

## Golden 981

Chapter 981 Well Deserved!

That makes sense. It's not wrong for merchants to pursue profit. Even Old Tang, who runs a jewelry company called "Heirloom Jade," came to gamble on jade stones to secure a supply for his company.

If we consider only the value of the jadeite, Zhuang Rui does win. However, in terms of the rarity of the jadeite, Tang Lao has a slight edge. Therefore, this matter is difficult to resolve clearly.

"That's not how it works. You can buy glass-type green jade with money, but can you buy jewelry with purple eyes?"

The conversation escalated into an argument between the two opposing camps, each with their own perspectives, making it difficult to determine who was right and who was wrong.

Zhuang Rui found it somewhat amusing. "It's not even theirs, why are they arguing like this? I have a piece of imperial green jade over there, and I haven't seen you guys this excited."

"Little...Little Zhuang, you...you come and see, this green...this green!"

Suddenly, Old Tang's voice rang out. When he called out to Zhuang Rui, his voice trembled slightly, clearly indicating that he was not at peace. This caused everyone to stop arguing and turn to look at Old Tang.

"Mr. Tang, this...this green is so vibrant..."

Zhuang Rui knew what was going on, but he still pretended to be surprised, holding the polished jade in his hands and examining it carefully.

The transparent, water-like glass-type jade, with a deep green color like the broad-leaved trees of the primeval forests of Myanmar, appears so crystal clear and unfathomable under strong light, radiating an endlessly alluring luster.

The color of the jade also tinted Zhuang Rui's hands a green hue, and its slightly vibrant luster was captivating at first glance.

This is still unpolished jadeite raw material. Only after processing can the charm of imperial green jadeite be fully displayed.

"It's not very intense, but if I'm not mistaken, it's a piece of imperial green jade!"

Old Tang's face showed fatigue from wiping the stone, but his expression was extremely excited. Although imperial green jade was rare, Old Tang had seen it several times over the decades, and had even personally cut it open.

But whether it was the imperial green jadeite that Tang Lao had unearthed or the one he had ever seen, the largest of them was at most the size of a baby's fist.

However, the jadeite in Zhuang Rui's hand weighs a full seven or eight pounds, and the bright green color on it is evenly distributed without any difference in intensity, so it can be identified as a whole piece of imperial green jadeite!

You should know that a piece of imperial green jadeite the size of a fingernail can fetch at least tens of millions at auction. And that's only because it's extremely rare, with only one or two appearing occasionally.

Zhuang Rui's piece of jadeite, whether in terms of market value or aesthetics, far surpasses Tang Lao's piece of purple-eyed jadeite.

After all, green is king among jadeite. When this green reaches its peak, it is the king of jadeite. This is an indisputable fact!

"Imperial Green?!?"

"Mr. Tang, is this... really Imperial Green?!"

"It's so beautiful! I've never seen such a green jade before..."

After Old Tang uttered the words "Imperial Green," the remaining seventy or eighty people in the room fell silent.

However, this silence was like the calm before a storm, lasting only five or six seconds before the emotions of the crowd suddenly boiled over, as if a drop of cold water had been poured into a frying pan.

As the name suggests, Imperial Green is the king of jadeite. Anyone who plays with jadeite is very familiar with this term. However, out of a hundred jadeite merchants, only one may have ever seen a real Imperial Green.

The remaining 99 people only knew about imperial green jade from legends, so when Mr. Tang identified it as imperial green jade, everyone crowded around, eager to hold it in their hands and examine it closely.

"Hey, I said, don't steal it! What the hell is this?"

Seventy or eighty of them rushed over at once, startling Zhuang Rui. If he really got hurt, he'd have nowhere to turn for help. Zhuang Rui shouted as he ran around the stone cutter.

The Burmese soldiers who were still on guard duty had not yet dispersed. They immediately took Zhuang Rui under their guns and protected him. Facing the dark muzzles of the guns, the fanatical people suddenly sobered up.

"Gentlemen, I understand your feelings, but with so many people involved, things could get complicated. If something were to happen, it wouldn't be good for any of us. I hope you can understand..."

Zhuang Rui wiped the cold sweat from his forehead. Dealing with this situation was much more tiring than cutting stones. These seventy or eighty hands could knock him unconscious with just one slap from each of them.

"Teacher Zhuang, could... could I take a look? You can hold it in your hand, I won't touch it, okay?"

"Yes, yes, Teacher Zhuang, you cherish us so much, we'll look at each of you one by one, we absolutely won't reach out..."

"That's right, Teacher Zhuang, please, I've been playing with jade for half my life, and I've never seen imperial green jade before. It's so embarrassing to even talk about it..."

The crowd surrounding Zhuang Rui stopped trying to snatch it, but they all began to plead. You see, imperial green jadeite is a legend to jade merchants!

So today, being able to observe this legendary jade up close, these wealthy and influential bosses all lowered their stance and began to fawn over Zhuang Rui.

"this....."

Zhuang Rui was in a dilemma. Honestly, no one would want to expose such a precious jade to the public, but the pitiful words of the crowd made Zhuang Rui hesitate.

After all, beautiful things should be displayed, and that's the purpose of Zhuang Rui opening the museum. If he doesn't agree to everyone's request now, he'll seem petty.

"Brother Zhuang, give it to me, I'll show it to them..."

Peng Fei nudged Zhuang Rui with his elbow, took the jade from his hand, and said to everyone present, "I'm showing it to you all. You can take pictures if you want, but please don't take pictures of me..."

Zhuang Rui laughed upon hearing this, thinking that with Peng Fei's skills, he probably wouldn't make any mistakes.

"I'll go first..."

"Let me go first, Lao Yu, can you take a picture of me later?"

"Hey buddy, don't push! Can't you see I'm standing in front?"

"Everyone, don't rush. This friend said everyone can see it, so let's go up one by one..."

Upon hearing that they could observe the Imperial Green jade up close and take photos, the crowd stirred again, but this time everyone was relatively rational and there was no overcrowding.

Not to mention the people standing in front, who were happily going forward to examine the imperial green fabric and take photos, there was one person who quietly walked up to Zhuang Rui and Old Tang.

"Mr. Tang...Mr. Tang, may I ask you a question?"

Old Tang, who was eating the bread Zhuang Rui handed him to stave off hunger, suddenly heard someone speak beside him. He paused for a moment, then said, "If you have any questions, feel free to ask me. If I know the answer, I'll definitely give it to you..."

Old Tang was known for being easy to talk to in the jade industry, and his attitude relieved the man, who cautiously asked, "Old Tang... Master Tang, Teacher Zhuang has deciphered the Imperial Green jade. So... so who won this competition between you two?"

The person speaking was none other than Lao Guo. The sudden appearance of the Imperial Green made his previously calm heart start to waver again, since the previous bet was still valid.

Moreover, a betting sum of over 40 million is no small amount; it's almost more than Guo's entire fortune, leaving Guo feeling conflicted and unsure of what to do.

Originally, he thought he would have someone else bring it up, but after waiting for a long time, no one brought up the topic. After pacing around in circles for a while, Lao Guo finally mustered up the courage to bring it up with Lao Tang.

"Hey buddy, isn't this a happy ending for everyone? Why bring this up?"

"That's right, while Professor Zhuang's imperial green is undoubtedly the king of jadeite, Old Tang's purple eyes are just as good. You're such a spoilsport..."

"Hey, you're here early today. Everyone else has already started betting, so of course you need to know who wins and who loses..."

Old Guo's words also attracted the attention of those who were looking at the imperial green material. Several people were dissatisfied with Old Guo's words and began to criticize him.

However, someone immediately spoke up to help Lao Guo out of the predicament. The previous draw was before the imperial green jadeite was produced. Now that Zhuang Rui's material has yielded another imperial green jadeite, it is no longer fair to call it a draw.

Moreover, since it is a competition, there must be winners and losers, and these winners and losers are also very important to Zhuang Rui, who has been the subject of much controversy beforehand.

Everyone's gaze shifted from the imperial green jade to Tang Lao and Zhuang Rui. Looking at the white-haired Tang Lao and the youthful Zhuang Rui, a strange feeling suddenly arose in everyone's hearts.

It was a strange feeling. Two people, thirty or forty years apart in age, stood together, their shadows overlapping on the ground. It seemed that everyone saw the shadow of Old Tang in Zhuang Rui, and the image of Zhuang Rui in Old Tang's face.

At this moment, the elderly Mr. Tang seemed to become young again, while Zhuang Rui's youthful face seemed to be full of vicissitudes, giving everyone a feeling of time passing in different directions.

Like a passing of the torch between a new and an old king in the jade trade, Old Tang suddenly smiled and said with a calm expression, "This time, Zhuang Rui has won. Both this piece of jade and Zhuang Rui's jade appraisal skills can be called the jade king of our time!"

Old Tang's voice wasn't loud, but it made everyone realize that what they had just felt was actually the birth of a new king!

"Zhuang Rui, the King of Jade! You truly deserve the title!"

A shout rang out from the crowd, representing the sentiments of everyone present!

Everyone in the room felt incredibly fortunate at that moment because... they had witnessed an important moment in the development of jadeite.

Chapter 982 The New President

"This...this...this kid doesn't deserve this title..."

Zhuang Rui was caught off guard by the sudden shout. He had previously dismissed rumors of being the "Jade King" with a forced smile, not taking them seriously.

But now that dozens of people had shouted it out in unison, the feeling of being respected made even the usually composed Zhuang Rui feel a little smug.

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It's not that Zhuang Rui will become arrogant because of this, but the title of "King of Jade" will undoubtedly add a lot of glory to Zhuang Rui, meaning that he will have a unique position in the jade industry in the future.

No sooner had Zhuang Rui finished speaking than someone in the crowd shouted, "Teacher Zhuang, you deserve it! Just for finding imperial green from this piece of jade that showed no signs of life, you are the undisputed King of Jade!"

Every industry has its own culture and a way of measuring professional competence. Whatever achievements one makes in a particular industry deserves corresponding respect.

The fact that Mr. Gu was known as one of the "Southern Wu and Northern Gu" masters demonstrates his unshakeable position in the jade carving industry. Even if ordinary jade is used, the objects carved by Gu Tianfeng are still very valuable.

The Xinjiang Jade King has almost monopolized the Chinese Hetian nephrite market. With a mere flick of his wrist, he can destabilize the domestic nephrite market, and his status in the industry is self-evident.

As for the world of antiques and calligraphy and painting, Jin Pangzi's teacher is also a figure of great stature. From high-ranking government officials to ordinary merchants, everyone is proud to own a piece of the master's calligraphy.

