

## Chapter 5688

"What's the great news?" Lily raised her eyebrows, unable to contain her curiosity.

"What kind of news is so significant?"

Sister Turk's face lit up with happiness. "Aren't you curious about what the Young Master has been up to? Did the Rothschild family strike a deal with us? I spoke with Miss Clark, and she mentioned that the Young Master secured a secret agreement with Howard, the patriarch of the Rothschild family. Master Wade exchanged a pill for a portion of their cash and a complete set of AI models."

"A complete set?" Lily's eyes widened. "Is it the most advanced AI model currently backed by the Rothschild family?"

"Yes!" Sister Turk nodded emphatically.

Lily leaned in eagerly. "This model is the latest craze in Internet technology. Its future market value is estimated to be in the hundreds of billions, and it's been elevated to a strategic level by the United States. From software to hardware, external sales are banned. How did Charlie manage that?"

Sister Turk replied, "Miss Clark didn't divulge many details to me, but I suspect there are some restrictions."

Lily nodded thoughtfully. "It seems Nvidia has recently delayed shipments to other companies for no apparent reason. They must be redirecting products to the Rothschild family, only they wield such influence." He paused before adding, "Since this is all covert, the AI model promised to Charlie by the Rothschild family likely won't be publicized. Essentially, Charlie will acquire an identical set, but it won't be used commercially or announced publicly. That's why the Rothschilds agreed."

Sister Turk smiled. "Madam, if the Young Master truly obtains a complete AI model set, he'll be well-equipped to face future challenges. We can take more initiative in our endeavors."

Lily grinned knowingly. "With the capabilities of AI and Jack, the Chinese detective, assisting Charlie, he's sure to achieve remarkable results. Perhaps it'll even pose unprecedented challenges to Morgana."

Having said that, Lily rose from his seat. "Sister Turk, prepare yourself. It's time to leave Aurous Hill."

Lily's initial purpose in Aurous Hill was to meet Nanako and aid her enlightenment.

After Nanako attained enlightenment, she remained in Aurous Hill, diligently monitoring Charlie's activities in the United States.

Following the Four Treasures of the Study's public announcement of her return to her homeland's embrace, she desired to relay a message to Charlie, advising against practicing the "The Nine Hidden Soul Paths" from the "Preface to the Apocalyptic Book."

With her objectives accomplished, lingering in Aurous Hill only heightened her risk of exposure. Moreover, Aurous Hill harbored not only Charlie but also Maria, a shrewd and astute individual. Lily harbored concerns that their keen observations might lead to her discovery, prompting her to hasten his departure.

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As Lily left Aurous Hill, Charlie found himself seated at his grandmother's dinner table, feeling somewhat awkward. Grandma bombarded him with questions, while his uncle remained enthusiastic. However, his aunt, Tece, stayed rather quiet.

Charlie entered the dinner table with a tinge of apprehension, fearing his aunt might inquire about Eddie. As the meal progressed and she remained silent, his discomfort deepened.

Despite his grandmother and uncle posing numerous questions, the topic of Eddie remained conspicuously absent. It appeared they had silently agreed to avoid broaching the subject.

After lunch, Charlie bid farewell to his grandmother and left. As he departed, his grandmother rose and offered, "Charlie, let me see you off."

At that moment, Tece, who had been quiet, rose from her seat and addressed her mother, "Mom, please, you stay and rest while I accompany Charlie outside."

Charlie understood his aunt likely desired a private conversation. "Yes, grandma, no need to trouble yourself."

Seeing her son-in-law and grandson leave, Grandma nodded. "Alright, let your aunt accompany you."

Outside the villa, Tece broached the question weighing on her mind. "Charlie, tell me the truth, is Eddie dead?"

Charlie, unfazed, nodded solemnly. "Yes, aunt. Eddie is dead."

Tece pressed further, "How did he die?"

"He perished in a fire, leaving no trace. It's as if he vanished into thin air," Charlie explained.

Tece nodded thoughtfully. She had been aware of Charlie's trip to New York, and shortly thereafter, Eddie vanished, prompting several Evans family managers to contact her in search of him.

Upon learning of Eddie's disappearance, she had speculated on his fate, leaning towards the grim possibility of his demise.

