

## Golden 501

### Chapter 501 Savage Mountain (Part 5)

From where Zhuang Rui and his companions rested to the mountain ravine where they hunted, it should only be a journey of about an hour. However, Zhang Guojun and the others waited for nearly two hours without seeing any sign of Zhuang Rui and his companion, and they began to grow anxious.

Originally, the little wild boar was left in the ravine for Zhuang Rui to hunt, but Zhang Guojun didn't care about leaving any prey for Zhuang Rui. After shooting it down, he carried it back along the same route to find Zhuang Rui.

When they arrived at their resting place in the morning, Zhuang Rui and the other person were nowhere to be seen. Zhang Guojun searched around for a while but still couldn't find them. The mountains were covered with dead leaves, and no footprints were left on them.

In the end, Ma Liu suggested going back to the camp to check, since maybe one or two people couldn't find their way and had already gone back.

Zhang Guojun then led the group back to the mine. They asked the patrolling team members around the mine, but none of them had seen Zhuang Rui and the others. This frightened Zhang Guojun greatly, and he immediately notified Hu Rong, who was searching for mineral veins on the mountain.

It would normally take more than an hour to get back to the mine from the edge of the Savage Mountain. With the time they spent in the forest, it was already afternoon. In other words, Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei had been missing for more than four hours.

"Gather everyone and head into the Savage Mountain!"

After pondering for a moment with a gloomy face, Hu Rong gave the order. He knew that if Zhuang Ruizhen were to suffer any mishap on his turf, he would not only be reprimanded by Qin Haoran, but would also likely face some pressure within China.

Hu Rong is now filled with regret. If only he had accompanied Zhuang Rui on the hunting trip himself, they would never have gotten lost.

Having grown up in the Hpakant region, no one knows the Savage Mountain better than Hu Rong. Even the most experienced hunters dare not venture deep into it. If Zhuang Rui were to go the wrong way and enter the Savage Mountain, Hu Rong simply couldn't imagine the consequences.

But now was not the time to blame Zhang Guojun and the others. After gathering forty or fifty people, Hu Rong left only three people to guard the mine, and took the rest to the Savage Mountain to look for Zhuang Peng and the other two.

"Peng Fei, what's wrong? Why are you so nervous? What's wrong...?"

Zhuang Rui had eaten a bit too quickly, and the sticky rice was stuck in his stomach. He was about to move around a bit when he was suddenly startled by Peng Fei's actions.

"Shh..."

Peng Fei turned his head to the side, giving Zhuang Rui half of his body space, gesturing for him to look ahead.

"Oh my god..."

Zhuang Rui followed Peng Fei's gaze and immediately felt a chill run down his spine.

Directly in front of them was a pond about forty or fifty meters in size. At that moment, a giant python, seven or eight meters long and as thick as a bowl, emerged from the pond and began to crawl toward Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei.

The giant python was covered with tiny blue scales, interspersed with crisscrossing oval black spots. It didn't move very fast. Its flat, long head was raised high, and it would occasionally flick out a red tongue that was more than ten centimeters long from its mouth. Its eyes were as big as copper bells, staring at Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei.

Peng Fei was also extremely nervous at this moment. Zhuang Rui didn't know what this thing was, but Peng Fei knew it very well. This was not a python, but an anaconda, known as the jungle killer.

The anaconda is the largest snake in the world, reaching up to ten meters in length and weighing over 225 kilograms. It is as thick as the torso of an adult man, but the average anaconda is less than 5.5 meters long.

Anacondas are aquatic creatures that typically inhabit muddy banks or shallow waters. They prey on water birds, turtles, capybaras, tapirs, and sometimes even crocodiles that are about 1.5 meters long. The anaconda will tightly coil around the crocodile until it suffocates and dies, and then swallow it whole. It will not need to eat for several weeks afterward.

The green anaconda is undoubtedly the king of snakes. Although different species of snakes will eat each other, all snakes, including highly venomous cobras, are prey for adult green anacondas. Other snakes pose no danger to adult green anacondas.

"Brother Zhuang, step back a little..."

Peng Fei had already aimed his gun at the giant anaconda, but his palms were sweating profusely. He knew that this kind of anaconda had extremely strong vitality, and if it entangled him, even if he blew its head off, his bones would likely be crushed by its enormous constricting force.

At this moment, Peng Fei did not dare to make the first move; he was waiting for the anaconda to take the initiative to attack.

After confronting Peng Fei for more than a minute, the jungle behemoth seemed to sense that its opponent was not someone to be trifled with. It finally shifted its gaze away from Peng Fei, climbed over to the dead lynx, wrapped its body around the lynx, and dragged it into the pond.

The pond looked quite deep. After the huge anaconda slid into it, it made a splash and disappeared, presumably beginning to devour the prey that belonged to Peng Fei.

"This thing is huge, it looks a bit like the python in the movie Anaconda..."

Zhuang Rui was unaware of how terrifying these anacondas were. He had even snapped a photo of Peng Fei from behind, and was now looking at it on his digital camera. He was thinking that when he returned

to China, if he posted this photo online, it would surely make those who frequently spent time online and enjoyed traveling and exploring the world extremely envious.

"By the way, Peng Fei, why didn't you fire just now?"

Zhuang Rui felt a little regretful. Even if he couldn't find the gold in the Savage Mountain this time, skinning the python would still be a decent trophy.

"Brother Zhuang, we should be thankful it didn't bother us. If we've rested well, let's continue on our way. It would be troublesome if we couldn't get back before sunset..."

Peng Fei rolled his eyes. Only someone with a screw loose would actively attack this python. Let alone getting entangled by it, even just being whipped by its tail would result in broken bones.

Peng Fei was now really anxious. They had already ventured deep into the Savage Mountain. If they couldn't get back before dark, spending the night in the jungle was not a good idea. After all, most large wild beasts were nocturnal.

Although the four seasons in Myanmar are not so distinct, there are indeed fewer animals in the forests during this season. They did not encounter any further dangers on the rest of the journey. Around 2 p.m., the two arrived at a sparsely wooded hillside.

After carefully studying the map on Zhuang Rui's digital camera for several minutes, Peng Fei looked up and said confidently, "Brother Zhuang, this is it..."

"Let's look for it..."

Along the way here, Zhuang Rui saw many more human skeletons in the bushes, presumably Burmese people who were killed by the Japanese for transporting gold. Since Peng Fei said the map was correct, this should be the location of the treasure.

The two searched the surrounding area carefully but found no treasure. However, they did find a lot of bones and rotten clothes, and even a few Type 38 rifles. However, the wooden handles were rotten and the guns were covered with rust. If you didn't look closely, you would think they were just fire sticks.

"Brother Zhuang, no..."

Half an hour later, the two met up, but neither of them found anything. However, Peng Fei was certain that no one had been here before them.

"Go up a bit further and keep looking..."

Zhuang Rui was puzzled. Logically speaking, when the Japanese devils were at their wits' end, they shouldn't have had much time to bury the treasure deep. However, Zhuang Rui took the entrenching tool that Peng Fei had brought and dug several places, only to find that they were all raw soil, indicating that those places had not been dug up before.

These tomb raiding techniques weren't entirely useless; at least they knew how to distinguish between raw and tamped soil, preventing Zhuang Rui from digging holes everywhere.

"Brother Zhuang, come and take a look here..."

Peng Fei, who was walking in front, suddenly shouted, and Zhuang Rui, who was following behind and occasionally digging with a shovel, quickly ran over.

"Brother Zhuang, look, something's not right about this mountain. There are traces of an explosion, and this soil must have been filled in later..."

Peng Fei was facing a rocky outcrop. Normally, rocks are exposed, but this rocky outcrop was covered with soil and overgrown with weeds.

Zhuang Rui didn't know what the explosion marks Peng Fei was talking about looked like, but when he heard that it was suspicious, he took a step forward, placed his hands on the rock as if to observe, and released spiritual energy into his eyes to look inside the rock.

"Damn, we finally found it!"

Just as the spiritual energy in Zhuang Rui's eyes passed through the soil, he saw a cave entrance covered by rubble. Behind the rubble was a small cave that was only twelve or thirteen meters long and about two meters high. Although there was no light inside, Zhuang Rui could still see more than a dozen metal boxes.

"Gold, it's all gold..."

Zhuang Rui felt excited. As the spiritual energy passed through the thin metal box, a dazzling golden yellow color immediately came into view.

These gold pieces must have all been melted down, because the gold bricks that appeared in Zhuang Rui's eyes were all about the size of soap bars from before, and were neatly arranged together.

"Wh...what is that? Damn it, how come there are pythons here too..."

Just as Zhuang Rui was about to take a closer look at whether there was any jade mentioned in the letter, he suddenly felt his feet sink, as if something was tugging at his pants.

Looking down, Zhuang Rui was terrified. It turned out that a giant python was climbing up his trouser leg.

Zhuang Rui quickly took a few steps back, but unexpectedly tripped over a stone and fell to the ground with a thud. The giant python, as thick as a bowl, then coiled around his body along his right leg.

Although he raised his gun, Zhuang Rui dared not fire. The python was coiled around his leg, and if he fired, he might not kill the snake, but his leg might break.

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Zhuang Rui's trouser legs, already soaked with sweat, now felt chilly, while the flat, dark snake head continued to crawl towards him, seemingly mistaking him for some withered branch or broken tree.

"Peng... Peng Fei, what are you laughing at? Hurry up and help me..."

Zhuang Rui suddenly remembered that there was someone next to him. He didn't dare to move at all, because the snake's head had already reached his penis. If the snake suddenly became aroused and bit him, Zhuang Rui's happy sex life would be over.

Zhuang Rui was puzzled by Peng Fei's behavior. His friend was in such a state, how could he still laugh? Did he want to keep this treasure for himself?

"Brother Zhuang, this snake isn't an anaconda, it's not aggressive. Look how scared you are..."

Seeing that Zhuang Rui was really exhausted, Peng Fei stopped teasing him, bent down, grabbed the python's head, lifted it up with both hands, and then hung the more than four-meter-long, bowl-thick python on his body.

"It doesn't bite?"

Zhuang Rui was stunned by Peng Fei's actions. So snakes can be vegetarians too?

"Yes, this is a Burmese python, it doesn't bite..."

Peng Fei grabbed the python's head and wrapped it around his arm. The giant, black python was indeed very docile and showed no intention of attacking Peng Fei.

After listening to Peng Fei's explanation, Zhuang Rui finally understood that Burmese pythons and anacondas are different. Anacondas are extremely aggressive, but this kind of python is very gentle and suitable as a pet. It is even easy for beginners to keep. If Liu Chuan were here, he would definitely be able to tell the difference.

This python was, after all, wild and had not been tamed. After coiling around Peng Fei for a while, it slid down and disappeared into the rock wall.

"There's a hole here..."

Zhuang Rui was struggling to explain the fact that the treasure was inside. Looking down at the spot where the python had disappeared, he saw a hole about 20-30 centimeters in diameter. Using his spiritual energy, he peered into the cave behind the rubble, and sure enough, the python was coiled on the cave floor.

"Yes, Brother Zhuang, if I'm not mistaken, the gold looted by the Japanese should be inside. These pythons usually like to live in shady places like tree hollows or caves, which means there must be a cave inside this rock wall..."

Judging from the missing Japanese Type 38 rifles and the remains in the surrounding area, this should be the place where the gold was buried. Moreover, there are traces of blasting on the rock wall. Although it has been a long time, it still couldn't escape the eyes of expert Peng Fei.

Peng Fei said everything Zhuang Rui wanted to say, saving Zhuang Rui the trouble. However, Zhuang Rui hadn't decided whether to blow up the cave to check the gold.

For Zhuang Rui, it didn't matter whether the cave was blown up or not, because he had already seen the gold inside. Even if it was blown up, he and Peng Fei couldn't move it. The feeling of being able to touch something but not being able to get it was not a pleasant one.

Let alone 10 tons of gold, even 100 kilograms wouldn't be enough for the two of them to take away, not to mention the nearly 30 boxes of jade jewelry. However, calling the items containing the jewelry boxes is inappropriate; they should be called containers. The 30 containers filled only two large metal crates.

"Peng Fei, the gold should be in this cave. Should we blow it up?"

Zhuang Rui consulted Peng Fei's opinion. In any case, the two of them had come together, and without Peng Fei leading the way, he would never have been able to get here.

"I'll do as you say, Brother Zhuang, whatever you say we should do..."

Peng Fei, on the other hand, was quite easygoing and passed the matter on to Zhuang Rui.

Zhuang Rui rolled his eyes and said irritably, "Aren't you curious? There are 10 tons of gold in here, worth over 1 billion RMB, enough for you to live on for several lifetimes..."

"Hehe, Brother Zhuang, let alone 10 tons of gold, I know that the two of us would have a hard time carrying even 10 kilograms..."

