

## Golden 921

### Chapter 921 Hui Ge's Ambition

Most yachts have winches, but when fishing for sharks, you obviously can't hold the fishing rod by hand. After Huo Jiang had been busy for a while, several large hooks, each with a bloody chunk of flesh on it, were tied to a thick rope and thrown into the sea.

Mr. Jervis was unwillingly given a sea burial. The former gambling king, who once dominated the gambling world, ended up in such a miserable state, just as the old saying goes, "When you're in the gambling world, you're bound to get hurt."

"Big brother, are we really going to Africa?"

Prior to this incident, Liu Minghui had indeed bought an island in Africa, and the island was beautiful, but it cost him a lot of money.

However, the tens of millions of dollars he extorted from Jervis were far from enough to allow him to live the life of an island owner in paradise. Even if the island were developed, these guys would probably only be able to live like African natives.

"Go to Africa?"

Liu Minghui glared at Huo Jiang. Although he had misjudged the situation this time, leading to the entire organization running out of funds, the prestige he had accumulated over the past one or two decades meant that Huo Jiang and the others still dared not blame Liu Minghui.

"Want to go to Africa to see the breasts of those African black women?"

Damn it, if they won't let us walk the straight path, then we'll become pirates...

Whether provoked by Zhuang Rui or not, Liu Minghui's fair face had been filled with murderous intent ever since they left Macau.

However, Liu Minghui's ancestors were indeed pirates. In the last century, it is unknown which generation of his grandfather was, but he followed Zhang Baozai across the seas, killing and arson, and living a life of drinking wine and eating meat in large quantities.

When Zhang Baozai was later recruited into the army, Liu Minghui's ancestors were unwilling to be controlled. Although they also left the military, they somehow ended up in the world of gambling.

Hui's father and grandfather used to boast to him about their ancestors' pirate exploits, but Hui preferred a more technical approach and always looked down on straightforward plundering. However, this time, he seems to have been spurred on, and the idea of becoming a pirate has actually taken root in his mind.

Over the years, Liu Minghui has been active in Southeast Asia and is very familiar with the waters there. In order to hide their tracks, they have strongholds on several uninhabited islands. Now that they don't want to go to Africa, Liu Minghui immediately thought of the path of piracy.

"Big brother, where are we going to become pirates? The Caribbean?"

Fire's favorite movie is "Pirates of the Caribbean." Hearing his boss's words, he was so excited he almost jumped for joy.

"Caribbean? You've been watching too many movies."

Hui Ge kicked out, and Huo Jiang dared not dodge, taking the kick head-on. Fortunately, Liu Minghui was weak, and the kick did not seriously injure Huo Jiang.

"Hey, third brother, go to Malacca. Contact a shipyard you're familiar with and find a way to buy an old cargo ship. Then refurbish it, make sure it has enough horsepower. Fifth brother, you know the black market for arms, buy some weapons. Damn it, from now on, we're pirates..."

As Liu Minghui was speaking, the thick fishing rod in front of him suddenly moved. Brother Hui quickly leaned out to look into the sea and saw a shark's fin slicing across the surface of the water like a knife.

"Quickly, hurry up and pull back the cable! Damn it, I'm going to kill you, and I'll fry you, boil you, and cook you all over the place..."

Hui's eyes were bloodshot, and the bloodthirsty impulse in his heart was completely aroused. Perhaps in his heart, he had already regarded the unlucky Jervis and the shark as Zhuang Rui, who had driven him to a dead end.

...

Achoo! Who's thinking of me?

Coincidentally, Zhuang Rui is also currently at sea.

However, the boat Zhuang Rui was on was hundreds or even thousands of times larger than Hui Ge's luxury yacht. The distance between the ship's side and the sea surface was equivalent to seven or eight stories. If someone jumped directly into the sea from the boat, they would probably be killed by the shockwave.

After having a simple lunch with Wei Ge and the others, Zhuang Rui returned to his booked room to rest. He slept for three or four hours, and as it gradually got dark, Mr. He sent someone to pick him up and take him to the dock.

"Uncle Ming, what can I do for Mr. He?"

Zhuang Rui had just boarded the ship via the elevator when the person who came to pick him up was none other than the old dealer from the morning's betting match with Jervis. Hearing others call him Uncle Ming, Zhuang Rui started calling him that too.

Seeing the respect and awe shown to Uncle Ming by the people around him, Zhuang Rui understood that the old croupier's identity was probably not just that of a croupier; at the very least, he was one of Mr. He's confidants.

"Mr. Zhuang, just call me Lao He, I don't dare to use your title..."

Uncle Ming had changed his clothes and looked like a butler, but everyone treated him with utmost respect, both in the car and on the ship.

"Uncle Ming, you are old enough to deserve this. By the way, Mr. He..."

"Mr. Zhuang, I don't know what Mr. He wants to see you about. You'll understand when we meet again..."

Uncle Ming interrupted Zhuang Rui with a smile. Actually, he was also a little puzzled. He hadn't been to the gambling table for at least four or five years. He wondered why Mr. He valued this young man so much and had him personally preside over the gambling game.

Having been rebuffed by Uncle Ming, Zhuang Rui didn't press the matter further. Instead, he strolled along, admiring the seascape. They had boarded the ship at the stern and were now heading towards the bow along the deck. The ship was a couple hundred meters long, and it would take them quite a while to walk there.

"Peng Fei, if we had a ship like that, wouldn't it be so much fun to go out to sea..."

Standing on the ship, high above the sea, Zhuang Rui could clearly see the beautiful sunset in the distance. The fiery red sun was not dazzling at all as it set, but it painted the surrounding sea and clouds like fiery clouds, which was exceptionally beautiful.

Only a large ship like this can offer such a beautiful view. If it were Brother Hui's yacht, you could only see a few rays of the setting sun sinking into the sea.

"Brother Zhuang, didn't you just win some money? Why don't you use it to build a ship like this? We can go visit Pirate Island anytime. With a ship like this, we won't be afraid of any storms at sea..."

During the days that Peng Fei spent searching for Zhuang Rui at sea in his luxury yacht, he suffered enough from the rough seas.

Don't be fooled by the yacht's ocean-going capabilities; when a wave crashes in, being inside feels like riding a roller coaster, and people with weak hearts can't handle the thrill.

Peng Fei, on the other hand, enjoyed himself for more than a month. When he got ashore, he was so tired that he could barely walk. So when he saw this big ship, Peng Fei encouraged Zhuang Rui to buy one as well.

"Buying one of these isn't out of the question..."

Upon hearing Peng Fei's words, Zhuang Rui stopped and began to think seriously. He didn't want to sail such a ship back to Pirate Island, but rather he wanted to have such a large ship to conduct marine archaeology, which would be an extremely pleasant thing.

Zhuang Rui had also suffered from the waves before and knew that the ocean was unpredictable. If he used ordinary salvage ships to salvage the shipwrecks at the coordinates he had noted, who knew what risks they would encounter at sea.

But such large ships are different. As long as they don't crash into reefs and icebergs like the Titanic, they can practically sail across the five oceans. Even if the sea is rough, people living on the ship probably wouldn't feel much swaying.

Seeing Zhuang Rui stop and ponder, the old croupier didn't urge him, but smiled and said, "Mr. Zhuang, do you know how much this ship cost?"

"How much? It shouldn't be less than one billion Hong Kong dollars, right?"

Zhuang Rui raised an eyebrow. Judging from the old croupier's expression, it seemed he couldn't afford to build one. Zhuang Rui felt a little unconvinced.

Uncle Ming smiled and said, "This ship cost a total of HK\$3.2 billion and took two and a half years to launch. Moreover, there are more than 600 employees on board, and the monthly expenses alone amount to nearly HK\$10 million..."

"What?!"

Zhuang Rui was genuinely surprised this time. He knew about the Neptune gambling ship he had visited before, which cost HK\$6 billion to build. However, that ship was much larger than this one. Zhuang Rui never expected that the ship he was standing on would cost more than HK\$3 billion to build.

Moreover, the cost of ten million Hong Kong dollars per month is not something Zhuang Rui can afford. Ten million a month, that's more than one hundred million a year! Unless Zhuang Rui does nothing but spend his days salvaging shipwrecks on the ship, perhaps he can cover these expenses.

"Looks like I'm still poor, buddy..."

Zhuang Rui felt inferior to Mr. He's extravagance in using this multi-billion dollar ship as a private yacht, and immediately gave up the idea of using the whole ship as a salvage vessel, as it was simply beyond his reach.

Zhuang Rui was unaware that the ship was originally built by the gambling king to counter Ye Han's Princess gambling ship in Hong Kong. However, while the gambling saint was no match for the gambling king on land, Mr. He was indeed defeated by Ye Han at sea.

After incurring huge costs and being unable to recoup them, the gambling king eventually ended his business of gambling ships at sea, selling several of them. However, he kept the largest one, as with his net worth of hundreds of billions, maintaining such a ship was more than enough.

At the bow of the large ship, Mr. He, dressed in very light clothing, sat under a parasol, with a round table beside him filled with various fruits, and two women serving him on either side.

About twenty meters away from the gambling king, four men in black suits subtly surrounded the bow of the boat. When Zhuang Rui and his group arrived, they were checked by the men before being allowed to pass.

Zhuang Rui truly admired Mr. He. At over ninety years old, he could still have women on both sides. Even the notorious playboy Picasso would be ashamed of himself if he were alive today.

Uncle Ming stopped five or six meters away from Mr. He and said respectfully in a low voice, "Mr. He, Mr. Zhuang has arrived..."

Chapter 922 A Pie Falling from the Sky

The once imposing Uncle Ming, standing before the Gambling King, now stood with his hands hanging limply at his sides, his eyes fixed on the Gambling King's feet, avoiding eye contact with the frail, aged man.

Even the old dealer controlled his voice very well, keeping it low but just loud enough for the old gambling king to hear.

"Okay, go ahead, young man, come and sit down..."

The old gambling king was in good spirits today. He waved to the old dealer and gestured for Zhuang Rui to sit down next to him.

Seeing that Mr. He had sent the two women away, Zhuang Rui knew that Mr. He had something to say to him. He turned to Peng Fei and said, "Peng Fei, why don't you go take a walk over there..."

"Come on...come on, have some fruit..."

With a trembling right hand, Old He pushed a plate of clean grapes in front of Zhuang Rui, and continued, "When I was little, I loved eating these, and I could afford them back then. But later I couldn't afford them anymore, and for several years I couldn't afford grapes. Now, for me, being able to afford grapes is a very happy thing..."

Zhuang Rui was no stranger to the old man in front of him, who could be described as a living legend.

Although the gambling king was born into a prominent family in Hong Kong, his achievements and fame were not due to the protection of his ancestors. When he was young, his father went bankrupt and his family fell into decline. He experienced the harshness of life. In his youth, he fled to Macau to escape the

war. At that time, he only had 10 Hong Kong dollars in his pocket. He was empty-handed and survived many dangers. He won a fortune of millions.

In Hong Kong and Macau, everyone knows who the "King of Gambling" is when the name is mentioned. Mr. Ho controls assets worth as much as HK\$500 billion, and his personal wealth has reached HK\$70 billion.

One-third of the people in Macau benefit directly or indirectly from his company. Macau people call the gambling king the "uncrowned governor of Macau" and the "rice bowl master". He is the most powerful, most profitable, most famous and longest-reigning gambling king in the history of Macau gambling.

