

# Power and Wealth

## Chapter 143 – Two Million!

Afternoon, at 1.50 pm.

After leaving Wang Fu Hotel, Xie Huilan and Dong Xuebing boarded the Audi and drove out of the carpark.

Dong Xuebing was sitting in the front passenger seat nervously. He secretly peeps at Xie Huilan. She had a stern look on her beautiful face. She was not only a high-ranking leader in the Central Government, but she also has a powerful backing. Now, Dong Xuebing doesn't even dare to smile in front of her. He was glad and worried at the same time. He was delighted that he had saved her life, but he was also concerned because he had used her stockings to do that shameless thing. What's worst was she knew about it!

Dong Xuebing's feelings were complicated!

It was quiet in the car, and Xie Huilan suddenly laughed. "Xiao Dong, do you have any hobbies?"

Dong Xuebing cleared his throat. "Errr..... It's not considered a hobby. But I like shopping around Antique markets and watch TV programs about antiques and collections." He tried to make himself sound high class. He will not tell Xie Huilan that his hobbies were watching movies, online chatting, etc. These were all too ordinary.

"Oh. I also like to visit Liulichang when I am free."

"You also like collecting stuff?"

"Yes. But I am only a beginner."

"You are too modest. I can tell you must know a lot about antiques."

"Is it written on my forehead? How can you tell? Hahaha....." Xie Huilan was holding on to the steering wheel gracefully. She thought for a while and slowed down the car. "I am still thinking of buying two shirts for you as a gift. But since you like

antiques, let's go to Liulichang. The temple fair's food street is moved to Taoranting Park, but Liulichang should still be open. You can choose an antique you like, and I will buy it as a gift for you. Ok?"

Dong Xuebing quick rejects her suggestion. "No need. No need. You have treated me to lunch, and it's enough."

"How can a meal be compared to life?" Xie Huilan replied firmly and drove towards the west. She did not give Dong Xuebing any choice. "Listen to me, you understand?"

Huh? I got no right to make any decision. Dong Xuebing could only smile and nod.

Two years ago, temple fair was held at Nan Xin Hua Street, and the whole street will be filled with people. All public transports were re-routed. Of course, anyone can still drive into the street if they want. But there were too many people there, and traffic will come to a standstill. It was so crowded that the distance between two people was less than the width of a palm. After the food street was shifted to Taoranting Park recently, it was not so crowded, and cars can enter that area.

West of Liulichang.

After the Audi stopped, Dong Xuebing unfastened his seatbelt and ran over to the driver's door to open the door for Xie Huilan. He even learns from Guo Panwei to place his hand at the top of the vehicle to "protect" Xie Huilan.

Xie Huilan shook her head and smile. "You....."

After these two days, Dong Xuebing noticed Xie Huilan likes to smile. She used different types of smiles to express her expressions. She looks like the Official ladies in Ancient times.

After entering an antique shop, Xie Huilan looked at Dong Xuebing. "Look around and see if there's anything you like."

Dong Xuebing did not want to let her buy any gift for him. But if he did not choose anything, she would not agree. So, after walking around the shop, he stopped in front of a wooden shelf and pointed to a grasshopper gourd, made from rosewood. Dong Xuebing knew this was the cheapest item in the shop. Even the low-grade paintings, calligraphy, and pottery were more expensive. "Sister Xie. This is a good gourd."

Xie Huilan laughed: "It's almost the end of grasshopper rearing season. Pick something better, ok?"

Dong Xuebing smiled shyly. "I like this."

“Fine.” Xie Huilan asked the store assistant about the price of that gourd. It was 2,000 RMB, and she paid without saying a word. She then pass the gourd to Dong Xuebing. “Let’s look around. This gift is too cheap.”

“It’s fine. It’s fine.” Dong Xuebing held the grasshopper gourd. “This is good enough. Thank you, Sister Xie.”

Xie Huilan shook her head and laughed. “I knew you will not pick anything. Let’s walk around and see if there is anything better.” She saw Dong Xuebing still wanted to reject her, she immediately waved her hand to stop him. “I will not buy it for you, ok? I will pick something for myself. You can give me some suggestions.”

Dong Xuebing replied. “Ok. But I do not know about antiques as well as you.”

“Hahaha, stop flattering me. Let’s go.”

A lot of shops in Liulichang were closed. After walking for a while, Xie Huilan did not see anything that caught her attention. They slowly walked to East Liulichang. Xie Huilan noticed a Yellow Stone seal in the first shop she enters in East Liulichang. But when she enquires about the price, it was more than 1 million RMB. Xie Huilan shook her head. She did not buy it. It was not because she does not like it. It was because she could not afford it. How much can a Deputy Director level earn monthly?

An hour later, Dong Xuebing and Xie Huilan stood at the junction of East and West Liulichang.

