

Golden 601

Chapter 601 Master Ge (Part 3)

"Boss, even though you're running a business, you can't be too greedy, can you?"

"Yes, we're buying seals. Shouldn't seal engraving be considered a service, and why is it charged?"

Amidst the commotion, various voices of doubt arose, all stemming from Zhuang Rui's pricing scheme.

Most people's names have two or three characters. If you add the character (seal) or (appraisal), then you need to carve three or four characters. That means that, not counting the cost of the seal, the carving alone can cost one or two thousand yuan. No wonder these people have complaints.

Not to mention them, even Zhao Hanxuan and Master Ge were stunned by Zhuang Rui's idea. Computer engraving is everywhere, but they are going against the grain. Can they succeed?

Fearing that Zhuang Rui would be embarrassed, Master Ge pulled him back from behind and whispered, "Little Zhuang, this... carving is my job, so let's not charge extra..."

Zhuang Rui shook his head and said, "There's going to be a charge, and the price will go up later. Master Ge, please don't get involved in this..."

"Everyone, please be quiet for a moment and listen to me..."

Zhuang Rui walked to the front of the crowd and waited until it quieted down before speaking: "As everyone knows, there are computer-made seals everywhere now, and private seals are becoming increasingly rare. What's the reason for this? Can someone explain..."

"What's so strange about that? Who uses personal seals anymore..."

"Yes, apart from the official seal and financial seal, personal seals are being used less and less..."

"Young man, does this have anything to do with charging for seal engraving? Tell me the truth..."

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's question, everyone offered various answers, but none of them hit the nail on the head, because none of them had considered the question beforehand.

"Hehe, no one has answered why there are fewer and fewer personal seals. In my opinion, this is a loss of culture. Modern people have chosen more convenient signatures and fingerprints, but they have forgotten about the seals that were the most reliable proof of identity in ancient times..."

Zhuang Rui's words caused everyone's expressions to gradually become serious.

"The art of seal carving has existed since ancient times. Most calligraphers and painters are also masters of seal carving. Not to mention ancient times, even in the Qing Dynasty, the seals carved by those masters of epigraphy were extremely valuable."

But in modern times, gentlemen, can you still find a stall selling hand-carved seals on the street?

At this point, Zhuang Rui's tone suddenly rose, and he said loudly, "Let me tell you, there are none left, or very few left. In the future, the calligraphy and paintings you create will be stamped with machine-made seals. Is that still our culture? Is that still what our ancestors passed down?"

Upon hearing this, many people's expressions became thoughtful. Zhuang Rui was right. Calligraphy and painting emphasize a certain artistic conception. If mechanically processed products are used in them, it would indeed be an insult to the art of calligraphy and painting.

"Modern machinery has brought us many conveniences, which is undeniable, but we also have many excellent handicrafts that have been lost as a result. Doesn't that break everyone's heart?"

Look at all those computer-engraved seals on the street, they can produce a seal in a minute, but those are inanimate objects. Can they compare to Teacher Ge's work of art?

Hand-carved seals can also create anti-counterfeiting marks that are difficult to imitate, according to your requirements. This is something that computer-carved seals cannot match. I hope you can think about this carefully.

Another point is that everyone has witnessed Mr. Ge's craftsmanship. The seals he carves are not only practical but also have collectible value. In my opinion, 500 yuan per character is not expensive!

Perhaps one day in the future, Xuanrui Zhai's seals will cost 5,000 yuan per character. In my opinion, that's not expensive at all for the sake of preserving traditional culture!

After Zhuang Rui finished speaking, his words resounding and powerful, Xuanrui Zhai fell silent as everyone digested what he had just said. 0800.080

After a few minutes, a round of applause rang out, and gradually the applause grew louder until everyone was clapping.

"This young man is right. Modern people are too utilitarian and impetuous, and they don't value the cultural heritage of the past as much..."

An elderly man in his fifties or sixties stepped forward and was the first to agree with Zhuang Rui's point of view. He then said, "I want to order a chicken-blood stone seal with four characters. The deposit of 2,000 yuan is going to be paid today..."

In everything, someone has to take the lead. With the old man's actions, those who were still weighing whether it was worth it also joined the ranks of those ordering bloodstone seals.

In fact, one or two thousand yuan is not much for people who like antiques and calligraphy. Moreover, a seal can accompany you for a lifetime and is not a consumable item. After understanding this, people are still willing to spend this money.

"Monkey, go help Old Zhao register, you have no sense at all..."

Seeing that Zhao Hanxuan was a bit overwhelmed, Zhuang Rui quickly kicked the monkey, which then snapped out of its daze, agreed, and ran over to help.

Little did Zhuang Rui know that the monkey was just thinking, "Brother Zhuang is such a smooth talker. No wonder he has such a large fortune at such a young age. He can deceive people to death with his mouth."

"Master Ge, what... what happened to you?"

After Zhuang Rui finished his speech, he turned around to greet Master Ge, only to find that the old man who had been standing behind him was already in tears and unable to control himself.

"Xiao Zhuang, good, well said. If you can say those words, this old man will work for you for free, even if it means not taking a single penny..."

To be honest, Master Ge was really moved by Zhuang Rui's words. In the 1970s and 80s, hand-carved seals were extremely popular. Although most of them were official seals of some organizations, it was still not a problem to support a family with this skill.

However, after machine engraving became popular in the 1990s, hand-engraved seals disappeared from the streets and alleys almost overnight. For these old craftsmen, the sense of loss was hard to express in words.

What's more, this also cuts off his livelihood. Master Ge's family has been a family of metalworkers for three generations. This is an ancestral craft, but in his generation, his son is unwilling to learn this craft, and his grandsons are even clamoring to go abroad. This puts Master Ge in a real dilemma. He is watching as the skills left by his ancestors are about to be lost in his hands.

After hearing Zhuang Rui's words today, the old man felt like he had met a kindred spirit. Just as he said, even if Zhuang Rui didn't pay him a salary, Master Ge would still be willing to work, not for any other reason than to make himself happy.

"Master Ge, let's talk inside. We can't do this without paying..."

Zhuang Rui smiled. The old man had been suppressing his feelings for a long time and couldn't be taken seriously. If he really didn't pay, Zhuang Rui wouldn't be able to get over it himself. There were too many guests outside, so Zhuang Rui led Master Ge into the inner room.

After sitting down, Zhuang Rui said, "Master Ge, the base salary we agreed on remains unchanged at 5,000, but you will charge 300 yuan for each character you carve for each seal. Is this a good deal?"

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Master Ge quickly stood up and declined, saying, "What? No, no, Zhuang, 5,000 yuan a month is already quite a lot, let's forget about the commission..."

Master Ge is quite famous in the seal engraving industry in Beijing. With his family's traditional skills, he has engraved personal seals for many high-ranking officials and even some foreign friends.

Back then, seal carving didn't bring in much money, only three to five yuan per piece. Later, when hand seal carving was replaced by computer seal carving, these craftsmen almost couldn't even afford to eat. Some of the younger ones switched to other professions, so the old man lived a relatively poor life.

If it weren't for his grandson wanting to go abroad and the family not having the money, the old man wouldn't be working at such an advanced age. Of course, his statement about working for free was made in a moment of emotional excitement, and as Zhuang Rui thought, it shouldn't be taken seriously.

"Master Ge, you earn money with your skills, so you have a clear conscience. Don't refuse, just do as I say. Let's consider this a partnership."

By the way, if you have some free time, could you take on an apprentice in the shop if you're skilled enough? Let's work together to promote and develop the art of seal engraving!

Zhuang Rui waved his hand, finalizing the matter. He had more on his mind than Master Ge. People who appreciate antiques and calligraphy wouldn't be short of money. Once word got out, people would probably come to him asking for his calligraphy.

Zhuang Rui wanted to make this trend popular in the antique circle, so that both genuine and fake collectors would be proud to have the private seal of "Xuanrui Zhai".

Zhuang Rui plans to give each of the experts, such as Fatty Jin and Teacher Sun, a personal seal. In the future, when they go out to appraise objects, the experts will feel embarrassed to sign the appraisal certificate if they don't bring out Master Ge's personal seal.

By leveraging this gimmick, we can definitely make a name for "Xuanrui Zhai". These days, fame and fortune are always intertwined. Once you have fame, why worry about not making money?

"Alright, alright, Xiao Zhuang, I appreciate this favor, you can rest assured..."

Master Ge does need money now, so he didn't refuse again. However, he has already started to treat seal carving as a career and no longer has the mindset of setting up a roadside stall.

"Hey, Mr. Zhuang, it's such a waste that you're not doing public speaking, haha..."

After Zhuang Rui and Master Ge finished their discussion, Zhao Hanxuan pushed open the door and entered. He immediately joked with Zhuang Rui, then continued, "A total of eleven people have ordered chicken-blood stone seals. They've chosen materials ranging from high-end to low-end. We just collected over eight thousand yuan in deposits..."

"Hehe, Lao Zhao, the good days are yet to come, but you should order a computer engraving machine later..."

Zhuang Rui's words left Zhao Hanxuan and Master Ge somewhat confused. They were preparing to promote traditional craftsmanship, so why were they ordering the purchase of a computer engraving machine?

Chapter 602 Unique

"Xiao Zhuang, didn't you say you wanted to promote our traditional culture? Why did you buy that computer engraving machine?"

Master Ge hesitated for a moment, but still asked, because this matter directly affected his income; the more people used the computer engraving machine, the less money he would earn.

Moreover, there's a lingering shadow in Master Ge's heart. Back when he was running a stall engraving business, his computer was completely taken by the engraving machines. There's no comparison between the two.

"Yeah, Mr. Zhuang, if you're going to put up a sign, buying that thing would just ruin your own reputation..."

Zhao Hanxuan also raised objections. It wasn't just Zhuang Rui who saw the potential of the seal engraving business; Old Zhao hadn't been doing business for nothing all these years, and he could also see through Zhuang Rui's intentions.

"Hehe, please sit down, sit down and talk..."

Zhuang Rui brewed a cup of tea for each of them, and then said, "Master Ge, when you used to run your stall, what kind of seals did you mostly get engraved?"

Master Ge recalled for a moment and answered with certainty, "They are basically all official seals of the company; at least 99 out of 100 are..."

In the 1980s and 90s, private companies sprang up like bamboo shoots after a rain. Everyone wanted to have their financial seals, company seals, and legal representative seals made. For a time, the business of handmade seal making was so busy that we couldn't keep up with the demand.

"Hehe, that's right. Master Ge, think about it. Those company seals are used for business. Would they spend thousands of yuan to have a seal made?"

Zhuang Rui laughed upon hearing this, and Master Ge and Zhao Hanxuan also understood a bit of what Zhuang Rui meant and fell into deep thought.

Suddenly, Zhao Hanxuan slapped his thigh and said, "I understand, Boss Zhuang, you mean we only do business with people in that industry, right?"

Zhuang Rui smiled and nodded, saying, "We don't just do business in antiques. There are many people who pretend to be cultured these days. Once we make a name for ourselves, these people will come to us asking for seals. At that time, 500 yuan per character won't be expensive, and our prices will rise even further..."

"Prices are going up again? Will anyone come to have seals made then?"

Master Ge was dumbfounded by Zhuang Rui's words. He used to think that three or five yuan was a lot for carving one character, but now that it was 500 yuan per character, the young man in front of him actually felt that the price was a bit low.

"Yes, don't worry, Master Ge, you'll be busy from now on..." Zhuang Rui replied confidently.

Indeed, as Zhuang Rui said, some officials nowadays, in order to demonstrate their status and culture, often write inscriptions in certain places during their inspections, which involves using their personal seals.

Once it becomes a common practice in the circle that it is shameful not to have a personal seal engraved by a famous person, officials will surely come knocking on your door, or even if they don't come themselves, they will send someone to ask for the seal.

Don't underestimate this group; they are a consumer group with great potential. Forget a few thousand, even tens of thousands are just a matter of signing off on reimbursement. What? Reimbursement needs a specific category? Office supplies, of course!

"What does this have to do with buying a computer engraving machine?"

Old Zhao was still a little confused. He had high hopes for Master Ge's skills and was sure he would make a name for himself. But wouldn't having a computer engraving machine in the shop affect Master Ge's engraving skills?

"Old Zhao, you should know that our chicken-blood stone seals are also divided into high, medium and low grades. For high-grade seal stones, customers will definitely be willing to spend money to have Master Ge carve the seals."

However, some low-grade seal materials only cost a few dozen yuan each, and those people may not be willing to spend thousands of yuan to carve characters, so computer seal carving machines can be used.

"Of course, Lao Zhao, you should put the engraving machine inside. You can use it when you need it. We'll engrave seals for consumers for free, as a way to sell it along with the bloodstone..."

Zhuang Rui's words made Old Zhao and Master Ge understand that the seal-carving machine was actually used by the young boss to attract business. Thinking about it, it made sense; doing business well requires attention to detail to ensure success. Even a small profit is still profit.