Such a legendary figure deserves Zhuang Rui's respect. Furthermore, the old man himself is extremely patriotic. To Zhuang Rui's knowledge, just this year, the gambling king spent nearly HK\$70 million to purchase a bronze horse head statue from the Yuanmingyuan and donated it to the nation.

Seeing that the old man seemed to be immersed in memories of the past, Zhuang Rui did not speak, but listened quietly. For an old man who has lived for nearly a century, every word he said was his understanding of life.

"Hey, when people get old, they like to talk about random things. Little one, are you getting annoyed listening to this?"

As the old man spoke, he suddenly chuckled self-deprecatingly. He had always been a strong-willed man, and even now, at over ninety years old, he still controlled that vast financial empire. Although he had many children, he rarely had the opportunity to relax and talk to someone so openly.

"Hehe, sir, it's no trouble at all. My grandfather seems to be a few years older than you, and he also enjoys talking to me..."

Zhuang Rui has always held the elderly in the highest esteem, especially those who have witnessed a century of true history. In their minds, there are too many truths unknown to the world.

When Zhuang Rui chatted with his grandfather, he often heard about historical events that were completely different from what was rumored outside. Although he was not a history major, archaeology and history are closely related, and Zhuang Rui always listened with great interest.

Therefore, Zhuang Rui listened with great interest to the gambling king's recollections, especially the difficult years he endured after fleeing from Hong Kong to Macau during the war years, which deeply moved Zhuang Rui.

Behind every successful person in this world are many unknown difficulties. Others only see the glamorous side of successful people, but few people know what kind of hardships they have gone through!

"Your grandfather is someone I greatly admire. The old general served in the military and sacrificed a great deal for the country and its people. Young man, please give him my regards when you get back. It's been quite a few years since I last saw the old general..."

The gambling king and Zhuang Rui's maternal grandfather were from the same era, and there are very few people from that generation still alive. When talking about Zhuang Rui's maternal grandfather, the old man sighed deeply.

"Mr. He, you have done a lot for the country, and the country will never forget it..."

Zhuang Rui smiled and said, "These elderly people, whether they hold high positions of power or are business leaders, may seem dignified, but they're actually very easy to get along with. They're much better than those low-ranking bureaucrats who put on airs all day."

I don't seek to be remembered by others, but only to have a clear conscience!

The old man smiled and shook his head, picked up a grape, and without peeling it, popped it into his mouth. After chewing a few times, he looked at Zhuang Rui and said, "Young man, do you know why I asked you to come here?"

To be honest, the gambling king has met countless people in his life and has seen many so-called geniuses, but he still can't see through this young man he has met a few times.

You might say Zhuang Rui is young and inexperienced? Yet, at just over twenty years old, he amassed a fortune of billions with his own hands, without relying on any family influence. This is a height that many people can only dream of reaching in their entire lives.

Zhuang Rui is supposed to be mature and steady, but sometimes he acts like a hot-blooded young man. Last time, he gambled with the shipping magnate just to win a few ancient paintings from China. This time, he spent hundreds of millions on a gamble just to vent his brother's anger.

There are people in this world who act whimsically, but the results are often surprising. The gambling king himself is such a person, and at this moment, he also categorizes Zhuang Rui as someone like himself.

Asking Zhuang Rui to guess the thoughts of this centenarian was less satisfying than letting him excavate the Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum. Therefore, Zhuang Rui simply cut to the chase, saying, "Grandpa, please tell me what you need. As long as it's within my capabilities, I will do my best to handle it..."

Zhuang Rui also noticed something amiss; the old gambling king seemed to have something to discuss with him. Considering the old man's advanced age and his concern for this gambling game, Zhuang Rui didn't mind helping him out this time.

Of course, being within one's capabilities is the major premise. If the old man wanted to open a casino in Beijing, Zhuang Rui didn't have that ability.

"Hehe, you're pretty smart, kid..."

Upon hearing this, the old man gave Zhuang Rui a deep look, seemingly talking to himself: "Ah Ming has been with me since he was twelve. He was an orphan, so he took my surname, He. When he was eighteen, Ah Ming was the best dealer in the Macau casinos. Over the years, almost all the dealers in Macau can be considered his apprentices and grand-apprentices..."

The old man spoke quite a bit in one breath, and was slightly out of breath. After a pause, he continued, "But few people know that Amin's gambling skills are also extremely high. He can shuffle a deck of cards almost however he wants, whatever kind of hand he wants to get. Young man, this isn't a movie; everything I'm saying is true..."

"Grandpa, why are you telling me this?"

Zhuang Rui was puzzled. Why did the conversation suddenly turn to the old croupier? Even if he were the world's gambling king, let alone a master of gambling, it had nothing to do with him.

After Zhuang Rui interrupted him, the old man was not angry. He just smiled at Zhuang Rui, a slightly mischievous smile curving his lips.

"Does Uncle Ming know how to gamble, and what about me...?"

Just as Zhuang Rui was about to continue speaking, a thought suddenly struck him. He remembered the gambling game from earlier that day, and his eyes widened in disbelief as he stared at the old gambling king.

"Grandpa... could it be... could it be that Uncle Ming shuffled the last hand of cards?"

Although Zhuang Rui had watched many gambling movies, he also knew that in real casinos, big hands like straight flushes and flushes were extremely rare. Some veteran gamblers might have gambled for half their lives and never even gotten such a hand.

After making the bet, Zhuang Rui simply attributed it to good luck and didn't dwell on the details. After all, he knew the hole cards, and even without a flush against a big hand like Fulhouse, Zhuang Rui was 100% confident of beating Jervis; it just meant it would take a little longer.

However, the old gambling king's words made Zhuang Rui realize that it wasn't because he was lucky, but because Uncle Ming shuffled the cards well.

However, this only made Zhuang Rui more confused. He had no relation to the old gambling king and had even indirectly offended him. Zhuang Rui really couldn't understand why the old man would help him so much.

"Amin shuffled the cards well, but you gambled even better. I have a feeling that even if Amin doesn't help you, you'll still be the one to win in the end..."

The old gambling king's slightly blue eyes were fixed on Zhuang Rui, as if trying to glean some clues from Zhuang Rui's eyes.

Zhuang Rui gave a wry smile and said, "Grandpa, you flatter me too much. But to be arrogant, I came here to win!"

"Oh? Why are you so confident?"

The old gambling king's eyes lit up. The person he knew with the best gambling skills was his old nemesis, Yip Hon. But even Yip Hon, the gambling saint of yesteryear, wouldn't dare to say he would definitely win before gambling. Otherwise, he wouldn't have lost millions in Las Vegas before gambling for three days and three nights to win back his losses with interest.

"I don't know why, but I'm just confident of winning. Maybe it's a sixth sense? I've always had a very keen sense of danger; it's what the ancients called being able to avoid misfortune and seek good fortune..."

Zhuang Rui knew that talking about how good his gambling skills were in front of the old man was pure nonsense, but the secret of his eyes was Zhuang Rui's biggest secret, which he had never even revealed to his mother, wife and children, so naturally he would never tell the old gambling king.

"Heh, a sixth sense?"

The old man chuckled noncommittally, pondered for a moment, then suddenly looked up and said, "Young man, what do you think of my boat?"

Zhuang Rui was a little slow to catch up with the old man's train of thought, and casually replied, "A ship? That's great. Apart from the Neptune, this is the biggest ship I've ever seen..."

"Alright, since you like it, I'll give you this boat..." the old man said with a smile.

"What?!"

Upon hearing the old gambling king's words, Zhuang Rui immediately jumped off the comfortable beach chair.

Although Zhuang Rui made his fortune through his supernatural ability, he never imagined that such a windfall would actually fall from the sky and land right on him.

Chapter 923 Gambling Cards (Part 1)

"Grandpa He, you...you're not joking, are you?"

Ever since Zhuang Rui learned that the ship cost over 3 billion yuan, he gave up the idea of building such a salvage vessel; the cost was simply too exorbitant.

If someone had a net worth of three or four billion, wouldn't it be a waste of time to go out to sea to salvage things? It's only because Zhuang Rui could see the treasures at the bottom of the sea that he came up with the idea of getting a salvage ship to plunder the ocean.

"Oh, do you think I, an old man, am joking with you?"

The old gambling king glanced at Zhuang Rui, reached out and picked up a grape, put it in his mouth and chewed it. After a while, he continued, "This ship has been idle for many years. I have no use for it. What's wrong with giving it to you to play with?"

Upon hearing this, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but curl his lip. "Your ship has been built for at least ten years, and I've never seen it given to anyone to play with. These days, if someone is being overly solicitous for no reason, they must be up to no good." Zhuang Rui became more vigilant but did not respond to the old man's words.

"What? You don't want it?"

The gambling king saw Zhuang Rui sitting there silently and asked him something strange.

"I want to raise them, but I can't afford it..."

Zhuang Rui was telling the truth. The maintenance and employee salaries alone would cost tens of millions a month. He really couldn't afford it. Apart from people like the gambling king with hundreds of billions in assets, there are probably not many people who can afford to maintain such a luxury ferry.

Zhuang Rui is now even starting to wonder if the old man feels that keeping the ship around is like having a chicken bone in his body, which is why he wants to get rid of it.

After all, it's useless every month, yet you still have to spend tens of millions. No matter how rich you are, you're not going to feel comfortable, right?

Zhuang Rui owns a private jet, which costs only a few hundred thousand yuan a month, but even that makes him feel a little pained. If he were to get a money-making ship like this, he probably wouldn't be able to sleep peacefully at night.

"That's true, there are a lot of idle people on this ship..."

The old gambling king deeply agreed with Zhuang Rui's words. Since the ship was withdrawn from international waters and its gambling business ceased, it had only occasionally been used to entertain guests in port. However, the old gambling king was sentimental and had kept all the crew members he had hired at high salaries.

The old gambling king knows the cost of hundreds of millions every year, and when Zhuang Rui said that, his brows furrowed.

"Actually, 100 people are enough for this ship. Young man, if you want it, I'll leave the captain and crew to you, and I'll arrange for the others. What do you think?"

Don't be fooled by how big this ship is; it's highly automated. It only takes a few dozen people to operate it. The 100 people the old gambling king mentioned actually include some cooks and cleaners, which are essential. Otherwise, the ship would grow mold after a month or two.

"Grandpa, please...please just tell me what you want from me. This ship...I really can't afford it..."

Zhuang Rui was a bit confused by this old man. He had met many people with strange tempers, but he had never seen someone trying to stuff billions of dollars into his arms. Wasn't he afraid that he would sell the ship?

The monthly expenses for 100 people should not exceed three million, which Zhuang Rui can afford. However, he dares not accept such a huge favor. Who knows what conditions the old gambling king will offer if he accepts the ship?

If there's such a thing as a free lunch, Zhuang Rui believes it, because you can get a free buffet in the casino. You just need to exchange a few chips, and even if you don't gamble, you can still have a free meal.

But Zhuang Rui didn't believe in the idea of a pie falling from the sky. Even if it did, it would be so high that it would either kill or seriously injure someone.

The old gambling king seemed a little embarrassed as he touched his distinctive nose and said, "Young man, I'm giving you a gift and you don't want it. I can't really offer you any other terms..."

"Sir, please feel free to ask for my help. I will do my best to fulfill it..."

Zhuang Rui was also a little curious. This old man was incredibly wealthy and powerful in Hong Kong and Macau; what could he possibly need his help with? However, Zhuang Rui didn't rule out anything: he would help if he could, and if he couldn't, then he would be sorry.

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, the old gambling king lowered his eyelids slightly, seemingly asleep. Just as Zhuang Rui was getting a little impatient, he suddenly opened his eyes, stared at Zhuang Rui, and said, "I want you to gamble for me in the name of SJM!"

