Triangle, these mine owners, after obtaining mining licenses, will designate an area of more than ten kilometers around the mine as their own sphere of influence and protect the mine with armed guards, just like a small kingdom.

All Burmese mine owners do not welcome outsiders into their mining areas. They have the right to warn outsiders to leave and to forcibly expel them without incurring any legal responsibility for killing or injuring them.

Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei's original plan was to avoid these mines, but since they hadn't been to the site, they didn't know if the place marked with a red sun on the map was where the treasure was hidden. If it was right next to a jade mine, they would have no choice but to risk entering.

However, with Hu Rong's invitation, this treasure hunt will become much easier. If there really is a jade mine there, even if it's not Hu Rong's mine, Zhuang Rui should be able to wander around without much trouble, thanks to Hu Rong's connections.

Hu Rong was also very interested in the Xinjiang jade mines that Zhuang Rui mentioned. He was a jewelry designer himself, and he not only designed jadeite jewelry, but also had some knowledge of diamonds, nephrite and other gemstones. He then started discussing it with Zhuang Rui.

Of course, the so-called discussion was mostly Hu Rong talking and Zhuang Rui listening. There was still a big difference between Zhuang Rui and Hu Rong in their understanding of jade, but Zhuang Rui could occasionally say something that hit the nail on the head, making Hu Rong feel like he had met a kindred spirit.

The group chatted until after 10 o'clock before Hu Rong got up to say goodbye. He seemed a little reluctant to leave, telling Zhuang Rui that he would send a car to pick him up after the conference and they would go to the Hpakant region together.

When Zhuang Rui told Peng Fei about it, Peng Fei was very happy. He had some concerns. With his skills, he could enter the Myitkyina jungle undetected, but taking Zhuang Rui with him would be much more dangerous. Now he could go there with someone else and just find an opportunity to go to the place marked on the map.

"Zhuang Rui, hurry up, we're waiting for you. Hey, where's your assistant? Isn't he coming today?"

Fatty Ma stuck his head out of the minibus window at the hotel entrance, urging Zhuang Rui, who had just rushed out of the hotel, to get on the bus.

The Myanmar jade auction was scheduled to start at 9:00 AM. In order not to delay the jade dealers from selecting their stones, the organizing committee decided to move the stone-cutting time forward by two hours. So, at 6:30 AM, the organizing committee's bus and the minibus that Qin Haoran had found were already parked in front of the hotel.

"Peng Fei doesn't know anything about jade gambling, so he won't be going today..."

As Zhuang Rui spoke, he climbed into the minibus. Peng Fei was going to prepare some things today, and the two of them couldn't exactly dig a hole with their hands.

Fatty Ma nodded and said, "Yeah, I left my men at the hotel too. If I'd known Myanmar was this safe, I wouldn't have brought those two along..."

Before coming to Myanmar, Fatty Ma and Zhuang Rui shared the same idea: that Myanmar was a land of warlords and bandits. However, after arriving, they discovered that Myanmar is a Buddhist country, and the locals are very kind. Even if you lose your wallet on the street, someone will return it to you.

As for those rumors, they are not entirely false. It's just that those chaotic areas are close to the borders of Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and China, which is due to their unique geographical environment.

The minibus quickly arrived at the Myanmar National Jade Exchange Center, where two large buses were already parked. Due to the organizing committee's rule that no one could enter the jade gambling venue before the designated time, they temporarily moved the stone-cutting equipment to an open space near the entrance that could accommodate thousands of people. They also connected the power supply and set up a cordon, with armed soldiers maintaining order on the perimeter.

More than two hundred people were already standing on the open ground cordoned off. Zhuang Rui and his group were among the second batch to arrive, and they managed to get a good spot. They squeezed to the front row and saw that the rough stone with the number 1888 had been placed next to the stone-cutting machine.

After stopping, Qin Haoran pointed to a person standing next to the stone-cutting machine and said to Zhuang Rui, "Xiao Rui, that person is the owner of Zhonghai Jixiang Jewelry in China. Jixiang Jewelry is a century-old brand with a very deep foundation..."

"Oh, I wonder what benefits the organizing committee gave them to make them willing to have the stone cut on site..."

Zhuang Rui nodded, but in his heart he was somewhat skeptical. He was sure that this bet on the stone would fail. Not only would the organizing committee lose face, but Jixiang Jewelry would also suffer a major blow. The failure of the bet not only meant financial losses, but it would also have a great impact on their company image.

"Oh, Mr. Ma, Mr. Song, you two are here too?"

As soon as Zhuang Rui and his group squeezed in, someone greeted them. Although China is a large country, some circles are not. Of the people who came to Myanmar, if you don't know them all, you can recognize at least four or five out of ten faces.

"Hehe, Mr. Liu, you're into metal stuff, you've joined in the fun too?" Fatty Ma greeted the man with a grin as soon as he saw him.

"That man is the owner of a non-ferrous metals company in Zhonghai. His business is huge, and his net worth is no less than several billion. I didn't expect him to be gambling on jade..."

Song Jun was considered a semi-official, semi-businessman in the country, and still retained some of the arrogance of the princelings. He simply nodded and greeted the man, then quietly introduced him to Zhuang Rui.

Zhuang Rui shook his head slightly. Judging from the situation, not only jewelry companies were snapping up raw jadeite, but even the big domestic investors had gotten involved. As a result, the price of jadeite in the domestic market would continue to rise.

However, it is the consumers who suffer. As the saying goes, the wool comes from the sheep's back. Jewelry companies may lose money to gain publicity in the short term, but they will eventually have to earn this money back from the consumers.

"Mr. Ma, Mr. Song, what do you think of this piece of material? Is it going to be a bargain or a loss?"

Since everyone knew each other, Mr. Liu, along with a young man who was not very old, squeezed into Zhuang Rui's group.

Fatty Ma shook his head and said, "It's hard to say. Even a god can't judge a piece of jade. Nobody knows until the mystery is solved. But in my opinion, the chances of losing the bet are very high, because my brother here doesn't think it's a good one..."

Zhuang Rui gave a wry smile. Why did he have to be so talkative in the car? Now Fatty Ma was bringing it up again.

Mr. Liu glanced at Zhuang Rui and said somewhat dismissively, "Mr. Ma, that's not necessarily true. The fact that the Burmese side is willing to encourage people from Jixiang Company to come and cut stones means they must be confident..."

Zhuang Rui smiled but didn't reply. He was too lazy to argue with these people. He figured he'd find out everything once the raw stone was cut open.

Zhuang Rui was good-natured, but Fatty Ma stood up for his brother, saying, "Mr. Liu, my brother wins nine out of ten times when he gambles on stones, you should believe me..."

"Alright, Brother Ma, if you keep going, I'll become the gambling king..." Zhuang Rui interrupted Fatty Ma with a laugh. He hadn't even bought ten pieces of jadeite rough in total, and he didn't know how Fatty Ma calculated that he'd win nine out of ten times.

The young man standing next to President Liu suddenly spoke up: "President Ma, how about we make a bet?"

"Big D, you're still such a gambler, aren't you? Mr. Liu, aren't you afraid he'll gamble away all the precious metals in your company's warehouse?" Fatty Ma laughed loudly after hearing the man's words.

"Big D, stop playing your games. If you want to gamble, go find someone to play poker with later..."

Although Mr. Liu was reprimanding the people around him, his face was full of smiles and he wasn't angry.

"Hehe, a little gambling can be fun, right? Boss Ma said this piece of jade will be a bad bet, so I'll set up the betting odds and pay out 20% if it goes badly, and 10% if it goes up. Anyone want to place a bet?"

The young man didn't seem afraid of his boss, and continued with a grin, "But I don't have that much money. The limit for each person to place a bet is ten thousand. If you want to place a bet, come find me..."

Men have a gambling spirit in their bones. The bigger the business, the bigger the gambling spirit. When they make a decision that determines the flow of millions of dollars, aren't they gambling?

So when this guy called "Big D" made his call, some people actually came to join in the fun. A few people took out their notebooks, tore off a piece of paper, and started using it as a betting slip. In no time, about ten people surrounded "Big D," stealing the spotlight from the person who was about to have their stone cut.

"Brother Ma, what does this guy do?"

Zhuang Rui was dumbfounded. He came here to see the stones being cut, but someone had actually set up a gambling den. What was even more speechless was that there were so many people supporting him. Judging from Fatty Ma's expression, he also wanted to go up and have a go.

"Hehe, that kid's name is Dai Jun. His family has a lot of influence in Zhonghai and is also a shareholder in that metal company. After he returned from studying abroad, he was assigned to Lao Liu's company to manage human resources and logistics. This guy is a natural gambler, but he doesn't gamble big and he's quite restrained, so Lao Liu doesn't bother with him. Come on, let's place a bet. I bet you'll win..."

After explaining to Zhuang Rui, Fatty Ma also moved his heavy body to squeeze in, shouting, "Hey, Big D, I bet this rough stone will be a dud, count me in!"