Old Tang, who is currently in the market, has spent his entire life in the jade industry and has earned the title of "Jade King". He can almost turn stones into gold. Even the most ordinary rough stones can become worth a hundred times more after he appraises them. This is the effect brought about by the title of "Jade King".

The individuals mentioned above are all top figures in their respective fields, and they have almost devoted their entire lives to achieving their current success.

Although Zhuang Rui had previously been quite successful in the antique business, he lacked experience, and the few good items he acquired were slightly inferior to those of the aforementioned individuals, making him incomparable to them.

However, the appearance of this king of jadeite, which has never appeared in the history of jade gambling, has propelled Zhuang Rui to the pinnacle of the jadeite industry.

With this piece of jade that can be called the king of jadeite, Zhuang Rui's position in the jade gambling circle and the jade industry has been unshakable ever since. Even compared with Old Tang, he is in no way inferior.

Moreover, Zhuang Rui reached this level in just a few years, standing at the pinnacle of this industry. Compared to him, the others are all old and declining.

Therefore, Zhuang Rui's future achievements should be far more than this. Everyone firmly believes that Zhuang Rui will definitely be able to create more miracles and create an even more legendary story!

"Xiao Zhuang, it's a good thing to have such an outstanding young person like you in the jade industry. In the future, you should pay more attention to what's happening in the industry, and help those who shop overseas as much as you can..."

Looking at Zhuang Rui's young and energetic face, Old Tang felt a sense of relief, as if a heavy burden had been lifted from his shoulders. Having been called the Jade King for decades, the old man also felt a great deal of pressure.

Human life is like grass that grows and dies in autumn; we cannot escape the laws of nature and will grow old one day. Old Tang has already left behind many legends in the jade industry, and now that he sees that there are successors, he is filled with joy.

Old Tang suddenly remembered something, looked at Zhuang Rui, and said, "By the way, Zhuang, there's a jade research and promotion association in our jade industry. I started it and have been its president for over twenty years. I think you should take over as president from now on, so I can finally enjoy my retirement..."

This association is composed of domestic geologists and jade merchants. Each year, these merchants provide funding for the experts to conduct research on the types and properties of jade. Over the years, they have completed numerous research projects and are highly influential within the domestic jade circle.

Although Zhuang Rui had a considerable reputation before, he had not been in the industry long enough to join the association. However, his father-in-law, Qin Haoran, was a member, and Zhuang Rui knew what kind of organization the association was.

"Mr. Tang, I..."

Zhuang Rui came to his senses and waved his hands repeatedly, but he didn't know what to say. Being put on the altar made Zhuang Rui feel very uncomfortable.

"Alright, you'll be the president of this association. I'm sure no one will object. It's settled then. Actually, there's not much to do in the association. You're just holding the title..."

Um... After we get back to China, we'll hold an industry conference and I'll introduce you to the members from various regions. But let me make this clear first: the president's work is all voluntary; there's no salary whatsoever..."

Before Zhuang Rui could say anything more, Old Tang waved his hand and settled the matter, leaving Zhuang Rui somewhat amused and exasperated. He was so busy with work and studies that he had no time to manage any kind of association.

"Well, old man, you're forcing me into this..."

Zhuang Rui shook his head helplessly. These days, there are forced sales, but this is even more outrageous – someone is being forced to become a leader.

Zhuang Rui discovered that these old men liked to forcefully arrange things. Old Master Gu first made him a director of the Jade Association, while Old Master Tang went even further, directly making him the president.

"Xiao Rui, let's talk about this later. It's getting late, everyone should go home now..."

Seeing that Zhuang Rui was about to decline, Qin Haoran pulled him back from behind. The onlookers had also finished looking at the imperial green jadeite material and, after saying goodbye to Zhuang Rui, boarded the organizing committee's bus.

Old Tang was staying at a hotel. After tidying up the purple-eyed jadeite, he boarded another vehicle specially arranged by the organizing committee, escorted by soldiers. This was one of the benefits of fame.

As for Zhuang Rui and the others, they got into Hu Rong's car, while Peng Fei and Li Zhen took the two pieces of jadeite respectively, so there was no fear of them being lost.

...

"Dad, why did you pull me just now? You know I can barely manage my own business, how could I have time to bother with anything related to the association?"

After getting into the car, Zhuang Rui complained to his father-in-law. What he said was true. In the past two years since starting school, Zhuang Rui had devoted almost all his energy to his studies and field archaeology. He hadn't been to antique shops or museums for a long time.

Especially after recently acquiring that cruise ship, Zhuang Rui yearns for freedom even more and plans to go to the Atlantic Ocean to salvage those unknown shipwreck treasures. He had previously surveyed the coordinates of many shipwrecks.

"You silly kid, this association isn't official, but it has a great reputation in the industry. Most jewelers can't even get a membership, and you're making excuses for not being the president for free. That's outrageous..."

Although Qin Haoran was satisfied with his son-in-law's performance, he still scolded Zhuang Rui with a stern face. He was just an ordinary member in this guild, yet Zhuang Rui still looked down on the position of guild president.

It's worth noting that the members of this association are almost all from the largest jewelry companies in the country. It's somewhat similar to the G14 alliance of European football giants. Although it's a non-governmental organization, it has a huge influence.

In many cases, the market pricing of jade jewelry in China and the distribution of market share in various provinces are negotiated and resolved within the guild. Previously, Qin Haoran was alone and powerless, but now that his son-in-law has become the guild leader, he naturally has more say, which is why Zhuang Rui agreed.

"But...but I really don't have time..."

Zhuang Rui isn't very interested in doing business right now. Even if he understood the benefits, he still wouldn't be interested. Besides, he only runs a jewelry store; what do rules and such things have to do with him?

"There's not much for you, as the president, to handle. It's just attending two industry conferences a year. Xiao Rui, no matter what, you have to agree to this..."

Qin Haoran displayed the authority of a father-in-law, and Zhuang Rui had no choice but to submit. He wouldn't dare to mess with anyone, not even his wife's father, son, or maternal grandfather.

Now Zhuang Rui understands why many people in society have endless meetings and social engagements; even he himself has quite a few meetings every year.

The museum attends the National Museum Work Conference every year, and the website alliance that Zhuang Rui founded also has annual events. As for the Jade Association, although Zhuang Rui has never attended a meeting, he receives an invitation every year.

In addition, there's the car sales company where he serves as chairman, which also has an annual meeting. Now, there's also a jade research and promotion association. Zhuang Rui is simply indifferent to the many problems he has; at most, he'll find someone to attend in his place.

"By the way, brother, look... you can't use these two pieces of material, right?"

After the father-in-law and son-in-law finished their conversation, Hu Rong turned around, and the smile on his face sent chills down Zhuang Rui's spine. He had never seen Brother Hu so obsequious before.

"Brother Hu, can we not do this? Just say what you want to say..." Zhuang Rui knew that Hu Rong had his eye on his two pieces of jade.

"Hehe, brother, you know, my companies in Southeast Asia have just opened, and I don't have any good pieces to show off. Could you spare some of these two pieces of material for me so that my shops can have a few presentable items?"

Although Hu Rong is known as a jade tycoon, to be honest, he doesn't have many top-quality jade pieces. He's basically limited to icy jade, and even glassy jade with green hues is rare.

"Xiao Hu, don't even think about getting this material. There's only so little of it. I have hundreds of stores all over the world, how could that be enough?"

Zhuang Rui hadn't decided whether to give Hu Rongyun some material yet, but Qin Haoran disagreed first.

Are you kidding me? Let's not even talk about the imperial green jadeite that can only be seen at auctions. Even the glassy green jadeite, once made into jewelry, can be the centerpiece of any jewelry store.

Chapter 983 Influence

"I'm saying, with so little material, I'm trying to use it sparingly, so you two shouldn't even bother with it, right?"

Seeing the two of them like this, Zhuang Rui was immediately at his wit's end. He did have a few pieces of glass-type jadeite, which he didn't particularly value, but he was determined not to give the imperial green piece to anyone.

The rarity of imperial green jadeite goes without saying. The key issue is its scarcity. Zhuang Rui has an exceptional eye, and in the past few years, the largest pieces of glass-type jadeite he has acquired are only the size of a fist, including the piece left by his deceased grandfather.

Zhuang Rui had already carved these materials into ornaments and given them to his mother, Qin Xuanbing, and others. But now that Zhuang Rui had two more children, he should make something for the two little ones, right?

More importantly, these imperial green glass-type items are practically impossible to buy. Even if one occasionally appears at an auction, it will be sold for a high price on the spot.

Therefore, Zhuang Rui would not easily give up on this rare and valuable item; he even planned to have two bracelets made as heirlooms.

However, Hu Rong immediately objected to Zhuang Rui's words. He didn't care about losing face at this moment and said, "Brother, you're wrong to say that. After all, that material came from my mine, didn't it?"

"Xiao Hu, how dare you say that? You used such a precious piece of material as a roadbed stone. If it weren't for Xiao Rui, you'd be crying your eyes out right now..."

Qin Haoran curled his lip, his words showing no mercy to Hu Rong, his subtle attack aimed directly at Hu Rong's weak spot.

"Uncle, I don't care, you have to give it to me whether you like it or not, or I'll just take it!"

Hu Rong, being a junior to Qin Haoran, resorted to shameless behavior. The usually gentle and refined Mr. Hu's behavior surprised the driver, who nearly swerved into the ditch.

"You're almost forty, and you're still spouting this nonsense?"

Qin Haoran was both amused and exasperated. Hu Rong was a man of considerable status, especially with considerable influence in Myanmar. For the head of such a family to act so unscrupulously left Qin Haoran helpless.

"How about this, we'll divide these two pieces of material into five portions. Xiao Rui, you only have one shop, so you can take one-fifth. Xiao Hu, you don't have many shops either, so you can take one-fifth as well. The remaining three-fifths are mine. What do you guys think?"

Qin Haoran, being a businessman, disregarded even the father-in-law/son-in-law relationship in the business world, offering an extremely "reasonable" distribution plan.

"Don't even think about it!"

Before Qin Haoran could finish speaking, Zhuang Rui and Hu Rong started shouting at the same time. Zhuang Rui, in particular, was indignant. Wasn't this bullying? Everyone said that when a son-in-law goes

to his mother-in-law's house, he gets to eat and take things. Why was it the other way around with Zhuang Rui?

"Alright, Dad, you can forget about getting this imperial green material. I'm saving it to make things for your grandson and granddaughter, to be passed down through generations..."