"Wh...what?!"

Zhuang Rui wondered if he had misheard. The dignified gambling king who had been in charge of Macau for nearly half a century actually wanted him to gamble for him? Could it be that all the people he kept were useless?

Although the former world gambling king Stevenson was ruined by him and the current gambling king Jarvis left Macau in disgrace, Zhuang Rui did not believe that the gambling kings did not have gambling masters he had trained.

"Old man, are you joking? I don't know anything about gambling. Winning twice was all luck. I can't help you with this..."

Zhuang Rui refused without hesitation. For this man over ninety years old to make such a request, the bet must be extremely important. Although Zhuang Rui was confident of winning, he didn't want to stand out.

In the minds of Chinese people, gambling is always associated with organized crime, and a figure like the "King of Gambling" is likely involved with international organized crime. If I were to actually help him win money, I probably wouldn't even have the life to enjoy this luxury ferry.

"Young man, do you know where your trip to Macau started?" The old man asked leisurely after hearing Zhuang Rui's words, without getting angry.

"My friend was scammed, and I'm here to get back what I should have gotten back..." Zhuang Rui replied.

"That's right. This kind of cheating would never have happened in Macau casinos before 2002. I wouldn't say there are no cheaters in Macau, but no one would dare to be so blatant!"

The old man spoke a little hurriedly, and coughed repeatedly after he finished speaking. Zhuang Rui quickly poured a glass of warm water from the table and handed it to him.

Why did those con artists become so unrestrained after 2002?

Zhuang Rui found it rather strange. For a casino, a steady stream of revenue is the most important thing, but the casino that colluded with Liu Minghui to "trap" Lao Si was clearly killing the goose that lays the golden eggs, which was an extremely unwise act.

"Gambling on licenses, it's all because of gambling on licenses..."

The old gambling king's eyes, which were originally somewhat cloudy, suddenly sharpened after the words "gambling license" were mentioned, and a strange light flashed in them.

"Gambling license? Does that mean you can only operate a gambling business in Macau if you have a gambling license?"

Zhuang Rui didn't know much about these things, but judging from the name, it should be the same type of thing as a company's business license, right?

The old gambling king nodded and said, "Yes, you understand correctly. A gambling license is a business license for operating gambling operations. Only with this can one open a casino in Macau..."

"This document must have been issued by the Macao SAR government, right? What does it have to do with gambling?"

Zhuang Rui was still somewhat puzzled. There were dozens of casinos of all sizes in Macau, and this man in front of him owned 11 of them. With his status in Macau, wouldn't it be an easy thing for him to get a few more gambling licenses?

"Of course it's related. I'm tired. Let Amin tell you about these things..."

The old gambling king had talked a lot today and seemed a bit tired. He beckoned to the old croupier standing in the distance, and after the croupier came over, he said, "Tell the young dealer about the history of Macau's gambling license development..."

"yes....."

The veteran croupier bowed respectfully and addressed Zhuang Rui, saying, "Mr. Zhuang, the first gambling license in Macau was issued in October 1961, when Mr. He, along with Mr. Fok and others from Hong Kong, jointly..."

A story about the development of gambling in Macau is told in detail by an old croupier.

It turns out that in the 1960s, the old gambling king joined forces with a group of Hong Kong tycoons and won the exclusive right to operate casinos in Macau by paying HK\$70,000 more than his competitors. He opened the first casino in 1963.

From then on, after decades of struggling management, the Macau gambling industry flourished under Mr. Ho's leadership, making Macau a world-renowned gambling city in the East, and ranking alongside Las Vegas in the United States and Monte Carlo in Morocco as one of the world's three major gambling cities.

From the late 1990s to the present, the old gambling king has paid as much as 6 billion in taxes to the gambling industry every year. It can be said that he alone has supported the entire gambling industry in Macau.

However, in 2002, the situation changed dramatically. The Macao government decided to reform the gaming industry and issued three gaming licenses that year, breaking the nearly half-century-long monopoly of the old gambling king in Macao's gaming industry.

The competition was extremely fierce at the time, with a total of 21 companies expressing their determination to win the gaming license. In addition to the local forces in Macau represented by the gambling king, there were also many companies from the United States, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, the Philippines and other places.

World-renowned casino hotel conglomerates, including MGM Resorts International, Las Vegas, Suncity Group, and Genting Group in Malaysia, have all attached great importance to this issuance of gaming licenses.

The 21 consortia pledged to invest an average of US\$2 billion in the Australian gambling industry, with the smallest investment exceeding US\$1 billion and the largest reaching HK\$40 billion.

At the time, the gambling king was extremely dissatisfied with the government's decision. In an interview with local media, he stated that with his 40 years of management experience, he did not need to cooperate with other companies and insisted on "playing by himself".

However, due to the prevailing trend, the Macau gambling industry, which was initially dominated by the gambling king, has now become a three-way division, with the gambling licenses being obtained by the gambling king's SJM Holdings, Wynn Resorts, and Galaxy Entertainment Group.

Unlike SJM Holdings, owned by the gambling tycoon, the other two companies are backed by foreign gambling conglomerates.

Just like Galaxy Entertainment Group, although on the surface it is a gaming company formed by the Lui Che-woo family of Hong Kong businessmen and the Venetian Group.

But behind it is Shodden Adelson, a prominent figure in the American gambling industry and owner of the Venetian Group in Nevada, who holds at least 30% of Galaxy's shares.

#### Chapter 924 Gambling Cards (Part Two)

Shoren Adelson is considered one of the world's leading experts in managing convention and exhibition centers and the tourism and entertainment industry, while another major shareholder, Lui Che-woo, is also a prominent figure in Hong Kong.

Lui Che-woo's ancestral home is Wuyi, Guangdong. He was born in Jiangmen in 1929. When he was 4 years old, he moved to Hong Kong with his parents. He started his business in the 1950s. His companies include two listed companies, K. Wah Construction Materials and K. Wah International, as well as more than 200 subsidiaries. His investments are spread across mainland China, Thailand, Malaysia, the United States and other regions and countries.

It can be said that although neither of them had experience in the gambling industry, their strength was no less than that of the old gambling king. The entry of Galaxy Entertainment Group set off a wave of casino competition in Macau.

If Galaxy Entertainment Group is run by outsiders, then the owner of Wynn Resorts (Macau) Ltd., which also holds a gaming license, is no less renowned in the gaming industry than the "King of Gambling."

Stephen Wayne, chairman of Wynn Resorts, is a legendary figure whose reputation in Las Vegas is even greater than that in Macau.

In the late 1980s, Las Vegas casinos began to fully implement modern corporate management systems.

Stephen Wayne, as an advocate and promoter, successfully transformed Las Vegas into a resort destination suitable for the whole family, pushing the trend of themed hotel operation to a new peak. He was dubbed the "Father of Las Vegas" and can be regarded as a bigwig in the gambling industry.

After Wynn entered Macau, it did indeed make a large-scale investment, spending nearly six billion patacas to build resort hotels, shopping malls, shopping centers, and large-scale entertainment facilities.

From then on, the era that originally belonged to the gambling king alone became history, and Macau became a three-way balance of power.

Of course, the nearly 20 billion patacas (approximately 16 billion RMB) investment from the three companies has propelled Macau onto a fast track of rapid development, but it has also brought many drawbacks.

The old gambling king's original ideas about the gambling industry have been overturned. Some people who contracted the gambling tables in the casinos colluded with loan sharks or swindlers to cheat tourists who came to Macau for tourism and leisure.

In recent years, there have been frequent reports in China about some powerful officials getting mired in trouble in Macau. The reason for this is that some casinos believe that these officials are afraid to publicize their losses, so they deliberately set traps for them.

Those who were exposed were just unlucky. Who knows how many other domestic officials, whose identities have been kept secret, are spending lavishly in Macau casinos? These are the very people most welcomed by those casinos.

The incident involving Lao Si happened within Galaxy Company. This was entirely due to Galaxy Company's lax supervision, turning a blind eye, and even colluding with people from the Thousand

Gates. There were other similar incidents, but Zhuang Rui was just unlucky enough to be the one to run into one.

Therefore, starting in 2002, Macau's gambling tax revenue has been declining year by year, and violent incidents have become commonplace. The entertainment environment is not as good as before. The old gambling king, who has worked hard in Macau all his life, sees this and feels heartbroken.

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After hearing about the gambling license dispute, Zhuang Rui was puzzled and asked, "Uncle Ming, there are only three gambling licenses in total, so how come there are so many casinos in Macau?"

"Cough cough..."

The gambling king, who was eating grapes, was choked by Zhuang Rui's words and started coughing repeatedly. Two women in the distance quickly came over and patted his chest and back, which made the old man feel much better.

After catching his breath, the old man glared at Zhuang Rui with annoyance and said, "The gambling license is issued to the company. As long as the company has a gambling license, it can open a casino. Can you explain that?"

"Hehe, I'm just an amateur, aren't I? Please don't be angry..."

After hearing the old gambling king's glorious history in Macau, Zhuang Rui held him in even greater respect. Although Zhuang Rui didn't advocate gambling, he believed that formalizing the industry was more beneficial than harmful.

"By the way, sir, these gambling licenses have only been issued for a few years. Is it really necessary to go through the bidding process again?"

Zhuang Rui suddenly remembered the reason why the gambling king asked him to gamble on his behalf, which was because of gambling cards, and he was immediately puzzled.

In order to bid for this gambling license, several companies invested over a billion dollars. The operating rights cannot be limited to three to five years; they should be at least twenty years. So what did the old man mean when he asked someone to gamble on his behalf?

Moreover, the issuance of gaming licenses is controlled by the Macao government. Although Macao is a gambling city, Zhuang Rui absolutely does not believe that the Macao government would decide on the issuance of gaming licenses based on who has the best gambling skills.

The old gambling king didn't answer, but waved his hand, signaling the women beside him to leave. The two women looked a little reluctant, but they still left and stood at a distance.

"Mr. Zhuang, it's like this: the government has decided to issue three more gaming licenses, bringing the total number of licenses in Macau to six. While this will create competition, it will also cause chaos in Macau's gaming industry..."

Uncle Ming explained to Zhuang Rui that the Macao government had been planning to increase the number of Macao gaming licenses since 2006, and this news caused a stir in the world of gambling.

As China grows stronger and its economy continues to improve, many foreigners have realized the strong spending power of Chinese people. Even in foreign gambling cities such as Las Vegas, it is not uncommon to see high-rolling Chinese tourists.

If this is the case abroad, it goes without saying that it is even more so in Macau, which is just a stone's throw away. Although profits have declined in recent years, Wynn and Galaxy, which entered the market later, have made a fortune and have already recouped their investments in just over five years.

As a result, the Macau gaming license has become a goldmine in the eyes of many gambling tycoons. Since the news broke, at least thirty large conglomerates have expressed interest in entering the Macau gaming industry.

However, the issuance of gaming licenses is not good for Mr. Ho, and it is also bad for the other two companies that have already established themselves in Macau, Wynn and Galaxy. The entry of more companies means that a large portion of the profits will be taken away, which is obvious.

Although the three companies have been fierce competitors in recent years, they have now joined forces in a very tacit manner.

It's worth noting that the owners of these three companies are all influential figures in the global gambling industry, yet they have jointly stated that they do not welcome any of these companies into Macau.

This news caused a huge uproar. Although the gambling companies that wanted to enter Macau were not as powerful as these three, they had the numbers to fight back. In the end, they even united to resist the three giants of Macau.