"By the way, when customers come in, just tell them directly that computer-engraved seals are free. We don't play games; let the customers choose for themselves..."

Zhuang Rui knew that seal carving usually involved first writing the inscription and then carving it. In this industry, there was a saying that "seven parts inscription and three parts carving."

Seal engraving is an art closely integrated with calligraphy. The fundamental difference between computer-engraved seals and ordinary seals engraved by seal engravers is that computer-engraved seals are "written" by computers, resulting in stiff and monotonous fonts.

The latter requires attention to composition, seal script, and the skill level of the seal engraver. Zhuang Rui believes that although hand seal engraving has declined, this ancient culture, passed down from the seal knob and seal nose, will surely regain its traditional cultural charm.

Furthermore, in this trade, even the most skilled seal engraver cannot create two completely different seals. This means that every customer receives a unique handmade seal, and many people would probably pay for it just for this "unique" status.

"Alright, let's leave it at that. Old Zhao, you find someone to order a computer-controlled seal engraving machine. Master Ge, you'll have to work hard these next few days. When I get those high-grade chicken-blood stone materials, you can take a look at the shape, then engrave a few personal seals for me to give away as gifts..."

Zhuang Rui is preparing to shut down "Xuanrui Zhai". Jin Pangzi and his experts often appraise others and issue authentication certificates, and those who own the treasures are all collectors in the industry. By spreading the word in this circle first, at least for a period of time, there is no need to worry about the sales of the chicken blood stone seals.

After thinking for a moment, Zhuang Rui added, "Old Zhao, there's something else I need you to do. We still have several dozen kilograms of those mid-to-low-grade chicken-blood stone materials, but none of them are suitable for seals. Could you find someone to cut them for us? Those seal stones aren't worth carving; a little processing will suffice..."

The chicken-blood stone seal material that Zhuang Rui purchased this time is of good quality and of high grade, but the quantity is not large, probably only enough to make thirty to fifty seals. However, the price is not cheap. It is estimated that after being carved and processed by Master Ge, each one can sell for tens of thousands of yuan.

For customers who purchase these kinds of chicken-blood stone seals, Zhuang Rui plans to carve them for free. Even though we run an antique shop, we still need to keep up with the times and maintain a certain level of sophistication. What do we call them? VIP customers, or, in ancient times, honored guests.

The prices of mid- to low-grade materials range from tens to thousands of yuan, with the most common being medium-grade chicken-blood stone costing two to three thousand yuan. Those who buy these types of seals will be Master Ge's main customers in the future.

Seeing that Zhao Hanxuan and Master Ge had both agreed, Zhuang Rui had nothing else to do, so he simply took Zhao Hanxuan and Monkey Daxiong to his courtyard to pick up the chicken-blood stone material. Zhuang Rui didn't have time to deliver it to them again.

Monkey and Da Xiong have been to the courtyard house twice already, but this is Zhao Hanxuan's first time. He has lived in Beijing for many years and knows this grand mansion much better than the two of them. Now, this house is worth more than 100 million yuan. You'd better not ask about the price.

Moreover, these kinds of places aren't just something you can buy with money. Without connections, they won't even sell to you. In Beijing, you never know, some random person riding a bicycle on the street might have connections with a high-ranking official through some back alley. Let alone someone as wealthy as Zhuang Rui, whose background is definitely not something ordinary people can afford to mess with.

After seeing this courtyard, Zhao Hanxuan gained a deeper understanding of Zhuang Rui's true strength. He realized that he was not on the same level as others at all, and that Xuanrui Zhai shop was probably just something Zhuang Rui used to pass the time when he had nothing else to do.

After giving all the bloodstone to Zhao Hanxuan and the others, Zhuang Rui chatted with his mother for a while. However, he still had things to do today, so he went back to the backyard to greet Qin Xuanbing. Zhuang Rui was going to visit Grandpa Gu.

During the days surrounding Zhuang Rui's engagement, Grandpa Gu caught a chill and was unwell, so he couldn't attend the engagement ceremony. Although Zhuang Rui visited Grandpa Gu later, he didn't bring Qin Xuanbing along. Today, he brought his wife to visit the old man.

Of course, the top-quality "Big Red Robe" chicken-blood stone was also in Zhuang Rui's pocket at the moment. It was estimated that when Old Master Gu saw this thing, it would be more effective than any magic medicine.

As they were leaving, the white lion followed Zhuang Rui, refusing to leave no matter what. Helpless, Zhuang Rui had no choice but to take the big guy with him. The white lion's size was now quite terrifying; from a distance, it really looked like a white lion, incredibly fierce.

"Zhuang Rui, you need to change your car again. Buy a Hummer, otherwise your White Lion won't be big enough to fit in..."

When Qin Xuanbing saw the disheveled state of the white lion crammed into the back seat of the car, she couldn't help but laugh. The white lion seemed to understand Qin Xuanbing's words and growled at her a few times.

"Okay, let's go to the car market tomorrow. Oh, and whatever car you want to buy, let's pick one out too, consider it a gift from your husband. Hmm, the price can't exceed 50,000 yuan, we need to be environmentally conscious..."

Zhuang Rui smiled and nodded, then joked with Qin Xuanbing, saying he had been saying he would buy her a car, but he hadn't had the time yet.

This time back in Beijing should give me some free time. I won't have to worry about the two shops, "Xuanrui Zhai" and "Qin Ruilin," anymore. I'll just have to wait for my graduate school interview in June.

"Fifty thousand yuan? That's stingy. Why didn't you just send me a plane instead..." Qin Xuanbing played along, feigning surprise.

"Buy a plane? But helicopters are strictly regulated in China..."

Upon hearing Qin Xuanbing's words, Zhuang Rui said helplessly that he had long wanted to buy a helicopter, but in Beijing, he was certain that it would be shot down before he could fly more than two kilometers.

Chapter 603 Private Jet (Part 1)

"Who said we were buying a helicopter?"

Qin Xuanbing rolled her eyes at Zhuang Rui and said, "You could buy a business jet. You could take White Lion with you wherever you go. That way, it'll be easier for me to visit Grandpa in Hong Kong..."

Qin Xuanbing and her grandfather had a very close relationship. Although Zhuang Rui was with her in Beijing, she still missed him. As she talked, she thought of her grandfather and almost grabbed Zhuang Rui's arm and shook it.

The white lion beside her seemed to understand her words, and its gaze toward Qin Xuanbing softened considerably.

"Hey, hey, I'm driving..."

Zhuang Rui quickly stopped Qin Xuanbing's actions and asked hesitantly, "A business jet? How much would that cost?"

To be honest, Zhuang Rui has never considered buying a business jet. In his mind, such large aircraft are beyond his means.

Zhuang Rui didn't realize that with his current wealth, although he couldn't afford the kind of luxury private jet that Bill Gates used, which cost hundreds of millions of dollars, he could still afford a regular business jet.

Due to policy and other constraints, the development of private jets in China has been extremely slow. However, many wealthy individuals have registered their purchased aircraft overseas or in Hong Kong.

As for China, in 1996, Zhang Yue, chairman of Hunan Yuanda Group, purchased one Cessna business jet and one Bell 206 helicopter, and is widely regarded as the first person in mainland China to purchase a private aircraft.

Zhuang Rui went from being penniless to becoming a billionaire in just over a year. However, his values and spending habits don't reflect the typical perspective of a top-tier tycoon. In fact, it's not just Zhuang Rui; many other wealthy individuals in China are also relatively unfamiliar with the private jet industry.

In Hong Kong, many ultra-wealthy individuals own private jets and luxury yachts. Owning a private jet not only makes business activities faster and more convenient, but it's also often a way to showcase one's status.

Qin Xuanbing's family owns a Legacy business jet. Last time, when Grandpa Qin came to attend Zhuang Rui's engagement ceremony, he arrived on that plane.

Seeing that Zhuang Rui seemed interested, Qin Xuanbing quickly said, "A typical private jet costs anywhere from several million to tens of millions of RMB, but a higher-performance one would be around fifty or sixty million RMB. Zhuang Rui, do you have enough money? Otherwise, I'd like to add some more..."

Qin Xuanbing didn't really know how much money Zhuang Rui had. She didn't like Zhuang Rui because he was rich. When she first met Zhuang Rui, he was still a poor man. Of course, several million was nothing to Miss Qin.

"What? Only tens of millions?"

Zhuang Rui was stunned when he heard the price; he could easily come up with tens of millions.

"Zhuang Rui, how much money do you have right now?" Qin Xuanbing asked curiously, seeing Zhuang Rui's expression.

"How much? I haven't calculated it. I invested over 200 million in Brother Jun's real estate company a while ago, and I think I still have a little over 100 million left. But next month, another sum of money is coming in from Xinjiang..."

As Zhuang Rui drove, he silently began to calculate in his mind.

He gave Ouyang Jun 40 million euros, and his brother hasn't returned the rest of the money yet. It should still be around 150 million. With the dividend from the Xinjiang jade mine next month, Zhuang Rui will have another 200 million RMB at his disposal. Buying a private jet doesn't seem like a big deal.

"You have that much money?"

Qin Xuanbing was startled by Zhuang Rui's words. Although Qin's Jewelry's total assets reached over 3 billion, their liquid assets were probably less than Zhuang Rui's. Even the nearly 100 million euros they spent on their trip to Myanmar last time were largely borrowed from banks.

Nowadays, companies basically tie up all their money in business in order to grow and expand, so there are really not many people with as much capital as Zhuang Rui.

Although Qin Xuanbing wasn't very involved in the family business, she still had some understanding of it, so when she heard Zhuang Rui's words, she couldn't help but show a look of surprise in her eyes.

"Hehe, your husband may not have much else, but he's got a lot of money, and um, his little guy down there is pretty good too..."

Seeing Qin Xuanbing's surprised expression was rare, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but boast, glancing down as he spoke and letting out a strange laugh.

"You rascal! I used to think you were honest, you big liar! You're not allowed to touch me tonight..."

Zhuang Rui's words immediately made Qin Xuanbing's pretty face turn bright red. Luckily, it was Bai Shi sitting next to her. If it had been a stranger, Qin Xuanbing would have had the urge to cut off Zhuang Rui's little brother with a knife.

"Xuanbing, what kind of airplane do you think we should buy? After we buy it, I'll take you traveling everywhere, we'll travel around the world..."

Seeing that things were not going well, Zhuang Rui quickly changed the subject. However, after saying it, he also began to yearn for that kind of life, and a desire for a private jet actually welled up in his heart.

"Well... it doesn't need to be too expensive, right? The maintenance costs for private jets are very high, and you also need to hire pilots and flight attendants, which costs a lot of money every year..."

Sure enough, when the topic of buying an airplane came up, Qin Xuanbing's attention immediately shifted to it. Women are generally good at managing money, and even though the two weren't married yet, she was already calculating how to save Zhuang Rui money.

In fact, many people in China can afford private jets, but the maintenance costs are extremely high. The annual maintenance cost for an ordinary private jet is more than 1 million RMB, while the cost for a luxury private jet like the Hawker 800 can reach tens of millions of RMB.

In addition, the number of general aviation airports in China is very limited, and the parking fees and take-off and landing fees are relatively high. The cost of using and maintaining a private plane is at least 400,000 yuan per year, not including the salaries of pilots and flight attendants, etc.

It's fair to say that many people can afford to buy a private jet, but they can't afford to fly it. The repair and maintenance costs add up, and after a few years, the price of the plane has already been paid off.

After listening to Qin Xuanbing's calculations, Zhuang Rui laughed. This amount of money might be a huge expense for some people who run traditional businesses, because no matter how big a traditional business is, it will always encounter a situation of tight funds. In that case, expenses like private jets might seem very large.

However, these problems do not exist for Zhuang Rui. He does not engage in any real business; all his money is invested. Even if he loses money, he does not need to subsidize it further.

In addition, the jade mines in Myanmar and Ouyang Jun's real estate company are both obvious money-making opportunities. As they develop, the funds will only increase so much that Zhuang Rui won't know what to do with them.

During this period, Zhuang Rui even considered going abroad to retrieve cultural relics that China had lost in the past. The reason was simple: Zhuang Rui didn't know what to do with the more than 100 million yuan he had. Now, hearing about private jets, Zhuang Rui was really tempted.

"Xuanbing, if we're going to buy one, let's buy the best one. I'll ask around first, and then we can buy it and park it at the Capital Airport. That way, we can take White Lion with us whenever we go out..."

Zhuang Rui made a decision, but now that the plane was bought, someone needed to fly it. He figured he should ask Young Master Ouyang for help, since he didn't know anyone else.

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, the white lion lying in the back seat excitedly shook its snow-white fur and stretched its large head forward, ready to wash Zhuang Rui's face. Startled, Zhuang Rui pushed the white lion away. His car wasn't like the ones in the 007 movies; it didn't have self-driving capabilities. If the white lion really blocked his view, there was a chance of a car accident.

Zhuang Rui was itching to try it after hearing Qin Xuanbing's words. Seeing that there was still some distance to Grandpa Gu's house, he couldn't help but take out his phone and call Ouyang Jun.