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Qin Haoran was stunned. He was nearly sixty years old; he couldn't possibly compete with a toddler who was just over a year old for something, could he? Especially since they were his own grandson and granddaughter.

Zhuang Rui's reason was so compelling that even Hu Rong could only stare blankly, unable to open his mouth despite wanting it.

Hu Rong could imagine what would happen if Zhuang Rui taught those two kids to scratch their faces with their fingers and say to him, "Aren't you ashamed?" Where would he put his old face then?

"Alright, let's forget about the imperial green jade..."

Hu Rong glanced resentfully at the piece of jade that Peng Fei was holding in his arms, then looked at the glass-like green jade placed in the back seat of the car and said, "You should at least give us a share of this piece, right?"

Glassy jadeite is already the most precious type of jadeite. Even colorless glassy jadeite commands a high price on the market; a small pendant can cost tens of thousands of yuan.

Objects carved from a piece of material with a light green hue and an extremely even color distribution can fetch prices many times higher, easily selling for over a million.

So Hu Rong settled for second best and set his sights on this piece of glass-type jade.

"Fine, I bet you won't stop until you cut a piece of flesh off me today..."

Zhuang Rui gave a wry smile and said, "This piece of glass-type jade, as Dad just said, will be divided into five parts. I'll take one-fifth, and you can discuss the other four parts..."

Seeing the joy on Hu Rong and his father-in-law's faces, Zhuang Rui added, "As the saying goes, even close brothers should keep clear accounts. You two know the value of this piece of material, right?"

If Zhuang Rui had the choice, he would rather keep the material than sell it. But circumstances are beyond his control. He can't let them take away something worth hundreds of millions for nothing. As the saying goes, a married daughter is like water spilled from a cup, and the father-in-law is an outsider too.

"You brat, you don't think I'd cheat you out of your things. I'll give you a fair price..."

Qin Haoran chuckled and cursed, then turned to Hu Rong and said, "Little Hu, look at this, I'll take three-fifths, and you..."

Regardless of the heated debate between the uncle and nephew, by the time the car arrived at Hu Rong Manor, Zhuang Rui had already passively secured a deal: 50 million euros would be deposited into his overseas account the next day.

To be fair, Hu Rong and Qin Haoran didn't shortchange Zhuang Rui. Even if these jade pieces were made into jewelry and sold, they would only be worth five or six hundred million yuan.

However, the impact of these accessories on the market is far beyond what money can measure. Having something that others don't has represents real strength!

...

"Hello, Teacher Zhuang..."

"Hello, Teacher Zhuang..."

"Teacher Zhuang, could you show us that piece of imperial green jade again?"

"Yes, yes, we left too early yesterday, this is really... Teacher Zhuang, could we take another look?"

The next morning, as soon as Zhuang Rui stepped into the gate of the Myanmar National Jade Exchange Center, he was surrounded by jade merchants from China.

Yesterday, when those who left late returned to the hotel and boasted about it, those who left early were filled with regret, kicking themselves and beating their chests in despair.

If I had known I would get to see imperial green jade, I would have preferred to skip a meal or even live a few years less... Of course, living a few years less wouldn't be worth it, but I could at least cut back on my sexual encounters with my secretary.

"Oh, everyone, I'm really sorry. I sent this material back to China this morning. I'll let you all appreciate it later if it's carved into something. I'm truly sorry..."

Zhuang Rui repeatedly bowed to those around him. He was telling the truth. Peng Fei had taken that piece of imperial green jade back to China on a private plane early that morning. With such a piece of jade around, some people might have ulterior motives.

Not only Zhuang Rui, but also Old Master Tang returned to China on Zhuang Rui's plane. Purple eyes and imperial green are of the same level, and it would be too much of a chore to leave them in Myanmar.

"Sigh, what a shame... I don't get to see this..."

"Exactly, I should have known better than to leave yesterday..."

"Alright, everyone, let's go look around some more. Maybe we can find some imperial green jadeite?"

For a jade merchant, owning a piece of imperial green jadeite is often their greatest pursuit in this lifetime, but it is also very difficult to achieve.

That's why these people were so interested in Zhuang Rui's jade, but now they don't even have the chance to see it. Everyone's faces showed a look of frustration.

They couldn't blame Zhuang Rui for this. Anyone who had that item would have sent it back to China immediately. After discussing it for a while, everyone dispersed. After all, no matter how good the item was, it belonged to someone else. Only what you have in your own hands is truly yours.

After yesterday's match with Old Tang, Zhuang Rui's reputation has become incredibly popular. Today, wherever Zhuang Rui goes, he is greeted by voices of greeting. There were even two foreigners pointing and whispering about Zhuang Rui. It's unclear which guy with good English leaked the news.

Many people followed Zhuang Rui, wanting to see how he selected the jadeite rough stones, but to their disappointment, Zhuang Rui only wandered around the bidding area for a while before returning to the shed to rest, which dashed everyone's hopes.

However, many people still came up to Zhuang Rui to ask him to help them examine the raw materials. Zhuang Rui spent almost half of the day helping others examine the raw stones, which made him realize that the reputation was hard to live up to. Being the "King of Jade" was not an easy job.

Zhuang Rui didn't hold back, basically stating the facts as they were, describing the quality of the materials as they were, and leaving the selection to those people.

Of course, sharpening the axe doesn't delay the work of chopping wood. Zhuang Rui also selected several good pieces of material, including an icy blue-water floating flower rough stone, which was of very good quality and was the most popular material for jadeite bracelets.

This gave Zhuang Rui an unexpected surprise, because his father-in-law had snatched away a piece of blue-green floating flower stone before, which made him determined to acquire this piece of raw stone.

The most direct impact of the legendary bet between the old and new generations of "Jade Kings" was that when the bidding opened at 3:30 pm, the bidding hall, which can accommodate more than 2,000 people, was packed to capacity.

People who gamble on rough stones are often a little superstitious. Zhuang Rui's open bid revealed imperial green jadeite, which attracted many people who had no intention of participating in the open bidding to flock into the bidding hall and bid heavily on the rough stones that they did not actually think much of.

"What the hell is this?"

After waiting anxiously for two hours, Zhuang Rui entered the price he had set into the bidding device. After the dazzlingly large screen stopped flashing, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but curse inwardly as he looked at the numbers that had stopped jumping on the screen.

The reason was simple: the piece of jade that Zhuang Rui had his eye on was snatched away by someone else, and the offer was a full 500,000 euros more than his own.

Chapter 984 Foreigners Also Gamble on Stones

"Damn it, are stones free? Everyone's gone crazy!"

"Exactly, such poor quality material, and they're asking for 2 million euros..."

"Hey buddy, this isn't surprising. Yesterday, Teacher Zhuang's pick hadn't shown any movement at all, still only worth over 10 million euros. But what happened after the decryption? That wasn't just a big increase, that was a massive surge!"

When the numbers on the screen stopped flashing, the bidding hall erupted in chaos. Today's bids were truly outrageous; many people almost burst into curses.

Zhuang Rui wasn't the only one sulking; almost half the people in the bidding hall looked dejected. The winning bids today were far beyond their expectations, and many of their sure-fire bids had been snatched away.

This is also the impact of Zhuang Rui's explanation of the Imperial Green incident yesterday, which gave many speculators hope and directly led to a surge in today's open bid prices.

The Myanmar government was the happiest, as today's top bid was 21.8 million euros, more than double Zhuang Rui's 10.5 million euros yesterday, and the total transaction amount was three times higher than yesterday, making the organizing committee very wealthy.

Those who didn't win the bid had long faces, as if their imperial green jade had been snatched away by someone else, while the winner went to complete the formalities triumphantly. Zhuang Rui shook his head slightly and walked out of the bidding hall.

Since it gets dark late in Myanmar, the sealed bid ended at 7 p.m., and Zhuang Rui wasn't in a hurry to go back. He wandered around the sealed bid area. It was a rare opportunity to participate in a Myanmar jade auction, and a single piece of imperial green jade was not enough to satisfy Zhuang Rui.

However, by nightfall, Zhuang Rui had not found any suitable materials. There were a few that were not bad, but they were semi-gambling materials, and the prices were ridiculously high. They would definitely fetch astronomical prices when the bidding opened, so Zhuang Rui was too lazy to get involved.

Only after the Burmese soldiers at the jade center began clearing the area did Zhuang Rui and Qin Haoran prepare to return. Overall, the day had been fruitless.

"Teacher Zhuang, wait a minute..."

Just as I stepped out of the jade trading center, someone called out to Zhuang Rui from behind.

"Who are you....."

Zhuang Rui looked at the middle-aged man in his forties in front of him. He seemed to recognize him. It was as if he had seen him yesterday when he was cutting stones, but there were too many people at the time, and Zhuang Rui couldn't remember his name.

"Teacher Zhuang, my surname is Guo, you can just call me Lao Guo..."

The visitor was very humble, a man in his forties, who acted like a student in front of Zhuang Rui, appearing somewhat reserved.

This is not Guo's fault. A person's identity is sometimes a very strange thing, like an invisible barrier that can put inexplicable pressure on people.

Those who say things like "you're all swaggering" are pure nonsense. Only when the person in question reveals their identity can they put pressure on others, and this pressure is mostly self-created.

Just like an ancient emperor traveling incognito, those who don't know him won't know and won't think he's some important figure. But once they know his identity, they will definitely feel a sense of awe and fear.

Zhuang Rui is now a top figure in the jade industry. Not to mention Lao Guo, even those old men in their fifties and sixties respectfully address Zhuang Rui as "Teacher Zhuang." As the saying goes, there is no order of learning; those who achieve mastery are teachers.

"Brother Zhuang, he's the one who ran the gambling den yesterday and bet on Old Master Tang. He's probably made a killing this time..."

Li Zhen recognized Lao Guo and whispered in Zhuang Rui's ear that he only remembered when he saw Lao Guo that he and Peng Fei still had 100,000 yuan that they hadn't redeemed. It seemed he would have to go find that Boss Jin later.

"Mr. Guo, is there anything I can help you with?"

The sedan chair was carried by people, and the respect given was all from others. Zhuang Rui naturally wouldn't directly call him "Old Guo." After several years of experience in society, Zhuang Rui had transformed from a naive young man into a boss with a refined, cultured air.

"Hehe, Teacher Zhuang, I won two lottery tickets today and I'm about to solve them. I was thinking... I was wondering if you could take a look at them? I don't know if that would be alright?"

As Guo spoke, he rubbed his hands together, appearing somewhat nervous. He and Zhuang Rui were complete strangers with no prior relationship. It was only natural that Zhuang Rui would agree or disagree with his sudden request.