Peng Fei, however, saw things clearly. Their weapons, ammunition, and other supplies already weighed over 20 pounds; they simply couldn't carry any more.

"10 kilograms? I don't really care..."

Ten kilograms of gold is only worth a little over 1 million RMB. Zhuang Rui would be better off spending that time in the Hpakant jade market and finding some good rough stones.

"Well, Brother Zhuang, this is what I'm thinking. If the gold is hidden here, no one will be able to find it without a treasure map. We can't take it now, and if we blow up the cave, someone else might discover it. I think we should leave it as it is..."

Peng Fei glanced at the sky and voiced his opinion. He wanted to return as soon as possible, otherwise, after dark, he wouldn't be able to see the marks he had made and might really get lost in this Savage Mountain.

Zhuang Rui paced back and forth in front of the rock wall. The amount of gold was simply too large. Even if there were twenty people here, let alone just two of them, they wouldn't be able to move it without modern equipment.

"Should we confront Hu Rong and tell him about this place?"

Zhuang Rui had this idea in his mind, but he immediately rejected it.

It's not that Zhuang Rui doesn't trust Hu Rong, but rather that he doesn't trust the group of men under Hu Rong. They say money can move people's hearts, and if those men saw this batch of gold, they might not even recognize Hu Rong as their boss. You know, 10 tons of gold is enough for those forty or fifty people to live a carefree life abroad for the rest of their lives.

If that were to happen, Zhuang Rui telling Hu Rong would only harm him.

"Damn it, if all else fails, tell Brother Lei. Even giving it to the country is better than leaving it in this savage mountain. Besides, the country should keep some for itself, right?" With Ouyang Lei's influence, sending a special forces unit to retrieve this batch of gold wouldn't be too difficult.

Zhuang Rui's mind was racing with all sorts of thoughts; the gold was indeed tempting him.

"Brother Zhuang, if you could get a helicopter, I'd have a way to get this batch of gold out..."

Seeing Zhuang Rui's furrowed brows, Peng Fei knew what he was thinking. The other side of the Savage Mountain was the border of China, and it only took one or two hours to get there by helicopter.

Peng Fei himself can fly a helicopter. If he can call on two or three comrades who have shared life and death with him, he will definitely be able to transport this batch of gold to China without anyone noticing.

Helicopters can't cross the China-Myanmar border? What a joke! The border defense between China and Myanmar is not tight at all. Not to mention the forest border areas, even between two villages, they are only a few dozen meters apart. Many Burmese people come to China to work in the morning and go back to sleep at night, so the border is practically non-existent.

"A helicopter? That would definitely alert the military back home. Forget it, let's talk about it later. Let's go back first..."

Zhuang Rui knew that this place was not suitable for lingering. After pondering for a moment, he decided to return to the mine first and figure out a solution later. Even if decades passed, no one might come to this place, so Zhuang Rui was not worried about not having time to move these treasures.

After making their decision, the two began to walk back. No longer needing to look at the sun to determine their direction, they moved much faster than they had come. Zhuang Rui's stamina left Peng Fei speechless. During a break, Zhuang Rui even had the energy to fire a few shots.

When the hour hand on the watch pointed to 5:30 pm, the two finally passed through several miasma zones and arrived at the edge of the Savage Mountain. At this time, the sun on the horizon was about to set below the Savage Mountain range.

The light in the forest grew dimmer. Peng Fei, who was walking ahead, turned on a flashlight and began to identify the marks he had left behind. This vast forest was dangerous; if one strayed even slightly, one might end up back in the Savage Mountain. Many people had died unjustly in the past.

"We'll be out in about half an hour, Zhuang. Be careful, there are more animals out foraging in the evening..."

Peng Fei, who was walking ahead, turned around and gave Zhuang Rui a message. But before he could finish speaking, a whimpering sound came from above, followed by a dark figure swooping down from the tree.

The dark figure seemed somewhat afraid of the flashlight in Peng Fei's hand. It was probably aimed at Zhuang Rui, who was walking behind. While its body was in mid-air, a claw with sharp teeth reached out to grab Zhuang Rui's head.

"Damn it, ouch..."

Zhuang Rui didn't even see what was rushing towards him. He only felt a whooshing sound above his head, and his left arm instinctively shot up. He then heard the sound of clothes being torn, felt a chill in his arm, and felt a sharp pain travel through the nerves in his left arm to his brain.

Before Zhuang Rui could react, another sound of claws scratching metal came from his chest. It was the shadowy figure that had missed its target and fallen to the ground. Immediately afterwards, its other claws struck the bullet clip in Zhuang Rui's chest.

"It's a leopard, Zhuang Rui, fire!"

Peng Fei turned around and shone the spotlight on the shadowy figure. In an instant, both of them could see clearly that it was a leopard with very beautiful fur. Its golden fur shone brightly under the light.

Because the leopard and Zhuang Rui were entangled, Peng Fei had no way to fire his gun. Zhuang Rui's submachine gun was slung over his right shoulder, and there was no time to get it. In desperation, he used the military dagger in his right hand to stab the half-standing leopard in the abdomen.

"Ouch..."

The leopard, having been stabbed right through the heart, let out a shrill cry. It now knew these two were no match for it, and it turned and leaped up a tree.

"Bang!"

Peng Fei's gun finally fired, followed by a heavy thud as it hit the ground. Zhuang Rui looked toward the light and saw the leopard, which had been climbing the tree, fall heavily to the ground, convulsing.

"Brother Zhuang, are you alright?"

Peng Fei didn't bother to check if the leopard was alive or dead; he quickly shone the flashlight on Zhuang Rui's arm.

Chapter 503-504 Returning Home (Part 1)

"It's nothing, ouch, damn it, I can't lift my arm..."

Zhuang Rui tried to move his left arm and immediately felt a sharp pain; it was likely a bone injury. A large chunk of flesh had been torn from his forearm, and blood was seeping out.

"Brother Zhuang, please sit down..."

"Sizzle..."

Peng Fei tore open Zhuang Rui's tattered camouflage uniform, then looked down and rummaged in his bag, taking out a bottle of alcohol and gauze.

"Hey, oh no, just wrap it up directly..."

When the medical alcohol was splashed onto Zhuang Rui's bloodied and mangled arm, Zhuang Rui screamed in pain and tried to stand up abruptly. The excruciating pain was unbearable; it felt like salt was being rubbed into the wound.

Peng Fei grabbed Zhuang Rui and, without caring about anything else, carefully cleaned away the animal hair from Zhuang Rui's wound under the light of the lamp he was holding in his mouth.

"Hey bro, I'm not Guan Yu, don't give me that bone-scraping surgery..."

While Peng Fei was looking for gauze and alcohol, Zhuang Rui had already used his spiritual energy to treat himself, but he didn't dare to increase the amount of spiritual energy he used; he only stopped the bleeding.

Seeing Peng Fei take out his small knife, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but struggle again. He wished he had acted faster and treated his injuries before Peng Fei saw them.

However, the wound torn by the leopard's claws was very deep, almost reaching the bone in Zhuang Rui's arm. Even with spiritual energy protecting him, it probably couldn't be completely healed. Although Peng Fei's movements were very gentle, Zhuang Rui's mouth still twitched in pain.

"Brother Zhuang, it looks like you've broken a bone, don't move it..."

Peng Fei's expression was very serious. That leopard weighed at least fifty or sixty pounds. The force with which it pounced down from the tree was enough to break the back of a wild boar. Fortunately, Zhuang Rui had taken a step back just now, otherwise, the consequences of that blow would not have been just a broken arm.

"Bang...bang...bang bang bang..."

"Da da da... da da da..."

Just as Peng Fei finished bandaging Zhuang Rui's wound and made a simple sling with gauze so that he could hang his left hand under his neck, several gunshots suddenly rang out from the forest. It started with the sound of pistols, followed by the rapid-fire of submachine guns, which echoed for a long time in the silent forest.

"It must be Brother Hu and the others who have come looking for us..."

Zhuang Rui took out a pistol from his bag, and was about to fire when Peng Fei snatched it away.

Peng Fei put Zhuang Rui's pistol, his own, the plastic explosives, and the grenades into a plastic bag, threw it into a small mud puddle behind him, and watched the bag sink before picking up his submachine gun and firing a burst of fire into the air.

Zhuang Rui looked at the pistol he had only played with for a few days, and it was gone just like that. He couldn't help but feel a little regretful. However, he also knew that the gun was useless now. If it were discovered when he returned to China, it would be a troublesome matter.

Although he knew that it might be Hu Rong and his group coming, Peng Fei still turned off the lights, helped Zhuang Rui to the base of a large tree, and disappeared into the shadows.

"Da da... da da da..."

Several bursts of submachine gun fire came from afar, getting closer and closer to Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei's hiding place. Peng Fei fired a few single shots, pointing out the location to the searchers.

"Zhuang Rui, Brother Zhuang, Brother Peng, is that you?"

About twenty minutes later, several beams of strong flashlights shone into the dense forest, and Hu Rong and Zhang Guojun's voices rang out alternately, loudly calling out Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei's names.

"It's Brother Hu, everything's alright..."

Peng Fei didn't let Zhuang Rui speak until Hu Rong's figure came into view. Only then did Peng Fei stand up and help Zhuang Rui up.

"Brother Hu, it's us..."

Zhuang Rui's voice elicited cheers, followed by beams of bright light shining on him and Peng Fei.

"What? Are you injured?"

Hu Rong spotted Zhuang Rui's sling at a glance and quickly walked over.

"It's nothing, I just got scratched by that leopard, Brother Hu, I'm really sorry for alerting everyone..."

Zhuang Rui pretended not to care and swung his left hand, but he winced in pain. This time the wound was too deep, and even his spiritual energy was not working well.

"Brother Zhuang, it's all my fault. I shouldn't have kept you here..."

Zhang Guojun, looking guilty, stepped out from behind Hu Rong. They had been searching in the dense forest for five or six hours and were almost giving up. If they couldn't find it, Hu Rong was prepared to ask the military for help the next day and request a helicopter to search for them.

Upon suddenly seeing Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei, Zhang Guojun was so excited that tears almost streamed down his face. The two had gotten lost because of his mistake.

"Brother Zhang, it's not your fault, it really isn't your fault. We saw a wolf and chased after it, and then we inexplicably got lost. It's not your fault..."

Zhuang Rui felt genuinely guilty because, for reasons that couldn't be explained, he had made this straightforward big guy a scapegoat. He quickly revealed the excuse that he and Peng Fei had discussed.

"Alright, enough talk, Dajun, hurry up, where's the stretcher? Quickly, let's get back to the mine and find a doctor in Hpakant tonight..."

Hu Rong waved his hand, interrupting the two men's self-criticism. He didn't doubt Zhuang Rui's words, because it's impossible to tell which way is which in the forest. People often think they're heading out of the mountains, but it's actually the opposite. It's normal to get lost in there. Even some experienced hunters often don't find their way out for days.

"I'm fine, hey... hey, no... no, can't I just lie down by myself...?"

Just as Zhuang Rui was about to say that he was fine, two men spread out a stretcher. One supported his shoulders and the other lifted his legs, and they put Zhuang Rui on the stretcher. Hu Rong had prepared this before they went into the mountains, just in case something happened to the two of them.

"I'm fine, I'm really fine, look, I can run and jump..."

When Peng Fei saw Hu Rong looking at him again, he was so frightened that he quickly ran forward a few steps. Although he was also a little tired, he was not used to lying on a stretcher.

"Brother Hu, take that leopard away..."

Zhuang Rui hadn't forgotten the culprit who hurt him. Speaking of which, that leopard skin was really beautiful. He would bring it back to China and brag about it to Liu Chuan, making that kid so envious. That way, Liu Chuan wouldn't be so eager to show off after catching a couple of wild rabbits in the fields.

"Wow, that's some serious marksmanship. He hit the eye right away. He's really lucky; the skin wasn't even scratched. Wait, there's another wound underneath. Was that made by a bayonet?"

After hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Zhang Guojun shone his flashlight on the leopard and examined it. He clicked his tongue in amazement. Although Peng Fei fired the shot when the leopard turned around to observe the situation after climbing the tree, Zhang Guojun naturally thought it was just a lucky coincidence.

Zhang Guojun picked up the leopard by its hind legs, slung it over his shoulder, and carried it out of the mountains with the group.

Hu Rong divided the search team into four groups of more than ten people each. On the forest path, people fired shots from time to time. Gradually, the other groups heard the gunshots and moved closer. By the time they came out of the forest on the outskirts of the Savage Mountain, there was no one missing and no one missing.

"How did you sleep last night?"

Still in the wooden house at the foot of the mountain, Hu Rong arrived at Zhuang Rui's room early in the morning.

