

Golden 54

Chapter Fifty-Four: Understanding the ways of the world is all knowledge

"Thief!"

A word popped into Zhuang Rui's mind, and he instinctively wanted to step forward and stop the thief, but unexpectedly, the street vendor grabbed his arm tightly. Zhuang Rui tried to break free but couldn't. When he looked back at the crowd, the thief had already disappeared into the throng.

"Brother, what do you mean by this?"

Zhuang Rui turned around angrily and said that if he hadn't been caught red-handed, he would have caught the thief in the act by now.

"Young man, judging from your accent, you must be from out of town. We get along well. Let me give you a few pieces of advice: when you're out of town, don't cause trouble. These places are full of all sorts of people, and trouble often comes from sticking your neck out."

The street vendor was very good-natured. After pulling Zhuang Rui back, he didn't get angry when he heard what Zhuang Rui said. He still smiled and gestured towards the crowd.

After hearing what the street vendor said, Zhuang Rui also came to his senses. He realized that his actions just now were a bit impulsive. It's not that being a hero is wrong, but with his abilities, even if he caught the thief on the spot, he probably wouldn't be able to convict him, let alone avoid the retaliation that would follow.

Zhuang Rui now saw clearly that within the crowd, there were always four or five people intentionally or unintentionally slipping into the more crowded areas, their hands repeatedly touching the pockets of some people. He guessed these people were accomplices of the thieves. If he had actually shouted or rushed forward, he probably wouldn't have fared well.

When Zhuang Rui worked at Zhonghai Pawnshop, he often took a car or subway. Over time, he could see some of the people in this line of work. Some of them were lone wolves, but most of them were in groups of three or five. Once someone made a mistake, others would come up to move the stolen

goods, stir up trouble, and some would even directly threaten the victim, making them swallow their anger and not dare to report the crime. As a result, even if a kind-hearted person caught the thief and took him to the police station, there was no evidence to prove it, and at most he would be detained for 24 hours before being released.

As the two were talking, a middle-aged man in his forties, slightly overweight, walked over with four or five uniformed security guards. Each guard was carrying a rubber baton. The crowd that had been watching parted to make way, and Zhuang Rui noticed that the few people who had been sneaking around in the crowd had quietly and slowly retreated.

Zhuang Rui couldn't help but sigh inwardly. Indeed, "knowledge of everything is knowledge, and understanding of human relationships is literature." No matter how many books he had read, when it came to social experience and the way to deal with people, he was far inferior to Liu Chuan, let alone the older brother in front of him.

However, Zhuang Rui still took out his phone and dialed 110, recounting what he had seen. Living with a clear conscience is Zhuang Rui's principle, and this matter was indeed the duty of the police.

After seeing Zhuang Rui's actions, the street vendor chuckled and patted Zhuang Rui on the shoulder, saying, "Hehe, it's alright now, go on..."

Zhuang Rui nodded gratefully to the stall owner, then followed a few security guards into the crowd. When he looked inside, he was immediately stunned.

The group arguing in the middle of the crowd consisted of four men. Two of them were foreigners with high noses, and another was a young man in a suit with slicked-back hair, who seemed to be the translator for the two foreigners. He was speaking to them in English. The third man was a young man, probably a few years younger than Zhuang Rui. He had a two-meter square piece of oil paper laid out at his feet, on which were some root carvings, but they had been kicked all over the ground. He seemed to be the one who was involved in the argument.

"What's going on here? This is your stall, right? You should explain yourself first."

After the middle-aged man from the market management office entered, he glanced around and understood what was going on. He guessed that the young man had fooled the two foreigners, and then

the foreigners brought the translator to cause trouble. This kind of thing had happened several times in the market before.

The middle-aged man immediately felt a bit dislike for the young, parted-hair translator; not everyone these days is a Westernizer.

The young stall owner was squatting down with a helpless expression, picking up the root carvings that had been kicked all over the ground. After hearing the middle-aged man's words, he stood up. It seemed that the stall owner knew the middle-aged man and called out, "Director Wang..." But just as he was about to explain what had happened, he was interrupted.

"You're the leader of this market, right? This person is passing off ordinary handicrafts as antiques, deceiving my two American friends. I urge you to handle this seriously and provide us with appropriate compensation. Otherwise, I will sue you for defrauding foreign friends."

The man with the slicked-back hair became annoyed when he saw a leader-looking person arrive but didn't greet him first. He immediately interrupted the stall owner, pointing and gesturing arrogantly.

"That scoundrel!"

"Damn it, I thought this was back in the Eight-Nation Alliance era! Let's beat these bastards up!"

His words also aroused the dissatisfaction of the onlookers, and there was a chorus of jeers. Some hot-blooded young people even started rolling up their sleeves. In people's hearts, these traitors and collaborators were the most hateful.

Director Wang reached out and brushed aside the fingers of the slicked-back hair, and said sternly, "If I haven't asked you anything, please stand back a little. You can answer when I ask you."

The man with the slicked-back hair was furious that Director Wang would be so disrespectful. He was about to confront him when he saw the several burly security guards standing behind Director Wang and heard the accusations from the surrounding crowd. He immediately retreated and began whispering among himself with the two foreigners.

"Director Wang, it's like this. My family has been craftsmen for generations, specializing in carving small items. I've learned a bit of it in my generation. Some of the items on this stall are family heirlooms, and some I carved myself. I set up this stall here to supplement my household income."

When I was setting up my stall at noon, two foreigners came to buy my root carvings. They picked out an old item that had been passed down in my family, and I sold it to them for 500 yuan. That price wasn't too expensive. Even the ordinary root carvings I make myself usually sell for 100 or 200 yuan.

"But I just went out for a meal, and less than an hour later, these two people came with the translator and smashed up my stall. They even accused me of fraud, which is completely unjust! I can't even understand what they're saying; we negotiate prices using gestures. How could I tell them it's an antique? Besides, if it really were an antique, I wouldn't have sold it for only 500 yuan."

The stall owner was clearly aggrieved, having his stall vandalized for no reason. Luckily, the items on his stall weren't porcelain, otherwise he would have suffered a huge loss. However, several root carvings scattered on the ground were missing, presumably pocketed by some people who took advantage of the situation.

At this point, several stall owners who were setting up their stalls nearby also stepped forward to testify that they were all there when the two foreigners came to buy things, and they even joked that he had earned foreign exchange.

After hearing the stall owner's words, the translator's expression changed. He whispered a few more words to the two foreigners, who shook their heads repeatedly, seemingly disagreeing with him. The translator with the parted hair became a little anxious and said a few more words before the two foreigners reluctantly nodded.

In such a noisy environment, it's really hard to hear what people are saying unless you listen carefully. Coincidentally, Zhuang Rui was jostled by someone and is now standing behind those two foreigners, so he can hear their conversation clearly. Keep in mind that Zhuang Rui has passed the English Level 6 exam.