Nearly a year has passed since the news broke, and multiple casinos have been disrupted, causing chaos and huge losses in the global gambling industry.

Ultimately, more than twenty of today's gambling industry giants sat down and came up with a solution: matters in the gambling world should be resolved through gambling!

All companies interested in entering the Macau gambling industry will hold a Texas Hold'em tournament, with each company sending one skilled player to compete for the three extra gambling licenses. Only those who win at the gambling table will be able to bid for those three licenses.

"Old man, doesn't your company already have a gambling license? Will the government issue another gambling license to you?"

Hearing this, Zhuang Rui finally understood what the old gambling king meant. However, he still had some questions. These three companies in Macau were essentially going against the Macau government's decision. Even if they won at the gambling table, they might not be able to get a gambling license.

"You little rascal, I really don't know how you run your business..."

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, the gambling king nearly choked again. After a pause, he continued irritably, "My current company is called SJM Holdings. Why not just register another company called SJM? As long as it's in accordance with the rules, who would dare not issue me a gambling license?"

The old man's words were imposing and menacing. He was dissatisfied with many of the actions of the Macau government. If he weren't so old, he would definitely have fought for the Chief Executive position and brought Macau's development onto his own track.

"That's true. All the other companies have withdrawn, so the only place left for you to get the gambling license..."

After Zhuang Rui figured this out, he couldn't help but shake his head. He guessed that the old man had been forced to agree to the condition. After all, there are winners and losers in gambling, and no one dares to pat their chest and say that they are invincible.

"So? Now you dare to take my ship back, right?"

The old gambling king looked at Zhuang Rui with hopeful eyes. Although he had trained many gambling experts under his command, such as Uncle Ming and others, when he counted his subordinates, the gambling king had no confidence at all.

Zhuang Rui's visit to Macau reminded the gambling king of a strange gambling game he had witnessed a few years ago, which aroused his great curiosity about Zhuang Rui. That's why he generously opened the money counting room for Zhuang Rui to use as a gambling hall.

Zhuang Rui's performance did not disappoint the gambling king. Although there was evidence of manipulation in the last round, Zhuang Rui's calm and composed demeanor at the gambling table made the gambling king very optimistic about him.

"Grandpa, I still can't take this boat back. I don't know how to play Texas Hold'em at all..."

Zhuang Rui only learned how to play All-in a couple of years ago through last-minute cramming. As for Texas Hold'em, although he knew how to play, he had never actually played it. In addition, he didn't want to get involved in this matter, so he simply used not knowing how to play as an excuse.

The old gambling king scoffed at Zhuang Rui's words, waving his hand and saying, "It's alright if you don't know how to play, Ah Ming can teach you. Young man, in the end, gambling isn't about the cards anymore, it's about people's hearts. If you have a firm will, you will surely be the final winner..."

"That's right, Mr. Zhuang. Even if I got that flush today, I could only win a maximum of 200 million from the opponent, unlike you who could go all in and win all their chips..."

Uncle Ming is considered one of the top gambling experts in Macau, but he is truly convinced of Zhuang Rui's skill.

Chapter 925 Forcing a Duck onto a Shelf

There are many things in this world that are hard to explain. Some people are not naturally inclined to gamble, but once they enter a casino, they win every time; it's hard for them to lose.

Uncle Ming once met a man who had been dragged to Macau to play. The man seemed to want to lose all of his 500 chips. He bet all his chips on "big" in the first round of dice games and unexpectedly won. He then bet all his winnings on "big".

Who knew that this person would win every bet, and in the end, he got eleven big bets in a row, while the other person also bet eleven times and won more than 500,000 with 500 chips. The strange thing is that just when this person stopped gambling, the twelfth bet was a small bet.

With Uncle Ming's keen eye, he could naturally see that the man knew nothing about gambling and relied entirely on luck. This was very similar to Zhuang Rui's behavior. In casinos, only those who don't care about winning or losing are the ultimate winners.

Although Uncle Ming is a skilled gambler, he is unable to let go of his worries. Watching millions or even billions of chips slip through his fingers, he cannot maintain a calm mindset, which is the main reason why he cannot replace SJM in the competition.

"Uncle Ming, I don't deserve such praise..."

Upon hearing Uncle Ming's words, Zhuang Rui waved his hands repeatedly. The higher a person is propped up, the more painful the fall will be. Zhuang Rui didn't want these two old men, whose combined age was a full 150 years, to be praised to death.

The old gambling king wiped his mouth with a snow-white towel, looked at Zhuang Rui, and said with a mocking expression, "Facts speak louder than words. Young people should be energetic and dare to challenge the unknown. So, kid, you really don't want this ship of mine?"

The old gambling king had thoroughly investigated Zhuang Rui's experiences over the past few years. After much deliberation, he still felt that Zhuang Rui was the most suitable candidate for this gambling game that would determine the gambling licenses within the industry.

As the gambling king himself just said, gambling is actually about people's hearts. When you don't care about money, your mind will naturally become more open, and when it comes to making choices, you will be far more capable than those who are preoccupied with the gains and losses of a single game.

For example, if a billionaire bets against someone with only 100,000 in assets, the billionaire will feel absolutely no psychological burden or fluctuation when betting 100,000. For the billionaire, it's just a very small game.

Conversely, the person with only 100,000 in assets will definitely hesitate and look back. If they win, their net worth will increase many times over, but if they lose, they may end up homeless. Even the most determined person will experience psychological fluctuations in such a situation, leading to poor judgment.

Zhuang Rui's situation is just like that. The gambling king once had someone assess Zhuang Rui's fixed assets, which were as high as RMB 5 billion. For Zhuang Rui, a bet of RMB 500 million was nothing more than a numbers game.

Just like the luxury ferry that the gambling king wanted to give to Zhuang Rui, although the amount of more than 3 billion is something that most people in the world cannot quantify, it is nothing in the eyes of the gambling king whose net worth is hundreds of billions.

"Sir, as you know, my business is related to antiques and art, which has absolutely nothing to do with gambling. I'm sorry, I cannot agree to your request..."

In all his life, Zhuang Rui had never even dreamed that one day someone would force a luxury ferry worth billions of dollars onto him, as if he had no choice but to accept it.

The bolder the man, the greater the harvest. Zhuang Rui knew he wasn't very bold and didn't want to get involved in this trouble. He hadn't even enjoyed two years of a comfortable life with his wife and kids.

"Don't be so quick to refuse. This matter won't be resolved until the end of the year. This old man has never asked anyone for anything in his life, but I never thought that I would be asking you, young man, for help when I'm almost in my grave..."

The old gambling king sighed and shook his head, looking like a hero in his twilight years. Zhuang Rui was also moved and almost agreed.

The old gambling king paused for a moment, then continued, "Here's what we'll do: go back and think it over. If you're willing to help this old man out, find someone to give you a message. If not, then forget it..."

"Grandpa, I'm so sorry about this. It's just that I'm terrible at gambling..."

When Zhuang Rui said this, it almost made the two old men in front of him lose their minds. He had gambled twice and won against two world gambling kings. Now he was saying that he didn't know how to gamble. Wasn't that just being pretentious?

"Forget it, forget it, let's not talk about this anymore..."

The old gambling king waved his hand. After talking with Zhuang Rui for so long, he was also feeling very tired. He lifted his almost numb foot, gently stepped on the deck, and said, "I've basically kept all the promises I've made in my life. Today I said I'd give you this ship, and I can't break my word..."

"Amin, when do you see this kid has time? Go with him to get the paperwork done. Oh, and don't forget to remove any unauthorized people from the ship..."

"Sir, this won't do. I can't accept a gift without having done anything for it. I dare not take your boat; I can't afford to maintain it..."

Upon hearing the old man's roundabout way of steer the conversation back to the ferry, Zhuang Rui quickly refused. "What a joke!" he thought. "He who accepts a bribe is bound to be obliged. If he really accepted this luxury ferry, he probably wouldn't be able to avoid gambling even if he wanted to."

"Don't worry, I'm an old man who's almost in my grave. What would I need this boat for? It's just a gift for you to have fun with. It has nothing to do with the gambling..."

The crew members left on this ship are all veterans who have been with me for over twenty years. It's a way of giving them a living. You won over a billion this time; can't you even support a few people like this?"

The old gambling king looked slightly sad, as if he were making his final arrangements. Zhuang Rui was speechless for a moment. Giving away billions of dollars made it seem like the other party owed Zhuang Rui a huge favor, which made it impossible for Zhuang Rui to refuse.

Moreover, Zhuang Rui really liked this ship. If he used this ferry as a salvage vessel, he was confident that he could salvage many sunken ships in areas with large waves.

It is important to understand that the size of the ship is often the most critical factor in salvaging sunken ships, because you cannot expect a salvage ship that is only a dozen meters long and weighs a few dozen tons to salvage those sunken ships that are tens of meters long.

Once a drilling platform and a large floating crane are installed, this luxury ferry can immediately become one of the world's most advanced salvage vessels.

Of course, probably no one in the world except Zhuang Rui would even consider using such a luxury ferry as a salvage vessel.

"Mr. Zhuang, you can have your lawyer handle the formalities tomorrow. This ship isn't registered in Macau, but in Panama, which gives it many preferential treatments, and the transfer of ownership is also very convenient..."

Just as Zhuang Rui was having wild thoughts, he suddenly heard Uncle Ming's voice in his ear.

"Uncle Ming, I... I didn't say I wanted to accept this ship..."

Zhuang Rui was stunned for a moment upon hearing this. Although he was tempted, he did not agree. Why was Uncle Ming bringing up the transfer of ownership? Whether the ship was from Panama or Macau, what did it have to do with him?

"Where...where is the old man?"

Zhuang Rui then realized that the gambling king who had been sitting in front of him had been put into a wheelchair and pushed into the cabin by the woman. His tall and thin figure looked so desolate in the afterglow of the setting sun.

Uncle Ming, standing to the side, smiled faintly as he looked at Zhuang Rui and said, "Mr. He said that since you've accepted the boat, he'll have me handle the formalities for you tomorrow..."

"What? This...isn't this forcing a duck onto a shelf?"

Zhuang Rui was stunned when he heard this. He had never agreed to accept the ship from beginning to end. This old man was simply... unreasonable.

There are forced sales in this world, and Zhuang Rui encountered something unusual today: he was even forced to accept a free gift, which he couldn't refuse.

"Mr. Zhuang, Mr. He said that this boat has nothing to do with the gambling. You can rest assured and accept it. Knowing Mr. He as I do, he certainly won't go back on his word..."

Uncle Ming repeated the old gambling king's words in a serious tone, but the smile in his eyes grew wider and wider.

"Alright, alright, stop talking. Tell Mr. He I've accepted the boat. Send me the information about this gambling deal when you have time..."

Zhuang Rui waved his hand to interrupt Uncle Ming. This matter was not like what Uncle Ming said at all. He had received such a big favor, and he was not representing the old gambling king to participate in this gambling game. He was simply unworthy of it.

Although he felt a little depressed, Zhuang Rui was more excited that the ship was about to become his private property. He stomped his foot on the deck and waved to Peng Fei, who was standing on the ship's side.

When the bewildered Peng Fei approached, Zhuang Rui's first words were: "Peng Fei, this ship is ours now..."

"Wh...what?"

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Peng Fei's eyes nearly popped out of their sockets, and he exclaimed, "Brother, you didn't just gamble with that old guy and win this ship, did you?"

"This was given to Mr. Zhuang by Mr. He..."