Watching this group of millionaires and even billionaires having so much fun over a bet of ten thousand yuan, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but laugh. If someone who didn't know the situation saw this scene, they would think it was people who were buying vegetables at the market and had gathered together to play cards and gamble at noon.

"Hehe, wherever this kid is, it's always lively. Brother Zhuang, why don't you place a bet too? That Big D guy may always lose, but he has good sportsmanship and will never renege on his debts..."

Song Jun, mindful of his age and status, did not join in the fun, but instead asked Zhuang Rui to go and have some fun.

Dai Jun was quite a quirky character. His family named him Jun, meaning "gentleman," but as he grew up, while he wasn't exactly a heinous criminal, he certainly wasn't a gentleman. He was particularly addicted to gambling, always inciting others to place bets, no matter the occasion. However, he didn't gamble much, and since he never won, he was essentially giving money away, so he didn't annoy anyone. Over time, people gave him a nickname: DJ.

DJ is short for disc jockey, representing the newest, most energetic, most addictive, and most high-energy music. Dai Jun's gambling addiction is just like that of the DJ leading the dance in the disco, which is quite crazy. For the sake of convenience, Dai Jun's name became known as "Big D" by others.

Ten thousand RMB is just a dozen or so hundred-dollar bills. Who among them is short of that money? Their bags are overflowing with dollars. Soon, more and more people are surrounding Big D. The guy is holding a handful of dollars in one hand and a stack of betting slips in the other, all handwritten by the individuals, which will be used to redeem bets later.

Thus, the scene at the stone-cutting site was divided into two parts: on one side were older people who wanted to participate but were too embarrassed to do so, and on the other side was a group of young people in their thirties who were huddled together, vying to place their bets.

The organizing committee saw a crowd gathered there and went up to inquire. When they heard that someone was gambling, they couldn't be bothered to ask any more questions. Gambling on stones is gambling anyway, and they were too busy with their own affairs to care about those foreigners.

"Oh my god, I'm exhausted. Okay, betting has closed. After the stone cutting is finished, all the winners come find me. I, Da D, offer fair and honest betting, and I promise I won't renege on my bets..."

As the other three buses arrived, the clock on his watch struck seven in the morning. Big D had finished placing his bets, and the young man, sweating profusely, squeezed his way out of the crowd, his face beaming with excitement.

Big D grabbed Fatty Ma, pleading, "Brother Ma, could you help me split this? Divide the winning and losing bets into two parts, and I'll split the winnings with you later..."

Fatty Ma laughed and cursed, "Get out of here, you always lose when you gamble, and you still want to give me a share?" But despite his words, there was nothing else to do at the moment, so Fatty Ma pulled Zhuang Rui over to help, and they sorted out the various papers with the words "rise" and "collapse" written on them.

Upon final counting, there were a staggering 198 betting slips. This meant that out of the more than one thousand people present, one in five had participated. Zhuang Rui couldn't help but chuckle. If Big D were to work on Zheng Hua's gambling ship, he would definitely have a brighter future than managing logistics at that metal company.

"Why are there still so many people choosing to gamble until they lose everything?"

Big D sat down on the sack containing over \$200,000 that he had just begged from the organizing committee, and carefully examined the sorted betting slips in his hand. Out of these 198 betting slips, 65 people had chosen to cut the raw jade into pieces that would be worthless. Those people didn't care about the money and just wanted to try their luck with a 1 to 2 payout.

However, this puts the bookmaker, Big D, in a difficult position. If the rough stone yields a profit, he will lose 2.66 million RMB. If the bet fails, he will only make 80,000 RMB. The risk he takes is far too great. Big D's earlier excitement has vanished, and he sits there looking dejected.

"Distinguished guests and friends, the jadeite rough stone we are about to cut is the top lot, number 1888, from yesterday's open auction. We would like to express our gratitude to China Overseas Jixiang Jewelry Company and wish them a prosperous New Year and a joyous start to the year..."

The organizing committee from Myanmar even sent a master of ceremonies fluent in Mandarin to give a long speech before the stone cutting, the purpose of which was nothing more than to encourage the raw jade merchants present to invest more money.

The stone-cutting master was one of the people from Jixiang Company. The reason they spent more than 50 million RMB to bid for this piece of material was because they had repeatedly examined and

verified it. Although this top-bid rough stone weighs only a little over 100 kilograms, what is rare is that it is an old mine material.

As everyone knows, old mine jadeite rough stones with an outer skin are most commonly found in pieces the size of a fist. A piece weighing seventy or eighty kilograms can be considered a large rough stone. This piece weighs over one hundred kilograms. Although it cannot be compared to that giant red jadeite rough stone that weighs one ton, its texture and appearance are much better than that red jadeite rough stone with flaws.

The surface of this rough jadeite was already green, and it was a high-quality icy green jadeite with a very pure color. Just based on the surface alone, it was worth one or two million RMB. If the green penetrated two or three centimeters deeper, the price would double. If it could penetrate five or six centimeters, they could recoup their costs.

Moreover, the chances of finding high-quality jadeite in rough stones that are easily polished are quite high. If they can get some glass-type jadeite material and process it into jadeite jewelry to sell on the market, Jixiang Company will make a profit. This is the main reason why they dared to bid more than 5 million euros to acquire it.

Several people from Jixiang Company standing next to the stone-cutting machine were also discussing in hushed tones. If this rough stone turned out to be a good gamble, it would not only solve the company's supply shortage problem, but also make them look good in front of their peers and have a deterrent effect. It would also be very beneficial in terms of seizing market share.

After discussing it for a while, the group decided to polish the stone first, starting from the crack on the back. If the crack went deeper, they would cut along the crack to preserve the integrity of the jade inside the stone as much as possible.

As the grinding wheel on the polishing machine hissed and spun, the previously noisy area instantly fell silent. On the thousands of square meters of open space, only the "crackling" sound of the grinding wheel rubbing against the raw stone remained, and small pieces of broken stone scattered all over the ground.

Twenty minutes later, after three grinding wheels had been changed, the grinding had penetrated the crack to a depth of five or six centimeters, but the crack still existed and was getting deeper and deeper, like a baby's mouth, splitting open and mocking the person grinding the stone.

"This is bad, the crack is way too deep..."

"Yes, from the outside the crack wasn't very obvious, but now it looks a bit like a malignant fissure..."

"It's almost certain to collapse; Jixiang Company has suffered huge losses this time..."

"Let's see what happens if we cut it in half from the back."

The once quiet stone-cutting area was now filled with chatter. Everyone present was an expert in gambling on stones, and rubbing and cutting the stone were the most crucial methods for distinguishing whether there was jade inside the rough stone. Seeing the current state of the rubbed surface, those who had confidently predicted that this rough stone would definitely appreciate in value changed their tune. After all, facts speak louder than words.

Seeing the crack that had appeared, everyone present had different feelings. Only Big D was full of excitement. He had always lost at gambling, but this time he might actually win. Although his happiness was based on the suffering of Jixiang Company, it had nothing to do with him. Big D and Jixiang Company were not happier at all.

At this moment, the stone-cutting master from Jixiang Company also looked extremely grim. The piece of material was only about 40 centimeters thick, and now five or six centimeters had been cut in. The crack still showed no signs of disappearing, and no jadeite had appeared, indicating that the crack was very deep and there was no need to cut it any further.

"Master Wu, stop rubbing. Just make a cut along the crack, but be careful not to damage the jade inside..."

A middle-aged man standing next to the stone-cutting machine said that he still held a sliver of hope that if a few kilograms of glass-type jadeite could be found in this piece, he could make back his investment.

"OK....."

Master Wu agreed and instructed the two men to move the rough stone onto the stone-cutting machine. He placed a thick layer of material under the surface from which the jadeite would be extracted, to prevent damage to the jadeite that had already appeared during the cutting process.

Master Wu observed carefully for a while longer, and then drew a slanted line with white chalk next to the crack in the rough stone, dividing the entire piece into two halves. By cutting the rough stone along this line, it would be immediately clear whether it would expand or collapse.

Holding the cold handle of the stone-cutting machine, Master Wu was filled with anxiety. He had bought this rough stone at his strong recommendation, and if it turned out to be a bad gamble, he would have no face to continue working at Jixiang Company, and in front of so many colleagues, he would have a hard time making a living in the jade gambling circle in the future.

After the power switch was pressed, the huge alloy gear began to spin rapidly. The morning sunlight shone on it, reflecting streaks of white light that dazzled everyone's eyes.

Chapter 455-456 Ming Biao (10)

"Click...click click..."

Master Wu's sweaty palms finally pressed down, and pieces of stone, each about the size of a palm, detached from the original rock.

The huge alloy gear, gleaming with a cold light, slashed fiercely into the raw stone reinforced in the stone-cutting machine. Although Master Wu was nervous, his hands were very steady. Following the white line drawn on the surface, he split the more than 100-kilogram raw stone in two without the slightest deviation.