After returning to the camp yesterday, Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei were so exhausted that they didn't go back to Hpakant overnight. There was a doctor at the camp who had come from Hpakant, so he re-bandaged Zhuang Rui's wound, gave him some anti-inflammatory medicine, and then he went to sleep.

"It's alright, Brother Hu. I'm really sorry for the trouble I caused you yesterday..."

Zhuang Rui sat up, but his left arm still ached when he moved it. It was a bone injury, and even after using spiritual energy to heal it, the effect wasn't very good.

Hu Rong stepped forward and supported Zhuang Rui's body, saying, "Don't say anything more. Judging from your condition, you can't take any more hardship. Why don't you spend the New Year in Myanmar before returning home..."

"Oh no, that won't do. I have my exam the day after tomorrow, and I have to go back today..."

Zhuang Rui calculated the time and couldn't help but feel anxious. There were only 3 days left before the postgraduate entrance exam began. If he didn't make it in time, not only would he be letting down Uncle De, but he would also be ashamed to face Professor Meng in the future.

Fortunately, the injury was to his left arm, so it won't interfere with the written exam. If it had been to his right arm, it would have been a real problem.

"Is this... alright?"

After Hu Rong understood what had happened, he frowned.

"It's nothing, Brother Hu, just a minor muscle and bone injury. I can walk perfectly fine..."

Zhuang Rui scrambled off the bed and walked around the room twice to show that he was perfectly fine.

"Alright then, when we get back to Hpakant, I'll have a helicopter take you to the China-Myanmar border, and then you can cross the border from there. Once you get to Ruili, you can take a direct flight back to Beijing from Dehong Mangshi Airport. This route is even closer than going to Mandalay..."

Seeing that Zhuang Rui insisted and that he really had something to do, Hu Rong arranged the fastest route back to Beijing for him. He often took this route when traveling to China, as it was both quick and convenient.

However, this speed is relative. If you were to travel by car, it would probably take more than ten days to get from Ruili to Mandalay.

"Thank you, Brother Hu. By the way, what are the two professors' opinions on the mineral vein from yesterday's exploration?" Zhuang Rui relaxed upon hearing that he could return to Beijing today.

"Alas, Professor Chen's opinion is that when this mountain range was formed, the pressure on the earth's crust was not uniform enough, which resulted in only some areas producing jadeite rough. Not only is the quantity small, but it is also very difficult to mine, so it is basically a waste mine..."

Hu Rong's smile was somewhat bitter. This mine, which had consumed a huge amount of his financial and material resources, had actually come to such a conclusion, which was hard for him to accept for a while.

"Brother Hu, I don't see it that way. This mine covers an area of several square kilometers. Even if the pressure is uniform for a hundred meters in the earth's crust, that's a vein of ore hundreds of meters long. We just haven't found the right spot yet. My suggestion is to keep digging and open up more mine shafts in several locations..."

Fearing that Hu Rong might give up the mine because of Professor Chen's words, Zhuang Rui quickly voiced his opinion: even if Hu Rong found the vein and he didn't make any money, he couldn't let Hu Rong give up the mine for nothing because of his own selfishness.

"You should focus on recovering first. We can talk about these things after the New Year. I might be able to attend your engagement ceremony after the New Year..."

Hu Rong patted Zhuang Rui's uninjured right shoulder. The Chinese in Myanmar also celebrate the New Year. The miners will all be returning home in the next few days, and it will probably be almost a month before work resumes.

Zhuang Rui's engagement ceremony was originally scheduled for before the Lunar New Year, but because he had to take the postgraduate entrance exam and there were too many things to do during the Lunar New Year, the two families discussed it and decided to postpone it until after the Lunar New Year.

"I'll go back and raise some funds as soon as possible. I still have high hopes for this mine..."

Zhuang Rui and Hu Rong didn't stand on ceremony; they each took a toothbrush and went to the front of the wooden house to brush their teeth and wash their faces.

"By the way, Brother Hu, what happened yesterday was just an accident, please don't blame Brother Zhang..."

After washing up, Zhuang Rui returned to his room and said to Hu Rong very seriously that this whole thing was caused by his own selfish motives, and he would feel guilty if it implicated Zhang Guojun.

"Brother Hu, you're here too. Brother Zhuang, this is the leopard you shot yesterday. I skinned it, look at it, it's really beautiful..."

Before Zhuang Rui could finish speaking, Zhang Guojun's large head popped out from the doorway, holding a blood-soaked leopard skin in his hand.

"What are you doing so early in the morning? The whole room smells of blood. Take it out right now..."

Hu Rong glared at Zhang Guojun with annoyance, which startled Zhang Guojun, who turned and walked away while calling out, "Brother Zhuang, I left it at the door for you..."

Hu Rong walked to the door and saw that Zhang Guojun had indeed placed the leopard skin on the wooden steps. He shook his head and said, "That brat, he's over thirty years old and still so unreliable. Zhuang Rui, this leopard skin needs to be tanned and dried before it can be used. Leave it here with me, and I'll bring it to you after the New Year..."

Zhuang Rui casually agreed; the leopard skin was filthy and unsightly.

After having breakfast, the group took a car back to Hpakant. Professors Feng and Chen, however, stayed at the mine. Since they had the rare opportunity to visit Myanmar, they wanted to conduct some in-depth research.

However, Zhu Fanpo returned to Hpakant in the same car as Hu Rong and the others. Hu Rong's intention was for him to give Zhuang Rui a ride, because Zhu Fanpo was very familiar with the China-Myanmar border. In order to return to China as soon as possible, Zhuang Rui reluctantly agreed.

After bidding farewell to the old lady of the Hu family in the city, Hu Rong personally escorted Zhuang Rui to the military camp outside the city, where a helicopter was already parked. The fact that Hu Rong could mobilize military helicopters at any time shows his connections and status in Myanmar.

"Brother Zhuang, see you back in China in a while!"

Hu Rongcai left the military camp after watching the helicopter slowly take off and disappear from sight.

Because of the mysterious strong magnetic field inside the Hukawng Valley, which caused the helicopter's electronics to malfunction, the helicopter flew around the edge of the Hukawng Valley for more than four hours before finally arriving at a small town on the China-Myanmar border, which is also a garrison of Myanmar soldiers.

"Boss Zhuang, are you alright?"

As soon as they got off the plane, the petite Zhu Fanpo approached them. Judging from his posture, it seemed he wanted Zhuang Rui to put his right hand on his shoulder. Startled, Zhuang Rui quickly took a few steps back and said, "It's okay, nothing's wrong. Where are we? Let's get through immigration quickly..."

During the several hours on the plane, even though Zhuang Rui closed his eyes and pretended to sleep, he could still feel the intense gaze of this "cooking woman," and he was incredibly conflicted.

"Let's go out first. Wait at the intersection for a while, and a luxury bus carrying Chinese tour groups will pass by. You can go through the border with them..."

Zhu Fanpo was quite dissatisfied with Zhuang Rui's lack of understanding, but he still had to complete the task assigned by Boss Hu. After communicating with the helicopter pilot in Burmese, he led Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei out of the military camp and onto an asphalt road, where the road conditions were much better than in the interior of Myanmar.

"This is a luxury bus?"

Zhuang Rui looked at the bus with blue smoke billowing from its rear as it approached from afar, and glared at Zhu Fanpo with an unfriendly expression.

"This would be considered a luxury car in Thailand..."

The woman muttered something in a very effeminate tone, then extended her delicate fingers and walked to the roadside to flag down a car, which made Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei shudder.

After the bus stopped, Zhu Fanpo and the driver exchanged a few words in Burmese, then Zhu Fanpo took out four 500 Burmese banknotes, handed them to the driver, and turned to Zhuang Rui, saying, "Alright, they can take you directly to the border. Boss Zhuang, I'll miss you later..."

"Okay, okay, thank you. I'll miss you too..."

As Zhuang Rui got into the car, he made excuses, but after he said those words, Peng Fei next to him visibly shuddered, clearly stunned by Zhuang Rui's words.

Once in the car, Peng Fei asked with a mischievous grin, "Brother Zhuang, do you really miss him?"

"Pfft, I'm sorry, I'm really sorry..."

Zhuang Rui was so shocked by Peng Fei's words that he spat water onto the head of a little girl in front of him. He quickly stood up and apologized to the girl.

"It's alright, it's okay. You're Chinese?"

The girl took out a handkerchief and wiped her hair. She turned around and looked at Zhuang Rui strangely. Not only her, but everyone in the car was looking at Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei.

"Yes, of course I'm Chinese, isn't I?" The girl was very pretty, with two sweet dimples when she smiled, making her very pleasing to the eye.

"No, I'm a tour guide in Myanmar, specifically responsible for receiving Chinese tourists. How did you get to Myanmar if you didn't join a tour group?"

After the girl explained, Zhuang Rui realized that the bus was responsible for picking up and dropping off tourists from China who were participating in a "Myanmar day trip." To obtain a temporary visa to enter Myanmar, one had to join this tour. That's why she was so curious about Zhuang Rui and the other person who got on the bus halfway through the trip, assuming they were illegal immigrants.

Zhuang Rui's left arm draped over his shoulder is easily misunderstood.

"I came from Mandalay, not for tourism, and certainly not illegally. By the way, is your Myanmar day tour fun?"

Zhuang Rui offered a brief explanation but didn't say much more, shifting the topic to the tour group.

"What a ridiculous Myanmar day trip! It was completely pointless. We were totally scammed..."

"Yeah, they called it a luxury bus, but this bus is practically an antique..."

"Go back to the travel agency, damn it, they're even ripping off their own people..."

As soon as Zhuang Rui finished speaking, the people around him started chattering away, clearly having been quite exhausted by the luxury bus.

"Dude, what are you two doing in Myanmar? Are you doing this for drugs?"

A fat man sitting a few rows ahead was quite curious. He even rubbed his fingers together as if he were rubbing powder. His words startled the burly man sitting next to the tour guide in front of Zhuang Rui, who shrank his head down.

"Hey buddy, you can't just say things like that. We're going to Yangon to gamble on jade, and we're stopping by Mandalay on the way. I have certificates issued by the Myanmar government here..."

Zhuang Rui saw that everyone in the car was staring at him and Peng Fei with strange looks, and he couldn't help but smile bitterly. If this matter wasn't explained clearly, he was afraid that once they reached the China-Myanmar border, everyone in the car would definitely report him.

"Yes, this is a VIP certificate issued by our government, that's right..."

After the Burmese female tour guide saw the certificate Zhuang Rui produced, she explained it to the people in the car, which dispelled everyone's doubts. You see, the drug dealers portrayed on TV are all ruthless and vicious. If these two were really drug dealers, they might have kidnapped all of them and taken them hostage.

After learning the identities of the two, the people in the car relaxed and began asking Zhuang Rui about jade gambling in Myanmar. However, seeing that Zhuang Rui only answered one out of ten questions, everyone felt a bit bored, and the topic shifted to the beautiful Myanmar tour guide.

"Guide, the roads in Myanmar are so bad, what does the government do with the taxes? By the way, how much do you earn a month? Can you tell me?" The fat man from the front was asking the same question.

"Our government doesn't collect taxes, and we don't have to pay taxes. We probably earn about 300 RMB a month?"

The girl was very honest, but what she said made everyone except Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei gape in astonishment.

"Then what will you eat? And won't you have to hand over the crops you grow?"

"Everything grown belongs to us. Our county government only seems to have two departments: the police station and the court. There are no other departments like the education bureau, health bureau, or urban management bureau that you find in China. There doesn't seem to be a tax bureau either..."

The girl's words elicited gasps of surprise. No evil city management officers? The people of Myanmar are so fortunate, even though their monthly income is a bit low.

Zhuang Rui really didn't know these things. Sitting in the back, he became a little curious and asked, "Then who runs your school and hospital? Who pays the teachers' salaries?"

"Education here is free. Students can buy their own books. They can see a private doctor for 50 kyats. The government pays for medicine, but students have to pay for injections themselves. Surgery is also out-of-pocket."

As for the schools, they are all funded by the villages themselves. The villagers pool their money to pay the teachers' salaries, which are about 300 yuan per month. Chinese teachers are especially welcome to teach in Myanmar, and many villages are willing to pay higher fees.

The girl's words made everyone roll their eyes. A salary of 300 yuan? Even if the price were doubled, probably not many Chinese people would be willing to go there to teach.

Chapter 505 Returning Home (Part Two)

However, Myanmar's welfare benefits are truly impressive. A doctor's visit only costs 50 kyats, equivalent to just a few cents in RMB, which is practically free! This is far better than the hundreds of yuan charged for a simple cold in China.

The girl's words piqued the curiosity of the men and women on the bus, who all asked their own questions. In this back-and-forth, the differences between the two countries' social structures were truly apparent.

In Myanmar, civil servants like police officers earn a salary of 300 yuan, but they usually only work half a day, finishing at 3 pm at the latest, and can then go on to do their own business.