However, lacking definitive information, she had remained in a state of uncertainty.

Now, with Charlie's confirmation, a wave of mixed emotions washed over her. Despite the sorrow and uncertainty, a sense of relief permeated her being.

"Charlie, you've long suspected Eddie's ties to the Warriors Den, haven't you?" she asked.

"That's correct," Charlie affirmed, speaking truthfully. "I had suspected earlier that he might have ties to the Warriors Den. He was a 'scholar' in the Warriors Den, adept at deception, but direct evidence was lacking. However, during my recent trip to New York, I inadvertently uncovered his clandestine collaboration with a member of the Warriors Den to acquire Four Treasures of the Study. It prompted me to seize the opportunity to eliminate both of them."

He turned to Tece with a tone of apology. "Auntie, the situation arose suddenly, and I didn't have the chance to seek your guidance. Please forgive me."

Tece sighed softly, expressing gratitude to Charlie for eliminating a threat to the Evans family. "Charlie, as your aunt, I thank you for ridding us of potential harm. Your quick

actions saved the Evans family from disaster. Without you, both your brother-in-law and I might have made irreparable mistakes, becoming the worst sinners of the Evans family..."

Charlie felt a wave of relief wash over him as he witnessed his aunt's sincere appreciation. Though he didn't know her well, he acknowledged that her sense of justice would prevent her from blaming him. However, if she possessed a more romanticized view, she might have harbored resentment toward him for her husband's demise.

Thankfully, the Evans family had endured its share of challenges, possessing a resilience beyond that of ordinary families. Thus, he reassured her, "Auntie, the 'scholars' of the Warriors Den are more cunning than we initially thought. Those who appeared around you and my uncle in the past likely deceived you with their charm. Even I would find it difficult to see through and guard against them."

Tece nodded in understanding, finding solace in Charlie's words.

Aware that she needed time to process everything, Charlie gently advised, "Auntie, don't burden yourself with thoughts for the next couple of days. Take some time to rest. Once the situation with the Warriors Den is resolved, we'll be in a better position to take action. You and your uncle should prepare to play an active role when the time comes."

With a determined nod, Tece replied, "Alright, Charlie, I understand!"

After bidding farewell to his aunt, Charlie headed to the Elys-Champ Hot Springs Villa to assess the progress of the martial arts training.

As his car departed the villa, Charlie received a call from Steve Rothschild.

As night settled in the United States, Steve busied himself packing his luggage, preparing for an early morning flight.

Eager to demonstrate his goodwill to Charlie, he dialed Charlie's number.

"Steve, why are you calling me so late?" Charlie's voice echoed through the phone, carrying a hint of amusement.

Respectfully, Steve replied, "Mr. Wade, I considered the time difference. It's afternoon in China, so I didn't want to disturb you."

Charlie hummed in acknowledgment. "Is there something you need from me?"

Steve's voice softened with sincerity. "Yes, Mr. Wade. My father has assigned me a task in China. I'll be departing in three or four hours. Since you're likely in China as well, I thought it'd be convenient to visit you in person..."

"Haven't we already agreed on our cooperation?" Charlie interrupted with a smile.

"Just carry out your duties. There's no need for a visit."

Steve hastily interjected, "Mr. Wade, my loyalty is unparalleled. To me, you're like a guiding light. If I were to come to China and not see you, I'd regret it deeply..."

Understanding Steve's desire for a meeting, Charlie assessed the situation, pondering the potential benefits.

Although not particularly eager to meet Steve, he recognized the importance of maintaining dominance over the second-in-command of the Rothschild family. By granting Steve an audience, he could subtly reinforce his influence. Moreover, neglecting the meeting might diminish Steve's sense of hope, rendering him less useful in the future.

"Since you've traveled so far, I feel obliged to extend my hospitality," Charlie conceded.

"Let me know your destination in China and a suitable time, and I'll make arrangements."

Steve's excitement was palpable. "Mr. Wade, I'll be heading to Aurous Hill for business. It's imperative I make it my first stop to appease my father. Please provide me with an address, and I'll come to see you as soon as I land."

Charlie's curiosity piqued. "You're coming to Aurous Hill?"