"well....."

The sighs from the crowd told the whole story. Although the half of the rough stone that revealed green was still more than ten centimeters thick, if it were all jade, more than thirty kilograms could still be extracted, so there would be no loss.

However, anyone standing close enough can clearly see with the naked eye that there is a distinct crack on the smooth cut surface. Anyone with even a little knowledge of jade gambling knows that this rough stone is a gamble that will fail.

Master Wu stood blankly beside the stone-cutting machine, his face ashen. His lips moved as if he wanted to say something, but no one could hear what he was saying. The smooth cut surface of the rough stone was so dazzling under the sunlight. The crack that ran almost through the entire piece of rough stone seemed like a laughing mouth, mocking everyone in the room.

"Master Wu, keep cutting. Take out as much jade as you can..."

Although the head of Jixiang Jewelry also looked very unhappy, he couldn't lose face, so he maintained his composure in front of thousands of colleagues and insisted on finishing the jade gambling.

However, in his heart, he hated the Myanmar organizing committee. Spending 50 million to gamble and losing was not a big deal in itself. With the strength of Jixiang Jewelry, it wouldn't be a serious problem. But losing in front of so many other jewelry companies was a big problem. He couldn't rule out the possibility that these people would take advantage of his misfortune and seize Jixiang Jewelry's market share.

As the saying goes, competitors are enemies, and this is especially true in the jewelry industry. You can often see several other jewelry stores vying for market share next to a jewelry company in various cities.

While such concentration can attract more consumers' attention, it also intensifies competition. If one company runs out of stock, other jewelry stores will immediately lower their prices to secure the other company's market share before adjusting their prices. This is a common practice among businesses.

After Jixiang Jewelry's gamble on this rough jadeite failed, it is very likely that it will be short of raw jadeite materials. There are also many of Jixiang Jewelry's direct competitors present, who are already thinking about whether to lower the price of their jadeite jewelry, drag Jixiang Jewelry into a price war, and kick them out of the jadeite market after they have exhausted their inventory.

The business world is like a battlefield, including the capital market. Although there is no smoke of gunpowder, the bloodshed and violence are no less intense than real guns and cannons. Haven't you

seen how many people cried and struggled to climb to the top of high-rise buildings to jump off after the stock market crash?

Indeed, after Jixiang Jewelry's defeat in Myanmar, several jewelry companies in Zhonghai seemed to have joined forces to launch a promotional campaign for jadeite jewelry, sparking a major battle in the Zhonghai jadeite market. Although Jixiang Jewelry managed to hold on for a few months thanks to the raw materials it had accumulated over the years, it eventually ran out of steam and lost a portion of its market share. Of course, that's another story.

"Here you are, here you are! Those who bought in earlier don't need to come over. Those who bought in earlier but lost money are all here..."

An untimely voice suddenly rang out in the room. No wonder Dai Jun wasn't exactly a gentleman; someone had just gambled away over 50 million, and his shout was like rubbing salt into their wounds. The head of Jixiang Jewelry glared at him, practically wanting to strangle the young man.

However, this wasn't in China, and the Burmese police didn't care about these foreigners gambling. The man could only watch helplessly. Big D, on the other hand, was full of excitement. Whether there was jade inside the stone was none of his business. But once the rough stone was cut open, its value wouldn't reach the more than 5 million euros he spent to buy it. However, the betting odds set by Big D were already ready to be cashed out.

The odds were 1 to 2. Sixty-five people bet on the winning numbers. After losing all his money, Big D actually made a profit of 80,000 yuan. He was now grinning from ear to ear, constantly bragging to the people around him: "If anyone ever tells me that I always lose when I gamble, I'll get mad at them."

However, not many people could hear him anymore, because when he cashed out his bet, Master Wu made another cut. With this cut, the entire rough stone was completely ruined. Following the initial cut, it took Master Wu nearly an hour to extract more than ten kilograms of icy jade.

Fortunately, the quality of these icy jade pieces is quite good, and the color is also very pure. They can be polished into some mid-to-high-end bracelets, but their value will not exceed five million. Compared to the more than fifty million they spent, it's a complete loss.

After the mystery was revealed, the crowd lost their interest in watching the spectacle and shook their heads as they left. Although they hadn't lost their bets, they still felt a heavy weight in their hearts. Apart from a few of Jixiang Jewelry's direct competitors, not many people were gloating. The reason was simple: they were afraid that the rough stones they had bid on would also end up like that.

In order to mitigate the impact of this failed jade gambling event, the Myanmar jade auction organizing committee opened the venue ahead of schedule, allowing buyers from all over the world to enter early.

The time allotted for observing the sealed bids was already limited, and the organizing committee's decision quickly dispersed the crowd at the stone-cutting site, who then gathered at the entrance of the venue to wait for their entry passes to be checked before entering.

This rough stone, which had been analyzed by numerous jade gambling experts in Myanmar and given a high probability of being a winning bid, ultimately failed to deliver, once again proving the saying "even a god cannot judge the value of a piece of jade."

"Zhuang Rui, let's go. What are you still looking at?"

After getting his winnings back from Big D, Fatty Ma saw Zhuang Rui still watching the people from Jixiang Company cut stones, so he pulled him along.

"Waiting a while won't hurt. There are a lot of people coming in now, so I'm not going to join the crowd..."

Zhuang Rui glanced at the crowd queuing to enter the Myanmar National Jade Exchange Center and replied casually. Actually, he wanted to wait until these people finished cutting the stones to see if he could buy the half of the stone that had been ruined.

Although this rough stone was a gamble that failed, that's only in a relative sense. Compared to the price of over 50 million yuan that bought it, it was certainly a failure. However, the jadeite contained in this piece was not just the ten-odd kilograms. In the other half of the rough stone, there were two or three kilograms of high-ice jadeite, only slightly larger than a fist, curled up at the edge of the crack in the waste material. If Master Wu's knife had been slightly to the right and up, he might have been able to cut that piece out.

Although two or three kilograms of material only cost a few hundred thousand yuan, even a small mosquito bite is still meat. Rather than leaving it here as garbage, it's better to spend some money to buy it later. Zhuang Rui is holding back his energy to find a bargain.

"Good lad, you have a really good eye, Uncle Qin is truly impressed..."

The expressions on the faces of the people standing around Zhuang Rui were varied. The jade gambling masters hired by Qin's Jewelry did not look good. They had strongly advocated bidding for this rough stone, but they were slapped in the face. If Fang Yi had spent money to bid for it, her fate would have been just like that of the people from Jixiang Jewelry, who were devastated.

However, Qin Haoran's excited demeanor puzzled everyone. This auspicious jewelry brand had no direct conflict with Qin's Jewelry in Hong Kong. Seeing someone else lose at gambling seemed unnecessary to cause such excitement. Only Zhuang Rui and Fang Yi understood that Qin Haoran's joy wasn't about someone else's loss, but rather Zhuang Rui's foresight.

After hearing Zhuang Rui's words yesterday, Qin Haoran had some doubts. After all, based on just one sentence from Zhuang Rui, he was willing to spend tens of millions or even hundreds of millions of yuan on that giant red jadeite rough. Qin Haoran was still a little hesitant. However, after seeing what happened today, his confidence in Zhuang Rui immediately increased. At the same time, he decided not to look at that rough with flaws, so as not to attract anyone's attention.

"Hey buddy, I'm getting a stone cut open, anyone want to come watch?"

Zhuang Rui was chatting with Qin Haoran when a loud shout suddenly came from beside the stone-cutting machine. Zhuang Rui looked in the direction of the sound and his expression changed. He was filled with regret: "Damn it, I was distracted while I was talking. How did that rough stone end up in that kid Da D's hands?"

"Brother Ma, what's going on? Isn't he running a gambling den? Why is he asking for stones to be cut again?" Zhuang Rui asked Fatty Ma beside him.

"Hey, that kid's a bit of a troublemaker. He got a little too excited after winning 80,000 yuan. He said he'd tried all sorts of gambling, but never stones, so he wanted to buy a piece of scrap to cut and play with. But someone teased him, so he spent 80,000 yuan on that half-piece of broken stone..."

Fatty Ma laughed as he spoke, his fat body trembling with each laugh, a gloating expression on his face. Big D still couldn't escape his fate of losing every time he gambled; he had just won back 80,000, and now he'd given it all away again.

"Damn it, this kid is really lucky..."

Zhuang Rui looked at Da D, who didn't even know how to operate a stone cutting machine, and was speechless for a moment. The people from Jixiang Jewelry weren't stupid. They cut that half piece of waste material into three sections, but still didn't find any green. They only sold it to Da D for 80,000 yuan. However, they didn't know that they had given away hundreds of thousands of yuan. But even if they knew, the people from Jixiang Jewelry didn't care. More than 50 million yuan had already gone down the drain, so what did it matter if they lost a little bit?

"Huh, what's this thing? Why is it a bit dark?"