Guo escaped death yesterday. At first, he felt hopeless, but Zhuang Rui unexpectedly found the imperial green material, which secured the victory and put the 40 million taels of silver into his pocket.

So today, Lao Guo had a great time at the open auction, winning two bids in a row, which are now on the bulldozer following behind him.

"This... tonight..."

Zhuang Rui was about to refuse, but then he suddenly remembered what Old Tang had told him, and said, "I'll stay a little later tonight, I'll go with Boss Guo to take a look..."

Saying things against his will, Zhuang Rui finally understood the meaning of the saying "the higher you climb, the colder it gets." Sometimes, the greater your ability, the more responsibilities you have to bear.

Moreover, the more inconspicuous something is, the more likely it is to be the subject of gossip. This public opinion can elevate someone to a pedestal, but it can also bring them down.

"Oh, thank you, thank you, Teacher Zhuang. You don't know, the first time I saw jade gambling was when you were in Pingzhou. If it weren't for you, I wouldn't have been able to get into this business..."

When Lao Guo heard that Zhuang Rui had agreed, his face lit up with joy, and he followed behind Zhuang Rui, looking no different from a fan meeting their idol.

What Lao Guo said was true. At that time, he was visiting Pingzhou as a tourist. His traditional business was having some difficulties, and after seeing Zhuang Rui make hundreds of millions of RMB from a single stone, he had the idea of changing careers.

In recent years, the jade market has soared, and materials such as bean green jade, which were once looked down upon by industry insiders, have become quite valuable. After entering the industry, Lao Guo has also made a small fortune, and he has always regarded Zhuang Rui as his mentor.

That's why I had the bet with Boss Jin yesterday. Especially after Zhuang Rui beat Old Tang, if there hadn't been no incense or candles for sale, Old Guo probably would have immediately treated Zhuang Rui like a living Buddha.

Zhuang Rui never expected that his trip to Pingzhou back then would actually change Lao Guo's life. However, he felt much closer to Lao Guo. He called out to Qin Haoran, and the group headed towards the stone-cutting area together.

There were significantly fewer people in the stone-cutting area today than yesterday. Only those who had bought rough stones at high prices hoping to make a fortune, and jewelers waiting to take advantage of the situation, immediately made way for Zhuang Rui when he arrived.

"Teacher Zhuang, are you getting stones cut again today?"

"Teacher Zhuang, are these two pieces your materials?"

"Teacher Zhuang is about to cut another stone, everyone hurry over and take a look..."

Zhuang Rui's arrival caused an uproar in the stone-cutting area. Even the people who were cutting stones and cleaning windows stopped what they were doing and swarmed around Zhuang Rui.

A person's reputation is built on the shoulders of Old Tang in the jade gambling industry. Who wouldn't want to get along well with this young man? In the future, when purchasing raw materials, a single word from him could save them a lot of losses.

Just as Zhuang Rui was about to step forward to clarify, Lao Guo stepped forward and shouted, "Hey...hey, everyone, don't push, don't push! Teacher Zhuang isn't here to cut the stone today, he's here to help me assess it, so please don't push..."

As Lao Guo spoke, a smug look appeared on his face. To be able to get Teacher Zhuang to take a look at his work, what a huge honor that must be! And indeed, everyone in the room looked on with envy.

A figure pushed his way out of the crowd, approached Lao Guo, and cursed, "Lao Guo, you're fucking lucky..."

"Oh, Brother Jin, this... it's not my fault. Tomorrow, I'll host a banquet for you to apologize, okay?"

When Lao Guo saw that it was Boss Jin, a smile immediately appeared on his face. He had already won money, so he couldn't pretend to be innocent after getting a good deal, could he?

"Get lost, it's not like I can't afford to lose that little bit of money. I'll just have Teacher Zhuang take a look at the materials later..."

Boss Jin laughed and cursed. His business was much bigger than Lao Guo's, so 20 million was nothing to him. He hadn't done anything else all morning and had already lost more than 10 million.

In the afternoon, Mr. Jin was a little unwilling to give up, so he went to the open bidding area, selected a piece of material, and bid on it. Now he's queuing up to have the stone cut.

"Okay, I'll talk to them for you later..."

Old Guo wasn't familiar with Zhuang Rui, but he couldn't show any weakness at this moment. So he glanced at Zhuang Rui, who was surrounded by the crowd, and patted his chest to agree.

"Come on, come over here. Line up your material in front of mine, and I'll have Teacher Zhuang take a look at it later..."

Boss Jin pulled Lao Guo aside and directed the bulldozer to drive to a stone cutting machine on the right.

When the bidding ends, the stone-cutting area becomes the busiest place, with all seven stone-cutting machines and more than twenty grinding machines almost completely full. If you arrive a little late, you have to wait in line.

"Hey, I'm saying, my material is ranked first, how come you've moved up to the front?"

As Boss Jin was directing the bulldozer to lower the stones, he noticed three people lifting a piece of material weighing over 200 kilograms onto the stone cutting machine, and he couldn't help but shout.

Mr. Jin had been queuing for almost an hour before it was his turn. Now that someone had cut in line, he was naturally unhappy. As for letting Lao Guo cut in front of him, wasn't that because of Zhuang Rui's influence?

Upon hearing Boss Jin's words, the three men who were working put down the stone and turned around. However, what they said left Boss Jin completely bewildered. It turned out to be three foreigners with golden eyes and blue hair.

Although Mr. Jin's business was quite large, he had not received much higher education. He made his fortune in copper mining and had rarely left home. Apart from "bye-bye," he didn't even know how to say "hello" in English.

Chapter 986 Finding a Bargain (Part Two)

The cutting of stones during the rough jade gambling process is always the most attractive aspect for these jade merchants.

Regardless of whether it's your own rough stone or not, the joy and disappointment after a successful cut or a failed gamble can be quite addictive.

This time was no exception, especially since a few foreigners were cutting stones, which attracted a lot of attention. This made the foreigners a little uncomfortable, so Steve took the grinding wheel himself and started polishing the raised parts of the raw stone.

The grinding wheel made a constant "crackling" sound as it rubbed against the stone, and white powder and stone chips flew everywhere. Before long, Steve had changed three grinding wheels, and a four- or five-centimeter-deep cut had appeared on the rough stone.

Experience tells us that jadeite is often found beneath blemishes, but to Steve's disappointment, no jadeite appeared under the blemishes, casting a shadow over his mind.

When another grinding wheel was worn out and unusable, Steve finally lost his patience. After discussing it with the two people next to him, he picked up the handle of the stone cutter.

"Click...click click..."

When it comes to foreigners gambling on stones, they are much more efficient and decisive than the Chinese. With one cut, Steve removed the pointed stone from the rough stone.

George, who was standing nearby, quickly splashed a basin of water onto the cut surface, but to their disappointment, no green appeared on the smooth surface.

"Sigh, it's collapsed..."

A huge sigh rang out. Although it wasn't their own gambling that caused them to lose, nine out of ten people present had experienced this situation before, so their sighs were a sign of shared misfortune.

Of course, the only person who has never lost money gambling on jadeite rough is Teacher Zhuang. If you count, since Zhuang Rui debuted, he has never lost money gambling on jadeite rough in public.

"I said, are you still planning to cut it?"

One of the onlookers, who spoke fluent English, immediately told Steve, "What you're seeing on the cut surface is a rocky cross-section, not a grainy, crystalline texture. This piece is basically ruined..."

"No...no, only a quarter has been cut off so far, there are still three-quarters left. I firmly believe that jade can be found there..."

Steve stubbornly shook his head. Perhaps Westerners have their own unique insights into jade gambling? Steve turned the rough stone upside down and placed the other pointed end under the alloy gear.

Upon seeing this, Zhuang Rui's heart leaped into his throat, because the blue jade was located at that sharp corner. If Steve cut close to the edge, he could easily cut it out with a single stroke.

"Crack...crack crack!"

Steve didn't draw any lines at all, and just made a cut like before. But after cleaning the cut surface, the guy was dumbfounded – nothing came out on either side.

Zhuang Rui breathed a sigh of relief, then looked at the stone lying on the ground, ignored by everyone, and began to make plans in his mind.

Going directly to buy it would be difficult to set a price, and the other party might not even be willing to sell. How to get that piece of material weighing more than ten kilograms was quite a headache for Zhuang Rui.

"Hmm? Finished?"

As Zhuang Rui was deep in thought, another loud sigh rang out beside him. Looking towards the stone-cutting machine, he saw that the largest piece of material had been split in two, but they still couldn't extract any jade.

Steve's face was rather grim as he stared blankly at the stone that had been broken into several pieces on the ground. What was supposed to be a sure thing in his gamble on the stone had unexpectedly ended in failure, which was hard for the proud and arrogant Steve to accept.

The fact that he had been so embarrassed in front of this group of Chinese people whom Steve considered uncultured and ill-mannered made him even more upset. He said, "George, let's cut a few more pieces and see..."

"Alright, Steve, God is on holiday today and isn't here to help us..."

George, patting Steve on the shoulder, was Steve's employer and also a tycoon in the British jewelry industry, with a net worth of billions of dollars.

George could accept losing a rough stone worth three or four million euros, and he comforted Steve at the time.

"Oh no, George, maybe the emerald is hidden in here?"

Steve, unwilling to give up, cut the stone again, breaking down the more than 200 kilograms of raw stone into pieces scattered all over the ground.

Someone nearby couldn't stand it any longer and spoke up: "Hey buddy, do you even know anything about jade gambling? If you can't see any green inside this cut, it's a bad gamble. Even if you break it down into cells, there's no way you'll find jade..."

Mr. Jin was also getting impatient and urged, "Yes, why waste time like this? If you're done, let me start unraveling it..."

"Okay, just the last piece, I'll stop cutting after this..."

Steve looked somewhat dejected. As a gem appraiser, he should have been gambling on semi-gambled rough stones, but this was the one he insisted on buying. Now that the gamble had failed, although the boss didn't say anything, Steve himself felt a little embarrassed.

"Alright, Steve, it's no big deal if you lose on one stone. Next time we'll buy stones with windows cut out, then you can really use your strengths..."

As an internationally renowned jewelry tycoon, George found the feeling of being stared at very unpleasant. He immediately grabbed George and said, "We can leave now, we can come back tomorrow!"

After exchanging a glance with George, Steve sighed and said, "Alright, George, I'll make sure you get your money's worth tomorrow..."

"Hey, I'm telling you, keep cutting, maybe we'll find jade..."

A voice suddenly rang out, causing everyone to cast disdainful glances toward the source of the sound. This piece of material, weighing over two hundred pounds, had already been cut into eight pieces without revealing any jade. Continuing to cut it would be pointless.