Uncle Ming, who was standing nearby, frowned when he heard Peng Fei's disrespect towards Mr. He. Although Mr. He ran a gambling business, many people in Macau regarded him as a benevolent figure.

"He gave it to you? Bro, what does he want you to do?"

Peng Fei wasn't stupid. There's no such thing as love or hate without a reason. The old man didn't have Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease, so it was impossible for him to give away billions of dollars without a reason.

"Six months from now, I'll be participating in a gambling game as a representative of SJM Holdings..."  
Zhuang Rui said with a wry smile.

"A bet? What if we lose?" Peng Fei hadn't expected the old man to propose this condition.

"If you lose, you lose. Mr. He won't blame Mr. Zhuang..." Perhaps Peng Fei's words had offended Mr. He, because Uncle Ming didn't like Peng Fei very much.

"That's good. Isn't it nice to have someone giving you money to gamble for fun?"

Peng Fei patted his chest, but what he said made Uncle Ming so angry he almost vomited.

Chapter 926 Luxury Salvage Ship (Part 1)

"Brother Huangfu, how is my fourth brother doing lately?"

Zhuang Rui, dressed in a flashy beach outfit, sat in the seat where the old shipping magnate had once sat, casually peeling a fresh lychee and popping it into his mouth. Huangfu Yun sat beside him, also dressed casually.

"Your classmate is very capable; I feel very reassured entrusting the foundation to him..."

Wearing sunglasses, Huangfu Yun kept glancing at the swimming pool not far away. There, not only his wife, but also Qin Xuanbing and Peng Fei's wife Zhang Qian were. The beauties were all curvaceous, which was a feast for the eyes of Huangfu Yun, who was not a gentleman to begin with.

"Damn, what are you looking at? If you want to look, your wife can look at her tonight..."

Zhuang Rui hit Huangfu Yun's sunglasses with a lychee. He knew that the guy's eyes were probably about to pop out of their sockets by now.

"Ahem... Am I that kind of person?"

Huangfu Yun took off his sunglasses and wiped them, saying, "In the past two months, the foundation has spent a total of 32 million RMB to build 20 Hope Primary Schools in Gansu, Guizhou and other places, and has also sponsored 60 out-of-school children from impoverished families..."

"Your classmate handled all of this very well, and our Fangyuan Fund has gained a certain reputation in China..."

The Fangyuan Fund that Huangfuyun mentioned was created by Zhuang Rui in the names of his children. Huangfuyun had always been in charge of its supervision, but after the incident involving the fourth son, Zhuang Rui handed over the business to Bi Yuntao.

Bi Yuntao, who left the family, did not disappoint Zhuang Rui's trust. Within a few months, he had managed the foundation in an orderly manner and done a lot of practical work, and it was basically on track.

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"Dad... Daddy... hug me..."

Zhuang Rui, who was chatting with Huangfu Yun, watched his son, Fangfang, stumble and fall onto the deck. He was both amused and annoyed, and quickly went over to pick Fangfang up. ☆☆ 69...

"My dear son, who did you learn that from?"

Zhuang Rui hugged his son and gave him a big kiss on his apple-red cheek, making the little guy giggle.

"King Kong!"

When the topic turned to King Kong, Xiao Fangfang's speech became fluent, and she even made a face, clearly imitating the big guy.

"That brat has corrupted my son..."

Zhuang Rui was very dissatisfied with his son's performance, but he couldn't bear to blame him, so he blamed all the mistakes on Jin Gang. Jin Gang, who was playing with Yuan Yuan in the distance, was completely unaware that he had become a bad element in Zhuang Rui's eyes.

At the beginning of the year, Zhuang Rui invited a well-known domestic biological expert to conduct a physical examination on Jingang. According to the expert's test, Jingang was no more than six years old, truly a little guy.

More than two months have passed since Zhuang Rui acquired the luxury ferry. July is the hottest season in Guangdong, but living on the boat with his family is quite a unique experience.

After Zhuang Rui agreed to the old gambling king's bet, he returned to Beijing. As for the transfer and handover of the ship, Zhuang Rui entrusted it all to Huangfu Yun and his wife. One of them was Zhuang Rui's financial manager, and the other was Zhuang Rui's legal advisor. It was up to Huangfu Yun to handle it.

However, since the school was already on holiday and Professor Meng and others were still busy with Liu Xiu's tomb in Mangshan, Henan Province, Zhuang Rui seemed to have nothing to do after returning to Beijing.

In the tomb of the founding emperor of the Eastern Han Dynasty, groundbreaking discoveries have been made from time to time. Professor Meng originally wanted Zhuang Rui to continue participating in the excavation work of the tomb, but after considering it, Zhuang Rui decided not to go.

It wasn't that Zhuang Rui was afraid of hardship; it was mainly because after learning that the owner of the large tomb was Liu Xiu, it had lost its appeal to him. What was mysterious and unpredictable in the eyes of Professor Meng and others was obvious to Zhuang Rui, posing no challenge whatsoever.

Zhuang Rui placed great hopes on the newly acquired luxury ferry. Upon arriving in Beijing, he immediately began arrangements, hiring experienced salvage and shipping experts to modify the hull.

Since many shipwrecks are located in deep-sea areas with depths reaching thousands of meters, ordinary salvage equipment is simply unable to retrieve them from the seabed. Therefore, Zhuang Rui adopted the experts' advice and installed a thousand-ton floating crane and a 700-ton drilling platform on the luxury ferry.

These two modifications alone cost Zhuang Rui nearly 200 million yuan. In addition, Zhuang Rui spent more than 100 million yuan to purchase an electronic survey vessel that is more than 30 meters long.

The survey ship is equipped with the world's most advanced electronic equipment, capable of scanning deep-sea areas. It is extremely powerful and has many military-grade components. If it weren't for Ouyang Lei's connections, Zhuang Rui wouldn't have been able to obtain this ship.

After being idle at home for more than two months, Zhuang Rui received a call from Macau saying that the renovations were almost complete. Feeling bored, Zhuang Rui immediately took his whole family to Macau.

Qin Xuanbing grew up on Hong Kong Island and was not particularly interested in the sea and ships. However, Huangfu Yun and Yunman, a couple who came to vacation with her, were full of praise for the luxury ferry.

Society today is nothing like it was in the 1920s and 30s, when you had to take a ferry to go abroad. People who travel around the world by ship now are definitely from the wealthy and leisurely class.

Although Huangfu Yun and Yun Man had both lived abroad for many years, they had never been on such a large ship before, and they were still very excited after a few days.

Fangfang and Yuanyuan had never seen the sea before. Every morning around four or five o'clock, they would clamor to watch the sunrise. The ocean is vast and boundless, and Zhuang Rui really hoped that his two children would have a broad mind like the ocean in the future.

"Honey, didn't you say that boys should be raised frugally and girls should be raised lavishly? Why are you spoiling our son so much..."

Wrapped in a large bath towel that accentuated her beautiful figure, Qin Xuanbing walked to Zhuang Rui's side. Looking at the playful father and son, a happy expression appeared on her face. With a son and a daughter, and such a capable husband, Qin Xuanbing felt content from the bottom of her heart.

When Zhuang Rui mentioned coming to Macau, Qin Xuanbing assumed he wanted to take her and her children on vacation and let her visit her grandfather, since her grandfather was getting old and Qin Xuanbing would go back to Hong Kong for a few days every year.

However, Qin Xuanbing never expected that as soon as she got off the plane at Macau Airport, Zhuang Rui would take her to the pier and give her a very big surprise.

On the hull of this luxury ferry, the three large characters "Xuanrui" could be seen from several miles away. Qin Xuanbing never expected that Zhuang Rui, who was not very romantic, would use such a way to express his feelings for her.

"My son is sensible, of course I should spoil him..."

Looking at his rosy-cheeked son, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but kiss his little face again, having long forgotten his own words about raising boys frugally and girls lavishly.

"Daddy, eat, eat..."

Little Fangfang broke free from Zhuang Rui's embrace, reached out her delicate white hand, took a lychee from the fruit plate beside her, and put it in Zhuang Rui's mouth.

"Haha, look... how sensible my son is..."

Zhuang Rui picked up her son, peeled the lychee, removed the pit, and put it into the little guy's mouth. Although she didn't eat any herself, she felt even sweeter than if she had.

"Ho ho!"

Hearing Zhuang Rui's laughter, Jin Gang also ran over, with Xiao Yuanyuan, who looked like a porcelain doll, sitting on his shoulder. After putting Yuanyuan down in front of Zhuang Rui, Jin Gang did not forget to do his signature muscle-flexing move.

Having spent so long in the manor, King Kong was incredibly excited to be out at sea. Although there were several swimming pools on the ship, King Kong still sneaked down the elevator several times to swim in the ocean.

The ship, which is tens of meters high, could not stop this long-armed and strong creature at all. Fortunately, King Kong always went into the sea at night, otherwise it would have really scared the tourists.

"No more sneaking out to sea at night, okay? We'll be going out to sea in a few days, and you can come down to the yacht to play then..."

Zhuang Rui really had a headache with King Kong. As the guy got older, he became smarter and smarter, but he also became more and more mischievous, always coming up with new ways to play.

If Zhuang Rui hadn't been watching closely, this guy probably would have taken Fang Fang and Yuan Yuan to the sea. That's no joke, and Zhuang Rui was already starting to regret taking it out to sea.

"Awooo!"

King Kong understood Zhuang Rui's words and excitedly pounded his chest, causing the workers who were working in the distance to feel a chill. Although King Kong was easy to get along with after a few days, anyone would be afraid in the face of such a big guy.

"Zhuang, your child is so adorable..."

A middle-aged man with a large beard walked over from the deck construction site and waved to Zhuang Rui from afar. He couldn't help but be enthusiastic, because this was his new boss.

The bearded man is named Clyde Welburne. Perhaps due to years of exposure to the sea winds, Clyde has a very rugged appearance. He is Scottish and is the captain of this luxury ferry.

In Clyde's words, his family had been adrift at sea since his great-great-grandfather's generation, and their family motto was: "We don't seek to live on a ship, but we must die in a bed on deck."

"Oh, young boss, could you please move this big guy a little further away from me?"

As soon as Clyde walked up to King Kong, King Kong gave him a warm hug. Even though Clyde was over 1.9 meters tall, King Kong hugged him so tightly that he almost couldn't breathe.

"Hehe, Captain Clyde, Kong is a great help. If the ship's anchoring system ever breaks down, you'll need Kong to help you pull the anchor up..."

Zhuang Rui chuckled and joked with Clyde. He really liked this bearded captain; he had the unique, forthright nature of a sailor.

"Boss, are you really going to convert this beautiful and luxurious passenger ship into a salvage vessel?"

To be honest, Clyde's income increased significantly after Zhuang Rui took over the ship, but he didn't understand Zhuang Rui's decision at all.

Chapter 927 Luxury Salvage Ship (Part Two)

Clyde had no complaints about Zhuang Rui renaming the ship; after all, it was the boss's right. Zhuang Rui would also have to pay an additional fee to the country where the ship was registered for this name.

However, Claude was very puzzled and dissatisfied that Zhuang Rui had transformed such a luxury ferry into a salvage ship. He wanted to be the captain of a luxury ferry, not the captain of a salvage ship.

Zhuang Rui only needs to lease such a luxury merchant ship to an ocean shipping company, and he won't have to worry about the rest. Given the current popularity of global tourism, he believes that those companies can maximize the benefits of this merchant ship.