"Yes," Steve confirmed. "It's my father's directive. If I were to skip Aurous Hill, it would displease him. But fret not, just give me an address, and I'll be there once I touch down!"

A smile tugged at Charlie's lips. "What a coincidence. I'm currently in Aurous Hill. I'll arrange to meet you upon your arrival."

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Steve felt naturally flattered upon hearing that Charlie would be hosting him. He expressed his gratitude repeatedly, saying, "Mr. Wade, you have so many responsibilities, yet you still make time to see me. Thank you so much!"

Charlie smiled warmly and replied, "We're friends, there's no need for such formality. When do you expect to land in Eastcliff?"

After a moment of consideration, Steve respectfully answered, "Mr. Wade, I'll be departing in a few hours. The flight will take about fifteen hours, and I'll arrive in Aurous Hill around ten o'clock tomorrow morning local time."

Charlie proposed, "Let's plan for a noon banquet tomorrow at the renowned Heaven Springs in Aurous Hill. It's a well-known restaurant, so your associates should have no trouble finding it. You can join us at that time."

Though the Rothschild family lacked manpower in Aurous Hill, their Greater China headquarters in Eastcliff possessed significant resources. Steve had already informed them of his visit, and the administrative staff there would arrange personnel and vehicles to serve him in Aurous Hill.

Given the close timing of his landing to lunch hour, Steve found Charlie's suggestion reasonable and cheerfully responded, "Very well, Mr. Wade. I'll head straight to the Heaven Springs as soon as I arrive at the airport!"

"Excellent. We'll meet tomorrow then," Charlie confirmed with a smile.

Steve bid farewell attentively, "Thank you, Mr. Wade. See you tomorrow!"

After ending the call, Steve felt an overwhelming sense of excitement. Initially, he hadn't expected Charlie to agree to meet with him, let alone treat him to dinner. This gesture clearly signaled friendliness, marking a promising start to his trip to China. If all went smoothly, completing the task assigned by his father and bringing the Hogwitz father and son back to New York would make his journey even more successful.

His wife, packing his belongings nearby, inquired in a hushed tone, "Darling, did that Wade bastard invite you to dinner?"

Startled, Steve shot her a glare and retorted sharply, "What nonsense are you spouting? That's Mr. Wade!"

His wife scoffed disdainfully, "Why do you defend him? He ruined your plans, yet you still protect him? Are you suffering from Stockholm Syndrome?"

Lowering his voice, Steve explained, "You don't understand. Mr. Wade is influential and capable. I can't afford to cross him. Remember, it's easier to offend the president than Mr. Wade!"

He warned her sternly, "Be cautious with your words at home. Loose lips can lead to trouble outside. And remember, walls have ears! Even if Mr. Wade doesn't overhear you, his confidants might. We can't afford any slip-ups."

His wife looked ashamed, and Steve continued in a hushed tone, "Even our son can't be entirely trusted in this household."

Shocked, his wife protested, "Darling... you don't doubt our children, do you? They're our flesh and blood! It's unfair to doubt our own children."

Steve countered, "What about my own flesh and blood? If our son is our flesh and blood, am I not my father's flesh and blood?"

His wife fell silent, then sighed resignedly, "You're right, dear... I won't speak like that again..."

Satisfied, Steve instructed her, "Once I leave, don't discuss anything with anyone. Keep my meeting with Mr. Wade confidential."

"Of course," she affirmed solemnly. "I'll keep it under wraps, darling."

Relieved, Steve nodded and concluded, "Mr. the Wade's invitation to dinner is a positive sign. I anticipate great gains from my trip to China this time."

The wife exclaimed excitedly, "That's wonderful! You need to quickly familiarize yourself with Chinese dining etiquette. You wouldn't want Mr. Wade to think you're impolite."

Steve nodded earnestly, "Absolutely, you're right. I've never attended a traditional Chinese banquet before, so I'll need to study it thoroughly to avoid any missteps."

With determination, Steve immediately reached for his phone to search for the rules of Chinese dining, and his wife did the same.

Meanwhile, Charlie descended the mountain and arrived at the Elys-Champ Hot Springs Villa. To avoid disrupting the students' practice, he only informed Don Albert, who was relatively new to martial arts and mainly participated for recreation, to meet him at the hotel entrance.