"Hey, you little rascal, you still remember your brother?"

When the call connected, Ouyang Jun's voice sounded rather resentful. Zhuang Rui had disappeared after throwing the money at him, and Ouyang Jun had tried to find him several times, but he was always out of town. He was furious.

"Hehe, Fourth Brother, you're busy spending time with your wife and managing the company, how could I dare to bother you..."

Zhuang Rui is becoming more and more like a Beijinger; he's developed a knack for being incredibly talkative.

"You know I'm busy, right? By the way, you graduated from a prestigious university, why don't you come and help Fourth Brother manage the company?"

Ouyang Jun has been extremely busy lately. With the funds in place, construction naturally began. There are just too many things to do in building such a large residential community. Ouyang Jun has always been used to a leisurely life, and he is not used to being so busy all of a sudden.

Ouyang Jun really wanted Zhuang Rui to come and help. Instead of hiring a professional manager from outside, he thought it would be better to have his own brother do it.

"No, Fourth Brother, I don't have time for that. We agreed before that I would only provide the money and not care about anything else. If you can reduce my shareholding, or if that doesn't work, I can withdraw my investment, right?"

Zhuang Rui was startled by Ouyang Jun's words. He didn't have time to wear a suit and tie to work every day. Those days were nothing compared to his current carefree life. In fact, he was just thinking about buying a plane to travel around the world.

"Why are you bothering me? I'm busy, I can't waste my time. I'll give you that money when we meet again..."

When Ouyang Jun heard Zhuang Rui's firm refusal, he didn't bring it up again. Construction would naturally be managed by professionals; he just wanted to find someone to manage the company's daily affairs.

Hearing that Ouyang Jun was about to hang up, Zhuang Rui quickly called out, "Fourth Brother, don't hang up yet! I need your help..."

Chapter 604 Private Jet (Part Two)

Ouyang Jun now rents an entire floor in an office building near the construction site as his office. Since he's starting a business, he needs to present a certain image. Just as Zhuang Rui had imagined, Ouyang Jun is now sitting formally at his desk in a suit and tie.

Taking the documents from his secretary, Ouyang Jun signed them and tossed them back, saying irritably into the phone, "Hey, I knew you wouldn't call with good news. What is it? Hurry up and tell me, I'm really busy..."

Ouyang Jun pretended not to notice the resentful look in the female secretary's eyes, but he made up his mind that he would change the secretary tomorrow. Damn it, does she think I've never seen a woman before?

"You want to buy a plane?!"

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Ouyang Jun was startled and stood up from his office chair, saying, "Are you serious? I haven't even considered this myself, and you're already going to do it?"

"Hehe, Fourth Brother, you know, White Lion is my precious pet. I can't take it with me when I go out often, so wouldn't it be more convenient to buy an airplane..."

Zhuang Rui didn't expect Ouyang Jun to react so strongly, but he still needed Ouyang Jun to handle this matter. He had no way of buying an airplane, let alone a helicopter.

"Damn, you bought a plane just to bring a dog with you?"

Ouyang Jun was completely speechless. He had said that his younger brother didn't know how to live and was frugal, but it turned out that he was playing the high game better than anyone else. He was

willing to spend tens of millions to buy a plane for a dog, not to mention the huge maintenance costs afterwards.

"Just tell me if you have any connections, I'm driving here..." Zhuang Rui was getting impatient. To say something that would drive Ouyang Jun crazy, Bai Shi was definitely more important to Zhuang Rui than Ouyang Jun.

"I can't help you buy the plane. You probably won't find any domestic business jets that suit your needs, and I don't have any connections overseas. But if you can buy one, it would be best to register it overseas or in Hong Kong. Then I can help you with things like leasing airports and establishing general aviation operations..."

Ouyang Jun was telling the truth. Although he enjoyed having fun, he hadn't considered flying. There were some flying clubs in China, but as the saying goes, "A wise man avoids dangerous situations," and Ouyang Jun, the Fourth Young Master, didn't participate in such high-risk sports.

"Okay, I'll contact you again after I buy it..." Zhuang Rui hung up the phone decisively.

"Hey...hey? You brat, go open it yourself after you buy it!"

Originally, Ouyang Jun wanted to remind Zhuang Rui to go to the boss to resolve the pilot issue, but the other party hung up unexpectedly. Ouyang Jun was too lazy to call back. In his opinion, Zhuang Rui was probably acting impulsively, and his aunt might not necessarily agree to his purchase.

What Ouyang Jun didn't know was that Ouyang Wan had always been indifferent to her son's affairs. Even if Zhuang Rui bought a plane, a castle abroad, or even a small island in the Pacific Ocean to become king, Ouyang Wan wouldn't say a word.

"Xuanbing, ask Mom and Dad to order a plane for us in Hong Kong..."

After hanging up the phone, Zhuang Rui looked at Qin Xuanbing. According to Ouyang Jun, buying a private jet abroad is a common practice, but there are fewer channels for it in China. This matter would require the help of his mother-in-law.

"You, you always act on impulse, you can't wait even a moment longer..."

Qin Xuanbing glared at Zhuang Rui with annoyance. Zhuang Rui was sometimes very calm and composed, but sometimes he acted like a child. Originally, she wanted to buy it, but now, looking at Zhuang Rui's expression, she couldn't wait to sit on it.

However, Qin Xuanbing still took out her phone and called her mother. Fang Yi seemed to be busy. After noting down something, she said she would call Qin Xuanbing back later and then hung up.

The car pulled up at the entrance of the alley outside the old man's courtyard house. Zhuang Rui stopped the car, took out a bag, and got out with Bai Shi and Qin Xuanbing. Bai Shi was now enormous, frightening a group of children playing in the alley who burst into tears. 69\$ħµx.ċđm

Although many people in old Beijing keep dogs, large dogs like this are really rare, and a white lion of this size is even more unique. Some of the bolder ones chased after the white lion to look at it, but Zhuang Rui ignored them and went to the door of the courtyard house where the old man lived and knocked on the door.

"No wonder it was so noisy outside. Turns out you brought this guy along too?"

Grandpa Gu recognized Bai Shi; he had seen him in Pingzhou and Nanjing last year. He immediately ushered Zhuang Rui and his wife into the house, and the nanny poured them two cups of tea.

"Uncle-Master, how have you been feeling these past few days?"

Zhuang Rui looked at the old man's face; it was still rosy, so he must have recovered.

When Zhuang Rui came last time, he stayed here for one night and helped the old man take care of his body. When people get old, if they are not careful, even a minor illness like a cold or fever can easily lead to serious consequences.

"I'm fine now, I've been fine for a long time. I've been taking walks around the Imperial City wall every morning these past few days, and I'm in great health..."

The old man laughed heartily. Gu Lao had completely retired from the Jade Association this year. He was a little unaccustomed to it at first, but these past few days, he's been going out to walk his birds and chat with them, and he's gradually gotten used to this kind of life.

"Little Qin, this place feels like home. Have some tea, have some tea. By the way, Zhuang Rui hasn't been bullying you, has he? If you have anything to say, tell your Uncle Gu. I'll teach this kid a lesson..."

The old man's words made Qin Xuanbing a little embarrassed. They knew each other, but back then she had only held hands with Zhuang Ruigang, and their relationship wasn't that clear yet. Hearing the old man's words, Qin Xuanbing blushed.

"Uncle-Master, why don't you let Brother Yun come and stay? It would be so much more lively if the whole family stayed together..."

The old man used to need quiet when he was working and carving jade, so he made his two sons move out. But now that he's retired, it's good to have his children around.

"Well, Xiaoyun is moving back next week. Alright, let's not talk about that. Let me take a look at the good stuff you mentioned..."

Before arriving, Zhuang Rui had called the old man. Zhuang Rui often managed to find some interesting things, so the old man was quite looking forward to seeing what good things Zhuang Rui could bring out.

"Hehe, senior master, please take a look at this first..."

Zhuang Rui didn't open his bag. Instead, he took his hand out of his pocket, made a fist, and then placed it in front of the old man before opening his palm. In his palm was a dazzling red object.

Zhuang Rui found some sandpaper yesterday and polished away the outer skin of this "Big Red Robe" material. Now, this piece of chicken blood stone is like a sword drawn from its sheath, its sharpness fully revealed. The pure and rich chicken blood red color is like freshly slaughtered chicken blood solidified on the stone, making it incredibly dazzling.

"This...this is chicken-blood stone?"

Old Gu hurriedly reached out and put on his reading glasses from the table. After taking the bloodstone, he showed a look of astonishment on his face, presumably having already realized the extraordinary nature of this seal stone.

"The blood is pure, glistening, thick and substantial, truly exceptional, an absolute gem..."

After examining it for a while, the old man sighed, "A piece of deep red chicken-blood stone is a rare find, perhaps only once every hundred years. A piece as completely red as this is truly a treasure. Zhuang Rui, your luck is just too good..."

Gu Tianfeng knew that Zhuang Rui had gone to Changhua some time ago, and he also knew that Changhua was famous for its chicken-blood stone. But no matter what, Gu Tianfeng never expected that the best chicken-blood stone would be obtained by this kid in front of him.

The former is jadeite, the middle contains Hetian jade, and now it's chicken blood stone. Gu Tianfeng has no words to describe Zhuang Rui's good fortune.

These rare treasures, which are rarely seen even once in a century, were like cabbages in a market for Zhuang Rui to pick and choose from. This made Gu Tianfeng, who had spent his whole life dealing with jade, feel a little unbalanced.

"Hehe, Uncle Gu, the way this bloodstone came about is quite strange. I only discovered it after stepping on it and getting a sore foot. Do you think this material is suitable for making a seal?"

Although he clearly claimed to be lucky, Zhuang Rui still tried to conceal it a little, and he said the same thing to Qin Xuanbing, repeating it again.

"Is it suitable? Of course it is. This material doesn't even need processing; it can be carved and engraved directly. It's done. I know what you're up to. I'll keep it and come back for it in a few days..."

The old man was itching to carve it himself, just like a martial arts master who always wants to spar with a skilled practitioner. Faced with such fine chicken-blood stone, the old man naturally wanted to carve it by hand.

"Uncle-Master, please don't worry, I still have something I haven't taken out yet..."

The seal is a minor matter; with Master Ge's skills, he could probably carve it to Zhuang Rui's satisfaction. The main purpose of this trip was still that "Liu, Guan, and Zhang" material. If it weren't for a carving master like Gu Tianfeng, Zhuang Rui really wouldn't trust anyone else to do it.

"Tch, what good stuff could it be? Cinnabar is prized for its red color, you think you can find material resembling Liu Bei, Guan Yu, and Zhang Fei?"

Gu Tianfeng curled his lip in disdain. He wouldn't even look at ordinary jade materials. However, after saying these words, he noticed that Zhuang Rui and Qin Xuanbing's expressions were very strange. The old man also sensed something was wrong and asked in a trembling voice, "Is it really the chicken blood stone material of Liu, Guan and Zhang?"

"Grandpa, do you have X-ray vision, or is it some kind of telepathy?"

Zhuang Rui feigned surprise, then smiled and opened the bag he had brought, taking out the "Liu, Guan, and Zhang" chicken-blood stone material that was tightly wrapped in several layers of newspaper. He gave a thumbs up and said, "Uncle-Master, you guessed right, it is indeed the Liu, Guan, and Zhang chicken-blood stone..."

"Incredible, truly incredible! I've seen pieces of jade with Liu Bei, Guan Yu, and Zhang Fei's designs over the past twenty years, but they were much smaller than yours, only big enough to make seals. This piece is truly remarkable..."

Even with Gu Tianfeng's knowledge, he was still extremely excited after seeing this "Liu, Guan, and Zhang" jade piece.

Chapter 605 Private Jet (Part 3)

"Uncle-Master, isn't it a bit of a waste to use this material for a seal?"

Seeing the old man's happy expression, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but crack a joke.

"You understand this, so how could I not? Get out of here. Don't think you can brag to me just because you've found a few good pieces of material..."

Gu Tianfeng glared at Zhuang Rui with annoyance, then turned his attention back to the black, white and red chicken-blood stone.

The three colors are distinct, and the stone is of the highest quality among chicken-blood stone. Even now, without being carved, it faintly glows with a fluorescent light. Even people who don't know much about jade can see that it is extraordinary.

"Carving three figures with three colors isn't much of a skill. Alright, kid, leave the stuff here. You'll have to wait a week... no, half a month. Come pick it up in half a month..."

As Gu Tianfeng looked at the stone, he began to conceive a design in his mind. The texture of the bloodstone was much softer than that of jade. Once the design was formed, it would not be difficult to carve it with the old man's craftsmanship. The reason why it would take half a month was that Gu Tianfeng wanted to carve it into a unique piece.

Seeing Gu Tianfeng's intoxicated expression, Zhuang Rui, fearing that the old man might overexert himself and harm his health, quickly said, "Uncle Gu, it's alright if it takes a little longer. You can keep these two things here; you can take care of them when you have time..."