But Captain Clyde never imagined that Zhuang Rui would install a drilling platform and that damned floating crane on the ship. The two long, arm-like frames of the floating crane completely ruined the ship's appearance.

"Does this Chinese man really think the ocean is full of treasures that he can just walk into anywhere and scoop them up?"

Clyde looked at the young man in front of him with disdain. When he was young, he had also dreamed of things like finding pirate treasure and salvaging sunken ships.

But as he grew older, Claude discovered that the reason a dream is called a dream is because it always appears in a dream, and you only realize how cruel reality is when you wake up.

...

Zhuang Rui looked at the bearded ship and said with a smile, "Clyde, don't you want the Xuanrui to roam the seas and stay in the port like a flower bud?"

Have you forgotten the glory of a sailor? Have you transformed from a brave sailor into a cowardly captain?!

Clyde was a straightforward man, and his dissatisfaction could be seen on Clyde's face. For someone with this kind of personality, gentle persuasion was far less effective than harsh words.

So Zhuang Rui, with a smile on his face, said something that made the bearded captain furious. Judging from his heaving chest, Captain Clyde was extremely... angry.

"Boss, this is an insult to me. Our family has produced six captains, all of whom died at sea. None of them disgraced the honor of a sailor..."

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Clyde's beard bristled. For a sailor, the job is to fight against the waves and contend with the storm.

If it weren't for some special reasons, Claude would have resigned from his position as captain long ago. Zhuang Rui's words clearly struck a nerve with what he had been avoiding.

Captain Clyde had already forgotten why he had come to see Zhuang Rui. He clenched his fists and glared fiercely at his new boss. He had made up his mind that if Zhuang Rui didn't give him an explanation, he would leave the ferry where he had worked for nearly twenty years.

"Oh? Did I say something wrong? Didn't you want to lead those sissies on the same repetitive routes every day? That kind of life doesn't seem like what a brave sailor should be doing..."

Seeing Clyde's expression, Zhuang Rui chuckled inwardly, but his face remained serious, adding insult to injury to Clyde's already wounded pride.

"Oh no, nobody would even dream of living like that..."

Before Zhuang Rui could finish speaking, Clyde let out a strange scream. To be honest, he wasn't interested in that kind of aristocratic captain. Back when the gambling ship was still in operation, Clyde was just the first mate of this ship.

At that time, the captain Clyde was with would hold a party every two days, entertaining the so-called VIPs with a fake smile. This was not the life Clyde wanted.

"Alright, if that's the case, why do you have such strong objections to modifying this ship?"

Zhuang Rui suddenly changed the subject, steer the conversation back to the issue of modifying the ship. For a moment, the previously excited, bearded captain was caught off guard by Zhuang Rui's question.

Clyde looked somewhat dazed, muttering to himself, "Yeah... why would I object?"

Seeing Clyde's bewildered expression, Zhuang Rui quickly pressed his advantage, saying, "Clyde, don't you want to come with me, sail this ship, explore the unknown ocean... and dig for endless treasures?"

You know, an experienced captain is not easy to find, especially since Clyde has worked on this ship for nearly twenty years. I believe no one knows this luxury ferry better than him.

Although the ocean holds the endless treasures Zhuang Rui spoke of, it is also fraught with unknown dangers. Don't be fooled by the size of this ship; if not handled properly, it can still sink to the bottom of the sea. The Titanic is the best example of this.

A good captain will minimize the risk. Since it concerns life and death, Zhuang Rui naturally wants to entrust the ship to an experienced person, which is why he is so dedicated to reassuring Clyde.

"Explore the unknown ocean...discover endless treasures..."

Clyde muttered Zhuang Rui's words, his eyes gradually brightening. He clenched his fist again, which he had just loosened, and roared, "Boss, you're absolutely right! That's the life I want..."

"Yes, that's right. Just think about it, if we retrieve a treasure that has been lying dormant at the bottom of the sea for thousands of years, it will shock the world. Isn't that much better than you being the captain of a tourist boat?"

Zhuang Rui patted Clyde on the shoulder. The poor big guy had been completely fooled by Zhuang Rui and was still echoing Zhuang Rui's words: "Yes, we're going to shock the world. My God, boss, how much are those treasures worth?"

"Hehe, I once obtained Klaus's treasure on an island, and it's now on display in my museum. It's probably worth over two billion..."

Zhuang Rui spoke casually, which made Clyde's eyes light up. He came from a family of sailors and had naturally heard of Klaus's name. He had dreamed of obtaining Klaus's treasure when he was young.

Clyde had heard about the discovery of the Klaus Treasure, but he never expected that it would be found by his own boss.

"Boss, I'll work for you. Even if it's that damned Bermuda, I, Clyde, won't bat an eye. I'll show you that I'm a real sailor!"

Zhuang Rui's persuasive tactics, appealing to both emotion and profit, finally won over the bearded captain. He was so respectful that he almost kissed Zhuang Rui's hand.

"Clyde, you won't regret your choice. I will give you an exciting new life..."

Zhuang Rui laughed heartily, pointed to the area under construction on the nail plate, and asked, "How much longer will it take them to finish the drilling platform?"

The floating crane equipment has been installed, but the drilling platform with a power of 700 tons is more troublesome. The past two months have mainly been spent on this task.

"Boss, I guarantee it will be finished within three days. You see, the work is already in its final stages..."

Clyde was even more anxious than Zhuang Rui at this moment. After hearing Zhuang Rui's description of the bright future, he couldn't wait for the ship to set sail immediately and go to the ocean to search for sunken ships or pirate treasures.

"Yes, the personnel on the drilling platform and floating crane will all be under your management, Clyde. I need a captain who understands modern management, do you understand?"

Zhuang Rui nodded. He'd given them all the dates, and now he needed to slap them, otherwise he might find himself unable to control them in the future.

"Boss, as you wish, I think the facts prove that I am fully capable of doing this job..."

As Clyde spoke, he suddenly became very polite and even gave Zhuang Rui a gentlemanly bow. If he had been holding a hat, he would have been a true gentleman.

Zhuang Rui didn't speak, but walked to the construction site. The huge drilling platform had been fully installed and was now in the commissioning phase, with thirty-four workers busy at work.

"Mr. Zhuang, hello, please put on your helmet..." A middle-aged man saw Zhuang Rui coming over and hurriedly came forward to greet him.

"Engineer Zhang, you really need to come with us on this voyage, otherwise we won't be able to handle any problems that arise..."

Zhuang Rui took the safety helmet and put it on. This middle-aged man was the chief engineer of the equipment supplier for this project. He was responsible for accompanying the entire process of projects like this, which involved hundreds of millions of yuan.

Engineer Zhang smiled confidently and said, "Of course, Mr. Zhuang, don't worry. Our domestic technology level is no worse than that of foreign countries. Let me explain the working principle of this platform to you..."

Due to its unique nature, half of the platform extends beyond the hull, requiring excellent balance. A drilling platform with a power output of over 700 tons must ensure that the drill pipe remains vertically connected without deviation under the influence of strong winds and waves at sea, which requires very advanced stabilization technology.

Below the platform, four hydraulic cylinders, as thick as tree trunks, can generate more than 800,000 kilograms of thrust, allowing the massive salvage device to penetrate deep into the seabed.

According to Mr. Zhang, this salvage device can lift up to eight times the weight of the world's most advanced salvage ships. It is only with this ferry as a carrier that this salvage device can perform such a function.

"Hmm, not bad, we can go out to sea the day after tomorrow, right?"

Zhuang Rui couldn't understand any of this stuff at all; he just noticed that the once luxurious ferry had become unrecognizable.

Engineer Zhang nodded and said, "Of course, I also look forward to seeing this platform play a role..."

"Brother Zhuang, this ship of ours is probably the most luxurious salvage ship in the world, right?"

Peng Fei had arrived at this point, and after joking with Zhuang Rui, he lowered his voice and whispered in Zhuang Rui's ear, "Brother Zhuang, that batch of goods has been loaded onto the ship..."

Chapter 928 Armory

"Peng, when did you get back?"

Before Zhuang Rui could reply, Captain Clyde spotted Peng Fei, went up to him, gave him a bear hug, and greeted him.

When Zhuang Rui first brought Peng Fei to the ship, the white crew members still didn't take Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei seriously. These guys were all seasoned veterans, and although they were very respectful to their boss, they were not.

Later, Zhuang Rui lifted an anchor weighing several hundred kilograms with one hand, while Peng Fei used the excuse of sparring with the crew to break the wrists of seven or eight strongmen. As a result, no crew member dared to underestimate the two of them anymore.

Clyde's straightforward temperament got along well with Peng Fei, but Peng Fei had been missing for the past few days, prompting Clyde to ask Zhuang Rui about him several times. Now that he had seen Peng Fei, he was unusually friendly.

"Damn it, you bear, can't you smoke less..."

Peng Fei was pushed away by Clyde; he simply couldn't stand the smell of cigars emanating from the other man.

"Awooo!"

King Kong, who had come to join the fun after following Peng Fei, immediately squeezed through when he saw Clyde wanting a hug. He hugged Clyde like a child, causing Clyde to shout "Help!" repeatedly.

This scene made the staff around them laugh. Although King Kong was big, he had a good temper and would sometimes come over to help the workers with some physical work. These people were not afraid of King Kong at all.

Seeing that there were many people around and it was chaotic, Zhuang Rui realized that some things were inconvenient to discuss with Peng Fei. After looking around, he stopped and said, "Engineer Zhang, I have some things to attend to. If you have any questions, discuss them with Captain Clyde, and he will arrange it for you..."

"Okay, Mr. Zhuang, don't worry. As long as the debugging is normal, we will definitely be able to set sail the day after tomorrow..." The heavy industry group where Engineer Zhang works attaches great importance to this project, and he dares not be careless in the slightest.

"Boss, don't worry, I will fully cooperate for our ideals..."

Clyde spent nearly twenty years in Macau. He didn't learn much else, but he became fluent in Cantonese and Mandarin, which made it very easy for him to communicate with the technicians.

After greeting Clyde and Engineer Zhang, Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei headed into the cabin. Seeing King Kong following behind, they frowned and said, "King Kong, go take Fangfang and Yuanyuan to play. Be careful they don't fall into the swimming pool..."

King Kong is so big that even the deepest part of the swimming pool can't drown him. That's why he loves to carry Fangfang and Yuanyuan on his shoulders to play in the pool. Zhuang Rui has told him to stop several times, but he won't listen.

"Hehe..."

Upon hearing that Zhuang Rui wanted it to play with the little guys, Jin Gang immediately became excited and turned around to run over.

...

The luxury ferry that Zhuang Rui bought was originally a gambling ship used by the gambling king to compete with Yip Hon for gamblers in international waters. The interior of the ship is extremely luxurious. Although more than ten years have passed, the gilded furniture is still glittering and magnificent.

The ship has six decks in total, with the one below the deck being the largest. Originally a gambling hall, it has been converted into a large, dormitory-like storage room, which is where the ship's hull will be stored after it is salvaged.

The second floor is the restaurant, a nearly 1,000-square-meter space that can accommodate thousands of people at the same time. However, from now on, it will only serve Zhuang Rui and the ship's crew. Originally there were nearly 30 chefs, but now only five remain. Of course, their treatment is much better than before.

The third and fourth floors are all guest rooms, which are used to accommodate guests staying on the gambling ship. Now Zhuang Rui has divided the third floor into crew quarters, and all the staff live on the third floor, including Clyde.

The fourth and fifth floors are Zhuang Rui's private space. Besides the encrypted direct elevator, the original staircase has been fitted with a PIN-protected door, completely isolating it from the floors below.