"Oh? Teacher Zhuang?"

Why does Teacher Zhuang say that?

"I don't know, maybe they're just mocking these foreigners? The entire history of jade development is in China, and these foreigners come here to join in the fun, they deserve to fail..."

When everyone followed the sound and saw Zhuang Rui, they were all dumbfounded. However, some people who thought they were clever quickly offered an explanation.

The guy who said that didn't seem to realize that in Myanmar, apart from the Burmese people, everyone else was a foreigner?

"Oh, young man, are you mocking me for not knowing anything about jade gambling?"

George looked rather grim. Although he was wealthy, he had built his fortune through hard work. Apart from being willing to spend on investments, he lived a very frugal life. Many people said he didn't seem like a British person, but more like a Jew.

Although George didn't know much about jade gambling, he did have some basic knowledge. Like the onlookers, he thought Zhuang Rui was mocking him.

"Oh no, I think Mr. Steve is right. Who knows, if we turn these remaining rough stones into strips, we might get some unexpected rewards..."

Zhuang Rui shook his head and said with a serious expression, but his words had a slightly teasing tone.

"Enough, young man, stop showing off your cleverness. Jade gambling isn't a Chinese invention. Don't be surprised that I don't know anything about it..."

George was genuinely angry. The other person was already injured, and this young man was rubbing salt into the wound; it was incredibly unfair.

"Oh, since Mr. George is unwilling to continue dissecting, could you sell me these broken stones?"

Zhuang Rui and George were speaking in English, which only a small number of people nearby could understand. They were immediately surprised. This was already a piece of junk, so why did Zhuang Rui still buy it?

George and the others did not know Zhuang Rui, nor did they know his reputation, but the onlookers knew Zhuang Rui very well, and they all stared at the scraps on the ground.

"Will I sell you these stones?"

George was taken aback upon hearing this, and looked Zhuang Rui up and carefully examined him. This young man didn't seem like a fool, and a look of suspicion immediately appeared in his eyes.

"Yes, I want to see if jadeite can be found after these rough stones are turned into individual stone strips..."

Zhuang Rui wore a mocking smile, which greatly annoyed George. His eyes darted around, and he said, "Alright, young man, I admire your persistence, but buying these rough stones won't be cheap..."

Zhuang Rui laughed upon hearing this, waved his hand, and said, "Hehe, I just unpacked it for fun. You can sell it or not, it's up to you. With Mr. George's reputation in England, I'm sure he won't care about that little bit of money, right?"

Zhuang Rui's words sparked a flurry of discussion among the onlookers. Their eyes burned with excitement as they looked at the rough stones on the ground. They absolutely refused to believe that someone of Zhuang Rui's status would be so bored as to cut stones for fun.

However, firstly, Zhuang Rui's reputation was undeniable; secondly, they were all Chinese, and it wouldn't be appropriate to compete for business at this juncture; and thirdly, they weren't sure if there was jade among these scraps. They were all watching the situation unfold in a volatile manner.

“Oh, young man, since you know my name, you also know that I am an Englishman known as a Jew...”

George grinned like an old fox and continued, "This damn stone cost me three hundred and eighty euros. Young man, if you want to take it, you'll have to come up with one hundred thousand euros!"

In George's mind, the broken rough stone was already worthless, and he asked for 100,000 euros in the hopes that Zhuang Rui would back down.

If... just if, Zhuang Rui were willing to take out 100,000 euros, then for George, it would be like making a profit for free. George, who started from scratch, had analyzed these intermediate steps in great detail.

George hadn't considered what would happen if... if jadeite were actually found in the remaining material, how would his losses be calculated?

"One hundred thousand euros?"

Zhuang Rui grinned like a little fox, snapped his fingers with his thumb and forefinger, and said, "Mr. George, the deal is done..."

Chapter 987 Finding a Bargain (Part 3)

Upon seeing Zhuang Rui's smile, George felt a sense of unease, but a promise made was a promise made, and in front of so many people, he lacked the courage to back out.

"Brother Zhuang, we only have 80,000 euros in cash..."

In Myanmar, jade gambling transactions are generally conducted via bank transfer, and few people carry large amounts of cash. In particular, Zhuang Rui had been instructed by Hu Rong to come to Myanmar this time, so he did not prepare much cash.

Li Zhen took out all his money, but he was still short 20,000 euros. He couldn't help but look at Zhuang Rui.

"Eighty thousand? You're still short twenty thousand. George, can I write you a check now?"

Zhuang Rui's actions made George increasingly uneasy. Looking at the rough stone weighing over twenty pounds on the ground, he shook his head and said, "Sir, if you can't produce the cash, I think... this transaction can be terminated..."

Although George was convinced that the rough stone he won the bid for was worthless and originally planned to salvage whatever he could, Zhuang Rui's actions made him change his mind, and he wanted to cut the remaining stone again.

After all, George is worth hundreds of millions, and he has already lost more than three million euros, so he naturally wouldn't care much about 100,000 euros. However, George was a bit too confident just now, so he is now using cash to try to terminate the deal.

"you....."

Zhuang Rui glared angrily at George, but he hadn't done anything very ethical either. He looked up at his father-in-law, wondering if he had any cash on hand.

Qin Haoran shook his head slightly. He only had a few thousand euros in cash on him. He had paid for all his food and drink in Hu Rong, Myanmar. Why would he need to carry cash? Otherwise, he would be constantly worried about being robbed.

Just as Zhuang Rui was wondering where to get the money, Lao Guo, who was standing next to him, suddenly spoke up: "Teacher Zhuang... I have some cash here, why don't you... take it and use it first?"

Yesterday, when Lao Guo and Boss Jin were gambling, many people wrote IOUs, but these people were all influential. After meeting Lao Guo today, many of them returned the money they had lost to him.

After all, 50,000 RMB is only 5,000 Euros, which many people can afford. They don't want to be chased for such a small amount of money.

So today, the bag on Lao Guo's back was bulging with money. If you were to ask who had the most cash at the jade trading center today, it would definitely be Lao Guo.

Don't be fooled by the fact that gambling on stones can be quite profitable. The high profits come with huge risks, and you can still lose money. Even if Lao Guo doesn't win any stones on this trip, the money he wins from just the gambling itself is enough to cover his entire fortune.

Zhuang Rui wanted to get things done quickly; paying for the stones was the most important thing. He didn't care about owing Lao Guo a favor, and said, "If it's convenient for you, Mr. Guo, then give me 20,000..."

"Convenient...convenient, hehe, what a coincidence today..."

Old Guo took the backpack off and unzipped it with a "whoosh." Even Zhuang Rui was startled; the backpack was full of money, worth at least five or six hundred thousand euros.

"Professor Zhuang, is 20,000 euros enough? Or would you like to take more?"

Old Guo was able to earn all this money thanks to Zhuang Rui. If Zhuang Rui hadn't unexpectedly defeated Old Master Tang, Old Guo would probably be in China right now demolishing houses and selling land to prepare for losses. So, let alone 20,000 euros, even if he gave Zhuang Rui 200,000 euros, he wouldn't even blink.

"Hehe, twenty thousand euros is enough..."

Zhuang Rui hesitated for a moment, then said, "If there's a good deal, everyone should take advantage of it. Since Mr. George is willing to part with it, Mr. Guo, you can keep 20% of this rough stone..."

"Hey, Lao Guo's lucky, he actually got a piece of the pie..."

"There's definitely something special in this rough stone. Master Zhuang has never been wrong when it comes to gambling on stones..."

"Yes, I also have twenty or thirty thousand euros here. I should have lent them to Professor Zhuang..."

Zhuang Rui's words immediately aroused the envy of those around him. Although they could not discern anything from the fragments, given Zhuang Rui's status, he would never utter such arrogant words.

If it weren't for concerns about Zhuang Rui's reputation, at least half the people in the audience would probably have jumped in.

"Mr. George, this rough stone is mine now..."

Zhuang Rui took the 20,000 euros handed to him by Lao Guo and gave it to George. Li Zhen, who was behind him, smiled and carried away the stone. The move was so fast that George didn't even have time to back out.

"Alright, I hope you can unravel the jade..."

George behaved very politely; after all, the stone had already been sold, and trying to back out now would only make him lose face.

"Thank you for your kind words..."

Zhuang Rui smiled, turned to Lao Guo and said, "Boss Guo, why don't you and Boss Jin work on other pieces first? This one isn't urgent. You can work on it at my place later..."

Having made such a splash yesterday, Zhuang Rui didn't want to cut stones in front of everyone anymore. Sometimes being in the limelight isn't necessarily a good thing. Today, just helping others examine rough stones had left Zhuang Rui feeling a bit dizzy and lightheaded.

"Okay, okay, we'll do as you say, Teacher Zhuang..."

Old Guo didn't care. Even though Zhuang Rui had just given him two cents, he didn't pay much attention to it.

After all, this is a stone that can be broken. In Lao Guo's opinion, even if Zhuang Rui breaks it up and increases the price, he will probably only make a few million. Even if he gets two-tenths of the profit, it will only amount to a few hundred thousand.

"Oh, Professor Zhuang, this won't do! Everyone's waiting for you to cut the stone..."

"Yes, Teacher Zhuang, aren't you just keeping us in suspense? We've spent money on the materials but still don't understand them. We're going to be sleepless tonight..."

Zhuang Rui's words aroused public anger, and the onlookers began to clamor.

These people, who failed to obtain the Imperial Green yesterday, now have a rare opportunity to see Zhuang Rui cut the stone again today, so they are naturally urging Zhuang Rui to start cutting the stone immediately.

"Professor Zhuang, why don't you unravel it here today..."

Seeing the excited crowd, Lao Guo was also quite excited. He was just a nobody in the jade gambling circle, but he was able to get so much attention because of Zhuang Rui, and he was extremely proud.

"Yes, Professor Zhuang, please solve it first. We haven't said a word..."

Those at the back of the line also chimed in, saying that they would definitely object if someone else cut in line, but since it was Zhuang Rui, they wouldn't have the stone cut today. Being able to witness a master cut a stone on the spot was worth it.

"Alright, thank you all..."

Seeing the situation on site, Zhuang Rui realized that if he didn't cut this piece of material open, he probably wouldn't be able to leave the stone-cutting area, so he nodded in agreement.

The remaining piece of material is not large, weighing only about twenty pounds, but it is a truly top-quality raw stone with thin skin and thick jade.

While Zhuang Rui was carefully examining the rough stone on the stone-cutting machine, George asked Steve with a serious expression, "Steve, do you know this Chinese man? Why is he so confident? Could it be that I made a mistake, and there really is jade in that piece of scrap?"

