

Golden 69

Chapter Sixty-Nine: A Horrifying Experience on the Grasslands (Part One)

No one expected that Zhou Rui would manage to acquire two guns in just two hours. It's well known that the country has extremely strict gun control; even in Tibet, these standard military-grade submachine guns are not something just anyone can obtain. However, seeing that Zhou Rui didn't seem inclined to explain the origin of the guns, no one pressed him for details. 0999.

"Which of you knows how to use a gun?"

Zhou Rui took out a gun and looked at the people in the car, asking them a question.

"I've hunted in Europe."

"I can do that too; I've practiced indoor shooting."

"I fired a gun during my university military training..."

Three voices rang out: Bai Meng'an, Qin Xuanbing, and Zhuang Rui. Liu Chuan remained silent because he still preferred the Remington hunting rifle he had brought with him.

"Bai Meng'an, you'll be riding in the same car with me later. We already have one gun, so this one will be given to them. Brother Zhuang, remember to keep the safety on all the time. If you don't see me fire, don't fire either."

After looking at Qin Xuanbing and Zhuang Rui's faces for a while, Zhou Rui handed the gun to Zhuang Rui and gave him a few more instructions. In his opinion, the delicate young girl was obviously not as reliable as Zhuang Rui.

Bai Meng'an, who was standing next to him, was a little annoyed but had nothing to say. He also wanted to ride in a Hummer, but he was too embarrassed to say so.

"Keep one of these in your car so everyone can stay in touch. Once you enter the grasslands, there will be no cell phone signal..."

Zhou Rui then took out two walkie-talkies from his person and handed one of them to Zhuang Rui.

Seeing Zhou Rui's serious attitude towards this trip to northern Tibet, Liu Chuan and the others, who had been laughing and joking, also stopped smiling and became serious.

Zhuang Rui and his group traveled the Sichuan-Tibet route, which traverses the Hengduan Mountains. During the rainy season, mudslides are frequent, and in winter, heavy snow often closes the mountain passes. The weather along the way is unpredictable, with temperatures often reaching seven or eight degrees Celsius at midday, only to plummet to below -10 degrees Celsius at night. 0shux.com

However, the Sichuan-Tibet Highway is undoubtedly the most scenic route after entering Tibet by land. It is shortly after the beginning of spring, and the earth is gradually reviving. The low hills and plains in front of you are covered with greenery and blooming wildflowers. Only the snow-capped mountains in the distance are still covered with snow all year round. The white clouds floating in the blue sky seem to be connected with the white snow.

We had already driven over 200 kilometers out of Litang County and entered the Tibetan region. Mangkang County in Tibet was just a few dozen kilometers ahead. The terrain was now much lower, and the chest tightness and shortness of breath that everyone had experienced in Litang had lessened considerably.

The scenery along the way was truly beautiful. Qin Xuanbing kept taking pictures with a high-magnification camera in her hand. Zhuang Rui was very skeptical that she could capture the scene while traveling at nearly 100 kilometers per hour.

Mangkang County is a city mainly based on animal husbandry. The blue sky and white clouds outside the car window, as well as the cattle and sheep moving slowly in the distance, formed a series of beautiful pictures. Although the people in the car had not slept in bed for two whole days, looking at the scene in front of them still gave them a refreshing and pleasant feeling. The sound of camera shutters clicking could be heard from time to time in the car.

"Zhuang Rui, Zhuang Rui, please respond if you hear me, please respond if you hear me."

Zhuang Rui, who was resting with his eyes half-closed in the passenger seat, suddenly heard the walkie-talkie next to the gearbox crackle once, and then Zhou Rui's voice came through.

"I am Zhuang Rui. Please speak."

Zhuang Rui picked up the walkie-talkie and replied.

"Let's go into Mangkang County for a meal and put the guns away!"

"clear!"

After answering, Zhuang Rui reclined his seat, picked up the Type 56 assault rifle that had been at his feet, crouched down, walked into the carriage, opened the safety compartment, and placed the rifle inside.

"Hey, there's a gun here."

Bai Mengyao, with her sharp eyes, spotted Liu Chuan's Remington hunting rifle and shouted loudly.

"That's what I brought, hehe. Don't think only Zhou Rui knows about the dangers of Tibetan wolves!"

"I'm driving," Liu Chuan said smugly, his hands busy as he followed the Desert Prince onto a side road and into Mangkang County.

Zhou Rui seemed quite familiar with Mangkang County, driving directly to the entrance of a restaurant. The restaurant didn't have private rooms, so everyone had to sit in the main hall. All they could hear was Tibetan, which they couldn't understand or speak, so Zhou Rui ordered the food.

"Brother Zhuang, look how barbaric they are, they even eat raw meat."

Bai Mengyao remained seated close to Zhuang Rui, her eyes glancing at the Tibetan men at the next table, and whispered something in Zhuang Rui's ear.