Upon Charlie's arrival, Don Albert, dressed in martial arts attire, was already waiting. He approached the car, opened the door for Charlie, and greeted him respectfully, "Master Wade."

Charlie nodded in acknowledgment and instructed, "Don Albert, tomorrow, temporarily close off Heaven Springs to the public during the day. Prepare a lavish feast and ensure compensation for any previously booked guests."

Don Albert readily agreed and inquired, "Master Wade, are we expecting guests?"

Charlie replied casually, "Not exactly friends, just an enemy who came from afar."

Understanding, Don Albert smiled and assured, "Understood. I'll make the arrangements as instructed."

Charlie nodded appreciatively and added, "If you're free tomorrow, join us for the entertainment. It's an opportunity to network with someone from a wealthy family."

Grateful for the opportunity, Don Albert felt a surge of appreciation. Despite his humble background and lack of confidence, Charlie had always treated him with respect and even entrusted him with responsibilities.

However, knowing he didn't need to express his gratitude verbally, Don Albert respectfully replied, "Of course, Master Wade. I'll be at Heaven Springs tomorrow."

He then asked, "May I ask, Master Wade, what name should I provide for our esteemed guest so the staff can prepare accordingly?"

Casually, Charlie responded, "His name is Steve Rothschild."

"Rothschild?" Don Albert exclaimed in astonishment. "The renowned Rothschild family from the United States?"

Charlie confirmed, "Yes, indeed. He's the second-in-command and the eldest son of the current patriarch."

"Wow..." Don Albert was speechless, muttering to himself, "The Rothschild family's second-in-command... coming to Heaven Springs for dinner... this is..."

Seeing Don Albert's reaction, Charlie chuckled and remarked, "Why the surprise?"

Quickly regaining composure, Don Albert exclaimed, "I never imagined the second-in-command of the trillion-dollar Rothschild family dining at Heaven Springs... Master Wade, your influence is truly remarkable!"

Charlie modestly replied, "It's not about my influence but rather the potential threat I pose to him. If he's sensible, he'll choose to dine at Heaven Springs. If not, he'll end up in your doghouse."

Don Albert nodded in understanding and then remembered something, blurting out, "Master Wade, there are still two men from the Rothschild family imprisoned at the dog farm under my command!"

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"Men of the Rothschild family?" Charlie furrowed his brow slightly in response to Don Albert's words. "Are you referring to Walter and his father?"

Don Albert nodded eagerly. "Yes, exactly! That American guy who poisoned Ms. Young's father, causing kidney failure. He's a despicable character. Didn't he and his father always claim to be members of the Rothschild family?"

Charlie waved dismissively. "They're not part of the Rothschild family. It's impossible for anyone with the surname Hogwitz to be a Rothschild."

After a moment of contemplation, Charlie continued, "The surname Hogwitz is probably of Jewish origin. They might be distant relatives of the Rothschild family."

Realization dawned on Charlie. "I think I've figured it out. Steve came to Aurous Hill to find this person. His father has just recovered and wants to consolidate his position as the family head for a few more years. He may be trying to win over these relatives."

Don Albert suggested, "Master Wade, if this kid is here to find someone, why not set up a trap for him? We can host a grand banquet for him tomorrow and then take him to the dog farm afterward to meet Walter and his father. That should deter him from causing any trouble in the future."

Charlie shook his head. "No need. Steve is the second-in-command of the Rothschild family, equivalent to royalty. This Hogwitz is likely just a distant relative and may not even be acquainted with Steve's biological sister. It's improbable for the Rothschild family to not intervene if they were close relatives."

Understanding dawned on Don Albert. "That makes sense. But what if he turns against you in the future, especially if he finds out about the dog farm?"

Charlie reassured him, "Even if he's aware of the dog farm, he won't dare to cross me. But just to be safe, prepare a discreet business vehicle. During dinner tomorrow, ask Steve if he intends to visit the father and son. If so, discreetly escort him to the dog farm afterward."

Don Albert nodded confidently. "Understood. I'll make the arrangements."

"Alright," Charlie smiled faintly and inquired, "What is Master Vail currently engaged in?"