"I think I've seen this person at the British Jewellery Fair two years ago..."

Steve looked at Zhuang Rui and continued, "He must have won a grand prize at the last expo for a purple eye necklace, and he went to accept the award. That's all I know..."

"Judging from his appearance, he seems to be quite famous in the jadeite rough stone trade?"

Although George couldn't understand Chinese, he could still tell the attitude of others towards Zhuang Rui.

"George, fame doesn't necessarily equate to competence. When Chinese bureaucrats go abroad, aren't they all surrounded by a retinue of followers?"

Steve, who knew China very well, continued, "Maybe he's a junior colleague of that government official, George. You know, those people have a lot of influence in China..."

"Yes, that's my opinion too. But Steve, you insisted on breaking that stone earlier, did you see something?"

George nodded in deep agreement, but still had some doubts.

"Uh... probably not, um... it's hard to say, George. I personally think that stone is very likely to contain jade..."

Actually, Steve wanted to cut the last piece of material mainly because he was a little unwilling to give up, not because he really believed there was jade inside.

However, after hearing George's words, Steve originally wanted to tell the truth, but then he thought, what if Zhuang Rui found jade? If he said he didn't have any now, wouldn't it make him seem like he was bad at appreciating raw stones?

"Sigh, it's all my fault for being too impulsive..."

George slapped his forehead in regret, his eyes fixed on Zhuang Rui, who was drawing lines on the rough stone.

...

"Teacher Zhuang, should we use a stone-grinding method or cut directly?"

Old Guo saw Zhuang Rui draw a line on a stone with chalk, looking like he was about to make a knife.

"Let's just cut it open. I'm not entirely confident about this piece of material. This one cut should tell us everything..."

Zhuang Rui said with a smile that the safest way is to first polish the stone and then slowly carve it out. However, Zhuang Rui did not want to be so meticulous and decided to make a cut directly, even if it meant losing some jade.

"Click...click click..."

Zhuang Rui didn't keep everyone waiting long. After drawing the lines, he immediately started the stone-cutting machine. Following the white dotted lines drawn on the raw stone, the huge gears cut deeply into the stone.

The piece of material weighed only about ten kilograms. In just over a minute, the entire piece was split in two, with the smaller piece falling onto the ground next to the stone cutting machine.

"Whoosh..."

Li Zhen poured a basin of water he had prepared directly onto the stone cutting machine, and the people standing in front of it stared wide-eyed.

"It's...it's turned green..."

"I...I won the bet..."

"Damn, it's really gone up in price! Quick, let's see what kind of material it is!"

"Teacher Zhuang's title of 'King of Jade' is well-deserved; every cut reveals its green..."

On the cut surface of that rough stone, which was only five or six centimeters in size, a touch of green caught everyone's eye, and the stone-cutting site immediately became abuzz with excitement.

Chapter 988 Some are happy, some are sad

"You...you won the bet? Teacher Zhuang, I wish I had polished the stone first..."

Standing next to Zhuang Rui, Lao Guo was the first to see the cut surface that had been washed by water. Looking at the jade, split in two by the gears of the stone-cutting machine, Lao Guo's face was full of regret.

The gears of this stone-cutting machine are not thin; they are only used for cutting stones. Generally, for cutting jadeite, there are special tools. However, Zhuang Rui's cut damaged a lot of the jade.

"Uh... Professor Zhuang, I didn't mean anything by it, I just feel it's a bit of a pity..."

After saying those words, Lao Guo realized his tone was a bit harsh, so he quickly explained, "Who is Zhuang Rui? His skill in gambling on stones is miles ahead of mine. What right do I have to lecture Zhuang Rui?"

"Yes, Mr. Guo, you're right. I didn't expect the outer layer of this rough stone to be so thin. This cut has really cost us a lot of money..."

Zhuang Rui said it was a pity, but his face showed a calm and composed demeanor. In everyone's eyes, this was the demeanor of a great man. He had managed to gamble on a stone that was almost impossible to find jade, which was simply a miraculous thing.

In the world of jade gambling, miracles are never in short supply, and even the most outrageous stories have been heard of. But being able to witness these legends on the spot still makes the onlookers feel excited.

"Steve, go check... what grade of jade has been extracted?"

George's face was rather grim. Although he wasn't the type to be jealous of others' success, no one would be happy to watch someone else take advantage of their misfortune.

Steve nodded and walked toward the stone-cutting machine. At the same time, several jewelers and jade merchants who were quite familiar with Zhuang Rui also gathered around. Some of them picked up a small half of the rough stone from the ground and huddled together to study it in hushed tones.

"Boss Jin, how is it? What's the quality of the jade?"

"Old Han, tell me quickly, is it imperial green jadeite?"

"You're just making this up. If Imperial Green were that easy to find, what would happen?"

"That's hard to say. Teacher Zhuang has cut out imperial green jadeite twice before..."

What was considered scrap by everyone suddenly became incredibly valuable after Zhuang Rui's cut, a story that sparked much discussion. Some impatient people even urged the people observing the jade to hurry up.

As for Zhuang Rui, he had been pushed to the outside by the crowd. He had been eyeing this piece of material all day, and probably no one present knew his performance better than him. Zhuang Rui was not in a hurry and smiled as he lit a cigarette.

"The water content is blue, which should be equivalent to icy jadeite, or even better. The material has floating patterns, making it a good material for bracelets. Judging from the thickness of the outer layer, it should yield about 80 or 90 kilograms..."

After observing the cut surface of the half-stone on the stone cutting machine for a long time with a magnifying glass that had a small, bright light bulb, Han Haowei gave his judgment.

Han Haowei's jewelry company is quite famous in China. As a veteran who has been in the jade industry for nearly 20 years, many people still believe what he says.

"Wow, blue-green jadeite with floating flowers, this kind of jadeite bracelet is very sought after..."

"If we can really pull out ten or so kilograms of that material, then this piece of fabric would be worth at least forty million RMB, right?"

"That's right, Teacher Zhuang bought it for 100,000 euros, he really made a fortune!"

Boss Han's words ignited everyone's excitement, as if they'd been injected with adrenaline. Buying the foreigner's scrap material and then unearthing a priceless jadeite was a legendary story, enough for them to brag about back home.

After examining the jade's cut surface, Han Haowei squeezed next to Zhuang Rui and whispered, "Boss Zhuang, how about I have half of this piece?"

Unlike other traditional businesses, jade trading relies heavily on distribution channels; whoever controls the sales terminals gains a competitive edge.

However, the jade business is not like that. To be honest, the jade ornaments displayed in the store are all low-end goods. At most, there may be one or two pieces that are relatively valuable, but those are just for show.

The truly prized items are sold through other channels. Jewelry merchants like these have lists of powerful buyers, and they usually notify these people first when they have good items.

Let alone imperial green jadeite, which is mostly used for collection, it goes to auctions. Even blue-water icy jadeite jewelry with floating flowers sells out in specific circles. There is no need to display it in jewelry stores and promote it piece by piece.

Many people see that jewelry stores are deserted and assume they have little business, but they are wrong. This is called "the meat in the bun is not on the pleats," which is somewhat similar to the antique business model of "not making a sale for three years, but then making enough to live on for three years."

The spending power of Chinese people today is absolutely terrifying. Even the famous luxury brand stores on the Champs-Élysées in France have specially assigned Chinese-speaking staff to serve Chinese tourists.

Therefore, these jewelry merchants are not afraid of not being able to sell their good products. Whoever can get high-quality jadeite will have a high-end consumer group. That's why Boss Han shamelessly asked Zhuang Rui for jadeite.

Zhuang Rui shook his head and said, "Old Han, there's not much material here. I promised to give Boss Guo 20%, so let's let it go this time. I'll think of you next time I have good stuff..."

Zhuang Rui's "Qin Ruilin" jewelry store in Beijing has now become a place to consume top-quality jadeite jewelry. Many celebrities and wealthy people patronize it, and basically as long as high-quality jadeite jewelry is put on the shelves, it will be snapped up immediately.

Some auction houses even send people to Zhuang Rui's shop every few days to try and buy some top-quality jadeite that can be auctioned. This amount of material is indeed what Zhuang Rui needs, otherwise he wouldn't have gone to bid in the afternoon.

Although Zhuang Rui didn't care much about these jewelry transactions, it was still his own business, and he couldn't just leave his business to benefit others.

After rejecting Han Haowei, Zhuang Rui turned to Lao Guo and said, "Lao Guo, this small piece of material can be considered your share of the 20,000 euros. That's about 20%, what do you think?"

According to Han Haowei's estimate, the two pieces of jade are worth 40 million RMB. A 20% share would be 8 million RMB. Lao Guo spent about 200,000 RMB and got 8 million RMB for free. He was a little dumbfounded for a moment.

Not only was Lao Guo dumbfounded, but the onlookers also looked at Lao Guo with envy, jealousy and hatred. They all regretted that they were too slow to react and did not contribute to Zhuang Rui's cause.

If Zhuang Rui were to make another call now, raising one or two billion RMB in the shortest amount of time would be no problem at all.

It's important to know that in recent years, each jade auction has seen a transaction volume exceeding 10 billion RMB, and most of that money ends up in the hands of these jewelers.

"Old Guo, you've really struck gold! You don't even need to gamble on stones this time..."

"Yes, Mr. Guo, you'll have to give me a red envelope later..."

"Yeah, let's treat Lao Guo to dinner tonight. We'll order a seafood feast and rip him off..."

Some of Lao Guo's close friends offered their congratulations. Since Zhuang Rui had spoken, it must be true.

After hearing the cacophony of voices, Lao Guo finally realized what was happening. He looked at Zhuang Rui and waved his hands repeatedly, saying, "Teacher Zhuang, this...this won't do, I...I can't accept it. Just give me back the 20,000 euros, I really can't accept this..."

It's not that Lao Guo doesn't want the eight million, but if he really takes on this piece of material, there will definitely be people gossiping behind his back, and he himself would be a bit tactless, after all, there is quite a big difference between two hundred thousand RMB and eight million.

"Alright, Mr. Guo, we've met by chance. I'll leave this piece of material to you. I'll start by cutting open this big one..."

Zhuang Rui waved his hand to stop Lao Guo from speaking. He had a good impression of this middle-aged man, probably because Lao Guo had said that he had entered the world of jade gambling after seeing him gambling on stones, which reminded Zhuang Rui of his past experiences.

"Well... thank you, Professor Zhuang..."