"Alright, alright, you're so young, stop with the nonsense. What do you want to eat tonight? Let Auntie make it. Xiao Qin, I won't keep you two company..."

Gu Tianfeng impatiently interrupted Zhuang Rui and went into the studio with the "Liu, Guan, and Zhang" jade piece in his arms.

The old man treated Zhuang Rui like a nephew, so he didn't bother with formalities. However, he left Zhuang Rui and Qin Xuanbing sitting in the living room, looking at each other, unsure whether to leave or stay.

"Zhuang Rui, Xiao Qin, what brings you two here today? Where's my dad?"

Just as Zhuang Rui was about to say goodbye to his aunt and leave, Gu Yun arrived at the courtyard with his wife and children. As soon as they entered, they saw Zhuang Rui and quickly greeted him.

"Sigh, it's all my fault. I brought two good pieces of jade, and the old man got so engrossed in them that he went into his room..."

Zhuang Rui thought that the old man had only recently recovered from his illness, and he would not be able to live with himself if he fell ill because of this material.

"Hey, I thought it was something serious. Let me tell you, my dad was sick a few days ago. He's just retired and has some free time, so he's been tinkering with some things. He's perfectly healthy..."

Upon hearing this, Gu Yun grabbed Zhuang Rui and said as they walked, "We haven't had a couple of drinks in a long time. Let my wife cook a few dishes, and we'll have a drink tonight..."

"Okay, okay, don't pull me, White Lion, come in..."

When Zhuang Rui saw Gu Yun's child approaching the white lion, he quickly called out to him. The white lion was so big that even if it didn't bite, a single pounce from it when it got angry could be terrifying.

Qin Xuanbing had met Gu Yun's wife before. Although she was born in Hong Kong, she knew the customs of the mainland. She went to the kitchen with Gu Yun's wife to help out. However, Miss Qin's cooking skills were really not very good. In the end, it was the aunt and Gu Yun's wife who cooked the meal. She just chatted on the side.

"Brother..."

Gu Yun and Zhuang Rui sat back down in the living room. Gu Yun called out to Zhuang Rui with a somewhat embarrassed expression, but didn't say anything more.

"What's up, Brother Gu? Do we need to be so polite between us?"

"Hey, um, do you still have that tiger penis from last time?" Gu Yun finally asked.

"Hey, Brother Gu, this stuff needs to be soaked in alcohol for more than half a year. You're not going to cook it and eat it, are you?"

When Zhuang Rui heard about this, he couldn't help but look at Gu Yun strangely. This brother's body is quite strong, so why is he in such a hurry?

"Keep your voice down, don't let your sister-in-law hear..."

Gu Yun quickly interrupted Zhuang Rui, saying, "My older brother went back to Beijing a while ago and saw the jar of liquor I was making. He took the whole jar with him. Well... I'm like that too. Oh well, if you don't have it, then forget it..."

Gu Yun's older brother works out of town. Being middle-aged, when his younger brother boasted that it was genuine tiger penis, he immediately disregarded his elder brotherly pride and simply grabbed the whole bottle, wine and all, and loaded it into his car to drive away.

Zhuang Rui laughed upon hearing this. It turned out that this man had a special fondness for these kinds of objects.

This is understandable. Although every man may verbally express disdain for Viagra, there are definitely quite a few who secretly go to pharmacies to buy it. Otherwise, how could China be the second-largest seller of Viagra in the world? Of course, this is also determined by China's large population.

Which country is number one? Duh, it's that island nation, of course. Don't be fooled by its small population, all the men there rely on this thing for their jobs. Every year, a considerable number of men are spent on AV stars. Otherwise, with such short and unsustainable penises, how could the AV industry have developed?

The fact that this man asked another man for this thing was tantamount to indirectly admitting that he was a bit... well, you know. Gu Yun looked a little embarrassed and stopped halfway through his sentence.

"Brother Gu, I still have some of that stuff, but there's really not much left. It's not that I'm stingy, but this is the last one I can give you..."

Zhuang Rui suppressed a laugh and agreed. However, he didn't have many left. Although he didn't need them now, he knew that people would get old eventually, and he might not have any left when he wanted to use them.

"Okay, okay, I'll toast you a few times later..." Gu Yun was overjoyed upon hearing this.

More than half an hour later, the food was ready. When Grandpa Gu saw his son and daughter-in-law arrive, he didn't say much. He ate a bowl of rice and went back to his studio. Gu Yun and the others were already used to this and invited Zhuang Rui and Qin Xuanbing to eat.

"Don't you know that alcohol damages the stomach and kidneys? No wonder people need to nourish their kidneys..."

When they left the old man's courtyard house, Zhuang Rui was already quite drunk from being plied with alcohol by Gu Yun. He had no choice but to leave the car to Qin Xuanbing to drive. As he got in the car, thinking about how he had been extorted for another tiger penis, he couldn't help but mutter to himself.

"What's wrong? What did you just say?"

Qin Xuanbing didn't hear Zhuang Rui's words clearly, so she started the car and asked a question.

"No, it's nothing..." This is not easy to explain. Zhuang Rui was secretly brewing that jar of wine in the house.

This wine can really stimulate people sometimes. After returning home, Zhuang Rui became unusually vigorous today. It wasn't until Qin Xuanbing begged for mercy that the battle finally subsided, and the room was filled with the smell of bodily fluids.

"You men definitely didn't have a good talk last night..."

Qin Xuanbing revealed her beautiful upper body and drew circles on Zhuang Rui's chest with her fingers, a satisfied expression on her face.

"Isn't this a good thing? Hehe..."

Zhuang Rui laughed and turned over, ready to mount his horse again and whip it on; he really hadn't had enough fun earlier.

"The phone is ringing, hey, stop..."

"Who cares whose call it is? Disturbing people in the middle of the night is the most inconsiderate thing to do..." Zhuang Rui didn't care about anything else and forced himself to get on the horse. With the help of the phone ringing, Zhuang Rui felt even more excited.

Qin Xuanbing could only stare at the phone on the bedside table and keep singing.

More than half an hour later, the panting in the room finally subsided. Zhuang Rui saw that the phone was still on his mind, so he quickly nudged Qin Xuanbing, but the person in his arms was almost limp at this point, her eyes full of seductive allure, and she wouldn't move an inch.

Hello, who is this?

Left with no other choice, Zhuang Rui had to answer the phone.

"Xiao Rui, are you with Xuan Bing? Why haven't you answered the phone after calling for over half an hour?"

Fang Yi's voice came from the other end of the phone, which made Zhuang Rui and Qin Xuanbing tense up. Qin Xuanbing even pulled the blanket over her naked body, as if her mother could see half of it.

"Cough...cough cough..."

Zhuang Rui felt a bit strange while answering his mother-in-law's call. Only after Fang Yi pressed him for an answer did he quickly reply, "Mom, it was noisy outside, we didn't hear you. We just got home. Is something wrong? I'll have Xuanbing tell you..."

"No need, it's the same whether you listen or not. Aren't you going to buy a plane? I asked about it for you today..."

Fang Yi was quite busy when she received her daughter's call, but she immediately looked it up for them when she had some free time. Given Zhuang Rui's wealth and status, it seemed quite normal for him to buy a private jet, which is why private jets are quite common in Hong Kong.

"Mom, what did you say..."

"There are two models that I think are suitable. One is the 'Prime Minister One' business private jet produced by Raytheon Aircraft Company in the United States. It costs about RMB 50 million and has a cruising speed of up to 835 km/h. It is the world's fastest light business jet, but the space is a bit small, with only about five or six seats."

The other model, the Hawker 800XP, is also manufactured by Raytheon, but its performance, range, and passenger capacity are much better than the "Prime Minister I." Of course, it's also much more expensive, around 100 million RMB. You could consider it..."

"Okay, Mom, I'll think about it and check out these two models online later. I'll get back to you tomorrow. If we want to buy them, I'll have to trouble you..." Zhuang Rui's mind wasn't on the plane at the moment.

"This child, we're all family, there's no trouble at all. You and Xuanbing should get some rest..."

The words coming from the other end of the phone made Zhuang Rui, who was usually thick-skinned, blush involuntarily. It turned out that his mother-in-law probably already knew what he was doing.

Chapter 606 Decision

"Honey, why are you up so early? Huh? What are you doing?"

The next morning, when Qin Xuanbing opened her eyes, she found Zhuang Rui already sitting on the bed, typing on a laptop on his lap.

"Huh? You've really decided to buy it?"

Qin Xuanbing pulled her hair back, revealing her snow-white neck, and leaned her shoulder on Zhuang Rui's shoulder. She saw pictures of several airplanes and some data parameters on the laptop screen.

Zhuang Rui nodded and said, "It's decided, Xuanbing. Come and take a look, which one should we buy?"

After searching online for a while this morning, Zhuang Rui discovered that the main reason why wealthy people in China don't buy private jets is probably not because of money. Although the maintenance costs of private jets are very high, it's really nothing for some people with billions in assets.

The main reason why these people are hesitant to fly private planes is due to the restrictions on general aviation. According to relevant domestic regulations, privately registered aircraft must submit a route application 15 days in advance if they want to fly, otherwise they will not be allowed to take off.

In business activities, many things are decided on the fly, and many are unexpected events. No one can plan their next month in such detail. As the saying goes, plans are no match for changes.

As a result, taking a domestic flight is far less convenient than flying on one's own private jet, so many people have given up the idea of buying a private jet.

However, this matter shouldn't be too difficult for Zhuang Rui to resolve. Although Zhuang Rui doesn't want to use his maternal grandfather's family connections to bully men and women, it shouldn't be a big deal for him to seek some benefits for himself, right?

Zhuang Rui isn't exactly a saintly gentleman devoted to public service and the country, and all the necessary expenses have been paid in full. Just shortening the application period for the opening of the air route is enough; I believe Ouyang Jun can resolve this matter.

"How's the look going?"

Zhuang Rui got up, drew back the curtains, and opened the window. A cool breeze blew into the room, greatly reducing the decadent smell. Returning to bed, Zhuang Rui embraced Qin Xuanbing and saw the beauty in his arms staring intently at the computer screen.

After thinking for a moment, Qin Xuanbing pointed to a picture on the computer and said to Zhuang Rui, "Zhuang Rui, I think we should buy Raytheon's 'Prime Minister One'. Although its range is a bit shorter, it's also much cheaper..."

"A light aircraft with a full composite fuselage, a spacious cabin like a medium-sized aircraft. The standing height inside the cabin is 65 meters—isn't that a bit too low?"

Zhuang Rui frowned as he looked at the aircraft parameters on the computer. At his height of 1.65 meters, wouldn't he have to bend over to get in and out? And if he needed to use the restroom, that posture wouldn't be very comfortable.

"Yes, it is a little low..." Qin Xuanbing nodded. She is 1.7 meters tall even without high heels, and this model is indeed a bit small.

"Two standard large-format 8-inch x 10-inch flat-panel LCD displays fully integrate the flight management system and the digital 3-axis autopilot system. It's fast, with a cruising speed of up to 835 km/h, making it the world's fastest light business jet. Hmm, that performance is pretty good..."

When Zhuang Rui read the next part, he nodded. In fact, he didn't understand any of these flight management systems and automated stances at all. He mainly noticed the phrase "the fastest in the world" at the end.

But when he saw the following, Zhuang Rui frowned again, because the Raytheon "Prime Minister One" model could only carry five people, including the pilot, and its total range on a single fuel load was 2,435 kilometers. This distance was only suitable for domestic use, and it was unlikely to be used for intercontinental routes.

"Xuanbing, this model won't do. We're going on a round-the-world trip, and this 2,000-kilometer distance, including a refueling stop in Hong Kong, is too much trouble. We might as well take a plane from an airline..."

Zhuang Rui shook his head, rejecting that model. He then looked down at another private jet, also from Raytheon, but with significantly superior performance.

The Raytheon Hawker 800XP aircraft has low requirements for runway length and can take off and land on gravel or grass. It has been approved by the Civil Aviation Administration of China for use at high-altitude airports, including Lhasa Airport.

Furthermore, the cabin of the Hawker 800XP private jet is the largest among mid-sized jets, with different seating layouts that can accommodate 6 to 10 passengers. The cabin has ample overhead space, allowing even someone of Zhuang Rui's height to stand upright and walk around comfortably.

What impressed Zhuang Rui most was that the Hawker 800XP private jet had a maximum range of 4,800 kilometers, which was farther than any other medium-sized business jet, making it particularly suitable for use in China and neighboring countries.

In this way, even when traveling to places like the UK and the US, he would only need to refuel once along the way, which is acceptable to Zhuang Rui.

Zhuang Rui is still a young man, and he is very much looking forward to owning a private jet. In Beijing slang, it's a matter of great pride.

However, the price tag below still made Zhuang Rui feel a little heartache. 14 million US dollars, after converting the exchange rate in his mind, was about 120 million RMB.