After arrogantly slicing the rough stone in half on the stone-cutting machine, Big D stared blankly at the cut surface. Under the sunlight, the green color turned a bit darker, and at first glance, it looked somewhat like black.

"Damn, you're really lucky..."

After hearing what Da D said, Fatty Ma went over to take a look. Although he was also a novice when it came to gambling on jade, his knowledge was much better than Da D's. He could tell at a glance that the cut jade was of good quality and should be worth far more than 80,000 yuan.

The group from Jixiang Jewelry, who had just left and hadn't gone far, stumbled upon hearing Fatty Ma's words. However, none of them looked back. The scrap they were about to throw away had been found to contain jade, which was another slap in the face to Master Wu. Now, Master Wu's face was deathly pale, devoid of any color.

For Jixiang Jewelry, this Myanmar jade auction was a complete nightmare. They not only lost money but also face. Although the Myanmar jade auction is not over yet, the jewelry industry in China is already in turmoil, and a major battle is imminent.

"Let's go in..."

Zhuang Rui was too lazy to look at what he was about to grab, as that kid had snatched it away. Besides, there were still tens of thousands of yuan worth of rough jadeite in the bidding area waiting for him to look at. With the price of jadeite soaring, Zhuang Rui wouldn't complain about having too much rough jadeite. At this rate of price increase, investing in jadeite rough was more worthwhile than investing in real estate.

Upon entering the jade gambling venue, Zhuang Rui headed straight for the open bidding area. His strategy for this trip to Myanmar was to spend three days examining all the tens of thousands of rough stones in the open bidding area before slowly selecting the stones from the sealed bidding area. After all, open bidding is quick and effective, and only when the rough stones are in his own hands can he feel at ease.

Zhuang Rui didn't even have the idea of buying up all the high-end jadeite in this public auction, because that was unrealistic. With just over 100 million RMB, it was simply not enough. He would be satisfied if he could get a few of the best pieces.

Of course, the raw stones that Zhuang Rui couldn't digest wouldn't be given to others. Qin Haoran - Song Jun - Fatty Ma, in that order, Zhuang Rui would reveal some information to them later, after all, it's better to keep the good stuff in the family.

There were significantly fewer people in the open bidding area today than yesterday. After all, the on-site stone cutting just now led many buyers to believe that the stones in the open bidding area were the leftovers and unlikely to yield green jade. So today, they all turned to the sealed bidding area.

However, this was the result Zhuang Rui liked best. He examined the raw materials too quickly, and with more people around, some people would inevitably become suspicious. Now that there were fewer people and everyone's attention was focused on the raw materials on the ground, no one paid any attention to Zhuang Rui, who seemed to be idly wandering around.

Yesterday, Zhuang Rui had already seen the materials numbered 4000 and above. Today, after entering the open bidding area, he started looking at the rough materials numbered 4000 and above.

Because there were so many raw materials, Zhuang Rui only used his spiritual energy to roughly examine each piece, sensing whether it contained any cool, icy spiritual energy. After examining so many rough stones, Zhuang Rui was already able to judge the quality of the jadeite based on the strength of the spiritual energy within them.

When encountering materials of slightly lower quality, Zhuang Rui would not stop at all, nor would he even take notes. Only rough materials of oily green or higher quality, and with abundant spiritual energy, would make Zhuang Rui stop and carefully examine them. He would write down the content of the jade inside and his rough estimate of its value in his notebook. Of course, if he showed those notes to others, they would not understand them.

In one morning, Zhuang Rui saw the rough stones numbered 17,000 and above. By then, his mind was completely blank. If he didn't look at his notebook, he couldn't remember how many rough stones were worth bidding on or which ones were the most valuable.

Zhuang Rui originally thought the open bid was only a little over ten thousand yuan, but he didn't expect that the circled area next to it was also within the open bid range. This was a disaster for him, as it was a full twenty thousand yuan!

"Xiao Rui, what's wrong? You look so pale."

Sitting in the canteen of the Myanmar Jade Exchange Center at noon, Fang Yi looked at Zhuang Rui with concern. In just a few hours, Zhuang Rui, who had been rosy-cheeked, was now deathly pale, looking even worse than the people who had lost money gambling on rough jade that morning.

"It's nothing, Aunt Fang. I'm just a little dizzy from looking at so many raw materials..."

Zhuang Rui waved his hand, looking at the food in front of him, unable to eat a single bite. The workload was far too great. He had examined more than 10,000 rough stones in just one morning. Just counting from 1 to 10,000 would take a long time, not to mention that he also had to select the valuable pieces.

Although spiritual energy doesn't consume anything when looking at inanimate objects, the immense mental strain left Zhuang Rui completely exhausted. All he wanted to do was find a place to lie down and get a good night's sleep.

"By the way, Uncle Qin, I've written down a few pieces of material. Please keep them in mind, and when you bid on them in a few days, please take a look..." Zhuang Rui listlessly opened his notebook, which was filled with numbers. However, it was impossible for others to discern any patterns from it.

Zhuang Rui really had no appetite at the moment, so he moved the boxed lunch aside. But when he saw the numbers on the notebook, his head started spinning. He closed his eyes to rest for a while before turning his attention back to the notebook.

"4179, 5367, 5580, 8751, oh right, and 5426. Okay, that's all I've seen so far. When the bidding starts, Uncle Qin, please pay attention. I've written the prices down. These pieces all seem pretty good to me. Piece 5426 is a little less desirable, so don't bid too high for it. For the rest, try to bid on as many as possible..."

Zhuang Rui took Qin Haoran's notebook and wrote down the numbers inside. The worst of the rough stones he listed could be extracted to yield golden silk-type jade; the four stones combined were worth well over two hundred million.

As for the 5426 that was written down later, Zhuang Rui just wrote it down randomly. Not every piece of rough jade he provided could turn out to be green. If that were the case, his title as an expert would probably not be able to stop others from being suspicious. So he just wrote down a piece of jade randomly.

The materials Zhuang Rui provided alone were enough to make Qin's Jewelry a fortune this time, so spending a little extra money was nothing to Zhuang Rui. He thought, "This guy is already showing great integrity."

It wasn't that Zhuang Rui didn't want to take it all; it was just that there were too many rough stones, and most of them were mid-range jadeite. Zhuang Rui simply couldn't handle them all. Originally, Zhuang Rui wanted to give Qin Haoran a few more numbers, but the sheer number of rough stones he had seen that morning was too astonishing, and he was afraid of scaring the two of them.

"This...this, Xiao Rui, you saw more than 8,000 pieces of raw jade?"

Even though Zhuang Rui was very restrained, he still gave Qin Haoran and his wife a big fright. Qin Haoran had been looking at the sealed bids all morning, but he had only looked at a little over 200 yuan.

That was after he had skipped over all the bids because he hadn't behaved well. He didn't expect that Zhuang Rui would quietly see more than 8,000 yuan.

"Uncle Qin, many of the materials in the open bidding area aren't even jadeite rough; they're just broken stones. I skipped all of those and only looked at the rough stones that showed promise. It was exhausting..."

Zhuang Rui then realized that the numbers he had given had frightened Qin Haoran and his wife. He quickly explained, and Qin Haoran felt relieved after his explanation. However, when bidding on these rough stones, he raised the prices Zhuang Rui had marked, wasting a lot of money. This was all due to Zhuang Rui's comment that he had "performed well".

After lunch, Zhuang Rui did not go directly to the venue to look at the raw materials. Instead, he found a quiet corner in the air-conditioned canteen to rest for a while. He did not reappear in the open bidding area until after 1 p.m.

With his mind clearing up a bit, Zhuang Rui finished examining all the remaining 3,000-plus rough stones in one go. More than a dozen more numbers appeared in his notebook. Zhuang Rui did not participate in today's open auction because none of the rough stones numbered from 2,000 to 4,000 were of his liking.

When the minibus arrived that evening, Zhuang Rui boarded it immediately and remained silent until they reached the hotel. Qin Haoran and his wife knew that Zhuang Rui was tired that day, so they did not disturb him.

After returning to the hotel, Zhuang Rui ate a bowl of noodles in the restaurant, then went into his room and collapsed onto the bed, falling fast asleep. Qin Haoran, who had wanted to discuss pricing the giant red jadeite with Zhuang Rui, couldn't reach him. Exhausted, Zhuang Rui didn't even hear his phone ring.

Zhuang Rui didn't get out of bed until eight o'clock the next day. He had slept for a full twelve hours, and after this deep sleep, Zhuang Rui's spirits were fully restored.

"Xiao Rui, what price range do you think we should set for that piece of red jadeite rough this afternoon?"

On the minibus were Fatty Ma and several jade gambling consultants. Qin Haoran couldn't discuss this matter with Zhuang Rui. When they arrived at the venue, he didn't bother to look at the rough stones. He grabbed Zhuang Rui and went to a secluded corner to ask him questions.

"Although that piece of jade has some flaws on the back, it's too big. I'm sure many people will be willing to gamble on it. The price can't be set too low, otherwise we probably won't be able to get it..."