Moreover, the police basically have nothing to do, because when they catch thieves, they are all beaten to death on the spot by the onlookers. The security in various villages and towns in Myanmar is so good that people don't even need to pick up lost items or visit other people's homes.

Burmese people traditionally build houses with bamboo, and they dismantle and rebuild them every three years. Therefore, you can't tell how wealthy a family is just by looking at their house. Generally, wealthy Burmese people save up some money to buy gold, leaving it at home for who knows what they'll do with it.

Upon hearing this, Zhuang Rui muttered to himself, "No wonder the Japanese devils looted so much gold in Burma; it seems they have a tradition of doing so."

When the topic of Burmese wedding customs came up, the men in the car began to breathe heavily.

They heard that Burmese men could marry multiple wives, and even the men sitting next to female companions were secretly listening intently.

In Myanmar, polygamy is completely legal, but you must have sufficient financial means to support your wives. Although the police don't handle minor matters like catching thieves—villagers take care of that with their hoes—if you can't support your wives, the police will begin to exercise their power.

In Myanmar, each acre of land is worth approximately 2500 RMB. If you buy ten acres at once, the seller will give you a daughter as a wife. Once you marry her, she will be responsible for planting, harvesting, and threshing the grain. And what about you? According to Burmese custom, "noble" men don't need to work; their main task is: playing mahjong!

Finally, the pretty female tour guide summarized: as long as you have 75,000 RMB and experience as a monk (meaning you can recite a few foreign Amitabha mantras), you can easily have three beautiful wives in Myanmar. Moreover, from then on, you won't have to work; you can just stay home and play mahjong!

Upon hearing this, the men in the car not only had their hearts racing, but their eyes also began to bloodshot. Some of them started calculating in their minds: if they sold their houses and cars back home, they should have more than 75,000 RMB, right? If they came to Myanmar, wouldn't they immediately have three wives and six concubines?

Only Zhuang Rui was secretly laughing. It was true that he was playing mahjong at home, but he would have to trouble you all to take care of the children born to his three wives and six concubines. What a bunch of idiots, did you really think being a stay-at-home dad was so easy?

"Miss tour guide, if I may ask a bold question, how many wives did your father have?"

The middle-aged, overweight man sitting in front turned around and looked at the Burmese female tour guide with an ambiguous expression.

"There are 3..."

"How many children are there?"

"There are nine in total, and I'm the third one..."

"Don't your mothers get jealous of each other?"

"If you get married and your husband has several wives, would you be jealous?"

At this point, not only the fat man was concerned about this issue, but others also started asking questions all at once.

"Burmese women don't get jealous, and neither do I. We can definitely be like best sisters..."

Although Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei knew about these things beforehand, hearing them from the person involved was a completely different experience. Everyone in the car, except for the driver, was stunned by the girl's words.

"Look, those women should all have the same husband..."

A tourist saw several women walking hand in hand along the roadside and called out to them, causing people in the car to stick their heads out to look.

"Yes, that's right, we Burmese women never get jealous..."

The beautiful female tour guide's words brought tears to the eyes of all the men on the bus. One guy was traveling with his wife, and if he accidentally glanced at another woman, he would get a lecture for half a day when he got home. This...this...is outrageous!

Several men, who were probably still unmarried, started fawning over the female tour guide, making the other men who were traveling with their female companions quite envious. However, the women on the bus also reached a consensus: when they got back, they would definitely tell their girlfriends that Myanmar was a place they should never come to.

From where Zhuang Rui and the others boarded the bus to the China-Myanmar border building, it was only a 40-minute drive. After the bus stopped, several men were still asking the female tour guide for her contact information, which made Zhuang Rui shake his head. He thought that after a while, there would be more Chinese dads in Myanmar.

Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei followed behind the tour group and easily crossed the Myanmar border. Their inspection personnel were practically useless; after handing over their passports, they didn't even bother to look up, just stamped them with a steel stamp and tossed them out.

However, the Chinese border control ahead was much stricter, with many people having their bags opened for inspection. The efficiency of customs clearance was nowhere near that of Myanmar.

"Peng Fei, can we take these things out of the country? Will they be confiscated during inspection there?"

Turning around, Zhuang Rui looked at the large backpack on Peng Fei's shoulder and felt a little uneasy. When he said goodbye to the Hu family, Hu Rong's father took a lot of tiger bones and tiger penises and asked Zhuang Rui to take them. Despite his repeated refusals, Zhuang Rui could only stuff them into his bag.

"It shouldn't be, it's not like it's gambling. I've never heard of these supplements being confiscated, have I? Brother Zhuang, how about... I enter the country from another place?"

Peng Fei didn't know much about this either. In the past, when he crossed the China-Myanmar-Thailand border, he always took unconventional routes and never went through the border crossings. The border between Myanmar and China is more than 100 kilometers long, and you can easily slip through from anywhere.

"Hey, it's those two. They're not from our tour group, officer, it's those two..."

Peng Fei couldn't leave now, because the fat man in the car was leading several border police officers to Zhuang Rui and his companion.

"Look at his bag, and this guy has a missing hand. He's definitely up to no good. Officer, is there a reward for calling the police? Shouldn't I get a Good Citizen Award?"

The fat man's words made the mouths of the armed police officers twitch. This guy was underestimating the intelligence of drug traffickers. He probably watched too many crime dramas. Are there really drug traffickers who would brazenly carry a bag and cross the border like this?

"Excuse me, gentlemen, please put your hands in front of you and come to our office..."

A lieutenant-level armed police officer saluted Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei, then politely gestured for them to proceed. However, the muzzles of the Type 81 rifles held by the soldiers behind him were subtly pointed at Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei.

"I'm sorry, you can't go with us..." The lieutenant stopped the middle-aged fat man who wanted to come and watch the excitement.

"I called the police, I want to be a witness..."

The fat man seemed convinced that Zhuang Rui was a drug dealer and started shouting in dissatisfaction.

"They might have guns, and they might hurt you..."

The lieutenant was at a loss with this clown, so he simply threatened him with a remark. This trick worked, and the fat man immediately shut up after hearing it.

Zhuang Rui followed behind several armed police officers helplessly, shaking his head repeatedly. This fat guy was really bored out of his mind. If they really encountered armed drug traffickers, he would definitely shoot him first. Zhuang Rui even had the urge to beat him up.

Upon arriving at the office, the lieutenant said to Peng Fei, "Please put your bag on the ground and take two steps back..."

Looking at Zhuang Rui and his companion's attire, especially Zhuang Rui's calm demeanor, the lieutenant didn't dare to go too far. He simply told Peng Fei to put down the large backpack. If it were a real suspect, he would have handcuffed them before questioning them.

After carefully opening Peng Fei's backpack, the lieutenant was immediately stunned. The backpack was full of scattered animal bones, as well as ten tiger penises wrapped in cloth.

With the eye that the lieutenant had developed over his long time at the checkpoint, he could tell at a glance that it was indeed the spine of a large feline. When he looked at Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei, his eyes sharpened. However, he did not take action immediately because one of them was fair-skinned and the other, although tall, had lost an arm and should not be much of a threat.

"Gentlemen, could you explain your smuggling of tiger bones and tiger penises?"

The lieutenant stood up and said in a serious tone, while the two junior armed police officers behind Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei immediately pulled back their bolts and pointed their guns at the two men.

"Excuse me, Lieutenant, I think you used the wrong words. The tiger penis and tiger bone that the country prohibits from being bought and sold refers to those poached. And the so-called smuggling refers to the illegal importation of goods exempt from customs duties for profit. It seems that there is no law in our country that prohibits bringing tiger penis and tiger bone into the country, right?"

On the other hand, even if we poached these things in Myanmar, it's not under Chinese law to regulate them, is it?

Peng Fei raised an eyebrow, looking at the lieutenant with a half-smile, and said the words above. He used to be in charge of investigating smuggling and drug trafficking, and he knew these regulations better than anyone. How could he be intimidated by this junior officer?

"You...you're just making excuses! Ten tiger penises, kept for your own use? And these tiger bones, enough to make dozens of jars of wine, right? Keep those for your own use too? You better behave yourself!"

The lieutenant slammed his hand on the table, dismissing Peng Fei's words with disdain. Ten tiger whips would require hunting at least ten male tigers.

Even if it's for personal use, there's no need to buy so many, right? They must be planning to smuggle them into China for sale.

Chapter 506 Buddha

Zhuang Rui, growing impatient, said, "Just declare customs and pay taxes according to regulations. Stop with the nonsense. We need to get back to Beijing tonight..."

"You two, first show me your ID cards and passports..."

After Zhuang Rui produced his ID card, the lieutenant gestured to an armed policeman to collect Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei's passports, and then said, "Only now you think about customs declaration? Too late. If you're going to make up a lie, at least make it believable. Do you two need to drink tiger penis wine all the time?"

As he spoke, the lieutenant's face was full of sarcasm. In his view, it was a foregone conclusion that he had cracked a major case of smuggling valuable medicinal herbs. Perhaps soon, the 12 cents on his shoulder would become 13 cents.

"It seems we haven't even cleared customs yet, and you've already brought us here? How do you know we won't declare it?"

Zhuang Rui was a little annoyed. Although he really hadn't planned to declare customs duties, he was still embarrassed by the lieutenant's taunts. Was it really worth making such a big deal out of such a trivial matter? Besides, he hadn't bought it himself; it was a gift.

The lieutenant waved his hand and said, "You don't need to tell me these things. After I complete the handover procedures, you can explain them to the police officers. Wang Liang, take them away..."

"yes!"

A soldier behind Zhuang Rui poked Zhuang Rui's arm with the barrel of his gun. This soldier was kind enough not to touch Zhuang Rui's injured left arm.

"Lieutenant, you will be held accountable for your actions!"

Zhuang Rui took out his phone. To be honest, he really didn't want to call anyone, but if he were locked up in Ruili for a few days, his postgraduate entrance exam would be ruined.

"Who gave you permission to make that call?"

The lieutenant slammed his hand on the table and lunged to grab Zhuang Rui's phone, but Peng Fei, standing nearby, swiftly grabbed the lieutenant's outstretched wrist with his left hand, twisting his wrist and elbow, slamming the lieutenant onto the table. His right hand then smoothly drew a pistol from the lieutenant's holster.

"Crack..."

With a gentle downward motion of his right hand, the pistol grazed Peng Fei's thigh, and the bullet slid into the chamber. Before the two armed police officers behind Zhuang Rui could raise their guns, the dark muzzle was already pointed at him, scaring the young soldier into immobility.

"Brother Zhuang, let's make a call. This counts as assaulting a police officer..."

Peng Fei's series of movements were as smooth as flowing water, a sight to behold. However, the lieutenant who was pinned down on the table felt a mixture of shame and regret. Why hadn't he handcuffed the two men earlier?

Although Peng Fei shouted that he was assaulting a police officer, he didn't take it seriously. People from his unit were always audacious and had done a lot of disciplinary violations. Sometimes, for mission purposes, they would even knock out their own people. Peng Fei had done this several times.

Furthermore, Peng Fei knew quite a bit about Zhuang Rui's background, so handling this matter shouldn't be a big problem. Even if Zhuang Rui couldn't handle it, he had other ways.

Zhuang Rui was also stunned. After hearing Peng Fei's words, he remembered to make a phone call. Just as his finger touched the keypad, the office door was pushed open from the outside with a "whoosh".

"Liang Yi, you little rascal, damn you, are you on duty today? Are you hiding in the office again?"

A curse came from the doorway, but it was tinged with amusement. Then a tall soldier appeared in the doorway.

The lieutenant struggled desperately beneath Peng Fei, repeatedly shouting, "Captain, don't come in, it's dangerous..."

The man who appeared at the door reacted quickly. When he saw the lieutenant being pinned to the desk and a dark gun barrel pointed at him, his massive body instantly crouched down on the ground. He didn't care about looking good at all and rolled backward like a ball.

After exiting the office, the man sprang to his feet, disappearing beside the door. In a flash, the pistol holstered at his waist was drawn. 020.

The time was too short; he only noticed that the two soldiers in the office and Liang Yi seemed to have been subdued. There were two other people on the other side, one of whom had a gun, and the other had his hand wrapped in bandages, as if he was injured.

"Captain, there are two of them, only one gun. The other one is wounded. Don't worry about me, take them out..."

The lieutenant started howling loudly in the office, but Peng Fei ignored him and looked towards the door with a half-smile.

Zhuang Rui was startled by the person outside and didn't make the call. Just as he was about to call again, Peng Fei waved his hand, indicating that he didn't need to call. Although Zhuang Rui was a little confused, he put down his phone.

"Listen up, you people inside! Lay down your weapons immediately. Surrender is your only way out..."

The soldier at the entrance, with 22 cents slung over his shoulder, was a proper lieutenant colonel in the People's Armed Police.