Xie Huilan looked at her watch. “Let’s stop shopping. Come, I will send you back.”

“No need. You have already fetched me from my place this morning..... I can take a taxi back.”

“No..... Eh?” Xie Huilan suddenly looked at a few roadside stalls. The stalls were selling balloons and cotton candies. One of the stalls had displayed all sorts of porcelain items on its shelf. Kangxi porcelain, ancient commoner’s bowl, etc. Xie Huilan was interested in these items: “Xiao Dong, let’s take a look at this store.”

“Oh.... Ok.” Dong Xuebing followed her to the store.

The store owner was a young man around 30 years old. He was stunned by Xie Huilan’s beauty and kept looking at her. “Hi, what would you like to see?”

Xie Huilan looked at the shelves and saw a blue-colored small bowl. The bowl was painted with clouds, and the interior of the bowl had a golden dragon. Xie Huilan

picked it up and examine the bottom of the bowl. There were some wordings engraved at the bottom of the bowl, stating that it was manufactured by the official kiln during Qian Long Emperor era. Usually, the antiques from these roadside stores were low-grade antiques. This bowl must also be either a counterfeit or a low-grade antique. This antique bowl was rare even in auctions, let alone by the streets. But there were still exceptions. If not, there will also not be so many stories about people finding real antiques on the streets.

The store owner looked at Xie Huilan and said: “This is from my hometown. It’s an antique produced by the ancient government’s kiln.”

Xie Huilan examined the bowl carefully and turned to Dong Xuebing and smiled: “Xiao Dong, take a look at this. What do you think?”

Dong Xuebing recognized this bowl. The name of this bowl was the Qing Dynasty Qian Long Emperor Dragon bowl. He knew about this bowl was because when he was working part-time in Pan Jia Yuan, the shop he worked for had a broken fragment of this type of bowl. That broken fragment was authentic. Although it was not worth anything, Dong Xuebing had scrutinized it several times. Seeing that Xie Huilan asking his opinion, he felt that he should show off his talent. He picked up the bowl with both hands and examined every detail of the bowl.

Hmmm..... this bowl looks similar to that broken fragment, but there seems to have some differences.

The color of this bowl was newer, and the paint was brighter. But the outlines of the designs look very similar to that fragment. The golden dragon was also more detailed.

Xie Huilan asked: “What do you think?”

Dong Xuebing jumped: “Errr..... this seems to be real, but some parts are suspicious. I am also not very sure.”

Xie Huilan turned towards the store owner. “How much are you selling?”

The store owner replied. “50,000 RMB.”

Xie Huilan shook her head and smiled: “If this is really from the government kiln, you will not sell it for 50,000 RMB. Make it cheaper.”

“This is really an antique. The ancestor of that man from my hometown was from Beijing.....

Xie Huilan waved her hand to stop him. “Let’s talk about the price and not the story.

Ok?”

The store owner smiled embarrassedly. “I got this bowl at 40,000 RMB. My profit is not a lot. I really can’t sell it to you lower than 50,000 RMB.”

“Never mind.”

If this bowl were real, it would be worth more than a few hundred thousand. This would be considered finding a treasure on the streets. If this bowl is selling for a few hundred or thousand, it’s not a problem to take a gamble. But 50,000 RMB is not a small amount. Furthermore, Dong Xuebing and Xie Huilan could not tell whether if this bowl was authentic. More than 70 to 80% of such bowls in the market were fakes. That’s why Xie Huilan decided not to buy it.

“Xiao Dong, let’s go.”

Dong Xuebing was disappointed for failing to impress Xie Huilan. This was the problem with antiques. Even if you had seen an authentic antique before and understand it well, but it’s hard to tell the difference between a fake and the real item. This was because of how the antique was preserved. If it was well kept, the colors and paintings would be different from another antique, which was not maintained properly. Sigh..... if I can examine it from the broken section. He had examined the broken part of a fragment of that Qing Dynasty Qian Long Emperor Dragon bowl before. He would be able to tell whether if that bowl was real or fake by the broken section. No matter how real the exterior painting was, the fractured section..... Who would be able to tell? There were thousands of ways to authenticate an antique and no one in the world would smash an antique to authenticate it. If the antique were found to be real through this method, it would be meaningless. The bowl was already shattered and the value.....

Eh?

Dong Xuebing stopped in his tracks when he thought until here!

Damn! There’s someone who can authenticate an antique through this crazy method.

Dong Xuebing was the one who can do this!

The store owner saw the woman walking away, but this young man was still standing there. “Young man, please take a look carefully. This bowl is really from the government’s kiln.”

“Really?” Dong Xuebing picks up the bowl again. “Let me take a closer look.”

The store owner laughed. “Sure. Go ahead.”

Dong Xuebing nodded. He raised his arms suddenly and smashed the bowl on the floor in front of the shocked store owner. Smash! The bowl was shattered into pieces.