Zhuang Rui thought for a moment and said, "I think the price needs to be at least six million euros to secure the deal. How about this, Uncle Qin, let's go in together when the bidding starts this afternoon..."

Chapter 457 Blind Bidding (Part 1)

There are many ways to gamble on jade, and everyone has their own method. Some gamble on the texture and clarity of the jade, some on its color, and naturally, some gamble on cracks and flaws. These people are numerous and form the main force in the jade gambling circle.

Because cracks vary in depth, while a crack means that the structure of the jadeite inside has been damaged, it also means that top-quality jadeite can be found inside, and there is a possibility of a huge windfall. Risk and opportunity coexist, so even though the crack on that piece of rough jadeite is a bad one, we still dare not take it lightly.

"If all else fails, then set the price at 8 million euros..."

Qin Haoran was much more decisive than Zhuang Rui. He directly raised the price by two million euros, which is 20 million RMB. The problem Qin's Jewelry is facing now is not a lack of money, but a lack of raw jadeite. Even if that piece of raw jadeite is only worth 8 million euros, let alone 200 million, Qin Haoran would bid for it without hesitation.

"Let's check things out on-site tonight..." Zhuang Rui was unwilling to draw conclusions now. The auction scene could change in an instant, and no one could guarantee that someone else was also eyeing that piece of material. We'd find out when the time came.

After separating from Qin Haoran and his wife, Zhuang Rui went to the sealed bid area today. He had already recorded the numbers of all the valuable rough stones in the open bid area in his notebook, and all he needed to do every day was to attend the auction on time in the afternoon.

In the open bidding area, Zhuang Rui had his eye on nearly 100 pieces of material, and the most important ones were 10 rough stones. Among these 10 rough stones, three were glass-type jadeite, but none of them reached the imperial green level. However, jadeite ornaments carved from such material could already be considered top-quality.

The other seven pieces, while slightly inferior in quality, are abundant; each piece could yield tens of kilograms of jadeite, perfectly filling the gap in mid-to-high-end jadeite jewelry. Putting everything else aside, if Beijing Qin Ruilin Jewelry Store can acquire these 10 rough stones, it won't need to worry about jadeite raw materials for the next five years.

"Damn it, all the good jade really is in the sealed bid area..."

After entering the sealed-bid area, Zhuang Rui looked at less than 100 pieces of jade and cursed inwardly. This was too much of a rip-off! All the good jade was concentrated in the sealed-bid area. Among the 100 pieces of rough jade he had just looked at, two of them were actually glass-type jade.

In reality, the situation wasn't as exaggerated as Zhuang Rui imagined. The jadeite pieces ranked in the previous sealed bids were all carefully selected by the organizing committee, and they were all semi-rough stones that had been cut or polished. Among them was a piece of glass-type rough stone, whose texture and water content were directly revealed through polishing.

Zhuang Rui absolutely avoided that piece of rough jade. He didn't even need to think about it; when the bidding opened, that piece of jade would definitely fetch an astronomical price. Zhuang Rui's most conservative estimate was that the price would be over 100 million RMB. He couldn't afford to get involved, nor did he want to join in the fun.

The number of rough stones in the sealed bid area is more than ten times that of the open bid area. In other words, there are nearly 200,000 rough stones for Zhuang Rui to choose from. So Zhuang Rui is not in a hurry. With his keen eye, he can choose some rough stones with poor outer appearance but good quality inside to bid on. This way, he can guarantee winning the bid and save a lot of money. This is Zhuang Rui's plan.

"Why are they all semi-gambling materials?"

When he saw the 500th bid, Zhuang Rui became a little impatient. He simply walked out of the sealed bid area and took a detour to the place where the open bid area and the sealed bid area met, and started looking at the bids from there.

Sure enough, the quality of the rough stones here was far inferior to those we had seen earlier. Some of them were even worse than those in the auction area. They were just some new mine rough stones that had been cut open and displayed there. Of course, some jadeite was also found inside.

"Hmm? Icy jade?"

After browsing the sealed-bid area for over an hour, Zhuang Rui stopped in front of a rough stone with an ugly appearance. It was ugly because the surface resembled the forehead of the God of Longevity, with a high protrusion on an oval-shaped stone. The entire rough stone was covered in black spots, somewhat like a stone from a rural outhouse.

Zhuang Rui examined the rough stone, which weighed over thirty pounds, from all angles. He found no signs of cutting or polishing, indicating it was a completely undeveloped piece. He couldn't help but feel happy, as he had finally found such an undeveloped, completely undeveloped rough stone.

"Damn, it's so dark..."

Looking at the price list next to the bidding box, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but curse inwardly. Such a stone, and the starting price was set at 30,000 euros, which is more than 300,000 RMB.

Zhuang Rui stared at the price tag with some resentment for a while, then looked at the bid box. Suddenly, a thought struck him, and he cursed at himself, "Zhuang Rui, you're such an idiot!" After cursing, he slapped his head hard, making a crisp "smack" sound.

"What are you doing?!"

A broken Chinese sentence suddenly rang in Zhuang Rui's ears. He turned his head and was almost startled to jump. A dark-skinned and thin Burmese soldier was holding an old AK47 assault rifle, with the muzzle pointed directly at him.

"Hey, hey, why are you pointing a gun at me? Take it away right now..."

Zhuang Rui shouted loudly, and a staff member standing outside the marking area heard him and quickly walked over. He communicated with the soldier, but they were speaking in Burmese, which Zhuang Rui could not understand. However, after the staff member arrived, the soldier lowered his gun.

"Sir, I'm sorry. He suspected you of tampering with the bid box, so he came to stop you. We apologize; it was a misunderstanding..."

The staff spoke much more fluent Mandarin and knew that "you" was a respectful term, so they were very polite. It was obvious that the bidding box next to the raw materials hadn't been moved at all.

"He just hit himself, he hit himself..."

The soldier was puzzled by Zhuang Rui's actions and spoke in broken Chinese, while gesturing as he spoke.

"Hey, what business is it of yours if I hit myself? I didn't hit you, why are you bothering with this?"

Zhuang Rui retorted to the soldier in an annoyed tone, "I was just happy, not really bored and slapping my head for no reason."

After hearing Zhuang Rui's words, the staff member smiled and exchanged a few words with the soldier before saying, "Excuse me, sir, we're disturbing your selection of raw materials. Please continue..."

After hearing what the staff member said, the soldier shook his head and left. However, he stood not far from Zhuang Rui and looked at Zhuang Rui with a strange gaze, perhaps categorizing Zhuang Rui as a mentally ill person.

Zhuang Rui didn't care about the soldier's opinion of him. At this moment, he was overjoyed because he had just thought of something: if he had enough money, he could bid on all the raw jade stones in the sealed bid area!

Many of you may have already guessed that "sufficient funds" doesn't mean throwing money at the top, but rather identifying the highest bid in the betting box and then betting on it by just one euro above that bid.

These past few days, Zhuang Rui had felt something was off, and now he finally understood. The spiritual energy in his eyes could not only see through metal and stone, but also see through bidding boxes made of alloy. As for the numbers on those bidding documents, they couldn't escape his eyes either.

"Hehe, no one's bidding yet, buddy, I'll take your virginity..."

After examining the bid box, Zhuang Rui found it to be completely empty, without a single bid. Mischievously, he pulled open the glass drawer at the bottom of the bid box and took out a bid form.

The so-called bid form is actually just a card, exactly the same size as a business card, with Burmese, Chinese and English indicating where to fill in your bid number and bid price.

The bidding number is not the number on the admission pass, but the four digits on the back of the admission pass plus the last four digits of Zhuang Rui's passport, making a total of eight digits. If the person is from Myanmar, it is the sum of the four digits on the back of the admission pass and the last four digits on their ID card.

When applying for an entry pass, you must fill in your passport number. Therefore, for each entry pass issued, the computer will automatically generate a bidding number. The purpose of this is to ensure that raw material suppliers are not subject to malicious bidding.

If the bid number is too simple, it will be easy for others to obtain it. If someone uses Zhuang Rui's bid number and writes "1 billion euros" on the bid form, Zhuang Rui will definitely not be able to pay that amount. The final result will be that he will renege on the bid, and in that case, all the raw materials he previously bid for will be invalid.

As the saying goes, competitors are enemies. It cannot be ruled out that some people with dark intentions might use this method to maliciously bid high prices after knowing the other party's bid number, thus squeezing the competitor out of this public auction.

That's why the organizing committee uses this method for bid numbers, and when issuing admission passes, they specifically remind each buyer not to disclose their bid number. If anyone is still taken advantage of because of this, they can only blame themselves for being too careless.

"Hmm, I'll put in 30,100 euros to play around..."

After writing his bid number on the bid form, Zhuang Rui mischievously wrote down a number. He was just playing around. For Zhuang Rui, the sealed bid was like a naked young woman, open for him to bid whenever he wanted.