Although the man spoke in a very serious tone, he seemed to be smiling, which was puzzling. Upon closer inspection, it turned out that he had a smiling face, somewhat like Maitreya Buddha, with sparse eyebrows and large earlobes. If he were to play a character in "Journey to the West," he probably wouldn't even need makeup.

At this moment, several more armed police officers walked in from outside. They were startled when they saw the lieutenant colonel's appearance. The lieutenant colonel gestured to the officers, indicating that there was danger inside the office. Immediately, the armed police officers outside dispersed and found their own hiding places.

The lieutenant colonel cleared his throat and shouted again, "I'll repeat myself, everyone inside, listen up, immediately..."

"Alright, Laughing Buddha, are you planning to have someone distract me first, then take down or kill the people around me? Force your way in? Stop with the nonsense, just get in already..."

Suddenly a sound rang out in the room, followed by a series of cracking sounds. A Type 64 pistol was disassembled into several parts and thrown out of the room.

Upon hearing this, everyone inside and outside the house was stunned. Zhuang Rui looked at Peng Fei, while the lieutenant beneath him stopped struggling, because he knew that the nickname "Laughing Buddha" was exclusively reserved for their captain.

"Instructor?"

The lieutenant colonel outside, who looked like Maitreya Buddha, was stunned for a moment after hearing the noise inside. He then reacted quickly, holstered his gun on his waist without hesitation, and waved for the men lying in ambush under the window and across the room to leave.

"Is it really you, Instructor? What are you up to?"

The lieutenant colonel appeared at the door, picked up the pistol parts on the ground, and then went into the room. At this time, Peng Fei had already released the lieutenant and looked at the officer who came in with a smile.

"Don't laugh, seeing your smiling face makes me uncomfortable..."

Peng Fei let out an exaggerated shout, then went over and hugged the lieutenant colonel. They patted each other on the shoulder. The lieutenant was dumbfounded. Although the battalion commander was usually unpretentious, he had never seen him so affectionate with anyone before.

"Instructor, come, sit down, sit down. Liang Yi, you son of a bitch, aren't you going to get some water?"

After releasing Peng Fei, the lieutenant colonel quickly helped him onto the sofa, then turned and yelled at the lieutenant who was still in a daze. The lieutenant was startled and quickly took out tea leaves, pouring a cup of tea for Peng Fei and Zhuang Rui.

"Alright, get out of here. Don't talk about what happened earlier. That's against the rules!"

The lieutenant colonel waved his hand and said with a serious expression, but the seriousness could only be discerned from his tone, because his face was always smiling.

"yes!"

The lieutenant saluted and walked out, full of questions, but he didn't dare to ask any more. As the saying goes, a higher rank can crush a lower one, and there's a difference of several ranks between a lieutenant colonel and a lieutenant.

"Instructor, please have some water. It's been over a year since we last contacted each other. What brings you here today? Are you on some kind of mission?"

The smiling lieutenant colonel moved the still-steaming water cup closer to Peng Fei. This action was nothing like that of a lieutenant colonel; it was more like the service of a clerk.

"To carry out a mission?"

Peng Fei's smile was somewhat bitter as he said, "Buddha, to tell you the truth, I've been discharged from the army for over a year now, and I'm working with Brother Zhuang now..."

"What?!"

The lieutenant colonel was shocked by Peng Fei's words and involuntarily stood up, saying, "How could this be? Instructor, what happened? Should I write a report and specially recruit you back into the army? I'd even give you my battalion commander position..."

"Company commander? Even if I don't retire, I'm just a major at most. You can just stay put and do your job. I'm doing fine now..."

Peng Fei shook his head. Now that his parents were gone and his young sister needed his care, he could no longer serve in the army without any worries as before.

"Instructor, how could it be a discharge? Didn't you already issue the order to promote him to captain back then?" the lieutenant colonel asked, puzzled.

"He shot and killed a few drug dealers during a mission, but let's not talk about that. Master, let me introduce you. This is my older brother, and also my boss, Zhuang Rui..."

Peng Fei clearly didn't want to bring up the past, so he changed the subject, introduced Zhuang Rui to the lieutenant colonel, and explained the relationship between the two to Zhuang Rui.

It turns out that this lieutenant colonel's surname was Li, and his given name was Xiao, so he was called Li Xiao. However, because of his smiling face, he was given the nickname "Smiling Buddha".

Because he was in charge of anti-smuggling and anti-drug operations at the border for many years, his own people called him the Laughing Buddha or Buddha, while the drug dealers who hated him to the bone called him the Smiling Tiger.

Two years ago, Li Xiao's unit sent more than 20 armed police officers who were fighting on the front line of drug enforcement to Peng Fei's mysterious unit for special operations training, and Peng Fei was the instructor at that time.

Chapter 507 Comrades

When they first arrived at the training camp, Li Xiao and the other trainees were quite resentful of Peng Fei, this pretty boy. He was lower in rank, shorter, and looked like a little kid—what could he possibly be capable of? Several of them expressed their dissatisfaction right then and there.

The military is a more direct place, unlike the local political arena. These trainees are all key personnel carefully selected from various border stations. They have rich combat experience and have always considered themselves the best in the world.

Such people are generally very clear about their likes and dislikes, and are mostly straightforward. When they are upset, they will express it, and the best way to do so is naturally to compete and vie with each other.

The result of their defiance was that, whether it was one-on-one duels, group fights, gunfights, or combat in various terrains such as jungles and cities, the group of trainees were thoroughly outmatched by Peng Fei, and at the same time, they were completely convinced of the merits of this young instructor.

Although Buddha was already a major at that time, he greatly admired Peng Fei, who was a generation younger than him and two ranks lower in rank. During the three-month intensive training, the instructors and trainees developed a deep bond.

Afterwards, Peng Fei led them on some unknown missions, forging a deep camaraderie amidst iron and blood. Peng Fei's skill during the missions made these trainees, who considered themselves the best in the world, realize the gap between themselves and that mysterious unit.

"Are you kidding me? Killing a few drug dealers is nothing unusual. Your unit's discipline isn't that strong, is it?"

Li Xiao looked at Peng Fei with suspicion. Although our army has always had the tradition of not killing prisoners of war, this tradition is not always well implemented. Even in the War of Resistance Against Japan half a century ago, many units did not take prisoners.

"Alright, Master, let's not talk about this anymore. Anyway, I'm fine now. Find someone to clear customs for these things, see how much they're worth, and we'll pay the customs duties..."

Peng Fei waved his hand, not wanting to elaborate on his family's affairs. He harbored a deep secret, one he hadn't even told Zhuang Rui.

Peng Fei killed those drug dealers who had already surrendered on purpose, because he knew that if he didn't do it, the army that had trained him for so many years would not let him go easily. However, his autistic sister at home needed his care.

So those drug dealers became the unlucky ones; Peng Fei wouldn't feel any guilt at all about killing them.

Even so, the leaders of Peng Fei's unit at the time wanted to cover it up for him, saying that the drug dealers were killed in the resistance. Peng Fei himself wrote a report and submitted it directly to his superiors.

People are aware of things like this, and as long as it's not said outright, no one will bring it up. But once it's put in writing, the truth can't be hidden anymore.

Given Peng Fei's irrationality during the mission and the terrible consequences he caused, he didn't even get a chance to be demobilized. An officer who was about to be promoted to captain ended up being discharged like a regular soldier.

The so-called irrationality actually stemmed from the leaders' disappointment and frustration with Peng Fei's report after completing the task. They felt that if Peng Fei had tried harder, the punishment might have been changed to a major demerit or something similar.

However, at that time, Peng Fei only wanted to go home to take care of his younger sister, so this result can be considered as getting what he wanted.

"Instructor, you haven't switched careers to sell medicinal herbs, have you? What's the point of going through customs? Just take it, I can handle this..."

Li Xiao kicked the backpack on the ground and said with a smile, but in fact he was quite suspicious. Smuggling these valuable medicinal herbs was not a serious crime. If caught, he would only be fined a little money. It was nothing like drug trafficking. It was understandable that Peng Fei would go home and do some business to make money.

However, Li Xiao's words were a test for Peng Fei. No one knew better than him how much harm someone like Peng Fei could cause to society if he went astray after returning to his hometown. If Peng Fei complied and took these things today, Li Xiao would immediately report the matter.

"Buddha, stop with the nonsense. If I wanted to smuggle, would you have caught me? Besides, why would I bother with this stuff? Making money off a few pounds of powder would be much faster..."

Peng Fei looked at Buddha with a half-smile, but what he said made Li Xiao feel a little embarrassed. However, since he was born with a smiling face, it was impossible to tell what he was thinking.

"Hehe, you're a true instructor, you even saw through my little scheme. To be honest, I absolutely trust your character, Instructor. But things are complicated here right now, so please don't get..."

Li Xiaoxiao stopped talking at this point, but looked at Zhuang Rui. What he meant was that society and the military were two completely different environments. Peng Fei, don't be fooled by some people with ulterior motives. And those people with ulterior motives were naturally referring to Zhuang Rui.

"Forget it, Master, I've seen all kinds of people, you don't need to tell me this..."

Peng Fei walked up to Li Xiao and whispered a few words in his ear. Li Xiao's Buddha-like face showed astonishment, but he still looked like he was smiling.

"No way, that old man is over 90, right? He needs this? I doubt this will even work..."

"Pfft, oh, I'm sorry, I really didn't mean to..."

Zhuang Rui spat out the mouthful of tea he had just taken a sip of, spraying it squarely onto the Buddha's face, which was beaming like a chrysanthemum.

"You...you deserve it..."

Peng Fei also pointed at the Buddha and laughed and cursed. He told Li Xiao Zhuang Rui's maternal grandfather's name just to show that Zhuang Rui wouldn't covet such a small amount of money. Who knew that Li Xiao had such a vivid imagination? Looking at these tiger penises and bones, he actually thought of that matter.

"Alright, I deserve it, I deserve it, hehe, instructor, you're not leaving now that you're on my turf. I admit I can't beat you in military skills, but when it comes to drinking, I've never lost. Let's have a good drink tonight..."

Although Zhuang Rui sprayed tea all over his face, Li Xiao felt relieved. It was better that his instructor hadn't gone astray. For those of them in this line of work, the worst thing was seeing former comrades turn into enemies. That kind of heartache was something outsiders couldn't understand.

"Liang Yi, you son of a bitch, come in here. I knew you hadn't gone far..."

Li Xiao walked to the door, opened it, and called out to Liang Yi, who was guarding outside, "Go, take this package to customs. Also, book a table and food at the usual place..."

"Captain, they're not smuggling..."

"That's bullshit, that's my instructor, he used to come from here..."

Li Xiao gestured to the lieutenant and said with a laugh, "Hurry up and go. If the instructor wants to cross the border, there's nowhere he can't get out along this 100-kilometer border."

"Okay, I'll go right now..."

When Lieutenant Liang Yi saw the gesture Buddha made, his eyes lit up. He knew that his loss was not unjust. Losing to those legendary figures was not shameful at all. He excitedly ran into the house, picked up Peng Fei's backpack, and went to handle the customs procedures.

"Master, we still need to get back to Beijing, so... let's skip the drinking..."

Peng Fei glanced at Zhuang Rui, knowing that Zhuang Rui was taking the postgraduate entrance exam the day after tomorrow and was in a tight schedule.

Li Xiao's eyes widened, and he said, "Nonsense, if we're on my turf and I don't entertain you, Instructor, those bastards will gossip about me behind my back. Besides, there are no flights to Beijing today. Tomorrow morning, I'll arrange a car to take you to Mangshi Airport..."

“Peng Fei, if you can’t leave today, stay overnight...” From the words of this lieutenant colonel, Zhuang Rui could feel the deep camaraderie between the soldiers.

After a while, Liang Yi returned with his bag and handed Zhuang Rui a form to pay the taxes. Zhuang Rui followed the lieutenant to the tax office, paid the money, and then the group headed to the restaurant.

Besides Liang Yi, who had the lowest rank, Li Xiao also invited two majors to accompany him.

"Come on, Instructor, let me, Li Xiao, toast you. Whether you're still in the army or not, you'll always be my instructor, Li Xiao!"

In the military, there's no such thing as urging someone to drink. After the drinks were poured, Li Xiao raised his glass and toasted Peng Fei. Without waiting for Peng Fei to drink or not, he tilted his head back and drank the rest of his glass.

"Okay, drink!"

To Zhuang Rui's surprise, Peng Fei, who always never drank alcohol when he was with him, actually downed his drink today without uttering a single word.

Moreover, Peng Fei had a remarkable capacity for alcohol. In the end, he even got the "Feast Buddha" drunk and passed out on the table. Even the other guests were all quite drunk and staggering.

Although Peng Fei had a good alcohol tolerance, he couldn't withstand being attacked by three or four people at once. He was quite drunk and was slurring military songs. However, Zhuang Rui noticed that tears were welling up in Peng Fei's eyes. Clearly, the olive green uniform he once wore was not so easily forgotten.