“What the f\*\*k are you doing?!” The storeowner was furious.

Xie Huilan, who was a few steps away, was also stunned. “Xiao Dong! What’s wrong?”

Dong Xuebing calmly replies. “I want to look at the interior of the bowl.”

The store owner points at Dong Xuebing and shouts: “Everybody saw you breaking this bowl! 50,000 RMB! Pay up! Pay me now!”

Dong Xuebing ignored the storeowner’s screaming and the bystanders. He quickly picks up a broken piece of the bowl from the floor carefully and examines it. He also touched the broken section carefully to feel the texture.

After a while, Dong Xuebing’s face changed color. That’s right. Everything fits.

The thickness of the paint was the same, and the interior of the bowl was white and smooth. It’s not the same as the fake porcelain created by modern technology. The piece in his hand felt precisely the same as that broken fragment he has seen before!

This bowl was real!

It’s really from the Ancient Government Kilin!!!

Damn! BACK!

.....

Dong Xuebing used the only BACK he had!

The scenes in front of him flashed! Time had turned back to the bargaining between Xie Huilan and the store owner!

“This is really an antique. The ancestor of that man from my hometown was from Beijing.....

“Let’s talk about the price and not the story. Ok?”

“I got this bowl at 40,000 RMB. My profit is not a lot. I really can’t sell it to you lower

than 50,000 RMB.”

“Never mind.” Xie Huilan put down the bowl lightly and said: “Xiao Dong, let’s go.”

The store owner did not stop them when they were about to leave. He had acquired this bowl from his hometown. But the ancestor of the person who sold this bowl to him was not some wealthy person in the olden days. The person who sold him this bowl was someone who collects waste products from the counties. He had gotten this bowl for 2,200 RMB from some village. Their hometown was famous for producing counterfeit antiques. There were many small factories there, and the store owner thought this bowl was also a counterfeit. He was only trying his luck to see if he could see this bowl for 50,000 RMB.

“Sister Xie, wait a while.” Dong Xuebing called Xie Huilan.

“Huh?” Xie Huilan turned around.

Dong Xuebing whispered to her softly: “That bowl is real. You should buy it now.”

Xie Huilan paused for a second and smiled: “Did you tell me you are not very sure? I think the bowl is not real. The color is too bright.”

“Sister Xie, just buy it. I will not lie to you.”

“Hahaha, nevermind. 50,000 RMB is too expensive.”

Dong Xuebing wants to return Xie Huilan favour and hope she will forget about the embarrassing incident. He smiled wearily when he sees Xie Huilan refusing to listen to him. He knew Xie Huilan have a strong personality and have her own views. Once she made a decision, she will stick to it and not listen to others. Dong Xuebing decided not to persuade her anymore. “..... If you don’t want to buy, then I will buy it.”

Xie Huilan looked at him: “You are confident?”

“Yes. I am very sure.”

Xie Huilan did not say anything and nodded.

Dong Xuebing firmly believes his judgment. Unless the person who made fake antiques could perfectly imitate even the interior of the porcelain. But no one would be so free to do that. He turned around and went back to the store and point to that bowl. “If you really want to sell, I will buy it for 40,000 RMB. That’s my highest offer. I do not have so much money with me.”

The store owner heard this and was overjoyed. “Ah..... 40,000 RMB is too little. 50,000 RMB is the lowest price.”

Dong Xuebing replied: “I said I do not have so much money. If you really can’t sell this bowl to me at 40,000 RMB, I will leave.”

The store owner quickly stopped Dong Xuebing from leaving. “45,000 RMB. How about 45,000 RMB?” Dong Xuebing turned, and the store owner immediately shout. “42,000! This is the lowest!”

Dong Xuebing hesitated for a while. “Fine. I will give you the money in a while.”

There is an ICBC bank next to the store, and Dong Xuebing does not need to fix appointment with the bank to withdraw 40,000 RMB. He returned with the cash very soon and complete the transaction.

The storeowner was overjoyed as he counted the money. He wrapped the bowl nicely and gave it to Dong Xuebing. “The value of this bowl will increase further in a few years. You should keep it.” The store owner said, but this was not his real thoughts. The fake products from his hometown were usually shipped to Beijing. Why? This was because Beijing people are stupid. Hehe, look at this young man. He still thought he had gotten a treasure. Does he really believe that real antiques are all over the place?

Dong Xuebing and Xie Huilan left with the bowl.

“Xiao Dong, shall we look for a place to check the authenticity of this bowl?” Xie Huilan asked with a smile. “Haha, to be honest, I still don’t believe that this Qing Dynasty Qian Long Emperor Dragon bowl is real.”

Dong Xuebing hesitates. “This.....” He was afraid that Xie Huilan would be embarrassed if the bowl was proven to be real. That’s why he does not want to send it to the experts in front of her.