On the fourth floor, Zhuang Rui performed major surgery, reinforcing each guest room. These rooms are used to house the precious cultural relics that were salvaged. Apart from Zhuang Rui and the cleaning staff, no other crew members are allowed on this floor.

As for the fifth floor, there are three deluxe suites and seven relatively ordinary guest rooms. The three deluxe suites are where Zhuang Rui lives and where he entertains guests. Huangfu Yun and his wife, as well as Peng Fei and his wife, all live on the fifth floor.

Of the other seven cabins, five are for the ship's security personnel, and the other has been converted into a monitoring room. The ship's security monitoring and low-to-medium altitude radar scanning are all conducted in this room.

The security work on this floor was handled by a comrade-in-arms that Peng Fei had recruited from his old unit. Originally, Zhuang Rui wanted to transfer Yang Jian, who was in charge of the museum's security, but after looking at this person's information, he found that he was even more suitable than Yang Jian.

Peng Fei's comrade-in-arms, Li Zhen, was originally an information security expert. He spent more than two months transforming the ship into a high-tech mobile castle at sea. Of course, Zhuang Rui paid an additional 40 million RMB for this.

There were also eighteen other people, all of whom were retired from the special forces division where Ouyang Lei was the former division commander. They were not only responsible for the security of the fifth floor, but also for the security of the entire ship.

The eighteen people were stationed on the decks and in various floors of the ship so that they could arrive at the scene immediately in case of any emergency.

"Shura, don't rush, there are still a few days before we officially set sail..."

After Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei took the elevator to the fifth floor, they were greeted by Li Zhen instructing the security personnel on the fifth floor.

Since this is a foreign-registered ship, the identities of the crew members on board still require some procedures. These security personnel have only recently boarded the ship and are familiarizing themselves with the environment under Li Zhen's arrangement.

According to Peng Fei, they used to call each other by nicknames when they were in the army, and Li Zhen, who looked refined and gentle, was nicknamed Shura.

Peng Fei had secretly told Zhuang Rui that although Shura was not as good as him in jungle warfare, he was one of the top experts in the country in terms of science and technology, and was even better at handling firearms than Peng Fei.

Furthermore, Shura is also a demolition expert; this guy can assemble a bomb for you even without any raw materials.

Shura was always responsible for providing cover during the retreat after missions abroad, and he never made a mistake. He and Peng Fei were true sworn brothers.

On their first day on the ship, when Xiu Luo and Peng Fei were joking around, they actually used the wood shavings left on the deck by the workers, added something else, and made a time bomb.

"Brother Zhuang, you guys are busy, I'm fine. I've been in the army for so long, I feel uncomfortable if I don't move around..."

Judging from his appearance, Shura was fair-skinned and clean-cut. If Peng Fei hadn't mentioned it, Zhuang Rui would never have known that this guy had more lives on his hands than Peng Fei.

Because he and Peng Fei were close friends, Li Zhen also called him Brother Zhuang, just like Peng Fei. Like Peng Fei, although he came from the disciplined forces, he had a lazy air about him. Only when danger came could you see their true colors.

"Shura, don't be shy here, just let me know if you need anything..."

Zhuang Rui greeted Li Zhen with a smile. Li Zhen had needed quite a lot during this period, and Zhuang Rui had spent money like water. However, he had also made the ship incredibly powerful, so it was finally worth the money.

After greeting Xiu Luo, Zhuang Rui and Peng Fei walked to the door of the innermost room on the fifth floor. There was a fingerprint lock on the side of the door. After Peng Fei entered his fingerprint, the fingerprint lock flipped up, revealing a button lock disc.

After entering twelve numbers, the seemingly ordinary door in front of Zhuang Rui clicked open from the inside.

"Brother Zhuang, this is too much trouble. We have to go through these two procedures every time. I don't know what Shura was thinking..."

This room was converted from the last guest room on the fifth floor. Both the door and the walls were reinforced with alloy and modified according to the standards of an armory of an inland military agency.

Without the password, even with an electric welding and cutting machine, it would probably take several hours to open this door. And the fingerprint and password for this door are only in the hands of Zhuang Rui, Peng Fei, and Xiu Luo.

This room was used to store the ship's weapons, but it was empty before Peng Fei arrived today.

After being tricked by Muta, Zhuang Rui became more concerned about his own safety. When he heard Peng Fei say that pirates were rampant, he took out a large sum of money and asked Peng Fei to buy defensive weapons.

Zhuang Rui was very curious to know what weapons Peng Fei had bought after disappearing for several days with twenty million US dollars he had taken from him. After all, every man has some desire for firearms.

"Yes, this ship is registered in Panama, so it's usually fine..."

Zhuang Rui wholeheartedly agreed with Peng Fei's words. Although the things placed in this room were somewhat shady, this was a foreign cruise ship, and it was permissible to have weapons and equipment.

For a foreign passenger ship, the deck represents its territory. This means that no matter which country the ship is in, that country has no right to board and search the ship without submitting a diplomatic note.

"Holy crap, you, you're planning to go to war?"

When Zhuang Rui pushed open the door, he was immediately dumbfounded. The room, which was over 200 square meters, had been transformed into an armory, densely packed with all kinds of firearms and wooden crates.

"Damn it, is that a cannon?"

After Zhuang Rui entered the room, he found a thick pipe about 30 centimeters in diameter on the ground. Upon closer inspection, he realized it was a disassembled cannon barrel, with a cannon carriage placed next to it.

Chapter 929 Audacious

"Damn, you bought two, not one?"

Zhuang Rui looked closely and realized that the cannons were actually a pair; the two brand-new barrels, gleaming with a faint light, seemed to lower the temperature in the room considerably.

Although Zhuang Rui wasn't a military enthusiast, he had once read a book about the firepower of warships during World War II. He knew that although the diameter of the cannon barrel wasn't as large as he had estimated, the shells were at least 100mm, which was already the secondary guns of many small and medium-sized warships.

Although with the development of world military technology, these cannons, which were originally fixed in place, can now be moved, these two behemoths are still quite large and heavy.

Zhuang Rui really had no idea how Peng Fei and the others managed to move this huge thing into the armory. The cannon barrel alone probably weighed several hundred kilograms.

"Hehe, Brother Zhuang, you gave me over ten million, I have to spend it eventually..."

Peng Fei had already anticipated Zhuang Rui's surprise and laughed smugly to himself.

"You should buy something useful. If you equip the ship with these cannons, isn't that just asking for trouble? You'll be unable to enter any port..."

Although Zhuang Rui also liked this behemoth and had the urge to fire a shot at it, he knew that while commercial ships could be equipped with light weapons, having a cannon on board would likely prevent any country from opening its ports to the "Xuan Rui".

"Brother Zhuang, it's alright, I've already thought it through. When we were modifying the ship's lower deck, we left a room on each side of the hull. I had someone change the windows of those rooms so they're normally closed, but when needed, the cannon barrels can be extended..."

Almost everyone from Peng Fei's unit was a weapons expert, adept at assembling weapons for various terrains and environments. His purchase of two 100mm recoilless rifles was not without its reasons.

Ships sailing at sea must be equipped with long-range lethal weapons; otherwise, in the event of an emergency, such a large ship would be left stranded and vulnerable to attack.

With these two cannons, they would have a certain deterrent effect on some small and medium-sized warships, and those so-called pirates would be even more vulnerable.

Therefore, Peng Fei focused his main efforts on these two cannons and some other items during this trip.

As for these grenades, submachine guns, and even squad automatic weapons, they are not rare items on the arms market and can be bought without much effort.

"Peng Fei, you're something else, you actually brought two cannons..."

After hearing Peng Fei's explanation, Zhuang Rui thought it made sense. Having these two cannons was always a good precaution. In this day and age, everyone talks about high technology. If they really encountered the Sea King, he might be able to fire a cannon and rout them.

Everyone has a heroic spirit, and Zhuang Rui is no exception. To indulge in the thrill of war while ensuring his own safety is something every man dreams of.

Just as Zhuang Rui finished praising Peng Fei, the armory door opened, and Shura walked in, laughing, "Brother Zhuang, you haven't seen how amazing this kid is yet..."

"What else is there?"

As Zhuang Rui spoke, his gaze fell on three boxes, each over a meter long, placed in the corner of the room. He knew that the smaller wooden boxes contained standard-sized ammunition, but these three boxes were much larger and seemed out of place in the room.

Peng Fei walked to a box, unlocked the outer latch, lifted the lid, and waved to Zhuang Rui like he was showing off a treasure, saying, "Brother Zhuang...look!"

"This...this is a missile?"

Zhuang Rui glanced over and his eyelids twitched incessantly. Inside the box was a shell about twenty centimeters thick and one meter long.

The front of this projectile looks a bit like the rocket that Zhuang Rui played with when he was a child, but the back has four metal forks, making it look like a miniature version of a satellite launch rocket. Of course, it looks more like the missiles that Zhuang Rui has seen in movies, only much smaller.

"Peng Fei, you're incredibly daring! How can you even get this thing on a ship? What if it explodes?"

To be honest, even standing next to these shells, Zhuang Rui was a little scared. Moreover, his room was right next to this armory. If anything went wrong, he would probably have to experience what it's like to ride a rocket.

Moreover, with cannons and missiles, if it attracts the attention of certain people, I wouldn't be able to explain myself. Although the ship belongs to Panama, I am Chinese.

"Brother Zhuang, this isn't a cannonball, it's an anti-ship torpedo, the latest Russian APR-2E series miniature torpedo. Don't worry, this torpedo uses wire guidance combined with active and passive acoustic homing control. As long as it's not launched, even if you smash it with a hammer, it won't explode..."

Li Zhen could tell that Zhuang Rui was genuinely angry, so he quickly explained that, for him and Peng Fei, playing with a torpedo was no big deal. If possible, they would even like to have the entire military helicopter on board.

After Xiu Luo's explanation, Zhuang Rui finally understood that these were the incredibly powerful torpedoes from World War II. However, these torpedoes were much more advanced than those of that time, and were controlled by the launch pad through wires to transmit commands and guide them to the target.

After launch, the torpedo transmits its status, position, target's bearing, and distance back to the launch pad via a wire. The launch pad then issues remote control commands based on the torpedo's returned information to manipulate the torpedo to attack the target, demonstrating good anti-jamming capabilities.

Peng Fei glanced at Zhuang Rui's expression, which had softened somewhat, and quickly whispered, "Brother Zhuang, I've put the torpedo launcher in the lower compartment. Someone's watching it; it won't be discovered..."

In fact, Peng Fei knew that things like cannons and torpedoes were far beyond the scope of weapons that ordinary merchant ships could be equipped with, but when he was inspecting goods in Russia, he saw these things and was immediately tempted.

Peng Fei had contacted Xiu Luo once and learned that with Xiu Luo's skills, he could operate these torpedoes. On a whim, he bought them. The Russian arms dealer also said that these torpedoes were in high demand and that this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Peng Fei believed this, because there are only a handful of countries in the world that can produce torpedoes, including the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Sweden, and China. Among them, the United States has always been at the forefront of torpedo development in the world.

Russia's torpedo technology is no less advanced than that of the United States, and may even be superior. Therefore, countries other than the US and Russia are eager to acquire torpedoes from these two countries. If Peng Fei hadn't acted early, they might have been bought by some foreign arms dealer.

"Well, I've already bought it, and they don't usually offer returns, right..."

Zhuang Rui waved his hand weakly. Peng Fei was already a daring guy, and now it seems that this guy called Shura is not so well-behaved either. Who knows what kind of chemical reaction will occur when the two of them get together.