The next morning, after sobering up, Buddha arranged for a military vehicle to take Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei to Mangshi Airport. Around 9 a.m., there happened to be a flight to Beijing.

We arrived in Beijing a little after 1 p.m. Beijing had just had a heavy snowfall a few days ago, and from the plane preparing to land, we could see that the entire city was covered in a layer of silver.

Zhuang Rui didn't notify Hao Long to pick him up at the airport. After collecting his luggage, he and Peng Fei took a taxi to their own courtyard house.

Having spent nearly a month abroad, Zhuang Rui felt a sense of warmth and familiarity listening to the taxi driver's Beijing accent.

Chapter 508 Don't move, I'll handle it.

"Hey boss, you're back! Why didn't you call me? I could have picked you up from the airport..."

Hao Long opened the door when he heard the doorbell ring and was greeted by Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei, who was carrying a large bag. He was taken aback, especially when he saw Zhuang Rui's arm in a sling. He quickly asked, "Boss, what happened? Peng Fei, didn't I tell you to take good care of Boss Zhuang?"

"Brother Hao, it's nothing, just a little accident. It's not Peng Fei's fault. Hey... White Lion, stop fooling around..."

As Zhuang Rui was speaking, a white shadow suddenly darted out from inside the door, pushing Peng Fei and Hao Long aside. The white lion pinned Zhuang Rui to the ground with its two large paws and licked his face affectionately with its blood-red tongue. However, the white lion seemed to know that Zhuang Rui's left hand was uncomfortable, so it did not touch that side.

In fact, Zhuang Rui's left arm injury had almost fully healed. However, the injury was too severe when it occurred, and he was afraid that removing the bandage now would look too abrupt. In addition, the fracture had not fully healed, so it had been kept in a sling. At this moment, he could only reach out his right hand to hug the white lion's thick neck.

"White Lion, did you miss me?"

Zhuang Rui could feel the deep affection the white lion had for him. After lying on the ground and playing with the white lion for a while, he picked up the white lion and stood up.

The white lion was covered in snow-white fur, so it was fine in the snow. Zhuang Rui, on the other hand, was covered in snow, even his head was white. Fortunately, the weather was cold and the snow hadn't melted yet, otherwise, his clothes would probably be soaked through in no time.

"Waaah..."

The white lion growled and angrily rubbed the snow off its head all over Zhuang Rui's body.

The first creature the white lion saw when it opened its eyes was Zhuang Rui. In the white lion's heart, it had long regarded Zhuang Rui as its parent. Moreover, the white lion's body had been refined by Zhuang Rui's spiritual energy for a long time, so its spirituality was incomparable to that of ordinary animals.

"From now on, whenever we go out, as long as we don't take a plane, I'll take you with me..."

Zhuang Rui felt the same way; he raised the white lion from a tiny cub to its current size, and the bond he formed was incredibly deep.

"Boss, the white lion has been lying on the gate tower every day, just waiting for you to come back..."

Hao Long took Peng Fei's backpack, opened all the doors, and let Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei into the house.

"Mom, you don't live in Yuquan Mountain?"

Zhuang Rui looked up and saw Ouyang Wan, dressed in a red silk cotton-padded jacket, standing at the door, her eyes fixed on his sling arm.

Since resolving the conflict between herself and her elderly father and settling in Beijing, Ouyang Wan's complexion has improved dramatically. At first glance, she looks like she's in her forties, despite being over 50.

"You child, you don't know how to take care of yourself at all. Why didn't you tell your mother about this happening..."

Although Ouyang Wan never interfered in Zhuang Rui's life, it didn't mean she didn't care about him. When she saw the thick bandages wrapped around her son's arm, Ouyang Wan's eyes welled up with tears.

"Mom, I'm sorry, it's my fault. I was just afraid you'd worry. I promise it won't happen again..."

Zhuang Rui released the white lion, walked to his mother, and put his right arm around her shoulder. He and Zhuang Min had always been most afraid of their mother crying, but now they were flustered.

"Sigh, you're all grown up now. You need to know what you should and shouldn't do. Just don't always make your mother worry..."

Ouyang Wan looked helplessly at her tall and strong son, turned around and walked into the yard, saying, "You didn't even tell me you were coming back. Xuanbing and your mother-in-law went to town and will be back in a bit. You and Xiao Peng haven't eaten yet, have you? I'll go make you something..."

As she turned away, Ouyang Wan quietly wiped away a tear from the corner of her eye. How could a mother not worry when her son was injured?

"Brother, Brother Zhuang, Uncle, bad Uncle..."

As soon as they entered the front yard, two exquisitely beautiful girls rushed towards Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei. The older and taller one was Ya Ya, while the younger one was Zhuang Rui's older sister's precious princess, Nan Nan.

Ya Ya's complexion is much healthier than before, and her eyes are full of spirit. Although her brother has been gone for more than 20 days, it seems that she has already integrated into the family's life. With Nannan around, she doesn't have time to be unhappy even if she wants to.

"Brother, I've started school! My teachers and classmates are so nice to me. Oh, and I can even recite Tang poems now. I'll recite one for you later..."

"Uncle, look at the snowman that Nannan and Sister Yaya built! And the bad white lion won't play with us..."

The two little girls each grabbed Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei and started showing off. Nannan didn't forget to complain about Bai Shi, who knew that Bai Shi usually ignored everyone except Zhuang Rui.

The white lion following behind Zhuang Rui let out a low growl, as if warning the little girl who was tattling, but the girl ignored it and went up to hug the white lion's neck and started swinging on it, making a ruckus.

"Alright, little girl, your uncle isn't feeling well. Go do your homework with Yaya..."

After sending her granddaughter back to her room, Ouyang Wan hurriedly went into the kitchen to prepare some delicious food to nourish her son.

"Aunt Zhang, Aunt Li, you two look really festive in these clothes..."

Hearing the noise in the courtyard, Zhang Ma and Li Sao came out of their rooms. They were wearing the same clothes as Ouyang Wan, and Zhuang Rui knew that his mother must have bought several of them at once.

"Boss, what happened to your arm? Are you alright?"

When Zhang Ma and Li Sao saw Zhuang Rui's appearance, they were also taken aback, which made Zhuang Rui explain again.

Although he had almost worn his lips out from talking since he walked in, Zhuang Rui felt very comfortable. This feeling of being cared for was really... nice!

When Zhang Ma and Li Sao heard that Ouyang Wan had gone to the kitchen, they rushed over to help Zhuang's mother cook. Zhuang Rui called out to Peng Fei and Hao Long, and the group went to the dining room to wait.

With the New Year approaching, Ouyang Wan and Zhang Ma tidied up the courtyard during their free time. Two large red lanterns were hung at the door of each room, and the characters "福" (fortune) and "喜" (happiness) were pasted upside down. The latter was prepared for Zhuang Rui's engagement. Of course, Hao Long handled all these tasks.

"Brother Hao, put your bag down. Go to the market later, buy a big jar, and a few dozen bottles of Erguotou (a type of Chinese liquor). Pick out a couple of tiger bones to soak in it, and then move it to the basement..." Zhuang Rui instructed Hao Long after they sat down in the restaurant.

Hu Rong had told Zhuang Rui that soaking tiger bone in alcohol with *Eucommia ulmoides*, *Morinda officinalis*, *Paeonia lactiflora*, *Ligusticum chuanxiong*, *Gentiana macrophylla*, *Loranthus parasiticus*, and *Angelica pubescens* could treat rheumatism and strengthen the waist and knees. People over fifty years old could drink a little every day, which would be very beneficial to their health.

As for tiger penis wine, there's no need to say more; every man understands it. Although Zhuang Rui doesn't need it now, Song Jun, Fatty Ma, and others are all middle-aged, and his cousins Ouyang Lei might need it someday. As the saying goes, it's never wrong to give a generous gift, and men won't refuse such a gift.

Hu Rong had specifically instructed Zhuang Rui that the medicinal wine should be made with strong liquor and sealed for at least a year to allow the medicinal effects to be released. So, as soon as Zhuang Rui sat down, he asked Hao Long to buy the wine. Zhuang Rui was also a little curious about the tiger penis wine.

Hao Long agreed and turned to go out to buy things. Not long after, Zhuang's mother, Zhang Ma, and others also brought the food into the dining room. Seeing her son wolfing down his food, Zhuang's mother smiled.

"Hey, Xuanbing, the ground is slippery, slow down..."

Just after finishing his meal, Zhuang Rui heard his mother-in-law's voice coming from the courtyard, followed by a red figure appearing at the restaurant entrance.

I wonder how many of those festive red cotton-padded jackets that Mrs. Zhuang bought. Qin Xuanbing was wearing one of them at the moment.

However, the cotton-padded coat could not hide Qin Xuanbing's stunning figure. Her slender waist and perky breasts, combined with this uniquely Chinese-style clothing, made her appear even more charming and alluring.

Upon seeing Zhuang Rui's injured arm, Qin Xuanbing burst into tears, which Zhuang Rui had to comfort her with great effort.

The mother-in-law next to him gave Zhuang Rui a good scolding. "A wise man doesn't stand under a dangerous wall. He's already worth over 100 million, why is he doing such dangerous things?" Fang Yi had learned about this from Hu Rong's phone call yesterday, but didn't tell Ouyang Wan so as not to worry her mother-in-law.

"What? Going back to Hong Kong tomorrow? Why the rush?"

After finishing their meal at their mother-in-law's house, Zhuang Rui and Qin Xuanbing went to a room in the backyard. The white lion dutifully guarded the backyard entrance, which had been designated as Zhuang Rui and Qin Xuanbing's private space.

Hearing that Qin Xuanbing was returning to Hong Kong the next day, Zhuang Rui became a little anxious. If he had known this would happen, he wouldn't have bothered searching for that damn treasure. He would have preferred to stay with Qin Xuanbing for a few more days.

"Mommy said there won't be many more opportunities to spend Chinese New Year with Grandpa, so we have to spend it at home this year, Zhuang Rui. Anyway, I'll be back after the New Year..."

Qin Xuanbing was also reluctant to part. The two leaned against the sofa and hugged each other tightly. However, Qin Xuanbing was convinced that Zhuang Rui's left arm was injured and refused to let him touch her no matter what.

However, when Zhuang Rui went into the bathroom to take a shower, Qin Xuanbing was worried that it would be inconvenient for him to use one hand, so she followed him in. Of course, it was just a shower. Although Zhuang Rui was willing and able to kill the thief, he couldn't force the beauty to do so.

"You're injured, don't move, I'll take care of you..."

After taking a shower, the two embraced and went to bed. After being intimate for a while, Zhuang Rui couldn't hold back any longer. He wasn't a saint, so why was he being so difficult? Just as he was about to get down to business, Qin Xuanbing held him back.

"Queen?"

Zhuang Rui recalled a European and American adult education film he had watched in college.

Chapter 509 Good News?

"Damn, it was totally worth losing that hand. Should we cause some kind of unnatural accident next time?"

Zhuang Rui sat in his Grand Cherokee, his eyes somewhat unfocused. Luckily, Peng Fei was driving; if it were him, he probably would have driven onto the sidewalk.

This morning, Qin Xuanbing and Fang Yi took a flight back to Hong Kong, but the beautiful scenery that lasted from the afternoon until the night yesterday kept flashing before Zhuang Rui's eyes like a movie.

If Gu Yun hadn't paid special attention to soundproofing when decorating the bedroom, their voices would probably have drifted all the way to the front yard.

Fortunately, they had the white lion, a guardian who wasn't afraid of the cold, who dutifully guarded the backyard gate in temperatures below minus ten degrees Celsius. Otherwise, their time together might have been interrupted by Fang Yi, who came looking for her daughter.

The consequence of this indulgence was that when Zhuang Rui woke up this morning, all his leg and back pain problems came out. When he walked to the central courtyard, he stepped on the snow and almost kowtowed to his mother-in-law and his own mother in advance to wish them a happy new year.

It seems that drinking tiger penis wine is not just for middle-aged and elderly people. Zhuang Rui went to the gatehouse early in the morning and saw two wine jars that were too big for one person to hug and sealed with red clay. He was relieved and planned to move them to the basement after the exam today.

However, during breakfast, the mother-in-law and Zhuang's mother, both experienced in their own ways, subtly hinted to the two that they were still young and shouldn't indulge themselves too much. This caused Qin Xuanbing to blush like a red scarf, and she didn't dare to look away from Zhuang Rui even after boarding the plane.

"Peng Fei, after you drop me off at No. 2 Middle School, go find your girl and talk things out. It's not a big deal. Finding a good girl these days isn't easy..."