"The world's best-selling luxury mid-size business jet. Equipped with world-class electronic flight and navigation systems, the cabin features a central bar, premium restrooms, fully adjustable leather seats, flight dynamics displays, high-fidelity audio systems, DVDs, and other high-end entertainment facilities, allowing customers to enjoy a truly luxurious experience."

In terms of performance, it is fully comparable to the Boeing 747 large passenger aircraft, and after takeoff it quickly climbs to a stable airflow layer of over 10,000 meters, with very little turbulence..."

Looking at the descriptions below the pictures, the luxurious features finally convinced Zhuang Rui to make up his mind. He said, "Buy it, let's buy the Haoke 800XP model. Xuanbing, call Mom later and tell her I'll transfer the money later..."

"You idiot, that's my mom..."

Qin Xuanbing rolled her eyes at Zhuang Rui, but she was secretly delighted. Although she wasn't the kind of girl who liked to show off, owning a private jet and traveling the world with her lover was probably an irresistible temptation for any woman in the world.

"Okay, then next time I see my mother-in-law I'll call her 'Auntie'..."

Zhuang Rui chuckled and joked, but then suddenly remembered the phone call he had with his mother-in-law yesterday. His heart skipped a beat, and his gaze toward Qin Xuanbing became intense.

"No, you have to get up, or Mom will definitely scold you later..."

Startled by Zhuang Rui's gaze, Qin Xuanbing quickly got out of bed, wrapped a towel around her body, and went to the bathroom.

"You bastard, you can't look at that..."

Zhuang Rui suddenly saw a snow-white head peeking out of the window. He grabbed a pillow and threw it at the head. He was being spied on as soon as he opened the window. When did the white lion develop this hobby?

After washing up, Zhuang Rui checked the time and it was almost lunchtime. This was one of the advantages of not having to work. However, if this continued for too long, he probably wouldn't have to wait until he was thirty or forty to use his penis. He could probably use it in just a few days. After getting up, his waist was indeed a bit weak.

"Zhuang Rui, should we tell Mom about this? Will she disagree?" Qin Xuanbing asked nervously as they walked to the Intermediate People's Court.

Zhuang Rui smiled and said, "It's okay, my mom doesn't know anything about these things. She never interferes with the money I earn..."

Sure enough, Zhuang Rui brought up the matter during lunch. Ouyang Wan didn't pay much attention to it. Her son was capable of making money, and how he wanted to spend it was his business. Ouyang Wan only inquired about the safety of the private jet, and after learning that its performance was guaranteed, she didn't say anything more.

After dinner, Qin Xuanbing called her mother-in-law, but Zhuang Rui was a little frustrated. He had thought that he could buy the private jet as soon as he paid the money, but he was told that he would have to pay half of the deposit and wait for a full eight months for delivery. This greatly dampened Zhuang Rui's enthusiasm for buying the private jet.

Since he had already decided to buy it, he figured he might as well wait a bit. Zhuang Rui asked his mother-in-law to find out the price first, and once the formalities were sorted out, he would prepare to make the payment. There were currently no branches of Raytheon in mainland China, so it would be more convenient to handle these matters in Hong Kong.

Buying a private jet is a big business deal. Raytheon has only sold a little over 500 Luxury private jets worldwide. They produce them according to the customer's preferences, height, and various requirements.

Raytheon took Zhuang Rui's order very seriously, and even sent an expert named Tom from the United States to Beijing to discuss some details with Zhuang Rui, including the specific configuration of the cabin, etc., so that Zhuang Rui could experience what it truly means to be the customer's best friend.

However, the person said they were powerless to meet Zhuang Rui's request for prompt delivery.

After all, this is something that flies in the sky, and the technical requirements are very strict. It also requires multiple tests. They have to be responsible for the safety of the guests. Zhuang Rui thought about it and agreed. He couldn't very well use himself as a test pilot, could he? Zhuang Rui cherished his life very much.

In the following days, Zhuang Rui had a completely relaxed time. He would occasionally visit "Qin Ruilin" and "Xuan Ruizhai," and both shops were doing well.

The business of seal stones at "Xuanrui Zhai" has already started. Just as Zhuang Rui had predicted, before he could even give the seals to Fatty Jin and others for promotion, those pretentious people in the capital had already flocked there.

In just three to five days, twenty or thirty people had already asked for his seal. It was estimated that Master Ge's income this month would be at least twenty or thirty thousand yuan. After meeting Zhuang Rui, he thanked him profusely.

Chapter 607 Swords and Blades (Part 1)

I walked out of the courtyard house early in the morning to go to work.

I went to the small shop at the entrance of the alley to buy breakfast.

I got on the bike, but unfortunately, there was no smoke coming out of the back.

Compared to those crammed into cars, this is quite leisurely.

Walking through the streets and alleys, Beijing is changing every day.

What remains unchanged is the habit.

Living in the new house and reminiscing about the past,

Listening to the old opera tales before my eyes.

Just thinking about Donglaishun's hot pot lamb makes my mouth water.

The Temple Fair at Ditan Park is no longer as grand as the one at Changdian.

There seem to be more people than goods in Dashilan.

If you come to Beijing

I immediately felt a sense of longing.

Walking through the bustling market of Panjiayuan, listening to old Beijing songs, Zhuang Rui felt very content. Life is just about living, and he was living his life to the fullest.

Old Beijing was the political and cultural center of the country, and its rich cultural atmosphere is unmatched by many other cities. When people first come to Beijing and see those ancient buildings, they often feel as if they have traveled back in time, as if they have stepped into ancient times hundreds of years ago.

Zhuang Rui was going to pick up the seal from Grandpa Gu today, but the appointment with the old man was in the afternoon. Since he had nothing else to do, he decided to come to Panjiayuan in the morning. Although there weren't many genuine items, he might just happen to come across one.

Qin Xuanbing has been busy these past few days. She has turned a side room in the backyard into her studio. She is currently designing some jewelry styles based on the jade pieces provided by Zhuang Rui.

Of course, she is only working on the paper and not actually carving them. After drawing the designs, she will still hand them over to Luo Jiang in Pengcheng for carving.

If Luo Jiang weren't from Pengcheng and unwilling to leave, Zhuang Rui would have wanted to find him another place in Beijing to settle down, since sending a batch of finished jade ornaments from Pengcheng every month was quite troublesome.

Of course, Zhuang Rui didn't care about these things. Zhao Guodong had Zhou Rui deliver them to Qin Ruilin, and Manager Wu handled them. The trouble Zhuang Rui was referring to was the fear of something going wrong on the way. After all, each shipment of jade was worth hundreds of millions of yuan. If it weren't for Zhou Rui transporting it every time, Zhuang Rui really wouldn't feel at ease.

These past few days, it seems like Panjiayuan is holding an event. Everyone is dressed strangely, even the small stall owners who set up their own stalls are all dressed in the same way. Some are wearing Tang suits, some are wearing long robes, and none of them are dressed normally.

Since he was already at Xuanruizhai and had nothing else to do, Zhuang Rui simply wandered around the various stalls. When he came to a stall selling swords, he stopped.

"Oh, boss, you've arrived! Come and see, I have everything here, from Tang Dynasty swords like the Mo Dao, Yi Dao, Zhang Dao, and Heng Dao, to Emperor Qianlong's grand review swords..."

The stall didn't seem to be doing very well, and it was located on a corner, so not many people stopped there. The stall owner's overly friendly attitude towards Zhuang Rui was quite overwhelming for Zhuang Rui.

"From the Tang Dynasty? Goodness, even from Emperor Qianlong? Dude, you're kidding me. If you had that kind of stuff, you'd be rich by now. Why would you be setting up a stall here?"

Zhuang Rui, having nothing better to do, squatted down and started chatting with the stall owner. However, his eyes were fixed on the stall. To be honest, there weren't many stalls selling swords and antiques in Panjiayuan. Zhuang Rui had been there many times, but this was the first time he had seen one.

Sword collecting has only become popular in recent years, but since most unearthed swords are made of copper and iron, they are easily corroded in the soil, and there are not many in good condition. Those shiny and polished items at this stall are undoubtedly modern handicrafts.

"Hehe, we also have antique swords, but I'm afraid you won't like them..."

The stall owner smiled sheepishly and pointed to a corner of his stall.

"oh?"

Zhuang Rui followed the man's finger and saw six or seven pieces of broken copper and iron, covered in rust, that looked nothing like swords or knives, but rather like fire pokers used for rural stoves.

"This...you actually dare to sell this?"

Zhuang Rui was dumbfounded. It was impossible to judge the quality of these items; they were practically worthless. However, Zhuang Rui knew that these might indeed be antique swords and knives, but with such poor condition, they were basically worthless.

"Brother, judging from your tone, you're quite the expert. These are all unearthed artifacts. They all look like this after being buried underground for a long time; otherwise, they would have been taken long ago. Take a look, if you like any of them, I'll give you a discount..."

After hearing Zhuang Rui's words, the stall owner realized that the other party was also a player, and that what he said was quite honest.

"Hehe, I'll just take a look. I really don't know much about antiques like swords and knives..."

Since he was bored anyway, Zhuang Rui calmed down and began to examine the seven or eight pieces of broken copper and scrap iron, even though they were not of high quality.

In recent years, the prices of antique swords and knives have risen very rapidly in the international antique auction market. A Qing Dynasty sword that was originally worth only a few hundred dollars was recently auctioned for more than \$100,000 at a British auction, which has suddenly made sword and knife collecting popular in China.

"Hmm? Interesting..."

Zhuang Rui didn't touch them, but instead scanned the "swords" with his eyes and found that they all contained spiritual energy, albeit a weak one. Some of them were so weak that they were almost undetectable without careful sensing. Zhuang Rui guessed that this was because the antiques had been damaged so badly that the spiritual energy had leaked out.

However, there was a broken stick about two feet long, covered in copper rust, which contained abundant and very thick purple-gold spiritual energy, unlike the other swords and blades which showed signs of spiritual energy leakage.

Zhuang Rui focused all his attention on the object that should be a "sword," and his spiritual energy instantly seeped into it, but it penetrated deeper and deeper, starting from the patina and seeping in bit by bit.

"Good stuff, really good stuff..."

When Zhuang Rui's eyes peered through the patina, he discovered that the sword was covered with exquisite and intricate patterns, like a spider web, resembling swirling clouds or a cascading waterfall reaching the tip. The blade even faintly gleamed with a cold light, indicating that it must have once been a deadly weapon.

"Boss, how much is this iron rod?"

Zhuang Rui is a regular at the antique market and knows all too well the ins and outs. If you want to buy something, you absolutely cannot just pick it up and ask, otherwise the other party will definitely quote you an exorbitant price.

"Hey, boss, if you're not going to buy it, then forget it. These are antique swords and knives I got from Hebei, not just some iron rods..."

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, the stall owner's face turned ashen, as if someone had died, though his eyes showed no sign of anger. Seeing Zhuang Rui stand up, he quickly added, "Seeing that you're an expert, I won't charge you much. If you like that 2000 yuan item in your hand, just take it..."

"2000 yuan and you're still asking for more? Dude, let's get real. If I were to go digging up old houses myself, I definitely wouldn't get more than 50 yuan a bunch of these. If you're really serious about selling, give me a fair price, and I'll buy a few more..."

Zhuang Rui calmly put down the object that should have been a knife. Although the wooden handle was rotten, there was a hole on the back of the blade, which was of course blocked by rust.

However, the fact that Zhuang Rui was able to open it suggests that it was a hole for a metal ring, and if Zhuang Rui wasn't mistaken, the knife should be an iron ring-pommel knife from the Eastern Han Dynasty.

This thing is a good item, but its condition is too poor. Although it contains slightly more spiritual energy than the other ones, it has almost dissipated. Zhuang Rui wants to buy them all and take care of them to do a small experiment to see if the spiritual energy will increase after maintenance.

"Boss, 50 yuan was the going rate a few years ago. Now, if you don't have 500 yuan, nobody will even talk to you. They'll just keep it at home like a treasure..."

As the stall owner spoke, he observed Zhuang Rui's expression. Seeing that Zhuang Rui remained expressionless, he realized he had truly encountered a seasoned professional. His usual tricks of deception and cheating were useless. Finally, he bluntly stated, "600 yuan a bunch, I'll keep 100 yuan as a service fee, that's the bottom line..."

"600? Okay, I'll take two, and you can buy this one too..."

Zhuang Rui pretended to hesitate for a moment, and under the stall owner's expectant gaze, he finally nodded, counted out 1200 yuan from his handbag, and handed it over.

"Brother Zhuang, what are you doing buying things here?"

Just as Zhuang Rui took the two swords wrapped in newspaper from the stall owner, he heard the sound of a monkey. He didn't know where the kid had come from, but he was wearing a melon-shaped hat and a long robe, and he was singing an old Beijing song, which was quite fitting for the occasion.

"Hey, monkey, never mind what I'm doing, what's going on here?"

When Zhuang Rui saw the monkey's appearance, he couldn't help but recall the time when the two first met. However, the material of this outfit was much better than the yellow jacket he wore back then.

