

Power and Wealth

Chapter 149 – 2.7 million!

6 days later.

Zhejiang Province Lin'an District.

Branch Bureau Deputy Chief Xu Yan lead the team to Zhejiang Province. The group consists of another Branch Bureau Deputy Chief, Zhao Jingxi, a Deputy Director from the Finance Department, an old officer from the Sixth Bureau, a Section Chief, and a staff member, Xiao Gao from the Political Section and a few others. With Dong Xuebing, there were precisely 10 members. After alighting from the plane, Xu Yan brought the team to check in to their hotel. The rooms were assigned, and after they kept their luggage, it was free and easy time. This “study” tour will last for 3 days. Other than visiting Lin'an District's State Security, they were free to do whatever they want. If any members wish to stay outside of the hotel overnight, they have to inform the team leader first.

Hotel. Room 3026.

The room was nicely renovated, and the décor was elegant. This was not a cheap hotel.

Dong Xuebing and Political Section Xiao Gao were assigned to a room. Dong Xuebing still has not reached the rank where he could get his own room. But Xu Yan took special care of him and gave him the biggest room.

Xiao Gao looked around the spacious room. “Chief Dong, thank you. If it is not for you, I will not get to stay in this room.”

Dong Xuebing dropped his luggage by the bed. “Haha, where are you going later? Are there any famous attractions here in Lin'an?”

“Ah..... There are many interesting places like mountains and rivers here. I had read up a tourist brochure while on the flight. Errr..... if you don't mind, can I follow you around in the afternoon?” Other government agencies could bring their family members along on official visits. But State Security was different. This trip was a bit

boring. What can one do alone? That's why Xiao Gao wishes to tag along with Chief Xiao Dong. At the same time, he hopes he would be able to foster a closer relationship with him.

Dong Xuebing laughed. "I'm sorry. I still have something to do later."

Xiao Gao quickly waves his hand. "It's fine."

After a while, Xiao Gao called that old officer from the Sixth Bureau and a few others to go out.

Dong Xuebing was alone in the room and went to take a shower. After drying his hair, he laid on his bed and called Qu Yunxuan. "Hello, Xiao Xuanxuan, I am in Lin'an now."

"Call me, Aunt!"

"Ah, what's wrong with you? Oh, where are you now?"

"I just arrived in Shanghai. I am asking one of my friends to teach me about business."

"Huh? How long has it been? You still have not decided what business to do? Stop deliberating. Just pick the industry you like. It doesn't matter even if you lose money!"

"How can you say that? The money is your hard-earned money. I must plan ahead and make preparations."

"Errr..... Then what's your plan?"

Qu Yunxuan paused for a while. "I will tell you my plan, and you see if it will work. Hehe, I think that since you are about to find treasures easily, how about we go into antiques and collection business? You can find precious ancient coins, pearl necklaces, ancient government kiln's bowl easily, and know about stone gambling. Also, there are more and more people going into this hobby. We will have many business opportunities. These few days, I have been reading up in this field."

Dong Xuebing's eyes brighten up. His BACK will be handy in this antique business and stone gambling. There was no way for him to make any losses. "Good idea! What are you going to do? Antique shop?"

"If we are going to set up an Antique shop, it will only be a small business. If we are going to do a rare stone business, a piece of high-grade jade stone will cost over a

million RMB. If we are doing porcelain and ancient painting business, our cost will also be very high. Even ordinary paintings and porcelain cost a few hundred thousand. We only have 2 million, and it is not enough.”

Dong Xuebing also felt the same. “You have any solutions?”

“Yes. What do you think of setting up an auction house?”

Dong Xuebing paused for a second. “It’s a good idea. But our investment will be much higher.”

“High investment is a must. But it should not be higher than setting up a high-grade antique shop. Those antiques for going for auction are also not bought by the auction houses. The sellers only sign a contract and leave their antiques with the auction house. Even if the item is sold for a low price, there will not be any losses for the auction house. The auction house will still get a cut from the transaction. Of course, the cost of an auction house is also very high. In the initial stage, we have to think of ways to persuade people to sell their antiques through us. We need to market our services and rent venues for our auctions. The staff we hire must include experts, etc. But I still think that this business will work.”

“Is 2 million RMB enough?”

“It’s not enough for sure. I come to Shanghai to visit a friend to ask about this business. When I was working in a newspaper agency, I know a lot of people. One relative of this friend owns an antique business and understand this industry inside out. I had spoken briefly with him, and he said we need at least 3 million RMB to set up a small auction house in a second-tier city.”