Today was the first day of the test, and after dropping off his mother-in-law and Qin Xuanbing, Zhuang Rui had to rush to the examination hall. He was currently trying to calm himself down, forcing his thoughts to leave the inappropriate scene from yesterday.

"Alright, Brother Zhuang, you must pass the exam! My biggest regret in life is not having gone to university..." Peng Fei said with a smile as he drove. Because the snow had not yet melted, many roads were still icy, so he drove very carefully.

"I'll take a self-study exam later. It's so easy to get into university these days..."

Seeing that Peng Fei had basically integrated into modern society, Zhuang Rui was also very happy. It's all about fate between people. He just liked Peng Fei and wanted to help him out, which was perfectly understandable.

As the two talked, the car arrived at the entrance of Zhuang Rui's examination venue. There were quite a few people applying for postgraduate studies. The school gates were not yet open, and many people wearing thick cotton-padded coats were waiting at the school gate. Now that the students were on winter vacation, it was obvious that these people were all candidates.

"You can drive the car away. Treat someone to lunch. There's 100,000 RMB on the card I gave you, enough to eat anywhere..."

After the car came to a stop, Zhuang Rui opened the door. The cold wind that rushed in cleared his mind, and all those romantic images vanished with it.

In this freezing weather, who would think of doing \*that\*? Didn't statistics show that the incidence of rape cases in the summer is several times higher than in the winter?

"Hmm? What's wrong? What are you looking at?"

After Zhuang Rui got out of the car, he didn't hear Peng Fei's reply. He turned around and saw that the boy's eyes were fixed on the front through the car window. Following Peng Fei's gaze, Zhuang Rui saw a pretty girl.

"Hey, hey, wake up! You can't do this! Learn from your older brother, you can't fall in love with every girl you see..."

Zhuang Rui patted the dazed Peng Fei and picked up his handbag from his seat.

"Brother Zhuang, that...that's Qianqian, she's...she's the one I told you about..."

Peng Fei's smile was somewhat bitter, because he noticed that during the few minutes he had been watching Zhang Qian, she had been talking to a man next to her, a man Peng Fei did not recognize.

"Go find her! What are you standing there for?"

Zhuang Rui also noticed that there was a man next to the girl. The two seemed to know each other and were talking to each other.

"Never mind, I was wrong before..."

Peng Fei slowly shook his head, but from the way he pursed his lips, Zhuang Rui could tell that his little brother couldn't let go of that girl.

"Zhang Qian!"

Zhuang Rui suddenly shouted loudly, and all the candidates' eyes were instantly focused on him. Zhang Qian also looked up immediately, but when she saw Zhuang Rui, she was puzzled. She didn't recognize Zhuang Rui.

However, Zhang Qian then saw Peng Fei sitting in the car. When their eyes met, Zhuang Rui sensed something was up, because the girl's body suddenly trembled. She was clearly shocked to see Peng Fei and had already moved towards the car.

"Brother, this is your own business now. Let me tell you, muster up some courage, apologize when you need to, and stop being so macho..."

Zhuang Rui patted Peng Fei on the shoulder, grabbed his handbag, and slipped into the crowd of test takers. His words were truly from the bottom of his heart. Last night, he definitely acted like a little man, with his future wife taking the lead.

It's unclear what the two talked about in the car, but about ten minutes later, when the school gates opened, the girl got out of the car.

"Peng Fei, what are you doing? Why don't you find a more romantic place and treat her to a meal?"

Zhuang Rui took out his phone and called Peng Fei, but he didn't even consider that it was only a few o'clock, and if he was going to eat, it would be breakfast.

"Brother Zhuang, it's alright. She's the proctor for this exam. That guy is her colleague. We agreed to have lunch together..."

Peng Fei's voice was filled with barely suppressed excitement; clearly, the conversation he had just had resolved his inner conflict.

"Okay, that's good. By the way, why didn't you come see her yesterday? I could have gotten some help from her too..."

The postgraduate entrance exam was like a whirlwind of exams; the exam rooms for the morning and afternoon sessions were not the same. It was rare to run into an acquaintance, but they hadn't even greeted him beforehand, which made Zhuang Rui a little annoyed.

"Professor Zhuang? You're taking the postgraduate entrance exam too?"

Suddenly, a woman's voice rang out beside Zhuang Rui. Zhuang Rui turned his head to look, but he didn't recognize her. Despite the freezing weather, she was bundled up like a dumpling, and he really couldn't tell who the woman speaking was.

"Who are you?"

"Teacher Zhuang, it's me, Liu Jia. You really have a bad memory..."

The woman in front of him untied the scarf from her face, and Zhuang Rui recognized her immediately. She was the popular female host from Beijing TV.

"Hehe, it's Miss Liu. Are you here to take the postgraduate entrance exam too?"

Zhuang Rui felt that asking this question was somewhat redundant; it was like seeing someone running to the bathroom with toilet paper and asking if they needed to use the restroom.

Zhuang Rui knew that during the postgraduate entrance examination, only the professional courses had special examination rooms; the English exam, which was to be taken today, was in a standardized room.

"Yes, Professor Zhuang, I tried calling you a few days ago but couldn't get through. I have some good news to tell you..."

When Liu Jia saw Zhuang Rui, she was visibly excited. She took off all her scarves and didn't care about her status as a public figure anymore. Who knows, some entertainment channel might report the news that a certain host is taking the postgraduate entrance exam tomorrow.

"I wasn't in the country for a while, Ms. Liu, what good news do you have?"

Zhuang Rui was somewhat confused by Liu Jia's words. His relationship with Beijing TV was just a one-off deal; after the folk treasure appraisal program ended, they had no further contact. What good news could she possibly have to tell him? Could it be that she had feelings for him?

Zhuang Rui guessed correctly. Liu Jia really did have some feelings for him. He was young, rich, and talented, and his appearance wasn't the kind that was repulsive like Uncle Ge. Even if he did look like that, he would definitely be the first choice for many unmarried young women.

However, the good news Liu Jia mentioned was not about her desire to offer herself to Zhuang Rui, but rather that she had been noticed by CCTV because of her previous amateur treasure appraisal program, and had been temporarily transferred to CCTV to prepare for a treasure appraisal program during the Chinese New Year.

Although Beijing TV can be considered a mainstream media outlet, it is nothing compared to the behemoth that is CCTV, which is why Liu Jia was so excited.

"Congratulations, Ms. Liu! This time you'll definitely become known to the whole nation..."

Zhuang Rui said something completely pointless: "What does your transfer to CCTV have to do with me?"

Liu Jia, oblivious to Zhuang Rui's expression, said happily, "Teacher Zhuang, my knowledge of antiques is very limited, so I especially recommended you to the director to co-host with me..."

"What? You want me to be the host?"

Zhuang Rui was stunned by Liu Jia's words; this really did concern him.

Chapter 510-511 Raising Funds

"Master Liu, don't make fun of me, a nobody. Hosting is your profession, I have absolutely no connection to it..."

After seeing Liu Jia nod in affirmation, Zhuang Rui immediately shook his head vigorously. He didn't share Mr. Ma's interests—publishing books and giving interviews. Zhuang Rui just wanted to stay in his little corner of the world and live his own quiet life.

Besides, this year's Spring Festival might be Zhuang Rui's busiest year yet. He has to visit many relatives on his maternal grandfather's side, and he also has to go back to Pengcheng in between. Speaking of Liu Chuan's parents, they are also his godparents, and they have always treated him well since he was a child, so he can't miss it.

Furthermore, his reply to Hu Rong was a two-week deadline, during which he also needed to secure the 200 million RMB. How could Zhuang Rui possibly have time to do any hosting?

"Teacher Zhuang, please let me finish speaking before you decide whether to agree or not, okay?"

Liu Jia put on a pitiful look and tugged at Zhuang Rui's sleeve with one hand. Whether it was intentional or accidental, she ended up grabbing Zhuang Rui's hand.

"Go on, go on, but hurry up, we have our exam soon..."

Although Liu Jia's small hands, which were always in her pockets, were very warm, Zhuang Rui had no experience with other women besides Qin Xuanbing, and he withdrew his hands as if he had been electrocuted.

To hide his panic, Zhuang Rui casually pulled out a pack of cigarettes from his pocket, took one out, and lit it. However, as he lit the cigarette, the faint scent of a woman in his palm made Zhuang Rui somewhat distracted.

Zhuang Rui was also a little puzzled. He was no longer a virgin, so why was he reacting so strongly?

In fact, Zhuang Rui's reaction was quite normal. If a man doesn't know what it's like to be with a woman, he might only have it in his imagination. But once he's experienced it, his imagination will immediately extend to every young and beautiful woman he comes into contact with.

From a psychological perspective, this is not infidelity to one's partner, but rather a subconscious behavior in a man's subconscious mind, known as "yy". The objects of this "yy" are usually celebrities, such as female celebrities who frequently appear on the big screen, who are the best material for millions of men to use when they want to masturbate.

Although Liu Jia was not as pretty as Qin Xuanbing, and did not have the same purity as Miao Feifei, she had a seductive charm that could easily arouse men's fantasies.

Upon seeing Zhuang Rui's expression, Liu Jia smiled and said, "Teacher Zhuang, this program will air for seven days, but it's all pre-recorded, starting next week. It won't interfere with your New Year's celebration. If you don't want to be the host, you can be a guest judge..."

Liu Jia didn't know why she recommended Zhuang Rui to the director. After returning from Jinan, the two had no contact. Perhaps she wanted to take this opportunity to fulfill her wish of marrying a rich man.

"Even before the New Year... that won't work either, I don't have time. I'm so sorry, Ms. Liu, the exam has started, let's go in..."

Zhuang Rui's reply surprised Liu Jia. This was the first time she had ever been rejected when she invited someone to participate in a program since she started hosting. Although she wanted to say more, the bell for the start of the exam had already rung.

"I'm going to stick with you..."

Seeing Zhuang Rui's hurried departure, Liu Jia paused slightly before heading towards the examination hall.

There were quite a few people taking the postgraduate entrance exam. There were five classrooms in total, with more than 200 people in this school alone, not counting the other exam venues in Beijing that were taking place at the same time.

College students are not as sought after as they were in the 1990s. Undergraduates only earn a little over a thousand yuan a month when they enter the workforce, so many students want to continue their studies and finish their postgraduate degree before entering the workforce.

Of course, among these candidates were also many who were already working, and quite a few of them were portly and had the air of leaders. In China, academic qualifications and professional titles are directly related to one's income.

Government officials, in particular, feel embarrassed when filling out their resumes for promotion if they don't have a master's or doctoral degree.

After entering the classroom, Zhuang Rui breathed a sigh of relief. Liu Jia was not in the same examination room as him. To be honest, Zhuang Rui was a little afraid of this girl because he could see ambition and desire in her eyes.

Zhuang Rui doesn't like this type of woman because women with ambition, especially beautiful women, can be the foundation of their success, but it is also their biggest weakness. These women are often loose-willed and willing to pay a high price for their own purposes.

After the exam papers were handed out, Zhuang Rui forcibly banished all distracting thoughts from his mind. The exam in the morning was in English, which was also his strong suit. Zhuang Rui quickly finished the paper. Since he couldn't leave early, he sat bored in his seat waiting for the exam to end.

When the bell rang, Zhuang Rui was the first to hand in his paper and rushed out like a shot. He regretted not taking off his suspenders; otherwise, the host Liu might not have bothered him. He couldn't let an expert with a broken hand face the national audience.

"drive....."

After Zhuang Rui got into the car outside the school, he shouted to Peng Fei that they had to make a quick getaway before Liu Jia came out. Although this woman wasn't cute, she was more attractive to men in certain ways. Zhuang Rui knew that his self-control wasn't that strong.

"Okay..." Peng Fei replied and started the car.

"Stop, stop. I'll take a taxi. You have a date later..."

The car had only driven a few meters when Zhuang Rui suddenly remembered this, quickly stopped Peng Fei, opened the car door and said with a smile, "If you can't handle this, you'll lose your job too..."

"It's time to buy another car..."

This car is indeed a bit inconvenient. My mother still often needs to go to Yuquan Mountain. Sitting in the taxi, Zhuang Rui thought about what kind of car to buy. Although there are still 200 million yuan of funds that have not been settled, he still has the money to buy a car. If all else fails, he can drive an Audi from Pengcheng to use first.

The afternoon exam caused Zhuang Rui a lot of brain cells to die. He just couldn't understand what archaeology and politics had to do with each other, and they were all just formalities. No wonder many senior professors in universities couldn't recruit graduate students. If Zhuang Rui hadn't been memorizing for the past few months, he probably wouldn't have passed the exam either.

After the exam in the afternoon, Zhuang Rui was picked up by Peng Fei. The girl, Peng Fei's girlfriend, was also in the car. The girl had been waiting for Peng Fei. The two talked things out and made up.

"Peng Fei, you're only a few months younger than me, when are you going to get married..." Zhuang Rui said to Peng Fei with a smile after the two of them took Zhang Qian home.