"Brother Zhuang, Panjiayuan is having a cultural month, and they want to promote our country's traditional culture. They've mandated that all the shops wear these kinds of clothes. And believe it or not, they still charged each person 200 yuan for these shabby clothes..."

The monkey didn't want to dress like that, because as soon as he came out, some foreign friends would definitely ask him to take pictures. Da Xiong had just joked that if they put up a sign behind the monkey that said "Photos cost 50," business would definitely be good.

There's a saying that wearing a dragon robe doesn't make you look like a prince. But this monkey, dressed like this, doesn't look like a waiter from ancient times at all. It's quite theatrical. As Zhuang Rui was talking to him, quite a few tourists were pointing and whispering.

"Heh, you dare to run around like that? Be careful the city management officers catch you. I just bought something, come on, let's go back to the store..."

Zhuang Rui chuckled and joked with the monkey. Of the two items in his hands, one was a treasure. He had found a bargain early in the morning, and Zhuang Rui was in a good mood.

Chapter 608 Swords and Blades (Part Two)

"Brother Zhuang, take your time going back. How much did you spend on these two items?"

The monkey grabbed Zhuang Rui, looked at the stall owner, and said, "Old Zhou, this is my boss, a famous antique appraisal expert who has been on CCTV's treasure appraisal program. You can't just ask for a random price..."

"Hey, monkey, what are you saying? I, Old Zhou, have been doing business in Panjiayuan for a long time, and I'm absolutely honest and fair, buying and selling on a completely transparent basis. If you don't believe me, just ask this teacher..."

After hearing Monkey's words, Old Zhou put on an expression as if he had suffered a great injustice, but inside he was filled with regret. "Damn it," he thought, "if I had known he was an expert, I would have scored at least 5000... no, at least 10,000 yuan!"

What Lao Zhou didn't know was that one of the two swords was worth more than 10,000 yuan, even 100,000 yuan. If Zhuang Rui only bought something worth 10,000 yuan for 600 yuan, would he feel like he got a bargain? He didn't care about such a small amount of money.

"What expert? You monkey! Stop spouting nonsense, let's go back to the store..."

Zhuang Rui raised his hand and slapped the monkey on the back of the head, then turned and left. The monkey, bewildered by the blow, quickly followed.

"Hey monkey, I'm telling you, what have you been doing all this time in Panjiayuan? You've been wasting your time here!"

When Zhuang Rui saw the monkey following him, he held up the sword wrapped in newspaper and pretended to scare it.

"Brother Zhuang, what's wrong? Did I do something wrong?"

The monkey didn't know why Zhuang Rui had suddenly gotten angry, and he felt a little uneasy. Although he knew that Zhuang Rui was easy to talk to, he knew that if a boss ever didn't like you, he would have plenty of reasons to get rid of you.

Monkey's time in Beijing was incredibly comfortable. He lived in an upscale neighborhood, spent his days drinking, and occasionally, he'd go to the gym with Big Xiong, who loved exercising, to flirt with lonely young women. Life couldn't be more carefree; Monkey had no intention of going back to Pengcheng to sell pets.

When Monkey saw Zhuang Rui buying things, he felt he had become well-known in Panjiayuan and wanted to give Zhuang Rui face. However, he didn't expect that his flattery would backfire, and he was dumbfounded.

"I'm telling you, you're getting less and less tactful as you get ahead..."

Seeing that Monkey's face had turned pale with fright, Zhuang Rui knew the kid was timid, so he softened his tone and said, "Monkey, if you want to find a bargain at Panjiayuan, you have to pretend to know a little bit, so that the sellers won't dare to fool you too much, but they'll still want to take advantage of you a little. That's how you find good stuff. If you act like an expert, they'll just ask for the absolute highest price..."

"Oh dear, brother, look at my brain..."

After hearing Zhuang Rui's words, the monkey suddenly realized what was going on and slapped its head. It was indeed true. These days, an expert's words can be worth money. An appraisal certificate can increase the value of an item many times over, not to mention the things that are favored by experts. Who knows, even if the price is set too high, some stall owners might not sell them.

"Alright, if you want to survive in this industry, you need to learn how to play dumb. You'll definitely do better than someone who pretends to be shrewd..."

Zhuang Rui patted the monkey on the shoulder, and his mind drifted back to Old Tang, the "Trap Master" who had set a trap for the broker Xiao Fang. Old Tang's skill in playing dumb was absolutely masterful; most people wouldn't stand a chance against him. If Zhuang Rui hadn't seen the several replica antique chairs in the inner room, he wouldn't have been able to expose the scam.

Later, Lao Bai stepped in and apparently got some money back for Xiao Fang, maybe only 100,000 yuan. This was a lesson learned the hard way: don't think you're the only smart person in the world and treat everyone else like fools. You'll often end up getting hurt by fools.

Since appearing on CCTV, Zhuang Rui has visited Panjiayuan a few times, but he only managed to exchange a few words with the stall owners before being recognized by them. People in this line of work are bound to pay attention to these treasure appraisal programs.

After this happened several times, Zhuang Rui got annoyed and deliberately cut his long hair into a buzz cut to avoid being noticed. Otherwise, given CCTV's terrifyingly high ratings, he'd probably have to resort to overseas online shopping to snag a bargain. Zhuang Rui also vowed never to appear on television again.

"Brother Zhuang, I understand. Do you think I'm alright?"

After thinking for a while, the monkey finally understood the implications. Its shrewd expression, which had been on its face, now gave off a rather dull feeling, which amazed Zhuang Rui.

"Hey, Monkey, why are you wandering around outside instead of staying in the shop?" Zhuang Rui suddenly realized that the stall where he had encountered Monkey was two streets away from "Xuanrui Zhai".

The monkey scratched its head, its silly expression becoming even more convincing, and said, "Brother Zhuang, didn't you tell me to go into these crowds whenever I had free time? I'm here to hear a story..."

"Oh, I forgot about that. Hey, kid, stop pretending in front of me..."

When Zhuang Rui saw the monkey's appearance, he couldn't help but laugh and cry. "You can pretend when you're trying to fool people. Aren't you tired of looking like a fool all the time?"

"Hehe, just practice more often. By the way, Brother Zhuang, if you like antiques like swords and knives, I know a shop in Panjiayuan that specializes in these things..."

Seeing that Zhuang Rui didn't seem angry with him, Monkey felt relieved. He had been flirting with a young woman at the gym for the past few days and was about to make her move. If he were sent back to Pengcheng, Monkey would feel like committing suicide.

"Specializing in antiques and swords?"

Zhuang Rui stopped in his tracks. There were some good items, but most were from overseas. The swords and sabers of emperors and generals back then were all looted by those foreign devils. But it wouldn't hurt to take a look; they had nothing better to do anyway. So he said, "Let's go for a look..."

"Hey, I'll lead the way..."

The monkey struck a funny pose, making the tourists around it laugh. Zhuang Rui shook his head and followed.

"Toukensai? That's an interesting name..."

After crossing a street, the monkey led Zhuang Rui to the entrance of a shop and said to him, "Brother Zhuang, the owner knows me. I haven't quite mastered pretending to be stupid yet, so I won't trouble you. Please go in by yourself..."

"Haha, alright, you can keep wandering around, I'm going back to the shop later..."

Zhuang Rui was amused by the monkey. There are some people in this world who can make people laugh whether they are talking or not. In Zhuang Rui's opinion, if the monkey could appear on CCTV's Spring Festival Gala, it might become a comedy star. It has such a great comedic talent.

Zhuang Rui looked up at the plaque again before walking into the shop. The plaque was also written by a calligrapher from China, but it was sharp and menacing, making people feel intimidated at first glance.

However, this also fits the mood of the shop. Swords are witnesses to the bloody wars and conflicts during the period of cold weapons in China and abroad. You could say that every antique sword is a history book engraved on metal.

Don't underestimate these two seemingly insignificant iron bars you're holding. They might have been deadly weapons, stained with blood, used by a great general hundreds of years ago or even just a couple of years ago.

Upon entering the shop, Zhuang Rui noticed that there weren't many customers, only two or three people examining the items displayed on the sword racks, with a person who appeared to be the owner behind them, providing explanations.

"Sir, please feel free to look around..."

When the shopkeeper saw the shape of the object wrapped in newspaper in Zhuang Rui's hand, his eyes lit up. He quickly came over to greet him. Judging from the shape of the object in Zhuang Rui's hand, it was definitely a sword or similar item.

"Sir, my shop has everything from bronze weapons from the Western Zhou to the Qin and Han dynasties, to antique swords and knives from the Tang, Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasties. Whatever you're interested in, I can find it for you, and I guarantee it's genuine..."

The boss spoke in a low voice, glancing left and right, before continuing, "I have connections that specialize in this, and I can guarantee these things are absolutely genuine..."

"Okay, let me take a look first, boss, you go ahead and get busy..."

Zhuang Rui nodded noncommittally, his eyes falling on the rows of swords and knives displayed on the shelves.

"Alright, if you see something you like, just tell me. I can tell you you're an expert, so to be honest, everything on this shelf is genuine, while the rest are antique swords and knives. Don't be fooled by their good appearance, they're all fake..."

The shop owner seemed honest, which gave Zhuang Rui a good impression. Of all the antique shops he had visited, this was the first person to admit that his shop had fakes. Other shop owners would have loved to say that all the items in their shops were taken from the Forbidden City.

Zhuang Rui didn't know much about miscellaneous items like swords, but he did know the most basic things. Ancient swords were all forged by hand, and the craftsmanship was extremely exquisite. Some of the techniques are still impossible to replicate today.

However, due to the limitations of the materials used in swords, they are all made of copper and iron and have no anti-corrosion measures. After thousands of years, they will inevitably develop copper and iron rust. Even famous swords that have been passed down through the ages, such as Longquan, Tai'a, and Yuchang, are no exception.

Zhuang Rui started by looking at the replica swords that the shopkeeper had mentioned. Sure enough, although the swords had an antique design and were so bright they were almost reflective, a closer look revealed many traces of modern craftsmanship. Although Zhuang Rui was a layman when it came to these things, he could still see some clues.

"The owner of this place is a kind and honest person..."

After using his spiritual energy to identify them, Zhuang Rui gave the shop owner a review and then turned to look at the shelves of what the shop owner called antique swords and knives.

The swords on the shelves on the left are noticeably less shiny, and many of them are covered in heavy rust. Just by looking at them, one can almost hear the neighing of horses and the clanging of swords on the battlefield thousands of years ago!

Chapter 609 Swords and Blades (Part 3)

Zhuang Rui didn't immediately use his spiritual energy to investigate. Instead, he took out a pair of white gloves from his pocket and put them on. He then picked up the Japanese sword closest to him, which was in its sheath, and began to examine it carefully.

In appreciating antiques, hands-on experience is extremely important. As the master of Chinese studies whom Zhuang Rui once met, and who was also Mr. Jin's teacher, once said: "The reason I can point out the authenticity of an antique is because I know where the real ones are, and I've seen them before. The more I see, the more I can distinguish between the real and the fake..."

This master's words illustrate that with rich hands-on experience, one can sometimes naturally distinguish between genuine and fake items, because fake items lack that heavy sense of historical

vicissitude. Of course, these subtle differences are something that newcomers to the field cannot appreciate.

The katana Zhuang Rui is holding now is a typical Japanese sword. Zhuang Rui measured it with the scabbard and the sword itself; the length of the sword, including the hilt, is almost 1.7 meters, reaching from the ground all the way to his shoulder.

The katana is decorated with exquisite ornamentation. The clasp of the scabbard is inlaid with pure silver, and one side of the scabbard is engraved with samurai figures, flowers, insects, and birds.

The figures on the scabbard are somewhat blurred, as if they have been handled frequently and worn down to the point of being difficult to discern.

On the other side of the scabbard was carved an erotic scene: a Japanese woman loosening her clothes and wearing a wide belt, exuding charm and allure. Of course, in Zhuang Rui's eyes, it was incredibly seductive.

"Damn it, this has always been a tradition in island nations..."

Judging from the style of this samurai sword, it should be from the era of Toyotomi Hideyoshi around 1500 years ago. It has been preserved for five or six hundred years. If this sword is genuine, it is indeed very valuable.

With a "whoosh," Zhuang Rui drew his katana a few inches. A flash of light immediately caught his eye; the blade featured a famous, intricately detailed, multi-layered, dark-light pattern on its surface.

"My friend, what do you think of this knife?"

Although it looked like a real thing, Zhuang Rui didn't know much about these kinds of objects. He immediately sheathed his sword and prepared to examine it with his spiritual energy, but he was interrupted just as he was about to look at it.

Zhuang Rui looked up somewhat unhappily and saw a tall young man standing in front of him, dressed very fashionably and holding a samurai sword.

Upon seeing the knife in the man's hand, Zhuang Rui realized that the so-called genuine items his noodle shop owner had been selling were basically all samurai swords. He wondered where the man had gotten them from. Had he collected all the samurai swords he had seized from the Japanese during the war?