Looking at the room full of weapons, Zhuang Rui wondered whether his voyage was to salvage underwater treasures or to fight pirates.

In short, judging from the current situation, if they really encounter pirates, it will definitely not end well.

"By the way, light weapons can be issued to the ship's security personnel, but these two cannons and torpedo launchers must be kept under strict control and not seen by any non-security personnel..."

After thinking for a moment, Zhuang Rui carefully gave the two men a few instructions. The crew members on this ship had been in Macau for quite some time, and many of them had married and had children, resulting in complex social relationships. Zhuang Rui didn't want any gossip to spread or attract the attention of certain departments.

"Don't worry, Brother Zhuang, I've arranged everything. There will be guards in the areas that are being renovated, and the crew will absolutely not be allowed to enter..."

Li Zhen patted his chest, explaining that Peng Fei's purchase of the torpedo was partly due to his instigation. He had only ever operated torpedo boats in the military; this was the first time he had ever installed torpedoes on a large ship.

"Alright, Li Zhen, go and make the arrangements. Hurry up and put these cannons and torpedoes in place; I feel uncomfortable having them here..."

Zhuang Rui shook his head. After seeing these two concrete and intimidating weapons, the latest American and Russian guns seemed like toys to him.

"Okay, Brother Zhuang, don't worry, this thing won't be a waste of money..."

Li Zhen smiled, turned around and went out to call people to get busy. The elevator on the fifth floor went directly to the bottom of the cabin, so there was no fear of being seen by the crew.

Zhuang Rui felt a little uneasy looking at the two things, so he simply pulled Peng Fei and took the elevator back to the deck.

Back on deck, Zhuang Rui's mind was still filled with those weapons and firearms. He vaguely remembered a few rocket launchers and couldn't help but ask Peng Fei, "By the way, I only gave you a little over ten million US dollars. How did you manage to get so many big guns? Weapons are so cheap?"

"Brother Zhuang, over ten million US dollars is no small sum. If it weren't for the torpedoes and those two cannons, it probably wouldn't even have cost two million US dollars..."

Upon hearing this, Peng Fei curled his lip. The weapons he used in the past were all provided by the state, and Peng Fei didn't know their prices. But this trip broadened his horizons and gave him some insight into the current arms market.

The global arms smuggling trade has expanded dramatically, soaring from \$18.5 billion in 1992 to around \$100 billion today. Peng Fei's \$10 million deal was really not worth much attention from the other party.

Light weapons, even the most advanced assault rifles from the US and Russia, cost only two hundred dollars each. Older AK-47s are twenty times cheaper, costing only ten dollars each.

According to the parties involved in this transaction, as long as there is money, they can sell anything from small items like grenades, guns and their parts, to large items like airplanes, tanks, missiles, and even nuclear warheads.

#### Chapter 930 More Promising Than Scamming

Arms dealers' buyers mainly fall into two categories: governments, anti-government armed groups, or guerrilla organizations in war-torn regions, and international terrorists.

For the first type of buyer, arms dealers are often responsive to their requests, selling weapons to both government forces and anti-government armed groups, because the longer the war between the two sides lasts, the greater the profits for arms dealers.

Arms dealers have no scruples when it comes to the latter type of buyer, thus becoming a "booster" for global terrorist activities.

These arms dealers don't care how many lives they'll lose because of what they sell. The types of weapons they sell range from small arms to heavy arms, from land and sea weapons to air weapons, from ordinary weapons to high-tech weapons, and from hard-kill equipment to soft-kill equipment.

In order to acquire formidable nuclear and biological weapons, a few countries and regions have gone to great lengths to purchase various raw materials and weapon components from secret arms dealers.

The Russian military recently admitted that it had lost more than a dozen nuclear warheads. Observers believe these warheads may have entered the logistics of clandestine transactions, and it cannot be ruled out that some have been acquired by individual countries or organizations.

For a long period in history, major arms exporting countries adhered to the principle of "only selling outdated and obsolete weapons to their own countries." As a result, the world arms market was dominated by second- and third-rate weapons and equipment. Even in the 1960s and 1970s, some heavy weapons from World War II that had long been obsolete could still find buyers.

Things are different now. The main combat weapons of developed countries' militaries, including the most advanced fighter jets, warships, tanks, anti-aircraft missiles, and so on, can all be purchased through open arms transactions.

In order to earn more hard currency and quickly rebuild their military, some arms-exporting countries have even sold some of their main battle weapons, which have not yet been officially equipped by their armies, to eager buyers.

"Damn it, these people will sell anything..."

Zhuang Rui was stunned by Peng Fei's words. Selling even the main combat weapons of some military units—if this happened in China, it would be an unimaginable disaster.

"What's so strange about that? Our country has been selling weapons to Russia since the beginning of the century, worth at least tens of billions of dollars. It's just that this is state-level smuggling..."

Peng Fei curled his lip. The reason he knew this information was because they had carried out the relevant handover missions. Peng Fei was able to obtain these weapons in just one week thanks to the convenience provided by certain departments.

Peng Fei wasn't a brainless person, so of course he wouldn't have made such a big show of buying these heavy weapons. His actions had been tacitly approved at certain levels, otherwise he would have just been causing trouble for Zhuang Rui.

"Damn, those drug dealers who risk their lives are like street vendors compared to these arms dealers..."

Zhuang Rui shook his head and swore, saying that the most fundamental reason for the global arms trade is still profit.

Arms smuggling is the most profitable business in the world, even several times more profitable than drug smuggling. Some arms smugglers are worth billions of dollars, and some have an annual income that is roughly equivalent to the GDP of a medium-sized country.

The lure of huge profits has driven arms dealers to relentlessly pursue their schemes, with one group falling only to be replaced by another. Some countries and groups, for their own benefit, have openly or covertly condoned and supported certain arms dealers. Many of these dealers have received the leniency and protection of major powers, allowing them to remain at large for extended periods.

In addition, arms dealers have replaced cash-and-goods trade with barter trade.

Some African countries, wanting to acquire weapons, exchange diamonds for them, bypassing money laundering and directly converting the money into "legal income." This makes the already difficult-to-detect arms smuggling even more shrouded in mystery.

"Brother Zhuang, take a look at this..."

Engrossed in his conversation, Peng Fei pulled a folded piece of paper from his pocket and handed it to Zhuang Rui.

"What's this?"

Zhuang Rui took it and saw that it was full of English writing, but after reading the contents carefully, he was immediately shocked.

"Holy crap, the American M1 series tank costs \$3 million per unit, and it even comes with 20 rounds of ammunition?"

Zhuang Rui's eyes widened immediately when he saw the first line of text.

Peng Fei chuckled and said, "Brother Zhuang, keep reading, there's lots of good stuff coming up..."

Zhuang Rui then looked down and saw that the Russian T-72 tank of the same class was only \$1.8 million per unit, which was almost half the price of the American one. Zhuang Rui then realized that the arms dealer had deliberately made a comparison on this price list.

Peng Fei suddenly leaned close to Zhuang Rui, pointed to a price list below, and said, "Brother Zhuang, what do you think about us buying an air-to-air missile system? It doesn't seem too expensive, only a little over ten million US dollars..."

"Get out of my way! We're going out to sea to find treasure, not to fight a war..."

When Zhuang Rui saw the price, he was immediately speechless. It was actually the price of the Russian C-300 air defense missile system, and it was only \$12 million per set.

Many people may not be familiar with the Russian C-300 air defense missile system, but its performance is higher than that of the famous American Patriot air defense missile system, and its price is only half that of the Patriot.

Zhuang Rui realized that with his wealth, if he wanted to equip it, he could probably convert this merchant ship into a destroyer. It seems that as long as you have money, there is nothing that cannot be done in the arms smuggling world.

"Alright, go keep an eye on things in the hold, don't let the crew find out about these weapons..."

Zhuang Rui waved his hand helplessly. He had gotten a ship for free, but he hadn't expected that the cost of the weapons alone would be hundreds of millions. He really didn't know if the value of the underwater treasures could make up for his expenses.

...

Not far from the Strait of Malacca lies a deserted island, long and narrow, with a depth of four or five hundred meters. It naturally forms a very secluded harbor, completely invisible from the open ocean. Hidden within is a port with a very deep draft.

At this moment, a huge oil tanker, more than 200 meters long, was moored in the port. Seven or eight people were standing at the bow of the tanker. Not far from their feet, there were several pools of bright red blood on the deck, indicating that something unpleasant had happened on the deck.

"Brother, this shipment of oil should fetch at least a hundred million US dollars, right? And this oil tanker should be worth several hundred million, right? The other party is only willing to offer eighty million, isn't that a bit too much?"

If Zhuang Rui were here, he would definitely recognize that the person who just spoke was the Thousand Gates Fire General he had seen before.

This guy looks completely different from how he was dressed in a suit a few months ago. He's wearing a tight vest, his muscles are bulging, and a golden bullet chain is slung diagonally across his body from his shoulder, giving him a bit of the look of Arnold Schwarzenegger in Terminator.

"A 200,000-ton oil tanker carrying over 1 million barrels of crude oil would be worth at least 150 million US dollars at market prices. However, Fifth Brother, someone died this time, so the cargo owner can't come to redeem the goods. We can only sell it to someone else at a low price..."

The speaker was Liu Minghui. Brother Hui's appearance was quite different from a few months ago. He was wearing an American navy camouflage uniform and a pair of large sunglasses. His originally fair and chubby skin was now tanned dark by the sea sun, but he was in very good spirits.

Since leaving Macau, they have spent a full twenty million US dollars to buy a frigate that had been decommissioned by the Russian military from the black market.

However, due to Liu Minghui's financial constraints, the missiles, depth charges, and anti-submarine torpedoes on this frigate were all removed by the other side. Apart from a few heavy machine guns, the 100mm naval gun at the bow was just for show, with not a single shell fired.

This is why frigates are relatively inexpensive to build. If it were a destroyer or a torpedo boat, \$20 million would probably only be enough to buy a set of electronic equipment for the ship.

However, in Malacca, having such a frigate is enough to allow the newly formed pirate group led by Liu Minghui to thrive.

In just two short months, Liu Minghui had already robbed three merchant ships that traded between Malacca and the Strait of Malacca. The one in front of him was an oil tanker belonging to the Nepalese shipping company "Flatari Damato Company" that he had hijacked just half a month ago.

However, a small accident occurred during the hijacking of the oil tanker. When warning the tanker to stop and board, Hui-ge lost his composure and shot and killed two crew members, which changed the course of the hijacking.

Pirates typically hijack ships, especially expensive oil tankers like these that are difficult to sell, with the ultimate goal of getting the ship owners to pay a ransom.

However, the situation became complicated after someone died. So, Hui contacted a major buyer in Malaysia through his old connections, intending to sell the boat and its fuel together. However, the price was extremely low, only half the cost of the fuel, which meant the boat was essentially given away for free.

"Eighty million it is, boss. This is still the most promising business. Including this one deal, we've made almost a billion RMB in just over two months. It's fucking awesome..."

Huo Jiang is very used to this life of risking his life. He used to work hard for decades, living in constant fear, and only made a fortune of four or five hundred million. He never expected that in just over two months at sea, he would have already made more money than he had in half a lifetime.

"The ancients were right..."

Suddenly, Hui Ge uttered a seemingly unrelated, literary remark. He was thinking of his ancestors' exploits at sea, realizing that what his father and grandfather had said was true. This line of work was far more promising than swindling.