“Then, we do not have enough funds.”

Qu Yunxuan paused for a while and said. “We are only a bit short. My friend might also be interested in working with us. If you decide to set up an auction house, I will speak to him.”

Dong Xuebing frowned. “Aunt Xuan, I disagree.”

“What do you mean?”

“I don’t mind setting up an auction house. This is a good idea and has a good prospect. But I do not want to partner with someone else. I want this business to belong to both of us only.” Dong Xuebing felt it would be troublesome if there were other partners. He knew that he would increase his investments in this company in the future. If there is one more partner, the share proportion will be complicated.

“Haha, ok. I will listen to you.”

“Yes.”

“Then, should we set up a small antique shop with the 2 million?”

Dong Xuebing thought for a while and said. “We will set up an auction house. It is only about money, right? I am now in Lin’an. Changhua Chicken-Blood Stone and Field-yellow stone is found here. I can go stone gambling later in the afternoon. We are only short of a few hundred thousand to a million, right?”

“Stone gambling is too risky.”

“Aunt Xuan, I will not suggest this if I am not confident. Just listen to me.”

After hanging up, Dong Xuebing got off the bed and took out a bag from his luggage. Dong Xuebing did not come here for a holiday. It was not easy for him to go to Zhejiang Province again, and he must make full use of this trip to make some money. He had prepared 100,000 RMB for this trip. But because he was traveling with his colleagues, he dare not bring too much cash. If his money is not enough, he can call Aunt Xuan to transfer some over.

Dong Xuebing had accumulated 12 times of BACK, and it should be enough.

After leaving the hotel, Dong Xuebing walked around the City’s streets, asking people if there were any places for stone gambling. Although Chicken-Blood Stone was found in Lin’an, there were no places selling uncut stones. After asking many people, Dong Xuebing finally met an old man who gave him an address.

This was an old shop, and the signboard was faded.

Dong Xuebing stood in front of the shop and looked around, before entering the small shop. There were many Chicken-Blood Stone seals on display at the counter. The seals were bright red. On a shelf, there were 7 to 8 pieces of Chicken-Blood Stones and Field-yellow stone artifacts. However, there were no uncut stones.

“Boss” Dong Xuebing pointed to a seal on the counter. “How much is this?”

The boss of the shop was a middle-aged man with small eyes. “This seal is 70% red and is considered ‘Big Red Coat’. It is worth at least 800,000 RMB.”

Dong Xuebing nodded. “What about this?”

“The red color for this seal is lesser. 150, 000 RMB.”

Chicken-Blood Stone’s value depends on the color. The size, weight, quality, and coloration will determine the value. Among the Chicken-Blood Stones, the most valuable is ‘Big Red Coat.’ If the red color was more than 90%, the stone is worth at least a few million. Chicken-Blood Stones were more valuable than crystals.

After checking the prices of the stones, Dong Xuebing asked. “Boss, is there any place nearby that has stone gambling?”

The boss looked at him and hesitated for a few seconds. “Chicken-Blood Stones are not allowed to sell directly according to the regulations. But if you want to gamble..... come with me.” The boss called one of his staff over and then brought Dong Xuebing to the backyard. It was noisy, and it sounded like someone was cutting stones. Dong Xuebing looked towards a corner and saw a crowd there.

Dong Xuebing brightened up. He finally found the place.

In that corner, 7 to 8 people were watching a man cutting an uncut Chicken-Blood Stone. The surface of the uncut Chicken-Blood Stones was not as smooth as crystal stones. They were rough and had odd shapes.

“Red! Red!”

“This stone should not have any problem! The red color had penetrated the insides!”

“Quick! Cut a bit more!”

Dong Xuebing walked over to the crowd. The stone weighed at least 10 kg, and on one corner, there were patches of red color. This stone must be expensive. If the red color on the surface could penetrate to the rest of the stone, it will be more valuable. But if the red color was only on the surface, it will be worthless.

Now, the shop assistant was using the grinding machine to cut the corners of the stone to see how far the red color had penetrated.

Screech..... Screech.....

The surface of the stone was slowly grinded away.....