"Brother Zhuang, there's no rush..."

Peng Fei smiled sheepishly. He felt that he had nothing right now, and he was even staying at Zhuang Rui's house. He couldn't keep living at Zhuang Rui's place after marrying the girl, could he?

"Really not in a hurry? Come on, if you consider me your older brother, we'll get things done when the weather gets warmer. You don't need to move out. Ya Ya might not be used to it. My house has plenty of rooms; you can just choose one in the middle courtyard..."

Zhuang Rui's words made Peng Fei's lips twitch a few times, but in the end he only managed to utter five words: "Thank you, Brother Zhuang!"

From that moment on, Peng Fei truly regarded Zhuang Rui as his elder brother, and he also treated that courtyard house as his own home. The long-lost family affection returned, which made Peng Fei's eyes well up with tears.

It's all about fate between people. Zhuang Rui didn't know why he was so good to Peng Fei. Perhaps it was when he first went to Peng Fei's rented, simple house that he was touched by Ya Ya's innocent "big brother" and the affection between the siblings.

Over the next few days, Zhuang Rui was extremely busy. Three consecutive days of intense exams had him on edge, and he was studying late into the night every day. This greatly displeased Ouyang Jun, who had visited Zhuang Rui several times.

However, Zhuang Rui's return made the house much more lively. In the past few days, Peng Fei and Hao Long have been taking their two children to put up couplets and auspicious characters. They also put up electrified colored lights on the artificial hill in the middle courtyard, which became very beautiful after being electrified at night.

"Fourth Brother, you didn't just invite me here for drinks, did you?"

Zhuang Rui looked at Ouyang Jun sitting in his room and asked in an annoyed tone, "Today is the first day after the exams. Originally, Zhuang Rui wanted to visit Professor Meng tonight, but Ouyang Jun dragged him back to the backyard, set out some braised dishes, and insisted that he drink with him."

Since Xu Qing was already there, chatting with Mrs. Zhuang in the front yard, Ouyang Jun said with a smile, "What's wrong with drinking? It's just that it's cold. Hmm, I'll stay here tonight..."

"Alright, you can stay as long as you like. I happen to need to talk to you about something..."

Zhuang Rui shook his head helplessly. His house was becoming the Ouyang family's guesthouse when they came to Beijing. Not only did Ouyang Lei and Ouyang Jun, who were in Beijing, come to stay for a few days whenever they had nothing to do, but even the Ouyang brothers, Ouyang Lu and Ouyang Jun, who worked in other places, would always come here to report whenever they returned to Beijing, saying that the food cooked by their aunt was delicious.

However, this suited Zhuang Rui's wishes perfectly; the house was too big, and it would be more lively with more people.

"I also have something to ask you. Never mind, you go first..." Ouyang Jun didn't expect Zhuang Rui to also have something to ask him.

"Fourth Brother, how much money do you have on hand right now? I mean, money that you can access immediately..."

These past few days, Zhuang Rui has been busy with exams and hasn't had time to raise funds. Now that he's met Ouyang Jun, he might as well ask him. Anyway, investing in mining veins is a sure-fire way to make money, and maybe he can get back the 200 million yuan at the next Myanmar mining auction.

Unexpectedly, Ouyang Jun's eyes widened suddenly after hearing Zhuang Rui's words. He looked at Zhuang Rui and said, "Hey kid, you knew that Fourth Brother was here to borrow money today, didn't you?"

"You're asking me to lend you money? I'm dirt broke right now, I still have a shortfall of 200 million, and I was thinking of asking you for a bit more..."

Zhuang Rui was also dumbfounded when he heard Ouyang Jun's words. This brother actually came to borrow money. The two brothers had the same idea today.

"Two hundred million? Zhuang Rui, you went to Myanmar last month, not Macau. What did you do to create a two hundred million funding gap?"

Ouyang Jun was startled by Zhuang Rui's words. He brought the wine glass to his lips but didn't put it in his mouth. When Zhuang Rui went to Myanmar, he had asked Ouyang Jun to help him exchange the euros. Ouyang Jun knew Zhuang Rui's wealth better than anyone else.

Zhuang Rui was somewhat amused and exasperated by Ouyang Jun's words. He waved his hand and said, "Fourth Brother, it's not what you think. There's no such thing. I want to invest in a jade mine in Myanmar. As you know, all the funds I brought this time were used to buy rough stones. Sigh, you wouldn't understand even if I told you this."

"By the way, Fourth Brother, how much money do you need to borrow? Did your wife take all your pocket money? I still have a few hundred thousand left, don't come looking for more..."

"A million or two hundred thousand? That's like giving money to beggars. I wouldn't even look at that amount of money. Hey bro, I know a bit about this jade gambling stuff you're talking about. You can't eat or drink that stuff. You've spent all your money on it?"

Ouyang Jun rolled his eyes. He had come to Zhuang Rui this time to borrow 100 million yuan to start a real estate business.

In recent years, the real estate market across the country has been very hot. Although Ouyang Jun had the opportunity to enter the market a few years ago, his father kept a close eye on him and did not allow him to do so. Now that he is married, his father no longer cares about such things, so Ouyang Jun has rekindled the idea.

The main problem is that the money comes too easily. Putting aside everything else, just look at the courtyard house that Ouyang Jun recently bought. He can easily make 30 to 40 million RMB just by reselling it now.

Despite Ouyang Jun's usual airs, when it comes to real wealth, he can only produce about 50 to 60 million RMB in cash, which is far less than what Song Jun and others have.

Moreover, although Ouyang Zhenwu agreed to let his son get involved in real estate, he made one point: he couldn't resell land. This meant that Ouyang Jun, who had used his connections to acquire several plots of land in the early stages, dared not sell them and could only try to develop them himself.

When it comes to real estate, to put it bluntly, it's about using government money to build houses for oneself. Haven't you seen those big real estate companies? They're the biggest debtors of banks, borrowing money from banks to develop projects, and then paying the banks back once the houses are sold.

Even if the house can't be sold, that's not my problem. What about the money I owe the bank? Easy, the house is the mortgage anyway. The bank can just take the house back and that's it. If I make money, it's mine; if I lose money, it's the bank's.

Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that real estate is the hottest industry in the 21st century.

Although this business is about getting something for nothing, it still requires some start-up capital. Ouyang Zhenwu is very strict and doesn't want the same thing that happened to Chen in the last century to happen to him, giving some political opponents an opportunity. Therefore, Ouyang Jun's idea of acquiring land and cooperating with other real estate companies was also rejected.

Want to get into real estate? Sure, Minister Ouyang has said so. Go ahead and do it yourself, but don't leave any ammunition for anyone to use against you.

For the past month or so, Ouyang Jun has been busy with these things. He bought a construction company with construction qualifications and spent almost all of his money. Although his wife has some savings, Ouyang Jun couldn't bring himself to do it, so he thought of Zhuang Rui.

Ouyang Jun never expected that the nearly 20 million euros that Zhuang Rui had asked him to exchange would be completely spent, and all of it was on stones. What a spendthrift!

"Fourth Brother, your real estate business is profitable, but it's too troublesome. Why don't you sell that company and invest in a jade mine with me instead..."

After Zhuang Rui understood the ins and outs of the matter, he smiled and said that although he was also optimistic about the prospects of real estate, relatively speaking, the profit from investing in jade was several times greater than that from investing in real estate.

"You make it sound so easy. I've already invested nearly a hundred million yuan. If I sell it, how am I supposed to survive? Forget it, I'll think of another way..."

Ouyang Jun knew in his heart that with the few plots of land he owned, he would make money no matter what if he developed them. He was not about to give up this lucrative opportunity and get involved in Zhuang Rui's mess.

"Okay, just don't regret it later..."

Zhuang Rui looked at this future Beijing real estate tycoon and laughed, then said, "Fourth Brother, how about you help me get a loan of 200 million RMB from the bank using this house?"

Zhuang Rui had this idea all along; he knew before that Ouyang Jun didn't have much money.

"loan?"

Ouyang Jun lowered his head and thought for a moment, then said, "A loan isn't out of the question. Your yard should be worth over 200 million now. Tell me, brother, are you really determined to invest in that jade mine?"

To be honest, Ouyang Jun was somewhat envious of Zhuang Rui's jade mine in Xinjiang. However, he didn't know much about jadeite, and since it was an investment overseas, he couldn't control the flow of his funds. Therefore, Ouyang Jun wasn't very optimistic about Zhuang Rui's decision.

"Fourth Brother, you're in the real economy, I'm in resources. Let's each do our own thing. You just need to help me get this 200 million loan..." Seeing that this most troubling issue of his was about to be resolved, Zhuang Rui was in high spirits.

"Alright, but banks are tightening credit at the end of the year and won't be lending large sums of money anymore. You'll have to do this after the New Year, and you should be able to get the money around March or April..."

Seeing Zhuang Rui's firm attitude, Ouyang Jun nodded in agreement. As long as the procedures were in order, it was not a big deal and no one could find any fault with it.

"March or April? No way, Fourth Brother, by then it'll be too late. Ten days, within ten days you can help me get a loan of 20 million euros, or 200 million RMB, either will do..."

Upon hearing Ouyang Jun's words, Zhuang Rui was so anxious he almost jumped up. He was worried that Hu Rong wouldn't be able to hold on and would have to give up the jade mine if the money wasn't in place. So, he needed to have the money to keep Hu Rong's mind at ease and gradually guide him to dig out the vein.

"Do you think I'm the governor of the central bank? You think I can just throw 200 million at you like that? I can't even get this done in a month, let alone ten days, unless I go through some other channels. If your uncle finds out, things will get really messed up..."

Ouyang Jun was also getting anxious and almost slammed his fist on the table. If he could get a loan from the bank through irregular channels, his problem would have been solved long ago. Why would he need to beg Zhuang Rui?

Although Ouyang Jun is not in politics, many people are still watching him because of his status. The more this is the case, the more important it is to follow the bank's procedures when doing certain things. Otherwise, if any mistakes happen in the future, these small things will be magnified infinitely.

Loans are a minor matter, and Ouyang Jun can be exempted from some of the shady dealings, but it must be done according to the rules. Otherwise, how could Ouyang Jun, after so many years in the business, only have such a small fortune?

Zhuang Rui thought about it for a moment and understood the crux of the matter. He waved his hand and said, "Never mind then, I'll think of another way. I need the money urgently, it has to be in place after the New Year, I can't wait for the bank..."

The two brothers drank some more. Xu Qing came to find her husband. After taking Ouyang Jun away, Zhuang Rui made a phone call to Uncle Tian in Xinjiang.

The news from the Jade King wasn't good either. Because a large batch of Hetian jade that was sold in December had seen a slight drop in market prices, it wasn't the best time to sell raw materials. The next dividend distribution would have to wait until after spring.

As for the repair shops in Pengcheng and Qin Ruilin's shop in Beijing, Zhuang Rui knew that these two places could only allocate a maximum of ten or twenty million yuan, which was just a drop in the bucket compared to two hundred million yuan and would have little effect.

Fatty Ma and Song Jun might have this money, but it's only a possibility. These two have also invested hundreds of millions in the Myanmar jade auction and stockpiled a lot of materials. If I were to ask for it and get rejected, it would be awkward if we met again in the future.

There's a saying going around these days: "If you want to lose a friend, borrow money from them." So Zhuang Rui won't ask others for money unless absolutely necessary, since his relationship with Song Jun and Fatty Ma isn't as close as Liu Chuan's.

"Peng Fei, come with me..."

After thinking for a while, Zhuang Rui got dressed and went to the front yard to call out to Peng Fei.

"Xiao Rui, what's the rush? Why did you only call me when you got to the door?"

With the Chinese New Year approaching, Ouyang Lei had a lot on his plate. He had a less important meeting to attend that evening, but after receiving a call from Zhuang Rui, he rushed home because it was his little cousin's first time visiting.

"Thank you, sister-in-law, Brother Lei, it's very important..."

After Zhuang Rui took the tea poured by Jiang Ying, he looked at Ouyang Lei.

He has made up his mind to reveal the truth about this batch of gold. In any case, he has no way to retrieve the gold on his own, so it's better for the country to benefit from it than for it to remain in Myanmar.

Moreover, Zhuang Rui also had some selfish motives. The country takes the lion's share, so surely he should get a little something too, right?

"Let's talk in the study then..." Ouyang Lei's study was where he handled his work at home; it was a forbidden place for his son and wife.

After arriving at the study, Zhuang Rui recounted the whole story, omitting only the part about how the treasure map was discovered. As he spoke, Ouyang Lei's expression grew serious.

Ouyang Lei paced back and forth in the room a few times, pondered for a moment, and said, "Ten tons of gold, and a large amount of jewelry, Xiao Rui, if we use the power of the state, you might not get any of this..."