Thinking of this, Zhuang Rui felt a little doubt about the knife in his hand. There must be something strange about things that seem abnormal. Many things that seem illogical have their roots.

"Excuse me, let me introduce myself first. My surname is Huangfu, and my given name is Yun. I've been collecting antiques and swords for several years now, but I used to collect them abroad and rarely interacted with fellow collectors in China. I really hope to get to know you..."

Seeing that Zhuang Rui hadn't paid any attention to him for a while, Huangfu quickly introduced himself.

"Hello, my name is Zhuang Rui. Although I also enjoy collecting, I'm not into swords. We can exchange ideas on other items, but I wouldn't dare embarrass myself by showing off my swords..."

As the saying goes, one cannot hit a smiling face. Since this Huangfu Yun was so polite, Zhuang Rui felt embarrassed to treat him coldly and immediately revealed his own name.

While the two were talking, the shop owner stood by. For some reason, he walked over and said, "Gentlemen, you two continue your conversation. I'm going to make a phone call..."

"Boss Tu, you go ahead with your work, we'll take a look ourselves first..."

Huangfu seemed to know the boss well and waved his hand dismissively, while Zhuang Rui gave the chubby boss a meaningful look. Could this be a trap they were setting together?

In the antique trade, there are countless ways to set traps. While skills posing as customers or experts can lure people into buying fakes, such traps are now rare because the methods are too crude.

However, Zhuang Rui didn't think Huangfu was a shill, because he was too young. Judging from his appearance, he was probably several years younger than himself. Shills are usually cunning and shrewd, and it would be difficult for someone so young to keep the scene in check.

"Brother Huangfu, how long have you been in this line of work...?"

Zhuang Rui casually chatted with the person in front of him. Don't underestimate this casual chat; there's an art to it. Experts can learn about your background and origins from just a few words and even extend that knowledge to the items you've brought out. However, this involves a bit of (jianghu, a term referring to the world of martial arts and a code of honor among people).

Although Zhuang Rui was unfamiliar with this, the other party seemed to be a novice. After a few words, Zhuang Rui managed to find out the other party's background and realized that he was not a shill.

It turns out that Huangfu Yun is a graduate of Peking University and is actually a few years older than Zhuang Rui, but he looks younger.

After graduating with his bachelor's degree, Huangfu Yun went abroad to pursue a master's degree in law. He worked as a lawyer abroad for several years. At an overseas auction, he saw ancient Chinese swords and was immediately captivated by them.

Later, Huangfu Yun spent tens of thousands of yuan to buy that antique sword, and from then on, he became completely obsessed with collecting antique swords, both domestic and foreign.

According to Huangfu Yun, he is currently preparing to publish a book, which is a catalog of sword collecting in China, filling a gap in the domestic catalog of antiques.

"Brother Huangfu, what do you think... are these samurai swords real or fake?"

After chatting, Zhuang Rui developed a good impression of this lawyer who didn't do his job properly. At least he was a green card holder who was still a red heart despite his green skin. He was thinking about bringing foreign treasures back to China, which was much better than those smugglers of cultural relics.

"Hehe, in my opinion, this is a batch of samurai swords from the era of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in Japan. According to the owner here, he acquired them from a Japanese family, so the credibility is very high. I bought two a while ago, and now that the owner has received some more, I'm here to take a look..."

Huangfu Yun had a smooth life since childhood and built his own business after growing up, so he spoke with great confidence and almost asserted that these swords and knives were genuine.

Upon hearing this, Zhuang Rui shook his head almost imperceptibly. When he had his doubts, he used his spiritual energy to examine the batch of samurai swords. The result surprised Zhuang Rui. All of these swords were fakes, and the internal structure of the swords was made by mechanical pressing and then reforging and polishing the patterns, and then artificially aging them.

The person who made this batch of samurai swords must be an expert with a deep understanding of the history and style of Japanese swords. At the very least, Zhuang Rui had already misjudged them before he used his spiritual energy to examine them. If he were a sword collector, he might have bought one.

"Brother Huangfu, how much did you pay for these two knives?" Zhuang Rui asked.

Huangfu Yun glanced around, lowered his voice, and whispered, "Two for 500,000. The owner originally asked for 500,000 per sword, but I managed to negotiate it down. Brother Zhuang, if you like one later, we can try to lower the price a bit more..."

Zhuang Rui looked at the well-meaning guy, swallowed hard, and asked, "Two... 500,000 RMB?"

Damn it, even though you're making US dollars, you can't just waste money like this! This knife? Zhuang Rui might buy two for fifty dollars each, at least they'd be decorative if hung at home. But five hundred thousand? Only when Zhuang Rui's brain is fried would he be able to buy it.

"Yes, very few 15th-century samurai swords like this exist. At a New York auction last year, a nearly identical samurai sword sold for \$180,000, and it wasn't even in as good condition as the one here. Luckily, I missed that auction, or I would have lost a lot of money..."

Huangfu Yun looked extremely relieved, which made Zhuang Rui both laugh and cry. Dude, you might as well have spent that 180,000 yuan. It wouldn't have been as upsetting as buying these two broken knives forged with modern technology, would it?

"Brother Huangfu..."

Just as Zhuang Rui was about to point out a few flaws in the knife, he suddenly saw the shop owner walk out through the back door. He quickly changed his tune, saying, "I really don't know much about antique knives and swords. I just bought a couple outside to play around with, and I came in to browse after seeing the name of this shop. You don't need to take my opinion into consideration; just choose what you like..."

They all make a living in Panjiayuan, so Zhuang Rui absolutely cannot say whether these things are real or fake. Otherwise, it would be a big taboo to ruin someone's livelihood. Although this boss doesn't know Zhuang Rui now, he might meet him in the future, and Zhuang Rui doesn't want to make an enemy who will be remembered by him.

However, Zhuang Rui still subtly hinted to Huangfu Yun that there was a saying often heard in the antique trade: "Just do what you like." This is usually said to comfort those who have been fooled and paid their dues. If Huangfu Yun is perceptive enough, he might be able to understand it.

Just as Zhuang Rui finished speaking, his phone rang. He took out his phone, greeted Huangfu Yun and the shop owner, and leisurely went out to answer the call.

He had said all he could. If Huangfu Yun were to fall for it again, the loss this time would probably be more than 500,000. There were at least seven or eight samurai swords there, and the loss might not even be less than 2 million.

The call was from Zhao Hanxuan. He had heard from Monkey that Zhuang Rui had come to Panjiayuan. Old Zhao was very dissatisfied with Zhuang Rui's behavior of passing by his own home without going in, so he called to complain for a few minutes until Zhuang Rui said he was coming over, and then the other end of the phone hung up.

"Brother Zhuang, Brother Zhuang, slow down, slow down, wait for me..."

Zhuang Rui had just squeezed into the crowd when he heard Huangfu Yun's voice coming from behind. He turned around and saw that the guy had just walked out of the store empty-handed.

Chapters 610-611 Cutting Iron Like Mud (Part 1)

"Brother Huangfu, what's wrong? Didn't you buy anything?"

Zhuang Rui turned around and saw the shop owner still standing at the door. Not wanting to say much, he casually asked a question.

"Come again next time. I'd like to get to know Brother Zhuang today. Come on, let's talk as we walk..."

Huangfu Yun, being a lawyer by profession, was no less adept at reading people than Zhuang Rui. With his back to "Daojianzhai," he gave Zhuang Rui a wink, and the two of them squeezed into the crowd together.

"Damn it, why did they have to come now of all times? What bad luck..."

The shop owner who had just escorted Huangfu Yun out had long since lost his smile. He spat at their retreating figures, cursing inwardly with resentment.

The samurai swords in his shop are indeed fake; they were all custom-made in Hebei and Tianjin, where there are craft factories that specialize in making antique swords for home decoration.

The shop owner originally ordered two swords, but unexpectedly met Huangfu Yun and made up a story about acquiring them from a fallen Japanese family. He actually sold them for a high price of 500,000. This gave him a taste of success, so he quickly ordered more than 10 more swords and arranged for Huangfu Yun to come and see the goods today. However, Huangfu Yun left without even finishing looking at the swords in order to get to know Zhuang Rui.

Of course, Zhuang Rui behaved properly in the store, so the shop owner didn't suspect anything. He arranged another time to see the goods with Huangfu Yun, but the deal didn't go through, and the shop owner was a little uneasy about it.

"Boss, this isn't fair of you. You're just hanging around Panjiayuan without even showing up at your own shop. That's unacceptable! You need to give me an explanation..."

As soon as Zhuang Rui stepped into the gate of "Xuanrui Zhai", he was blocked by Zhao Hanxuan. Old Zhao was a person who loved making friends, otherwise he would not have suffered losses and been deceived because of making friends. During this period of time, he had become good friends with Zhuang Rui, so he spoke very casually.

"Xiao Zhuang, you're here..."

Master Ge, who was sitting behind the seal stone, quickly stood up and greeted Zhuang Rui when he saw him. He didn't dare to speak like Zhao Hanxuan. In the old society, Zhuang Rui would have to call him "boss".

"What's the explanation? You guys should find somewhere to eat tonight, the restaurant will pay for it. By the way, where's Da Xiong?"

Zhuang Rui went into the store and took a look, only to find that apart from the monkey and another employee, Da Xiong was not there.

Zhao Hanxuan smiled and said, "Send that kid to get the goods. Let him explore the distribution channels more often so he can get up to speed faster..."

"Old Zhao, you're practically forcing me to give you a raise..."

Zhuang Rui patted Zhao Hanxuan on the shoulder with some frustration. It seemed that the old man hadn't given up on his idea of going out on his own. But that wasn't surprising. Who wouldn't want to be a boss and be someone else's employee?

"Let's not talk about this, let's not talk about this. I've been selling myself to you for two years..."

Zhao Hanxuan smiled and changed the subject. Noticing that Zhuang Rui was followed by another person, he asked, "Boss, who is this...?"

"Hey, look, we almost forgot about our distinguished guest..."

Zhuang Rui slapped his forehead and stepped aside, saying, "I met Huangfu Yun when we were looking at the items earlier. He's a top American lawyer, and also an expert in antiques and swords..."

"Brother Zhuang, please stop making fun of me. You call yourself an expert? You're embarrassing yourself. By the way, should I call you Boss Zhuang?"

Huangfu Yun stood quietly behind Zhuang Rui. To be honest, he was also very curious about Zhuang Rui's identity. How could someone a few years younger than him own such a large shop in Panjiayuan?

Zhuang Rui smiled and waved his hand, saying, "No, I'm not a good enough boss. Please just call me 'brother'..."

"Brother Zhuang, you are the real expert! You must have been holding back just now. There are truly hidden talents in this country..."

Remembering Zhuang Rui's words at "Daojianzhai," Huangfu Yun's confidence in the two samurai swords he'd bought for 500,000 yuan began to wane.

Actually, Huangfu Yun was a little doubtful at the time, but while inspecting the goods, an elderly man who spoke Japanese was also interested in buying them and negotiated the price with Huangfu Yun several times. Huangfu Yun didn't think much of it and bought them directly.

Looking back now, however, he found many suspicious points. Moreover, after he bought two samurai swords, more than ten more suddenly appeared, which aroused Huangfu Yun's suspicions. However, people are often blinded by their own involvement. It was only after Zhuang Rui's guidance that Huangfu Yun gradually expanded his doubts.

Huangfu Yun was right. The Japanese old man's identity was indeed real, but he was a shill hired by the shop owner. This shows how much effort antique shops nowadays put into creating a scam. Just hiring that temporary actor cost the shop owner a considerable sum.

Of course, that accomplice has probably already returned to Japan, so there's no way to prove it now. Even if Huangfu Yun goes to the shop owner, he can't do anything about it.

Antiques are always sold out immediately, and the invoice is issued as a craft item, so Huangfu Yun has no way to settle accounts later. When setting up a trap, especially for shop owners, they will never leave any loose ends.

"What happened? Did someone hook you up? How much did you lose?"

Zhao Hanxuan was very perceptive about this matter. As soon as he heard the conversation between the two, he knew that Huangfu Yun had probably been set up.

"Probably around 500,000. There are so many fakes in China these days..."

Huangfu Yun sighed. He had started collecting swords and knives abroad and thought there would be more genuine ones left in China. Who knew that he would suffer a big loss on his first attempt.

Zhao Hanxuan had come to terms with it by now. After hearing Huangfu Yun's words, he said self-deprecatingly, "Brother, just consider it a lesson learned from spending 500,000 yuan. I was scammed out of 8 million yuan, and even this shop has changed hands..."

Huangfu Yun was unaware of this matter. When pressed for details, he shook his head repeatedly, admitting he was truly lucky to have encountered Zhuang Rui on his second attempt; otherwise, he would likely have had to throw even more money into the scheme.

However, Huangfu Yun was still completely baffled as to how Zhuang Rui distinguished between the real and fake swords. He then looked at Zhuang Rui and asked, "Brother Zhuang, I noticed that you only looked at the scabbard and didn't examine the inside closely. How did you know that there was something wrong with the sword?"

