

Golden Eyes

Chapter 8: The Old House

Zhuang Rui had complicated feelings about the old house. In his hazy memories, his father's image was connected to the old house. His memories before the age of five were beautiful: leaning in his father's arms, eating dates picked from the jujube tree in the old courtyard, and listening to his father tell Andersen's fairy tales. **Zhuang Rui** was undoubtedly the happiest back then.

But after his father passed away, everything changed. The large old house became lifeless. When his mother was allocated housing at the age of ten, they moved out and came to their current residence. For many years, **Zhuang Rui** rarely visited the old house, mainly because he didn't want to face his father, who had passed away many years ago. Losing a father in childhood is an unbearable pain for many.

The old house is located at the foot of Yunlong Mountain, a famous scenic area in Pengcheng. A few hundred meters in front of it is the Pengcheng **Museum**, where the jade suit sewn with silver thread on display attracts numerous domestic and international tourists daily.

Not far behind the old house, on Hubu Mountain, is the famous Xima Terrace. This is where the heroic Xiang Yu, after destroying the Qin Dynasty, declared himself the Hegemon-King of Western Chu, established his capital in Pengcheng, and built the Congtai for viewing horse performances, martial arts drills, and military parades. Historically, it was listed alongside Suzhou Gardens and **Nanjing's** Six Dynasties stone carvings as one of the Three Treasures of Jiangsu, but it was destroyed in war and could not be preserved as completely as the other two scenic spots.

Throughout history, various dynasties constructed many buildings on the site of Xima Terrace, such as Taitou, Sanyi Temple, Minghuan Shrine, Jukui Academy, Songcui Mountain Villa, and stele pavilions. With the passage of time and changing eras, the former buildings have mostly disappeared. After renovation, Xima Terrace reappeared in the world with a magnificent and radiant appearance. As a child, **Zhuang Rui** often secretly snuck in with his friends to play and frolic.

Early the next morning, **Zhuang Rui** and his brother-in-law hurried to the old house. However, the rented car could only park at the alley's entrance. **Zhuang Rui** and his brother-in-law got out and walked through the thick snow towards the old house.

Zhuang Rui's old house had three bungalows and a spacious courtyard. In the middle of the courtyard was a tall jujube tree, and beneath it, a stone table with several stone stools. He remembered that every summer during his childhood, the family would sit on these stone stools in the courtyard to eat and cool off. Now, the stone stools, long unused, were covered in moss.

Originally, **Mother Zhuang** would come here to clean once a month, but now that it was about to be demolished, she hadn't come back after tidying things up. The spacious courtyard was

overgrown with weeds, and a large character '**dismantle**' (Demolish) was written on the outer wall. Since construction was set to begin after the New Year, the neighboring residents had already moved out. While celebratory New Year atmospheres filled other places, this area seemed somewhat desolate and lonely.

The middle room was where **Zhuang Rui**'s grandfather used to live. After his grandfather passed away, the room became empty and was usually used to store miscellaneous items. As a child, **Zhuang Rui** always felt it was eerie inside and never dared to enter. As he grew up, he visited the old house less often, so he lost interest in going in.

Regarding this grandfather he had never met, **Zhuang Rui** only knew from his mother that his grandfather was a geologist who had worked in the **Yunnan Myanmar** region after liberation. It was also for this reason that he was falsely accused of colluding with the enemy during the chaotic decade and was persecuted, which also implicated **Zhuang Rui**'s grandmother, causing both elders to pass away early.

"Xiao Rui, it's dusty inside, don't come in. I'll move the things out; you just lend a hand outside..."

His brother-in-law opened the door to the middle room, and a cloud of dust rushed out, making **Zhuang Rui** retreat repeatedly, coughing.

The sunlight reflecting off the snow illuminated the room, faintly revealing two rectangular wooden boxes, about one meter in size, placed in a corner of the room. The purpose of their visit this time was to move these two wooden boxes home. **Mother Zhuang** had already taken all the other small items back.

"It's fine, I rarely entered Grandpa's room anyway. This house will be gone soon, so let me take a look. These boxes are quite big, hey, they're really heavy. Let's both carry them out..."

Zhuang Rui re-entered the room, lifted a corner of a box to test its weight, and felt it was very heavy.

Few people use heavy wooden boxes for storage now. These two boxes must be old items left from before. The lacquer on the outside of the boxes had already peeled off in places. The surface of the boxes was also carved with some floral patterns, and two iron locks hung on the exquisitely crafted hasps.