They were all grown men, and they had agreed on two separate payments beforehand. Old Guo didn't hesitate and took the small half of the raw stone from Zhuang Rui. However, his eyes were a little dazed, as if he hadn't quite processed what had happened yet.

"Brother Guo, what are you planning to do with this piece of material?"

As Zhuang Rui held the large piece of jade, preparing to continue polishing it to extract the jade, Boss Han, who hadn't gotten any advantage from Zhuang Rui, approached Lao Guo.

Zhuang Rui doesn't care about money, but that doesn't mean others don't. Lao Guo doesn't own a jewelry store; he makes his profits by gambling on stones. If Lao Guo is willing to buy, then of course he's willing to sell.

After whispering for a while, Lao Guo transferred half of the rough stone to Han Haowei, and in return, he received a check for nine million RMB.

Zhuang Rui caught this scene out of the corner of his eye, smiled and shook his head, then focused his attention back on the material in front of him. If he took good care of it, this large piece of jadeite could still be used to make more than ten bracelets.

"Steve, how much is that...that piece of material worth?"

There is never a happy ending in this world. For every person who is happy, there is someone who is sad. At this moment, Mr. George's expression was not very good. He could not understand Chinese, so he could only ask questions after Steve finished his examination.

"George, it's all my fault. I didn't insist on solving it..."

Steve's face was even uglier than George's, and his words were slightly sarcastic. He had spent 3.8 million euros to carefully select a rough, uncut stone, only to have it end up being sold to a Chinese person. This made Steve feel as if he had been scratched by a cat.

Of course, Steve hated his boss the most... George. If it weren't for this greedy guy, he might be the one in the limelight right now.

Chapter 989 Revisiting Hpakant

Actually, Steve wasn't optimistic about the last piece of material yielding jade, but he had to say it, and given his previous insistence, he believed he wouldn't bear any responsibility.

"Steve, it's my fault. It's all my fault for not listening to you and insisting on making another cut..."

Fortunately, George wasn't like some leaders in China who were always right. These words made Steve feel a little better.

Seeing Zhuang Rui surrounded by onlookers like a star being fawned over, Steve and George both felt a bitter smile.

After a long day of hard work selecting a rough stone, it turned out to be a gift to someone else, practically a freebie. This made Steve and George remember the name Zhuang Rui.

The news of this bargain-hunting event that occurred at the jadeite cutting site quickly spread, becoming known not only to everyone who participated in the Myanmar jadeite auction, but also to people back home.

Many things cannot be publicized. The result of word of mouth was that Zhuang Rui displayed great power that night, using his divine eye to identify stones, snatching a piece of top-quality jadeite worth hundreds of millions from a foreigner.

The antique and jade trades are inherently intertwined. All of Zhuang Rui's friends in the antique circle called to congratulate him, which initially annoyed Zhuang Rui. He thought, "I'm not getting married, and I haven't even had a wedding night yet. I just found a bargain while cutting a stone. Is it really necessary to make such a big deal out of it?"

Finally, Zhuang Rui learned from Uncle De that he had been described as Sun Wukong, with fiery eyes that could see through all jadeite, and that the piece of jadeite worth 30 to 40 million had been inflated more than tenfold in other people's mouths, directly becoming 300 to 400 million.

This news left Zhuang Rui both amused and alarmed, wondering if he had been too high-profile lately. Although no one believed the rumor, it was indeed the truth.

Not only was it a hot topic of discussion domestically, but even in Myanmar, Zhuang Rui was treated like a living Buddha. Wherever he entered the jade trading center, he was followed by a group of people.

These people weren't genuinely interested in asking Zhuang Rui about the raw stone; they were just looking to take advantage. As soon as Zhuang Rui stood next to the raw stone, without him even asking, they all pulled out paper and pens and wrote down the stone's markings.

Even when Zhuang Rui was writing down the numbers in his notebook, several pairs of eyes would pop out from behind him, their pupils bulging out of their sockets. Those people wished they could stay by Zhuang Rui's bedside every night, because who knows, even if he talked in his sleep, he might be able to come up with some good material numbers?

Moreover, Zhuang Rui couldn't kick people out or show any impatience, otherwise people would immediately say that Zhuang Rui was putting on airs, which made Zhuang Rui so angry that he almost lost his temper. "I'm neither a celebrity nor a panda, do I need you guys to pay so much attention to me?"

At this moment, Zhuang Rui truly realized what it meant to be burdened by fame. Being a celebrity wasn't easy. Fortunately, these people weren't interested in his body; otherwise, the scandalous photos of Zhuang Rui showering in the manor would probably be all over the internet.

After persisting for four or five days, Zhuang Rui finally gave up and hid in Hu Rong's manor, refusing to show his face again. However, he had already seen most of the materials at this public auction and would have Li Zhen or Peng Fei, who had returned from China, bid for him every day.

Although Zhuang Rui had already set a high bid, he still underestimated the sensation caused by his two stone-cutting operations. The price of raw stones at this public auction was three times higher than in previous years, and two-thirds of the raw stones that Zhuang Rui had his eye on were snatched up by others.

The direct consequence of the booming demand for raw jadeite is a surge in the price of jadeite jewelry in China. Almost any slightly better piece of jewelry will have its price tag changed, and the numbers on the tag will jump several times over.

Just like Zhuang Rui's Qin Ruilin store in Beijing, a piece of icy jadeite pendant that could be bought for 30,000 yuan last year is now priced at 100,000 yuan. And that's a limited edition, attracting many wealthy people to rush to buy the top-quality jadeite jewelry.

All of this was because Zhuang Rui, like a butterfly flapping its wings in Myanmar, caused a price surge in the domestic jade market. Upon learning the news, Zhuang Rui was so shocked he couldn't speak for a long time.

...

Although Zhuang Rui didn't go to the auction site for more than a week afterward, the merchants who participated in the auction kept coming to his residence day and night, all seeking his help in inspecting materials.

"Brother Zhuang, why don't we go back to sea and go treasure hunting? We're so bored staying in this manor..."

After seeing off another group of people, Peng Fei wiped the sweat from his forehead, took out a beer from the refrigerator, gulped it down, and started complaining to Zhuang Rui.

Do you think I wanted this?

Zhuang Rui glared at Peng Fei in annoyance. If he didn't want to stock up on some raw stones for Qin Ruilin, Zhuang Rui would have already dragged Hu Rong to Hpakant. It would be better than being a free appraiser for someone here.

After more than a week, Zhuang Rui had nothing but admiration for Old Master Tang. He was almost on the verge of collapse after just one week, and he wondered how Old Master Tang could tirelessly help people look at raw stones for free for decades.

Upon seeing Qin Haoran and Hu Rong walk in from outside, Zhuang Rui quickly went to greet them and said, "Dad, tomorrow is the last day for the sealed bid opening, so I won't participate. I'll go directly to Hpakant with Brother Hu..."

Over the past few days, although Zhuang Rui hasn't won many bids, each piece has been of high quality, and most of them are mid- to high-grade jadeite, enough to sustain Qin Ruilin's shop in Beijing for three to five years. Therefore, Zhuang Rui wants to leave as soon as possible.

I've been in Myanmar for about 20 days now. News came from Beijing that the ancient shipwreck museum is about to be completed. When the ancient Song Dynasty shipwreck is moved into the exhibition hall, Zhuang Rui, the discoverer, will definitely have to make an appearance.

"Alright, although this trip cost nearly 100 million euros more than the budget, the gains were considerable. Xiao Rui, you and Xiao Hu go to Hpakant tomorrow..."

As Zhuang Rui's father-in-law, Qin Haoran has been quite troubled lately. Those who have no way to contact Zhuang Rui have actually set their sights on him.

Imagine how you would feel if you were observing raw stones every day while surrounded by a group of people trying to get close to you.

"Dad, these pieces of jade are up for auction tomorrow. Please keep an eye on them, and if you have enough money, please buy them all..."

Zhuang Rui handed Qin Haoran a slip of paper with more than ten numbers on it, along with the reserve price. Qin Haoran took the paper, glanced at it, and laughed, "You kid, you actually have some stock hidden away. Are you out of money?"

"Hehe, Dad, if you don't want it, I can eat it all myself. At most, I'll let Peng Fei stay for one day to bid..."

Zhuang Rui laughed. He had spent a lot of money this time, but he still had more than 200 million US dollars in deposits in Swiss banks, so eating these ten or so pieces of food was not a big problem.

"Alright, if this batch of materials yields good quality goods, you'll definitely get your share..."

Qin Haoran quietly placed the note into his handbag. He no longer doubted Zhuang Rui's eyesight; in fact, he was starting to believe in the saying "eagle eyes can see through anything."

The next morning, Zhuang Rui, along with Li Zhen, Peng Fei, and others, flew directly from Yangon to Mandela in his own plane, and then transferred to an old-fashioned helicopter that Hu Rong had found to reach Myitkyina.

Finally, after a long and arduous journey by car, we arrived in Hpakant again and checked into Hu Rong's Chinese community in Hpakant. By then, the Myanmar jade auction, which had lasted for more than 20 days, had finally come to an end.

Zhuang Rui received a call from his father-in-law, informing him that eight of the last ten or so jade stones had been sold, bringing the total transaction amount at this Myanmar jade auction to an all-time high of over 18 billion RMB.

Another piece of news is that, in recognition of Zhuang Rui's contributions to this auction, the Myanmar military government has actually granted him the title of Honorary Citizen of Yangon. In a few days, a special envoy will travel to Hpakant to present Zhuang Rui with the Honorary Citizen certificate.

This news left Zhuang Rui somewhat amused and exasperated. He wanted to ask his father-in-law if this title would allow him to experience the Burmese marriage system.

You know, in Myanmar, as long as a man can afford to support himself, no one will care if he marries a hundred wives. Of course, Zhuang Rui only dared to think about it in his heart. He was already very sorry for his wife because he was always running around outside.

...

"Brother Hu, what's going on? We're not going to fight a war..."

After resting for a night in Chinatown, Zhuang Rui and Hu Rong prepared to head to the jade mine early the next morning. However, upon going outside, they found that their two off-road vehicles had been replaced by armored vehicles.

"There's been another war in the Golden Triangle lately, and many drug lords have fled here. The situation in Hpakant is a bit unstable, so it's safer to use armored vehicles..."

The richer a person is, the more they cherish their life. Zhuang Rui never thought his life was more important than others. After hearing Hu Rong's words, he immediately obediently crawled into the armored vehicle.

"Hey, Brother Zhang, we meet again..."

Zhuang Rui sat in the back seat of his car and peeked out. The driver was Zhang Guojun, whom Zhuang Rui had met two years ago. He couldn't help but laugh. Back then, when he ventured into the Savage Mountain, he had given this guy quite a fright.