Zhuang Rui tossed the bid form into the bid box, glanced at it, and was about to select raw materials as if he were looking at an open bid when his phone rang.

Chapter 458 Blind Bidding (Part Two)

"Xiao Rui, what are you doing? It's almost three o'clock, why aren't you here at the auction hall yet?"

Qin Haoran's voice came through the phone. Zhuang Rui raised his left wrist to look at his watch and couldn't help but stick out his tongue. It was almost three o'clock, and they could enter the venue by now.

"Uncle Qin, I'll be there soon..."

After hanging up the phone, Zhuang Rui turned and ran towards the auction hall, almost causing the soldier to lose his way. After walking to the box and checking that nothing seemed to be missing, he went back to his post. However, the soldier was even more convinced that Zhuang Rui was a "lunatic".

"Hurry up, get your license plate number so we can get in..."

When Qin Haoran saw Zhuang Rui running over breathlessly, he didn't bother with pleasantries and let Zhuang Rui go in front of him. Although this act of cutting in line made the people behind him very unhappy, since he didn't cut in front of them, they complained a few times, but Qin Haoran and the others pretended not to hear them.

Because they arrived late, Zhuang Rui and the others were unable to sit in Hall 1 this time. Following the number cards in their hands, they found Hall 3, where their seats were relatively close to the front, in the second row.

Most importantly, Qin Haoran, Zhuang Rui, and Fang Yi were sitting side by side, giving them plenty of time to discuss and set bid prices during the two-hour bidding period, which was enough to handle any unexpected events.

At exactly three o'clock, the voice of the supervisor Ming Biao rang out in the venue. However, this time he spoke in Burmese, and someone translated it into Chinese and English. Zhuang Rui only learned when he met Hu Rong the day before yesterday that the supervisor of this conference was changed every day, and the supervisors were all very prestigious people in the upper echelons of Burmese society.

"here we go....."

As soon as the supervisor finished speaking, the large screen in front of Zhuang Rui and the others immediately began flashing. Numbers from 4000 to 6000 appeared clearly on the screen, while the red reserve price below was extremely eye-catching.

Zhuang Rui looked around and found that there weren't many people in the mood to chat today. After the top bid price appeared, two rough stones in the open auction that he hadn't participated in yesterday also reached 40 million. Obviously, the failed top bid did not affect these people's determination to buy jadeite rough stones. On the contrary, they became even more frantic.

"Xiao Rui, keep a close eye on lot number 5220. Your aunt and I will check the other lot first. If there are any changes, let us know immediately..."

Qin Haoran opened his notebook, glanced at it, and immediately assigned tasks. Today's bidding task was very heavy. Not only did they have to ensure that they could win the giant red jadeite rough stone No. 5220, but the rough stones No. 4179, 5367, and 5580 that Zhuang Rui had given him were also scheduled to be auctioned today.

Fearing that the jade experts might leak the news, Qin Haoran did not allow them to enter the auction hall. The three of them were going to bid on four rough stones, which was not as leisurely as bidding on

just one stone. Moreover, the numbers were not close together, and it would take some time just to find them on the big screen.

The tactic of testing the waters was clearly used more extensively in today's open auction. As soon as the starting price on the big screen was refreshed, people started bidding, and in an instant, the entire screen turned red, blue, and white.

"Damn it, why are they all copying me?"

Zhuang Rui couldn't help but mutter to himself, "This method is really nerve-wracking. You can't care about bothering others; you're all focused on the raw jade you're interested in, wondering if it's been numbered."

"Xiao Rui, what did you just say?" Fang Yi, who was sitting next to Zhuang Rui, turned her head and asked after hearing Zhuang Rui's words.

"It's nothing, it's nothing. There are just too many boring people here. Why are they causing trouble instead of bidding themselves?"

Zhuang Rui quickly adopted a look of deep disgust, knowing he couldn't let word get out about his mischief that day, otherwise that fellow Chinese who spent 1 million euros might come looking for a heart-to-heart talk.

"You silly child, you were the one who placed over sixty bets the other day, weren't you? I'm relieved to entrust Xuanbing to you..."

Zhuang Rui's words made his mother-in-law immediately guess the truth, but Fang Yi was not angry. In this day and age, a man who is too honest will suffer. Zhuang Rui is a good person by nature, not lacking in wit, and he loves his daughter very much. With such a son-in-law, what else could Fang Yi not worry about?

"Hehe, I just didn't understand..."

Zhuang Rui scratched his head and laughed, but the smile immediately froze on his face because he saw that someone had bid on the red jadeite rough stone No. 5220 that he had been paying attention to, and directly raised the price of the rough stone from the starting price of 200,000 euros to 500,000 euros.

"Uncle Qin, someone has placed a bid for the red jade, 500,000..."

Zhuang Rui quickly informed Qin Haoran of the situation. When it came to improvisation, Zhuang Rui knew he was no match for the two business elites beside him.

"It's okay, don't rush, there's still a full hour and fifty minutes..."

Qin Haoran glanced at his watch and said calmly, "I never expected to get this rough stone cheaply. In the past few days, I've heard a lot of people talking about the No. 5220 rough stone. With more people paying attention, its popularity has naturally increased. Among these people who came to Myanmar to gamble on rough stones, there are quite a few experts in crack detection."

The risks are high, but the rewards are equally high. A rough stone weighing over a ton from the old pit of Dakanmu is quite rare in the history of jade gambling. Although there is a bad crack that is more than a meter long on the back, the rough stone is so big that the bad crack may disappear when it reaches the middle.

So don't be fooled by Zhuang Rui's dismissive attitude towards the rough stone that day, or by the extremely low evaluations given to it by many others who saw it later. Perhaps the people bidding now are those who gave it such low evaluations back then, just like Zhuang Rui.

"Something's not right, the price of this rough stone has been steadily rising..."

In just ten minutes, the price of rough stone No. 5220 skyrocketed from 50 to 800,000. Almost every three minutes, someone would raise the price by 100,000. This was different from what Zhuang Rui had seen that day. There was no physical activity at all; they immediately started fighting with bayonets.

"Hmm? Xiao Rui, come and look at the prices of these two lots, 4179 and 5367. I'll keep an eye on 5220 later..."

Qin Haoran frowned. He had actually secretly taken a look at the rough stone yesterday. Although it was large, the other parts were not good, and no jade was found after polishing. It seemed a bit abnormal that it was being offered such a high price.

"Dad, this rough stone doesn't seem to be worth that much money, does it? 800,000 euros is already more than 8 million RMB. We still need to bid in the sealed auction. If this one wins the bid, we won't have enough money from the sealed auction..."

"Don't worry, that little rascal surnamed Zhuang is a very good actor. He even tricked this old man once. His behavior the day before yesterday was very abnormal. Maybe there's something really valuable inside this rough stone..."

In Auction Hall No. 4, which was separated from Zhuang Rui and the others, a conversation was taking place. One of the speakers was Xu Zhendong, Zhuang Rui's old nemesis and the head of Xu's Jewelry, while the other speaker was his son, Xu Qi.

As for Xu Wei, who provoked the conflict with Zhuang Rui, he has now been sidelined. After being stripped of all his positions at Xu's Jewelry, Xu Wei, like those spoiled brats who just laze around all day, goes to the company every month to collect a monthly allowance. As for something as important as gambling on jade in Myanmar, Xu Wei has absolutely nothing to do with it.

Seeing that his father had made all three bids, Xu Qi became anxious and said, "Dad, we can't put all our eggs in one basket. You're raising the price every ten minutes. What if no one dares to bid and we end up buying it?"

"Hmph, what's there to be afraid of? It's only 800,000 euros. You think no one will follow suit?"

Xu Zhendong snorted coldly. He had been observing this rough stone for several days and discovered that several people who had initially dismissed it as worthless had secretly returned to examine it more closely. This greatly boosted Xu Zhendong's confidence in the stone. He would be more than happy to buy it for 800,000 yuan.

Sure enough, as soon as Xu Zhendong finished speaking, the price of 800,000 euros jumped to 1 million euros under the white number 5220. Xu Zhendong clenched his fist, then relaxed it, immediately picked up the bidding device, entered 1.1 million euros, and pressed the confirm button heavily.

Xu Zhendong's thinking is very simple. He only brought 5 million euros to Myanmar this time, and he has set a price of 4 million euros for this rough stone in his mind. Even if he can't get the rough stone, he will stir up trouble so that others can't easily get it.

"Uncle Qin, were you the one who raised the price just now?"

Zhuang Rui glanced at lot number 5220 and noticed that the number had changed to 1.5 million euros. His heart skipped a beat, and he looked at Qin Haoran.

"No, it seems there are at least three groups eyeing this bid, so the price of 8 million euros still needs to be adjusted..."

As Qin Haoran spoke, his eyebrows twitched slightly upwards, because he noticed that the price of lot number 5220 had jumped from 1.5 million euros to 1.8 million euros, with someone adding 300,000 euros directly.