Zhuang Rui had originally planned to visit Xima Terrace today, but seeing these two large boxes completely extinguished his desire to sightsee.

He didn't know what was inside the boxes, but they were incredibly heavy. After the two of them moved the boxes into the car and drove them home, they were drenched in sweat. However, upon returning home, they received good news: the house next door was basically settled. His mother's colleague promised to handle the transfer procedures after the New Year, and the price was set at thirty-eight thousand, a few thousand less than the initial asking price. This made **Zhuang Rui** and **Zhao Guodong** very happy.

Zhao Guodong helped move the boxes, then took his leave. After all, the New Year was approaching, and he had a lot of things to do at his parents' home. After his brother-in-law left, his mother went to visit an old colleague, leaving **Zhuang Rui** alone at home.

Looking at the two large boxes placed in his room, **Zhuang Rui** felt an urge to open them. After all, his past memories would fade with the demolition of that house, and these items left by his elders became especially precious in the eyes of the younger generation.

Zhuang Rui found several keys in his mother's room drawer and tried to open the boxes. Sure enough, they opened! **Zhuang Rui** was overjoyed and quickly lifted the lid of one box, finding it full of books. The covers of the books were yellowed, indicating their age.

Carefully picking up a book from the box, **Zhuang Rui** checked the publication date and found it was Li Siguang's original 1953 edition of "Chinese Geology." Opening it, he saw numerous pictures of biological fossils and maps. After a quick glance, **Zhuang Rui** carefully placed the book back. He believed that a 1953 edition like this could now only be found in larger libraries.

Flipping further down, he found only geology books, which didn't interest **Zhuang Rui**. He opened the other box, which contained bundles of letters and stacks of notebooks. In one corner of the box, there were surprisingly four or five dark, fist-sized stones.

"No wonder the box is so heavy. Why would Mother put several stones in there?" **Zhuang Rui** thought in astonishment and annoyance.

He casually picked up and opened a letter, and **Zhuang Rui** was immediately stunned. The entire letter was written with a brush, and the signature at the end was "Li Siguang." **Zhuang Rui** quickly read it carefully. The letter wasn't long; it seemed to be a reply from the respected scientist to his grandfather. It detailed the geological features of places like Yungui and **Myanmar**, using very professional terminology that **Zhuang Rui** didn't understand much of, but he was certain it was Li Siguang's personal letter.

He never expected his grandfather to know this great scientist, whom he had admired since childhood. This greatly increased **Zhuang Rui**'s interest, so he began to sort through his grandfather's letters. He took out the several dark stones, which were in the way, and threw them directly under the bed. If it weren't for the hassle, **Zhuang Rui** would have thrown them into the downstairs trash.

He roughly flipped through the letters, most of which were professional correspondence between his grandfather and some classmates and teachers. After reading only a small portion, with a thick layer still remaining in the box, **Zhuang Rui** became a bit impatient, as some of the terminology was truly difficult for him to read.

Putting down the letter he was reading, **Zhuang Rui** had a thought: if he used **Spiritual Qi**, he could seemingly read without opening the envelope. Thinking this, **Zhuang Rui** concentrated and looked towards the bottom of the box. A green light flashed, and the **Spiritual Qi** in his eyes also flowed out.

"Oh!"

Zhuang Rui suddenly cried out in surprise, because just as his eyes penetrated a stack of letters and saw the bottom of the box, two scrolls came into view. What astonished him was that after the **Spiritual Qi** passed through the scrolls, a kind of Qi within the scrolls seemed to merge into the **Spiritual Qi** in his eyes. Then, that **Spiritual Qi** returned to his eyes on its own, and **Zhuang Rui** could clearly feel that the originally thin, one-layered **Spiritual Qi** had become much denser.

Zhuang Rui felt as if his eyes had just had eye drops, with a cool sensation tinged with a slight soreness. **Zhuang Rui** gently closed his eyes, and when he reopened them, the entire room seemed to have become much brighter.

PS: It's been a long time since I've typed, so my hands are a bit rusty, and my speed is slow. Currently, I can write a maximum of 4000+ words a day. I'll get used to it. I'll try to ensure two updates a day. I hope everyone can support Da Yan during the new book period, give some collections and recommendation tickets, and friends who are reading can easily click to recommend. Also, thank you to Shu Yu 2 for the reward; your reward also brightened my eyes. Thank you!!!