With one hand on the steering wheel, Zhang Guojun said with a smile, "Boss Zhuang, how about we go hunt some wild game tonight?"

"That would be great..."

Upon hearing Zhang Guojun's words, Zhuang Rui couldn't help but recall the time he and Peng Fei ventured into the Savage Mountain, as if it had happened just yesterday.

"Come on, if you disappear again, my heart can't take it..."

Hu Rong interrupted their conversation. In terms of both wealth and influence in the industry, Zhuang Rui was no longer the same as before. If anything went wrong, Hu Rong couldn't afford the consequences.

Chapter 990 Drug Lord (Part 1)

The armored vehicle moved at a snail's pace, a journey that normally takes half a day took a full day. By the time they arrived at the familiar mine, it was already getting dark.

When Zhuang Rui got out of the car, he felt like his whole body was about to fall apart; the military armored vehicle didn't have any good shock absorption system.

Although Hu Rong is a local and often travels between the mine and Hpakant City by car, he still felt a bit overwhelmed this time, and his legs were weak after he climbed out of the armored vehicle.

Holding onto the armored vehicle's deck, Hu Rong said weakly, "Zhuang Rui, let's check the mine tomorrow. Get some rest after dinner tonight..."

Actually, having Zhuang Rui inspect the jade mine was just a formality. After all, Zhuang Rui was the second largest shareholder, and if he objected, Hu Rong wouldn't be able to sell the mine completely.

"Alright, Brother Hu, if you're tired, take a rest. Brother Zhang said he had some pheasants shot down..."

After getting out of the car, Zhuang Rui used his spiritual energy to cleanse his body. Although he was still a little tired mentally, his body had fully recovered, and he could run another five kilometers of mountain road without any problem.

"Alright, but don't stray outside the mine's warning zone, the situation isn't looking good lately..."

Hu Rong was exhausted, and being over forty years old, he couldn't compare to the younger men like Zhuang Rui. After giving some instructions, he didn't even eat and went straight back to his cabin to rest.

"Hey, Shura, you're pretty energetic, aren't you..."

Zhuang Rui turned around and saw Li Zhen looking around curiously, his eyes constantly darting back and forth in the bushes.

Li Zhen curled his lip and said, "That's nothing. Back then, Peng Fei and I walked eighty miles through the jungle in one night and killed more than ten people..."

"We know you two are amazing, right? Stop bragging a bit, it won't kill you..."

Zhuang Rui didn't say anything, but he was inwardly shocked. He had crossed the Savage Mountain before and knew how difficult the mountain paths were. For Peng Fei and Li Zhen to pursue the enemy for over eighty li at night was simply an impossible task.

"Hehe, a hero doesn't dwell on past glories. Brother Zhuang, how about we find some guns tomorrow and go hunting in the Savage Mountain?"

Li Zhen wasn't angry. He looked around and saw several concealed firing positions set up around the mine. His eyes lit up. Due to his professional habit, the first thing he did when he arrived at a place was to observe the terrain.

There was only one road leading into the mine. Li Zhen could see that several sentries had been set up along this road, which was only about forty meters long. There were even people hiding in a tree. This level of security was comparable to the guard force of a temporary command post in the field.

This made Li Zhen feel a sense of excitement. Since leaving the army, he could no longer carry a gun with him, which he found a bit strange. Now, being in this environment, Li Zhen felt as if he had returned to the familiar army.

"Okay, I got lost last time I came here and didn't have a chance to go hunting..."

Zhuang Rui, oblivious to the heavy security at the mine, readily agreed. Turning to Zhang Guojun, he smiled and said, "Brother Zhang, since my little brother has brought this up, you'd better give me some face. I'll cover all the bullets you need..."

Zhang Guojun said with a wry smile, "Boss Zhuang..."

"No, just call me Brother Zhuang, it's the same as before..." Zhuang Rui waved his hand to interrupt Zhang Guojun.

"Alright, bro it is. Anyway, once you become a boss, you won't disown a roughneck like me, will you?"

Zhang Guojun was usually quite forthright, but his face soon fell, and he said, "Brother Zhuang, to be honest, let alone shooting guns, even if you wanted to fire an artillery, I could get you one..."

"Stop, Brother Zhang, stop! I didn't come here to have sex, don't say things like that..."

Zhuang Rui was drinking mineral water when he heard Zhang Guojun's words and almost spat it out. The term "fireworks" has a very strong connotation in China, and anyone could easily misinterpret it.

"What's wrong with cannons? You think I can't handle them? Let me tell you, I set off a few cannons every month..." Zhang Guojun rarely went to China and was somewhat dismissive of Zhuang Rui's words, thinking that Zhuang Rui was looking down on him.

"Alright, Brother Zhang, please continue. Let's not fire the cannon..."

Zhuang Rui gave a wry smile. His thoughts weren't pure. Look at Old Zhang, how righteously he shouted "fire!" He was worth learning from!

Zhang Guojun muttered to himself, "Firing one shot isn't a big deal, is it?"

"Alright, Brother Zhang, just get me a few AK submachine guns tomorrow. I trust you can fire them, okay?"

Zhuang Rui was almost driven to the brink of collapse by Zhang Guojun. Why was this guy so persistent about this?

"Okay, shoot as many bullets as you want, but brother, let me make this clear: you can only shoot around the mine. You can't shoot any further away..." Zhang Guojun was quite decisive this time and nodded in agreement.

Zhuang Rui immediately objected, saying, "What's around here? You're blasting rocks and clearing mountains every day; even wild animals would be scared away..."

Nowadays, jade mining is done with machinery and explosives, making a rumbling sound like thunder every day. It's estimated that there aren't many wild animals left, even on the edge of the Savage Mountain. Therefore, Zhuang Rui was very dissatisfied with Zhang Guojun's words.

Zhuang Rui wasn't an animal rights activist. In fact, most of the tiger penises he brought back last time had already been stolen, so Zhuang Rui was too embarrassed to ask Hu Rong for them again. He was thinking of getting a fresh one himself.

But nowadays Zhang Guojun won't let me go far, so there's probably not even a lynx around here, let alone a tiger.

“Brother, it’s not that I don’t want you to go, it’s just that things haven’t been peaceful lately. Several groups of drug traffickers have entered the Savage Mountain. Last time they almost came to our mine and even injured one of our brothers...”

Zhang Guojun smiled bitterly. Zhuang Rui’s disappearance in the Savage Mountain last time almost drove him crazy. If he encountered drug dealers this time, he would be too ashamed to work for Hu Rong. So he couldn't let Zhuang Rui get close to the Savage Mountain no matter what.

"Drug dealer?"

Zhuang Rui was stunned when he heard this. He had looked at the map and knew that Hpakant and the Golden Triangle were far apart, and there were countless primeval forests in between. How could drug traffickers get here?

When Hu Rong first mentioned it, Zhuang Rui thought he was joking, but now, judging from Zhang Guojun's expression, it didn't seem like he was lying.

Zhang Guojun straightened his expression and said, "Brother Zhuang, would I lie to you? This time, it was mainly the Thai military that sent troops, sweeping across the Golden Triangle. All drug trafficking forces were hit, and many drug lords have gone into hiding..."

The situation in the Hpakant region is complex, with numerous local powers, making it a paradise for drug traffickers. Wealthy drug lords are safe, hiding in the city, but many small, scattered groups have ventured into the Savage Mountain...

Approximately how many drug traffickers have entered the mountains?

Upon hearing Zhang Guojun's words, Peng Fei and Li Zhen's expressions instantly turned somewhat cold. They had dealt with those people quite a bit back then and knew that these people were ruthless and never left any survivors when they encountered strangers during drug trafficking. It could be said that each of them had blood on their hands.

Moreover, drug traffickers live in jungle environments year-round, and in tropical rainforest regions, they are even more difficult to deal with than special forces in some countries. It can be said that Peng Fei and Li Zhen both grew up in the process of fighting against drug traffickers.

"I don't know how many there were. Last time, there were probably more than twenty people who tried to attack the mine. When they saw that we were heavily guarded, they fired a few shots and ran away..."

Zhang Guojun didn't know exactly how many drug trafficking organizations had come to Hpakant, but to be on the safe side, he transferred almost half of the young men in the Chinese town there. Now, the armed force guarding the mine has reached more than 600 people.

"Doesn't Myanmar frequently send troops to fight in the Golden Triangle? How come... how come they've hidden themselves here, and the Myanmar government is ignoring them?"

Zhuang Rui asked, somewhat puzzled. Didn't we often see news on TV about countries working together to combat armed forces in the Golden Triangle?

Upon hearing Zhuang Rui's words, Zhang Guojun dismissively replied, "Well, Mandela and Hpakant are the areas where the military government's control is weakest. Hpakant has always been known for its heroin, jade, and gold, and many drug lords have their hideouts there..."

"Brother Zhang, has something happened in the Golden Triangle?"

Peng Fei and Li Zhen exchanged a glance. They had dealt with drug traffickers for many years and knew that the Golden Triangle was not so easy to destroy. Now that this had happened, there must be a problem within the drug lords themselves.

Zhang Guojun nodded and said, "Yes, I heard that Khun Sa is dying..."

"Khun Sa? No wonder, it looks like the Golden Triangle is going to be in chaos for a while..."

Peng Fei shook his head and muttered, "Khun Sa is quite the ruthless one!"

"A tycoon? Isn't he just a drug lord?" Zhuang Rui found it very strange that Peng Fei, who had never had a good impression of drug traffickers, would give such an evaluation of Khun Sa.

Almost everyone who knows about the Golden Triangle has heard of Khun Sa's name, and Zhuang Rui is no exception. However, as far as he knows, Khun Sa was a notorious drug lord who committed all sorts of evil deeds.

During Khun Sa's rule over the Golden Triangle, the drug trade there reached its peak, surpassing even drug-producing regions like Mexico to become the world's largest drug hub.

Over the past few decades, drugs flowing from Khun Sa to various parts of the world accounted for nearly 60 percent of the global drug market, which aroused strong hostility from major powers including the United States and the United Kingdom, who repeatedly urged Myanmar and Thailand to carry out a crackdown on the Golden Triangle.

Despite this, Khun Sa remained in power for decades, effectively establishing a state within a state in the Golden Triangle, demonstrating the extent of his influence there.

Peng Fei glanced at Zhuang Rui and said, "Brother Zhuang, Khun Sa is more than just a drug lord. Did you know that he surrendered to the Burmese government ten years ago and has been living in Yangon ever since..."