But Xie Huilan did not give Dong Xuebing the chance to reject as usual. “Let’s go to Rong Bao Zhai. It’s reputable. Ok?”

Dong Xuebing had no choice but to reply: “Yes.”

Rong Bao Zhai was quiet, and there were not many customers around. It might because it was still the Lunar New Year. Dong Xuebing looked around and saw someone who looks like an expert. He went over and asked: “Do you all buy Qing Dynasty Qian Long Emperor Dragon bowl here?” Xie Huilan was standing beside quietly.



That old man looked at Dong Xuebing: “It depends on the item. Do you have it with you?”

Dong Xuebing placed the small bowl carefully on the table.

The old man looked at the porcelain bowl and carefully pick it up. He examined it carefully and asked: “Young man, are you in a hurry? I need some time to examine it.”

Dong Xuebing turned and looked at Xie Huilan.

Xie Huilan smiled. “No. We are not in a hurry.”

Dong Xuebing was afraid Xie Huilan would be tired from standing, he pulled a chair over for her. “Have a seat first. I will buy you a bottle of water.”

“No need.” Xie Huilan sat down and laughed. “Bring a chair over for yourself too. Stop standing there like a fool.”

The old man took out a big magnifying glass and much other equipment. He took his time to examine the bowl and after 5 minutes, he took off his glasses and called a middle-aged man down from upstairs. After that, both of them considered and discussed about the bowl for more than 10 minutes.

Dong Xuebing felt it was okay for him to wait so long, but time for a Central Government leader was precious. He asked: “Are you all done?”

The old man and the middle-aged man looked at each other, and that old man said. “How much do you want to sell this?”

Dong Xuebing thought for a while: “1 million RMB.”

The middle-aged man shook his head. “It is too high. You won’t even get this amount at the auctions.”

The old man looked at Dong Xuebing. “This is a good piece, and it is well preserved. But it is definitely not worth 1 million. The highest I can offer is 600,000 RMB.”

Xie Huilan’s eyes narrowed and looked at Dong Xuebing.

Dong Xuebing was overjoyed. Hahaha, I’m right! It’s really from the ancient government kiln!

Dong Xuebing was only trying his luck when he said 1 million. He did not expect to sell the bowl at that price. Now, he knew this bowl is a real antique, he started to

bargain. In the end, they finalized at 700,000 RMB. Dong Xuebing had not thought about making use of his power to sell this bowl at the auctions. After all, it was against the regulations for the owner of the product to interfere in auctions. It was coincident during the last auction when he sold his pearl necklace. It was Teacher Sun who used his own identification card to register for Dong Xuebing. After the auctions, he reprimanded Dong Xuebing for bidding on his own necklace. That's why he was not allowed to do it again.

“Young man, how do you want us to pay you?”

“Cheque?”

“Ok. Please wait for a while.”

After getting the cheque, Dong Xuebing left Rong Bao Zhai in a good mood. But he remembered Xie Huilan was still beside him, and he quickly composed himself. “Sister Xie, let's split the money. If you did not notice that bowl, I will also not buy it. The credit is all yours.” Dong Xuebing said. He also knew that Xie Huilan would not want his money.

Xie Huilan laughed: “Xiao Dong. I didn't expect you to be so skillful. How long have you been collecting antiques?”

“Hah. I am only lucky.”

“Haha, stop flattering me. You bought that 42,000 RMB bowl without hesitation. You must be very confident that it is real. I am not as good as you.” Xie Huilan looked at Dong Xuebing and smiled. “I think I must bring you along when I want to shop at the antique markets in the future.”

Dong Xuebing thought in his heart. As long as you don't bring up the incident with your stockings, I will go wherever you want me to go.

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At 4pm, Dong Xuebing deposit that 700,000 RMB cheque into his bank account and was surprised at his current savings. 2 million! It's 2 million RMB!

Dong Xuebing wiped the sweat off his forehead and happily called Qu Yunxuan. “Aunt Xuan, I bought a porcelain bowl at a bargain in Liulichang earlier.”

Qu Yunxuan was surprised: “Huh? You found a treasure again? Why are you so lucky?”

Dong Xuebing replied. “Hehe..... I made 700,000 RMB this time. We have 2 million in total now.”

Qu Yunxuan: “.....”

“I think I should not keep so much money in my account. If my unit conducts checks on me..... I decided to transfer all my money to your account. In future, if I make any money, I will deposit into your account. You will manage my money for me. Just set up whatever company you want and make more money together. Ok?” Dong Xuebing was surprised that he was speaking like Xie Huilan unconsciously.

“You really make 700,000 RMB?”

“Haha, you will know when you check your bank account later.”

“Idiot! You are so capable! I will be going back tomorrow. Let’s celebrate!”

“Huh? Will we be going back to the same cinema to celebrate?”

“Go to hell!”