"Let's go to the inner room to talk, and I'll let you see what I just bought..."

Seeing that there were quite a few people in the shop, Zhuang Rui greeted Master Ge and led Huangfu Yun into a private room. Zhao Hanxuan naturally followed, wanting to see what goodies Zhuang Rui had found this time.

"Brother Huangfu, please take a look at these two swords..."

After entering the cubicle, Zhuang Rui unwrapped the newspapers covering the two swords and carefully placed them on the table.

"Rusted like this? It's not worth much..."

Huangfu Yun frowned when he saw the two stick-like objects. He asked Zhuang Rui for a pair of gloves, put them on, and began to examine the knife.

"This should be an iron ring-pommel sword from the Han Dynasty, but the hilt is rotten and the blade is too oxidized to be worth polishing..."

Huangfu Yun had indeed put a lot of effort into swords. After a brief look, he took out the key he carried with him and poked around the hole of the ring-pommel sword, removing the rust and revealing the original hole for the ring.

"Hmm? I'm planning to polish this myself, it shouldn't be too difficult..."

Zhuang Rui bought a knife that wasn't very valuable; he planned to take it home and sharpen it with a sharpening wheel.

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Huangfu Yun quickly said, "Brother Zhuang, a good knife can't be sharpened haphazardly, or it will cause damage..."

"Oh? There's such a saying? Brother Huangfu, please tell me about it..."

Zhuang Rui knows a little about porcelain restoration, but he knows absolutely nothing about sword preservation. Sword collecting has only become popular in recent years, and even Uncle De doesn't know much about this kind of antique.

“Brother Zhuang, when sharpening swords, if you're not a professional, you can easily grind away the hard steel coating on the surface. That would change the entire shape of the sword, which is a big no-no...”

It was rare for Huangfu Yun to exchange knowledge about sword collecting with others, so he began to speak eloquently. There was no precedent for sword collecting, and what Huangfu Yun said was all the experience he had accumulated over the years, which greatly broadened the knowledge of Zhuang Rui and Zhao Hanxuan.

It turns out that while polishing can restore the beautiful patterns to antique swords, these patterns are not inherent to the swords themselves. Although they may look nice, they lose the unique charm of antique swords, and thus their value is greatly reduced in the eyes of experts.

In Japan, a skilled sword polisher charges \$100 for polishing a sword to one inch in length. It can take up to half a month to process a single sword, and the effort required is beyond the imagination of most people. It's not as simple as just taking it for a quick polishing and maintenance to restore its original brilliance.

There's a story in the antique trade about an antique dealer who went to the countryside to collect items. He took a fancy to a small hexagonal sandalwood table in a villager's house, so he bought it for a high price of 20,000 yuan, intending to take it away the next day.

To my surprise, when I arrived at the villager's house the next day, the square table, which had originally been covered in a thick patina and was simple and elegant, looked brand new, with the smell of undried paint still on it.

The antique dealer was immediately taken aback. When he asked what had happened, it turned out that the fellow villager felt bad that the other party had bought the old table for 20,000 yuan. So that night, he found some sandpaper, sanded the entire square table, and then painted it again, feeling that he had done justice to the 20,000 yuan.

However, this caused the antique dealer to beat his chest in frustration. In the end, he left without paying and turned away. This is the consequence of improper antique preservation.

The preservation of antique swords and knives is also very particular, even more so than that of calligraphy and paintings.

Generally speaking, many sword collectors like to use rust remover. However, for weapons from before the Song Dynasty, especially swords inlaid with gold and silver, rust remover will expand once it gets into the crevices, which will damage the original structure.

According to Huangfu Yun's experience, after the swords have been polished, it is best to wipe them frequently and not to apply any chemicals. Ideally, when not handling them, use a vacuum packaging machine to coat the swords with a layer of protective material.

After listening to Huangfu Yun's explanation, Zhuang Rui learned a lot. However, of the two swords, the ring-pommel sword was not very valuable, while the other one did not need to be polished.

"Brother Zhuang, you still haven't told us where those samurai swords are fake?"

Although Huangfu Yun was fairly certain that the samurai swords were fake, they looked exactly like the real ones. He couldn't shake the unease until he figured it out.

Zhuang Rui smiled and said, "Brother Huangfu, may I ask you, if these swords from over 500 years ago are in such good condition, do they need to be wiped clean frequently?"

Huangfu Yun replied, "Of course. Before vacuum packaging, we had to wipe it down at least every three to five days. I noticed the wear marks on the scabbard; they looked like they were caused by excessive wiping..."

"Hmm, wiping them every three to five days for 500 years shows that the master must have valued these samurai swords very much. Brother Huangfu, think about it, would the master not understand the value of these swords? Would he have let that shop owner buy them so easily?"

Zhuang Rui laughed loudly upon hearing this, and then said, "Brother Huangfu, we can make a bet. You can have the two knives you've already bought tested for carbon-14. If they're genuine, then it's not too late to buy the others..."

Japan has many connections with Europe and America, and the collection of antique swords originated in Europe and America. If a Japanese family wants to sell this batch of samurai swords, their first choice would definitely be European and American auction houses, without a doubt. Therefore, from this point of view, it is almost possible to deduce the authenticity of this batch of samurai swords.

Huangfu Yun pondered Zhuang Rui's words carefully, and the more he thought about it, the more reasonable they seemed. Finally, he stood up, bowed to Zhuang Rui, and said, "Brother Zhuang, hearing your words is worth more than ten years of study. Huangfu is ashamed..."

It is true that Huangfu Yun has a deep understanding of swords and antiques, but his research is more from a technical perspective. However, the counterfeiters of antiques nowadays can make them so realistic that they are almost impeccable in terms of technique.

This is also why Huangfuyun has not systematically studied antique appreciation. To appreciate antiques, one must not only look at them from a professional perspective, but also look for flaws in the words of collectors and sellers, because the current counterfeiting technology is too realistic, and many high-quality imitations are really very difficult to distinguish.

Zhuang Rui's words guided Huangfu Yun to deduce from the most basic common sense that the shop owner's story would then fall apart.

"Damn it, they don't bother with foreigners, but they come to scam their own people..."

After Huangfu Yun understood the situation, he cursed angrily, but then his eyes lit up and he said, "The two I bought are pretty high-quality replicas. I'll take them abroad in a few days and see if I can get them auctioned in London..."

"This will work?"

Zhuang Rui was stunned by Huangfu Yun's words, but he wholeheartedly supported selling counterfeit goods overseas. He had had this idea before, and if it weren't for his poor hands-on skills, he would have liked to make a few Mona Lisa paintings to sell. Of course, it was just a thought in his mind.

"Hehe, those foreign appraisers don't really care about cultural background; they just trust their instruments and their own eyes. These two items should have a starting bid of around \$50,000. I doubt they'll do carbon-14 dating. They'll just take them and try to bluff their way through, maybe they'll be able to..."

Huangfu Yun chuckled. Over the past few years, he had been searching for antique swords and knives at auction houses in various countries. Sometimes he would sell some of his collection. He was quite familiar with some appraisers and was fairly confident in his abilities.

Zhuang Rui laughed and said, "That's great! If you have the connections, there are tons of fake stuff in China. You can just export them all to foreigners..."

"This is just a one-off thing, and whether it will work out is still uncertain..." Huangfu Yun dared not make any guarantees.

"Well, let's not talk about that anymore, Brother Huangfu. Why don't you take a look at the other sword..."

Zhuang Rui also knew that this matter was not so simple, otherwise domestic counterfeiters would have already extended their reach overseas.

In fact, Zhuang Rui didn't know that even abroad, there are a lot of fake Chinese antiques. The root cause is that in recent years, more people have gone abroad to buy things, and counterfeiters have also exported a lot of "modern handicrafts" to Europe and the United States.

Many people in China believe that cultural relics from abroad must be genuine. Based on this mentality, many people buy antiques in large quantities and bring them back to China. In fact, what they end up buying are still fakes.

"Okay, let me take a look at this sword first..."

There are very few people in China who collect antique swords and knives. Huangfu Yun felt that he had met a kindred spirit today, and immediately picked up the bronze sword to look at it again.

"This should be a bronze sword from before the Qin or Han dynasties, but I don't understand why it's covered in iron rust instead of copper rust..."

After observing it for a long time, Huangfu Yun handed the bronze sword, which was about two feet long, to Zhuang Rui's surgeon with a puzzled look on his face.

Upon hearing Huangfu Yun's words, Zhuang Rui secretly admired him. He hadn't noticed this before, but he was slightly puzzled as to why the patterns on the bronze sword were so clear under the rust. After hearing Huangfu Yun's explanation, Zhuang Rui understood.

"Hehe, Brother Huangfu, today I'll show you an unparalleled sword..."

Zhuang Rui had a better idea of what to do, so he asked Zhao Hanxuan to bring him a file and a roll of gauze.

"Brother Zhuang, you wouldn't just leave like this..."

When Huangfu Yun saw Zhuang Rui holding a file and scraping the hilt of a sword, he was dumbfounded. He had repaired many antique swords, but he had never seen Zhuang Rui do something so unskilled before.

As for the peerless sword Zhuang Rui mentioned, Huangfu Yun scoffed at it, saying that it was so rusted that even if it were polished, it would lose its sharpness.

"It's alright, just you wait and see..."

Instead of filing the sword as Huangfuyun had expected, Zhuang Rui cleaned the rust off the hilt and then wrapped gauze around the copper handle to create a simple, hand-held hilt.

Zhuang Rui's next move puzzled Huangfu Yun and Zhao Hanxuan. He took the file and gently tapped the sword blade with little force. Every few inches, he would tap lightly. Because the rust covered almost the entire blade, the sound was very dull.

Zhao Hanxuan, being an insider himself, couldn't help but say after seeing Zhuang Rui's actions, "Boss, you don't actually think that tapping it like that will make the rust come off, do you? If so, this sword would definitely be a famous one like the Fish Intestine Sword..."

"Yes, famous swords like Zhanlu, Juque, Haocao, Chun Jun, and Longquan can indeed remain incorruptible and immortal, but this one..."

Huangfu Yun also shook his head, clearly not very optimistic about the sword in Zhuang Rui's hand.

"Immortal and incorruptible? Impossible, right?"

Zhuang Rui raised his head and asked in surprise. In his mind, no matter how good the swords were, they were just scrap metal after they were unearthed. Iron and copper are easy to rust, which is common knowledge. Every year, tens of millions of tons of iron around the world are corroded and turned into waste.

"Of course it can be incorruptible and immortal, didn't you know that?"

Seeing Zhuang Rui shake his head, Huangfu Yun realized that the person in front of him was an outsider. He then said, "You know about the swords made by King Goujian of Yue that were unearthed from the No. 1 Chu Tomb in Wangshan, Jiangling County, Hubei Province?"

Zhuang Rui had no idea about this. He shook his head. Huangfu Yun continued, "This sword has been buried underground for at least 2,400 years, but when it was unearthed, it was completely free of rust. The eight characters 'Yue King Goujian made this sword himself' are clearly visible on the sword. The glass inlaid on the sword and the smooth patterns on the guard are also completely undamaged."

The blades remained as sharp as ever, as if the past 2,000 years had passed in the blink of an eye, and the oxygen that filled the earth had had no effect on them...

In fact, not only the swords of Goujian found in the tomb of the King of Chu, but also the bronze swords from the Spring and Autumn Period unearthed at the foot of the Jishengtan Pagoda in Longquan, and the bronze swords from the same period excavated at the Jinshuitan construction site in Yunhe County, are all intact.

The Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum in Xi'an yielded a precious sword known as the Qin King's Sword, which further proves the superb craftsmanship of ancient Chinese sword-making.

The tomb was dark and damp, about 5 to 6 meters below the ground. The soil was damp. It had been lying in such a place for 2,000 years, but when it was unearthed, it was shiny black and had a cold, sharp gleam. It could cut through more than a dozen sheets of paper in one stroke, and it was extremely sharp.

"Holy crap, is this really true?"

Although Zhuang Rui spoke with doubt, he knew that this matter was not false, because it could be found out with a simple investigation. The main problem was that he had paid too little attention to news about the excavation of antique swords and knives in the past. This was not Zhuang Rui's fault. He had only been studying antique appreciation for a year at most, so how could he know the facts clearly?

"We've made a fortune! Damn, this is a huge windfall..."

When Zhuang Rui looked at the bronze sword in his hand, his eyes were filled with fervent desire. If what Huangfu Yun said was true, those famous swords were all incorruptible and immortal, then the bronze sword in his hand was very likely to be on the same level as famous swords such as Gan Jiang, Mo Xie, Long Yuan, and Yu Chang.

After tapping the bronze sword for nearly 20 minutes, Zhuang Rui stopped, smiled mysteriously at Huangfu Yun and Zhao Hanxuan, and said, "Gentlemen, watch closely, I'm going to perform a magic trick for you..."