

Middle Age 93

Chapter 93: Old Foxes All, Who Are You Trying to Fool?

Upon hearing Qi Yun mention Yingfeng Building, the smile on Shi Feng's face faded slightly, and he frowned a bit: "Why are you bringing that up all of a sudden?"

Qi Yun chuckled and explained, "Oh, nothing serious. I just took a liking to something in his shop, and I was thinking if you're familiar with him, maybe you could help me negotiate."

Shi Feng sighed lightly upon hearing this, "To tell you the truth, my relationship with Boss Liao from Yingfeng Building isn't great."

"Years ago, we were both fighting tooth and nail for a rare item. Since then, there's been competition in some business matters too, and our relationship became more and more strained. Now we just nod when we see each other, nothing more."

Qi Yun nodded upon hearing this. Originally, he wanted Shi Feng to step in, but it seemed not to be feasible now.

He then asked, "Does Boss Shi know much about the Qing Dynasty painter Yun Shouping?"

Shi Feng frowned and thought for a moment, "I've heard of him. Are you planning to buy his work?"

"Yes, exactly, his 'Flowers, Birds, and Mountains.' What do you think is a fair price?"

"Flowers, Birds, and Mountains?" Shi Feng scratched his head, "I've never heard of it. It probably isn't very famous, right?"

Qi Yun nodded slightly, "It's likely not that well-known."

Shi Feng thought for a while and suggested, "Even though I haven't seen it, I'd guess it's just a casual work and such things aren't very valuable."

"I'd estimate it's within thirty to forty thousand yuan."

"Alright, I understand." After getting the answer, Qi Yun thanked him, put down his teacup, and took his leave, "I'll go take a look myself then."

As Qi Yun got up to leave, Shi Feng added one more reminder, "That guy's very sly, watch out for yourself."

"Haha, no problem." Qi Yun replied with a smile, turned around, and left, leaving Zhong Rui at Shi Feng's shop to wait.

He crossed the street and arrived at the shop opposite.

The shop was elegantly arranged with various antiques displayed neatly on the shelves.

Boss Liao was sitting in an old armchair, holding a magnifying glass and carefully examining a small porcelain piece.

Noticing someone enter, he looked up and his eyes glanced at Qi Yun, a professional smile on his face: "Boss, welcome, anything you'd like to see?"

"Haha, I'm just browsing." Qi Yun responded with a smile, his gaze wandering around the store.

Boss Liao was used to this and didn't say anything more.

After a long while, Qi Yun had looked through all the paintings and calligraphy on display but hadn't found what he wanted.

So he tentatively asked, "Boss, do you happen to have any works by Yun Shouping here?"

Upon hearing this, Boss Liao's hand holding the magnifying glass paused slightly. He looked at Qi Yun, a subtle gleam in his eyes.

Soon, he recovered his enthusiastic demeanor and chuckled, "Oh, you have a keen eye, boss! Yun Shouping's works are hard to find, but as luck would have it, I do have one here. Please wait a moment."

He said this as he stood up, carefully placed the porcelain back on the shelf, and took a painting scroll from the counter beneath him.

As the scroll slowly unfurled, a landscape painting came into view, with intricate brushwork and vivid imagery. It looked quite spirited, and at the bottom was Yun Shouping's signature.

It was precisely the 'Flowers, Birds, and Mountains' that Qi Yun was looking for.

Qi Yun leaned in, pretending to examine it carefully for a while, before looking up to ask, "Boss, how much for this painting?"

A cunning gleam flashed in Boss Liao's eyes as he lightly coughed and broke into a broad smile, "Boss, you truly know your stuff! It took me quite an effort to acquire this 'Flowers, Birds, and Mountains.'

If you're sincerely interested, I'll give you a straightforward price of two hundred thousand. What do you think?"

As he spoke, he subtly observed the change in Qi Yun's expression, the price of two hundred thousand was just a probe.

This painting was something he had acquired just yesterday for only eighteen thousand.

Hearing this, Qi Yun frowned, realizing that he was being charged as if he were a clueless buyer ripe for exploitation.

"Give me a reasonable price, that one isn't negotiable."

Boss Liao lightly coughed, not embarrassed at all, and with a smile said, "Then what's your offer, boss?"

Qi Yun thought for a moment before saying, "Drop the ten, twenty thousand."

When Boss Liao heard Qi Yun's price, his smile froze instantly, and a hint of displeasure flickered in his eyes: "Boss, that's quite the aggressive bargain! Twenty thousand isn't even enough to cover my overhead."

Qi Yun internally sneered. Both played the game well, neither fooled by tricks.

Still maintaining a poker face, he shrugged and said, "That's how much I think this painting is worth."

Boss Liao looked at Qi Yun, feeling somewhat agitated, but he suppressed it and forced a stiff smile, "You know how regulations in the antique business work, boss; you get what you pay for."

After all, it's still a Yun Shouping painting. Twenty thousand is just too low. Please reconsider and add some, so I can earn a living."

Qi Yun thought it over and spoke again, "Alright then, I'll add four thousand, twenty-four thousand total."

"The painting doesn't have much collectible value. I'm just buying it to study, so if the cost is too steep, I'll pass."

Boss Liao's smile grew even stiffer upon hearing only an additional four thousand, internally cursing at the tough bargaining.

He shook his head slightly and replied, "I can see you're an expert, boss. So my final offer is thirty thousand. Otherwise, let's call it off." He began to roll up the scroll.

Noticing Boss Liao's stance, Qi Yun figured this was his bottom line and decided not to push further and agreed.

Seeing this, Boss Liao's smile returned, and though the price wasn't what he initially hoped for, he had acquired it cheaply enough to make a profit regardless.

After receiving the payment, he promptly re-packaged the painting and handed it to Qi Yun.

Qi Yun said nothing further, nodding before turning to leave.

He returned to Shi Feng's shop and placed the painting scroll on the glass countertop, slowly unfurling it.

Shi Feng leaned in immediately and asked, "How much?"

"Thirty thousand."

Shi Feng nodded, considering the price reasonable.

He studied the painting for quite some time, then asked, puzzled, "There's nothing remarkable about it; why did you buy it?"

Qi Yun didn't answer immediately but carefully examined the border before asking, "Do you know any artisans who can unveil a painting?"

Shi Feng was taken aback, his eyes growing wide with surprise as he asked, "Are you implying...?"

Qi Yun smiled and nodded, "That's exactly what I mean."

Upon this confirmation, Shi Feng immediately moved his hefty body to the side, took his flashlight out to inspect the painting closely.

He scrutinized it for a good ten minutes but found nothing.

He clicked his tongue and, with a hint of skepticism, turned to Qi Yun: "Are you sure?"

Qi Yun answered confidently, "Of course."

"Then we should call in that expert," Shi Feng suggested after thinking for a moment.