"You continue looking at those two lots; I'll take care of this red jadeite..."

Qin Haoran's expression turned serious. The price displayed on the big screen showed that none of the three parties were willing to back down and each wanted to overwhelm the other with their imposing manner.

Chapter 459 Blind Bidding (Part 3)

"Two million euros, what a flop..."

Looking at the large screen in front of him, even a refined person like Qin Haoran couldn't help but swear. There was still a full hour and a half before the bidding started. If the price continued to rise at this rate, who knew what kind of sky-high price this rough stone would fetch?

However, the four rough stones that Zhuang Rui and Fang Yi were eyeing hadn't changed price after someone made a bid, which reassured Qin Haoran considerably, allowing him to focus entirely on lot 5220.

"It's reached three million. It seems one side has withdrawn..."

Qin Haoran reported the situation to Zhuang Rui and Fang Yi, his eyes fixed on the big screen. However, he remained patient and showed no sign of making a move. At this moment, Qin Haoran was like a predatory beast, only revealing his fangs at the last moment.

"Dad, this is three-fifths of our funds! Is that flawed jade really worth that much?"

In another exhibition hall, Xu Qi was much more anxious than Qin Haoran. In the air-conditioned hall, he was sweating nervously. He knew the current situation of his company. If this 50 million yuan went down the drain, it would be a disaster.

"Look at you, so spineless. Sit there quietly..."

Xu Zhendong sighed inwardly. He had originally wanted to train his son, but his son was ultimately a hopeless case. He could not hand over Xu's Jewelry to him in the future.

Xu Qi had no idea that after he said those words, he would soon be enjoying the same treatment he had before, receiving a monthly allowance and living a life of leisure.

Xu Zhendong didn't glance at his son again, because he noticed the number on the screen had changed to 3.6 million euros. Xu Zhendong's heart leaped; he was only 400,000 euros short of his psychological threshold of four million.

Gritting his teeth, Xu Zhendong entered four million euros on the bidding device's display screen and then pressed the confirmation button hard. At that moment, Xu Zhendong's old face, covered with wrinkles like orange peel, looked somewhat ferocious.

"Old Ma, are you sure you're not serious? This is over 40 million RMB already! What if you lose it all? Are you trying to find someone to take the fall?"

In Auction Hall No. 1, Song Jun was looking at Fatty Ma with a displeased expression. He didn't know what had gotten into him that led Fatty Ma to drag him here to bid on this rough stone worth 5200. The jade expert he brought had said that this rough stone was performing very poorly, even worse than the one that had failed to sell yesterday.

But Fatty Ma seemed to be possessed. Not only had he been guarding that piece of rough jade for the past two days, but today he also dragged Song Jun along to join the bidding. At this moment, Song Jun was seething with anger.

"Hey, Brother Song, you won't mind this little bit of money, will you? I, Fatty Ma, may not be good at judging stones, but I've never been wrong about people. Don't be fooled by the people who've been eyeing this rough stone these past few days, leaving grumbling and cursing. They probably all know what's going on. Those guys who were raising the price just now were the ones who had their eye on this rough stone..."

Fatty Ma was already in the zone. The bid of forty or fifty million RMB was enough to get his blood pumping. Because now, apart from gambling on stones, Fatty Ma couldn't feel much passion even with women. Speaking of which, the unconventional position of man on top and woman on the bottom was very likely to hurt Fatty Ma's self-esteem.

"Then why aren't you raising the price now?"

Song Jun asked, somewhat puzzled. He didn't care much about the money, but face was important. Before he came, he had confidently told those people in Beijing that he was going to Myanmar to make his fortune. If he lost everything gambling, it would be incredibly embarrassing if word got back to them.

"I estimate that 4 million euros is about what they're willing to pay. Let's wait until the bidding period is almost over, then we'll bid 6 million. I don't believe they'll be able to react in time..."

Although Fatty Ma spoke in a low voice, the fat on his face was trembling, showing that he was definitely not at peace. It has to be said that Fatty Ma was very good at understanding human nature, and he was able to figure out the psychology of someone who didn't even know who his opponent was.

However, Fatty Ma forgot the old saying, "The mantis stalks the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind." He and Xu Zhendong were fighting tooth and nail, but he never expected that there was someone else who hadn't made a move yet, who was keeping a close eye on this rough stone.

"4 million euros, that's quite a sum..."

Qin Haoran was completely relaxed at this moment. He had already decided to take the rough stone. He was not afraid of anyone when it came to funding. Qin's Jewelry had brought nearly 100 million euros this time. Besides, this rough stone was not worth that much money. Anyone who risked their life to buy it was really out of their mind.

Zhuang Rui was also somewhat speechless. If this piece of rough jade had been placed in the sealed auction area, he could definitely have won it at the most affordable price. However, when it came to open bidding, Zhuang Rui was willing but unable to do so. No matter how powerful his spiritual energy was, he couldn't see through other people's thoughts.

"Xiao Rui, you handle lot 5220, and give me the rest..."

Qin Haoran's words surprised Zhuang Rui, who said, "Uncle Qin, why are you letting me operate it? I have no experience at all!"

"You'll gain experience with more, right? You were the one who picked this piece first. When it's cut open, as long as we can sell it to Qin's Jewelry for half the market price, that'll be fine..."

It turns out that Qin Haoran didn't want to take advantage of his son-in-law. If the rough stone was really as Zhuang Rui said, its value would be over 200 million. After being made into jade jewelry and sold, the price would double. For him to bid for it himself seemed a bit like stealing his son-in-law's business.

"Uncle Qin, this..."

Zhuang Rui was stunned by Qin Haoran's words, but he also admired his future father-in-law immensely. He didn't take the easy money that was offered to him, and instead bought the cut jadeite at the market price. Such magnanimity was something that not everyone could do.

"Alright, there's still half an hour left. Keep a close eye on it. If no one bids again within this half hour, we should be able to get it for 8 million euros. If someone else bids, let me know..."

Qin Haoran waved his hand and turned his attention to the other rough stones with their numbers. He knew that Zhuang Rui had come with all his resources and that acquiring this piece of red jade would be no problem.

"Ten minutes left, Uncle Qin, still no change..."

Zhuang Rui's palms were covered in sweat. The atmosphere in the auction hall was so oppressive that it was almost suffocating. As time went by and the time for the bidding to end drew closer, the pressure felt like a mountain, growing heavier and heavier.

"Don't be nervous, 8 million is definitely achievable..."

Qin Haoran was already busy managing three bids and couldn't concentrate on anything else. He had already entered 2.8 million euros into his bidding device and was just waiting three minutes to submit the bid before he had to manage the other two. He simply couldn't spare any attention for Zhuang Rui.

"Could I have misjudged? Is no one else vying for this rough stone?"

Meanwhile, in another auction hall, Xu Zhendong was also feeling quite uneasy. This 4 million euros represented all of Xu's Jewelry's working capital. He had even collected next month's employee salaries with it. In other words, this Myanmar auction would either revive Xu's Jewelry or lead to its utter ruin.

"Three minutes, Fatty Ma, are you ready? I've already bid on this piece of jade..."

The scene shifts to Fatty Ma and Song Jun, both of whom are incredibly wealthy and look tense. The fun of gambling on stones lies precisely in this: whether it's open or closed bidding, or on-site stone cutting, no one knows who the final winner will be until the very last moment.

"Six million euros, this rough stone is definitely ours..."

Fatty Ma said with a relaxed expression that once the price on the big screen changed to 4 million euros, no one raised the price anymore. Adding another 1 million euros would bring the total to over 10 million RMB. Fatty Ma finally raised the price to 6 million euros, feeling that he had it in the bag.

"Fatty, do you think we should say hello to Zhuang Rui?" Song Jun suddenly thought of Zhuang Rui. To be honest, he was quite annoyed with Zhuang Rui this time in Myanmar. This kid actually went his own way and didn't give him and Fatty Ma any information.

"He doesn't need our help. Maybe he's got his eye on this rough stone, but we haven't seen him come to look at it these past few days, so it's hard to say..."

Fatty Ma shook his big head, his eyes fixed on the countdown numbers on the big screen. There were only sixty seconds left until the result was clear. However, Fatty Ma had a bad feeling. He quickly picked up the bidding device, cleared the numbers on it, and re-entered the new price of 7 million euros.

After Fatty Ma finished his operation, the timer jumped to the final five seconds. At that moment, hundreds of fingers pressed the confirm button on the bidding device at the same time. The numbers on the big screen started jumping instantly, and no one could see the final result clearly.

As the countdown reached zero, everyone in the auction hall breathed a sigh of relief. Regardless of the outcome, today's open auction was finally over. Those two short hours felt like an eternity to everyone.

Chapter 460 Blind Bidding (Part 4)

"How? How is this possible? Impossible!!"

When the large screen finally stopped flashing, the most frequently shouted phrase in the auction hall was "Impossible!" Looking at the now-still numbers on the screen, it was just like the old song: some were happy, some were sad, and some had given everything for those numbers.