Dong Xuebing looked at the grinding process. Chicken-Blood Stone was softer than other stones and can be easily cut. If he bought 7 to 8 pieces of Chicken-Blood Stones at once and cut the stones fast, he should be able to succeed. But after thinking for a while, he gave up this thought. He knows Chicken-Blood Stone is not a famous

gambling stone. It is not like jade or Field-yellow stones. Why there are not many stone gambling places for Chicken-Blood Stones in Lin'an? It is because it is not worth gambling. The red patches can be seen from the surface of the stone, and it depends on the depth where the red color penetrates.

The raw Chicken-Blood Stone in front of Dong Xuebing cost more than 200,000 RMB. If the red color had penetrated into the stone, the value of the stone would increase to about 300,000 RMB. But if the color inside the stone is not as bright as the exterior, the value will drop to about 180,000. Very seldom there will be surprises like jade stone gambling. The chances were slim for someone to get rich from Chicken-Blood Stone gambling.

If Dong Xuebing used the same method as what he did for the crystal stone gambling, it would be wasting his BACK. Even if he won, he would only earn a few hundred thousand. Furthermore, he only has 100,000 RMB with him. He can't buy many stones at once. If he used 1 BACK for 1 stone, it would be a waste.

What should he do?

“Eh! It's cut open!”

“How is it?”

“It's ordinary. The red color is about the same as the surface. There are no changes to the value.”

This was not a surprise to the crowd. This is Chicken-Blood Stone gambling. No one will win a large amount of money, but the losses are also not a lot.

“Bring me another stone! That's right! That one!” The man who bought the stone refuses to give up. He spent another 80,000RMB on buying a smaller stone.

Screech..... Screech..... The shop assistant started to help him cut the stone.

Dong Xuebing was looking at them and thinking of ways to use BACK to earn several hundred thousand from Chicken-Blood Stone gambling. He needed money to set up his auction company. Yes. Since I cannot use the same method as crystal stone gambling, I can wait until others finish cutting the Chicken-Blood Stones, and if the red color had penetrated deep into the stone, ii would use BACK to buy that stone. But the only problem was the stone was purchased by others, and I have no control over time. They were careful when cutting the stones and took more than 20 minutes to finish cutting one stone. I only have 12 minutes of BACK. It will not be sufficient.

Dong Xuebing had no choice but to wait and see.

Half an hour passed.....

An hour passed.....

Two hours passed.....

The crowd around the cutting machine had changed thrice, and Chicken-Blood Stones had appeared 16 to 17 times. But the value of those stones was similar. The best stone was a stone bought by a woman. She spent 50,000 RMB on it, and the final value was 100,000 RMB. The worst was this man who was still cutting the stones. He had spent more than 110,000 RMB on the stones, but it was only worth 50,000 RMB. The value of the rest of the cut stones was about the same as their selling prices. The difference was less than 30,000 RMB.

Dong Xuebing looked at his watch. It was almost dinnertime.

Dong Xuebing was getting impatient. Sighed..... It was not easy to get here, but Chicken-Blood Stone is too rare. There was not even a high-grade Chicken-Blood Stone in the whole afternoon. Dong Xuebing was disappointed. If a high-grade Chicken-Blood Stone appeared, his BACK and money might also not be enough. He thought about this for a while and decided to go for dinner after this stone was cut.

Screech..... screech.....

The shop assistant was grinding a medium size stone. He was grinding off the areas beside the red color parts, hoping the red would spread more significantly into the interior of the stone. But the stone did not change color. It was still greyish black color!

“Ah! The red color did not penetrate into the stone!”

“Hah! The value will drop.”

A middle-aged man was staring at the stone, and he cursed. “Damn! This is my second stone!” He looked at his stone and knew this stone was a worthless piece. He turned to the crowd: “Anyone wants to buy this stone? The back of the stone is still not cut. You all can try your luck. I had paid 80,000 RMB for this stone, and I am selling it at 30,000 RMB now!”

“Just cut it yourself!”

“Hahaha, who will buy it?”

“If you are selling it for a few thousand, maybe you will get a buyer.”

The onlookers were not stupid. The part around the red color exterior was already wasted. Who would be so stupid to buy it?

Even Dong Xuebing felt this man was ridiculous. 30,000 RMB? No one will buy it at 3,000 RMB!

That man gave the crowd a stare and told the shop assistant: “I will keep it for myself! I can afford it!”

The shop assistant looked at that man and continued grinding the back of the stone. Screech..... Screech.....!

The crowd lost interest in that stone and left to pick the uncut stones. Some of them were chatting among themselves.

Suddenly, that was a loud gasp!