Zhuang Rui felt a tingling sensation near his ear, and the fragrance of a young girl filled his nose. His heart skipped a beat. When he looked at Bai Mengyao again, she was already sitting upright. Qin Xuanbing's eyes were also glancing in his direction. Zhuang Rui knew that he had been tricked by the girl again. He couldn't help but smile bitterly. Bai Mengyao had really tormented him along the way.

Throughout the journey, Bai Mengyao almost constantly called him "Brother Zhuang," and occasionally made some intimate gestures, which made Qin Xuanbing and Lei Lei look at him strangely. Zhuang Rui had not spent much time with girls, and although he was in a gentle embrace, he was suffering terribly.

Ignoring Bai Mengyao, Zhuang Rui looked at the table next to him. Those people were indeed eating raw meat, or more precisely, a raw leg of lamb. Each of them held a small knife, selecting the most delicious parts, cutting them frequently, and using the tip of the knife to pick them into their mouths. Their technique was very skillful, and they ate with great relish and rhythm. A large piece of meat with bone was quickly eaten clean, leaving only a skeleton.

Zhou Rui had already ordered the food. He had somehow overheard Bai Mengyao's words to Zhuang Rui and explained, "That's normal. Tibetans have a different food culture than us. Beef and mutton are their staple foods. They mainly smother cattle to keep the blood inside, which makes the meat tender. However, fewer people eat raw meat now. This restaurant in Mangkang is the only one that still preserves this tradition, so I brought you here to see it."

"Brother Zhou, you're not going to make us eat raw meat too, are you?"

Bai Mengyao asked with a bitter face, and the people next to her nodded repeatedly. They couldn't accept this custom. Even Liu Chuan, a foodie, stared wide-eyed at it, let alone eat it.

"Hehe, no, today I'm bringing you the 'Four Treasures' of Tibetan cuisine."

Perhaps because they were all young, Zhou Rui had been talking more than before these past few days. Seeing everyone's puzzled looks, he explained, "Butter, tea, tsampa, and beef and mutton are the four treasures of Tibet. However, some people may not be used to them. If you don't like them, you can eat something else first."

Not long after, the shop's waiters served butter tea, with a large bowl in front of each person. The tea was thick and soupy, with some oil floating on top. Zhuang Rui had long heard that butter tea was exceptionally nutritious, so he picked up the bowl and took a sip. He immediately felt a warm sensation throughout his body. After finishing the bowl of tea, the slight dizziness, shortness of breath, and palpitations he had experienced earlier due to altitude sickness all disappeared.

Then the dishes were served: hand-pulled beef and mutton, cold yak tongue salad, steamed buns, sweet tea, milk tea, yogurt, grilled sausages, and dried meat, all piled high on the table. The staple food was tsampa, but you had to mix it with butter tea by hand. Everyone felt it wasn't very hygienic, so no one ate it. Only Zhou Rui ate it with relish.

After finishing their meal, it was already past 1 p.m. They planned to stay overnight in Baxu County when it got dark. This stretch of road was not easy to travel. Before leaving, Zhou Rui actually bought two freshly slaughtered and skinned lambs, wrapped them in tarpaulin, and threw them into the trunk of the off-road vehicle.

Starting from Mangkang, they crossed the Jioba Mountain, which has an altitude of over 4,000 meters, and traversed the Nujiang Bridge. The scenery along the way was picturesque. Although the journey would definitely take longer than planned, Zhuang Rui still felt it was worthwhile. Here, he felt his soul was pure, as if the clear breeze and white snow could wash away the dust from people's hearts.

It was nearly midnight when they arrived in Baxu County. The group of people who had just arrived in Tibet were all exhausted. Although both cars had good shock absorption, they had been bumping around on the mountain roads for more than ten hours and their bodies felt like they were falling apart. Even Bai Meng'an, who was quite picky about hygiene, fell asleep as soon as he lay down on the bed after entering the guesthouse arranged by Zhou Rui.

The next morning, around six o'clock, Zhou Rui woke everyone up. They were heading to Nagqu that day, which would take two days if all went smoothly. This meant they would have to spend the night on the road. If they were unlucky and couldn't find any herders, they would have to sleep on the grasslands. Therefore, they had to leave early and try to find a herder's family where they could stay before dark.

"Brother Zhou, it looks like we won't be able to find these herders. We'll just have to make do in the car for the night."

Zhuang Rui was in Zhou Rui's Desert Prince at the moment. He couldn't stand Bai Mengyao's harassment anymore and saw through the girl's thoughts, so he simply suggested that he and Bai Meng'an switch cars for a while. Bai Meng'an naturally did not refuse, but now it was already dark and they still hadn't seen anyone.

“There used to be a tribe around here, but they’ve probably moved away. Everyone should be careful at night; we’ll take turns keeping watch.”

Zhou Rui's expression was not good. According to his original plan, he was going to stay overnight at the herdsmen's home, but given the current situation, that was impossible. This was a small road that ran across the grassland from Basu to Nagqu. Perhaps because no vehicles had passed through for a long time, the dirt road was covered with withered grass, making it difficult to see the road ahead.