"Old Ma, I won the bid! How's it going on your end? Damn, why that look on your face?"

When Song Jun saw the numbers on the screen, he smiled happily. However, when he looked at Fatty Ma, he immediately frowned. The fat guy's eyes were so wide they were about to pop out of their sockets, and with his fat cheeks, he looked exactly like a toad.

"No... I didn't get it..."

After being kicked by Song Jun, Fatty Ma finally came to his senses, looking dejected. The price he had painstakingly calculated had been snatched away by someone else for a difference of 500,000 euros. This made Fatty Ma feel a sense of frustration, like when he was with a woman and the man was on top.

"You're not as reliable as Zhuang Rui when it comes to getting things done. Well, if you didn't win, you didn't win. We'll see how your brother cuts the stone tomorrow..." Song Jun didn't really care whether he won the rough stone or not. He was quite pleased with himself for winning the bid for the rough stone he had chosen.

"Damn it, I'll have to find out who stole Fatty's thunder later."

Fatty Ma cursed angrily, but he was helpless. After winning the bid, the rough stones were all handled through shipping procedures. Generally, no one would cut the stones in Myanmar because it is illegal to take jade out of the country, even if the jade was cut from your own rough stone.

"Sigh, I wonder who got the contract..."

In another auction hall, Xu Zhendong let out a long sigh. His expression was unreadable, neither disappointed nor happy. He had been under immense pressure. Winning the bid and facing financial ruin would have been a disaster for Xu's Jewelry. Now, having failed to win, Xu Zhendong suddenly deflated like a punctured balloon, slumping into his chair.

"Dad, wouldn't it be better if we kept this money and used it to bid on some sealed bids..."

Xu Qi, on the other hand, was overjoyed. In his opinion, the rough stone that all the experts were not optimistic about probably could not be mined into jade. The fact that someone else won the bid saved the company a lot of money.

"You don't know anything!" Xu Zhendong glared at his son, but he did feel much more relaxed now.

"Hey, we won two, Xiao Rui. We didn't win that uncertain one you mentioned..."

Qin Haoran and his wife were naturally among the happy people. Zhuang Rui gave him four numbers, and Qin Haoran won three of them, spending a total of more than four million euros. This was just a drop in the ocean for Qin's Jewelry.

"Huh? Why is it 7,510,000 euros? Did you forget to submit the bid?"

When Qin Haoran looked at the number 5220, his expression immediately turned ugly. He discovered that the blue bid number under that number was ultimately set at 7,501,000 euros, which was a full 499,000 euros less than the 8,000,000 euros he had told Zhuang Rui.

So Qin Haoran's first reaction was that Zhuang Rui had not submitted a bid, which greatly disappointed him. To be honest, the rough stone he valued most was still this red jadeite. He should have handled it himself. Young people can't handle pressure.

"No, Uncle Qin, this bid price is the one I submitted..."

Zhuang Rui's words left Qin Haoran and his wife speechless for a long time. It turned out that Zhuang Rui wasn't unable to withstand the pressure, but rather that his heart was too strong. He dared to lower the price when others were raising it, and in the end, he even won the bid.

"Good lad, you've got some talent. It seems Uncle Qin is really getting old..."

Qin Haoran gave Zhuang Rui a relieved punch on the shoulder. The sudden turn of events had quite a fright for him, and the thought of losing his composure in front of his future son-in-law made Qin Haoran's face flush slightly.

"Uncle Qin, you're not old at all, are you, Aunt Fang?"

Zhuang Rui winked at his father-in-law, which earned him a disapproving glare from Fang Yi.

"Alright, your bid should be today's winning bid. Before the announcement, if you don't want others to know, let's hurry up and complete the winning bid procedures..."

Qin Haoran was very familiar with the process of the Myanmar jade auction. After seeing Zhuang Rui nod, he stood up and walked towards the window at the entrance to complete the bidding procedures.

"Sir, please walk ten meters to the right to that office to complete the bidding process..."

Zhuang Rui handed his bidding paddle through the window, but to his surprise, the people inside told him to go into the auction hall's office to complete the formalities. He wondered if the previous top bidder had also received this treatment, but Zhuang Rui knew that the top bidder, who belonged to Zhonghai Jixiang Company, had met a very tragic end.

"Let's go, I'll go with you..."

Qin Haoran didn't know what had happened either. After turning around and saying a few words to Fang Yi, he went to the office with Zhuang Rui.

"Hello, is this Mr. Zhuang? Congratulations on winning the title of the top bidder so far in this jade auction..."

Upon entering the office, a very thin, middle-aged Burmese man greeted him. He spoke fluent Mandarin, and if it weren't for the fact that they were in a foreign country, Zhuang Rui would have assumed that the man was from a minority group in Yunnan or Guizhou.

"Hmm, this doesn't seem to require congratulations, does it? I wonder what brings me here?"

Zhuang Rui cut to the chase. He knew that Myanmar was a military state, and this middle-aged man might hold some position in the army. As the saying goes, a scholar can't reason with a soldier, and Zhuang Rui didn't want to deal with the country's armed forces.

"Haha, Mr. Zhuang, you're very straightforward. It's like this, we'd like to ask for your cooperation. Could you come and cut this rough stone tomorrow morning? Of course, rest assured, if jadeite is found, we can provide an invoice and certificate free of charge to help you clear customs. Don't worry about the jadeite not being able to leave our country..."

The middle-aged man didn't beat around the bush with Zhuang Rui and directly stated his meaning. Zhuang Rui laughed upon hearing this. Perhaps those people from Jixiang Jewelry Company had also enjoyed this treatment before?

"May I ask why you chose this particular piece of rough jade to cut?"

However, Zhuang Rui was also a little puzzled. His rough stone was not performing well. If the Myanmar organizing committee wanted to make up for the negative impact, they should have found a rough stone that could be cut into jadeite. Why did they choose his?

"Ahem... well... we have many friends in China, and they all say that Mr. Zhuang, you were blessed by a Living Buddha, and your luck... well... you're incredibly good..."

The official from the organizing committee seemed a little embarrassed, and his words were somewhat hesitant, but he managed to convey the meaning: to put it bluntly, we know you're lucky, which is why we decided to choose your rough stone for cutting.

"Depend on!"

Hearing this reason from the other party, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but roll his eyes. Wasn't this too hasty? If his luck wasn't as good as the other party imagined, and he failed again, the impact on this Myanmar jade auction would be huge.

Although Zhuang Rui knew that Myanmar was a Buddhist country, he, as someone without faith, did not understand the fervor of the Burmese people for their religious beliefs. Zhuang Rui's information was

something they were very interested in, so immediately after he won the bid, a senior member of the organizing committee issued instructions to dissect the raw jadeite that Zhuang Rui had won.

"But... I didn't plan to have the stone cut in Myanmar..."

Zhuang Rui thought for a moment and still refused, but he was a little uneasy. He was afraid that if the other party didn't listen to reason, they would try to force him. They were in someone else's country, and he was powerless to do anything about it.

"Mr. Zhuang, you can reconsider, and we will offer you some compensation. To be specific, if you agree to have the stone cut in Myanmar, we can lower your bid by 10%, meaning that instead of 7.5 million euros, you will only need to pay 6.75 million euros."

"And you will also become a lifetime honorary guest of the Myanmar Jade Auction. In the future, you will be able to enter the jade gambling venue without an invitation when participating in the auction..."

When the organizing committee official saw that Zhuang Rui was unwilling to have the stone cut in Myanmar, he finally pulled out his trump card. The offer was incredibly generous, with 750,000 euros equivalent to more than 7 million RMB. Myanmar was indeed offering a substantial sum.

"Okay, we agree. We can have the stone cut on-site tomorrow..."

While Zhuang Rui was still hesitating, Qin Haoran unexpectedly agreed on his behalf.

After the organizing committee members expressed their gratitude and quickly signed the "Winning Bid Contract" with Zhuang Rui, and after Zhuang Rui paid all the fees, Zhuang Rui and Qin Haoran left the office.

"Uncle Qin, why do we have to have the stone cut in Myanmar? Won't it attract unwanted attention?" Zhuang Rui asked Qin Haoran with some confusion after leaving the office.

"A discount of 750,000 euros is equivalent to nearly 8 million RMB. That's a considerable discount. Besides, that person should be from the Myanmar Ministry of Mines. It's not a bad thing to have good

relations with them. Who knows, you might even be able to get your hands on a jade mine in Myanmar someday..."

Qin Haoran joked with Zhuang Rui with a smile. Actually, he was mainly interested in the discount equivalent to more than 7 million RMB. Qin Haoran is a businessman, and business is business. Of course, he was willing to acquire this rough stone at the lowest possible cost.

Furthermore, if the on-site stone cutting yields a winning bet, Qin's Jewelry will make a huge splash in the industry. In the jewelry business, people are never afraid of attracting attention; the more eye-catching, the better, saving them the expense of hiring celebrities for the job.