When the shop assistant made a few deep cuts, he let out a loud “Wow!” and attracted the people nearby. The crowd looked at the cut surface and exclaimed!

Red!

The inside of the stone was red!

It was bright red, and the density of the red color was dense. This was the highest-grade Chicken-Blood Stone, Big Red Coat!

Dong Xuebing was also stunned. Who would expect the part where there was almost no red color on the surface will be bright red inside? This stone was not a big piece, but the red color parts were enough to make a seal. A Chicken-Blood Stone Big Red Coat Seal!

That man started laughing! He would earn a few hundred thousand!

The color and density of the red were scarce!

Dong Xuebing finally got his chance. BACK! BACK! He used two BACKs in a row!

.....

The scenes flashed before Dong Xuebing’s eyes!

It was two minutes ago!

“Damn! This is my second stone! Anyone wants to buy this stone? The back of the stone is still not cut. You all can try your luck. I had paid 80,000 RMB for this stone, and I am selling it at 30,000 RMB now!”

“Just cut it yourself!”

“Hahaha, who will buy it?”

“If you are selling it for a few thousand, maybe you will get a buyer.”

The man had given up hope on this stone. He was thinking of lowering his losses. But he knew the people there were not idiots. No one would want to buy this stone. He thought to himself. Since no one is willing to buy, he might as well keep it for himself. He turned to the shop assistant.

“Wait a minute.” Someone among the crowd said.

That man turned and asked. “What is it? You want to buy this stone?”

It was Dong Xuebing. “I am interested in this stone. But the price you asked for is ridiculous. I can buy an uncut stone with 30,000 RMB. Why should I buy this from you?”

That man looked at Dong Xuebing and knew he was a noob in stone gambling. However, he was overjoyed when he saw Dong Xuebing was interested in buying this stone. He asked. “Alright. Make an offer.” That man did not want to continue cutting the stone. He knew this stone would worth only a few thousand if he carries on cutting it. He might as well sell it.

Dong Xuebing was lazy to bargain with him. “10,000 RMB.”

The crowd was shocked. They thought this person was crazy. 10,000 RMB was enough to get a small uncut stone.

That man was laughing in his heart. “No. At least 25,000 RMB.”

Dong Xuebing laughed. “Forget it.”

“Wait!” That man tried to bargain a while more, but in the end, he sold the stone to Dong Xuebing at 10,000 RMB.

Dong Xuebing took out 10,000 RMB from his bag and gave it to that man. That man was overjoyed as he had minimalized his losses. The crowd looked at Dong Xuebing

and shook their heads. This person must not know anything about stone gambling. He doesn't even know the market price of Chicken-Blood Stone.

Dong Xuebing looked at that shop assistant. "Can you help me cut it?"

The shop assistant nodded. He also does not believe this stone would be red inside. He carried on cutting the stone from another angle.

1 cut.....

2 cuts.....

3 cuts.....

The shop assistant only made 3 simple cuts!

But after the third cut, everyone drew in a deep breath!

The whole surface area was bright red!

Sudden! This was too sudden! No one was prepared for this to happen!

1 second..... 2 seconds..... 3 seconds.....

The crowd looked at each other and were speechless!

This was not a waste stone! This was the top-grade Chicken-Blood Stone!

The man, who sold this stone to Dong Xuebing, turned green! He hit himself on his lap in regret. Why did I sell it? Why didn't I continue?!

This is stone gambling. No one knows what is inside an uncut stone.

"Young man, do you want to sell this Big Red Coat?" The shop assistant asked and then run out to get his boss.

A young man said: "I offer 400,000 RMB!"

A middle-aged man asked: "550,000 RMB! Are you selling? If you agree, I will write you a cheque now!"

"Sell it to me at 550,000 RMB!"

Big Red Coat was extremely rare, and the crowd started to make offers.

Dong Xuebing was not in a rush to sell it. He listened to the offers patiently.

The boss arrived at the backyard. “Big Red Coat? Where is it?” The boss saw the half-cut stone on the floor and squat down to get a closer look. He nodded: “This is a quality stone. Young man, this stone belongs to you? You are very lucky. I do not know about how much other people offered you, but I have a 700,000 RMB cheque with me. Do you want to sell it?”

Everyone heard 700,000 RMB and stopped making offers.

Dong Xuebing was jumping with joy in his heart. He thought for a while and nodded.

With this 700,000 RMB, Dong Xuebing’s total assets had reached 2.7 million RMB!

It is sufficient to set up a small auction company!