Don Albert responded, "Master Vail is conducting martial arts training for everyone in the martial arts hall."

Nodding in understanding, Charlie instructed, "Please inform Master Vail that I'll be awaiting him in the general manager's office."

"Understood!" Don Albert affirmed. "Master Wade, please proceed to the office, and I'll notify Master Vail immediately."

The Elys-Champ Hot Springs Villa, with its hundreds of rooms capable of accommodating thousands of guests and hundreds of employees, now catered exclusively to a few hundred martial arts students and support staff. Consequently, most of the rooms and facilities remained unoccupied.

Charlie settled into the general manager's office, where Master Vail, clad in a Tang suit, soon arrived. After knocking and receiving permission to enter, Master Vail burst in with excitement. "Master Wade, it's been a while since you've graced us with your presence!"

Charlie was pleasantly surprised and teased, "Master Vail Tian only recently returned to China, but it seems he's adapted quite swiftly to local customs."

"No, no, no," Master Vail quickly countered, his tone serious. "Master Wade, in the eyes of us subordinates, your talents are truly exceptional. It's an honor and privilege to receive your guidance firsthand."

Though touched by his sincerity, Charlie remained modest. "Master Vail, I possess limited knowledge of martial arts. Unlike you, your theoretical expertise and practical experience are extensive. Moreover, your teachings in Mystic Harmony Sectism have produced numerous outstanding disciples. How could I, as a senior, presume to offer advice on your teaching?"

After exchanging pleasantries, Charlie inquired, "Is everything running smoothly here recently?"

Master Vail respectfully replied, "Master Wade, everything is going well. Thanks to the 'Great Way of Harmonious Unity' you provided, everyone has established a solid

foundation for their subsequent mental cultivation. The progress of these students is the fastest I've witnessed in all my years of teaching."

Recalling Serena, who had previously brought Mystic Harmony Sect to China but later entrusted its management to Master Vail, Charlie asked with curiosity, "How are the disciples of Mystic Harmony Sect progressing?"

Master Vail hastened to respond, "Master Wade, the disciples of Mystic Harmony Sect are advancing much faster than they did in the United States. Serena is particularly dedicated to her practice and is making remarkable strides. However, the one who has shown the most progress is Miss Ito. In fact, her recent transformation has left even her subordinates baffled."

Surprised, Charlie queried, "You mean Nanako has experienced a significant change?"

"Yes!" Master Vail affirmed with admiration. "Miss Ito's comprehension is unparalleled. Her demeanor exudes an air of transcendence that is truly remarkable."

Charlie couldn't help but feel curious. Nanako had only recently begun her martial arts training.

Despite the rejuvenation pill she had taken previously, which had greatly improved her physical condition, mastering martial arts still required gradual progress, step by step.

Even if her progress was faster than that of ordinary individuals, Charlie doubted that it would be sufficient to astonish Master Vail to such an extent.

Intrigued by Nanako's rapid development, Charlie decided to meet her. "Is Miss Ito present today?"

"She is," Master Vail confirmed. "Miss Ito is currently at the martial arts hall."

"Master Vail Tian, please inform Miss Ito and request her presence here," Charlie instructed. "Also, after today's session, inform all the students that I have a gift for them tomorrow morning. Please tally the number of students as well."

Previously, to accelerate the progress of the students, Charlie had specially prepared some "oral liquids" containing various elixirs he refined himself. However, due to his busy schedule, he intended to wait until Nanako, Aurora, Isaac Cameron, and Don

Albert joined the martial arts sect before distributing the oral liquids to help speed up their training. Unfortunately, he hadn't found the time to do so yet.

Now, with more students present than before, including members of the Elms family and Dragon Temple soldiers, the need was greater. Serena's bold move of relocating the entire Mystic Harmony Sect to China had significantly increased the number of people. Fortunately, Charlie had a simple oral liquid filling system installed in his mid-level villa in Elys-Champ. He planned to use it to quickly produce another batch that afternoon.

Not aware of the nature of the gifts Charlie had for everyone, Master Vail respectfully assured him, "Don't worry, Master Wade, I'll inform Miss Ito immediately. As for the current number of people, if my subordinates remember correctly, there should be 426, including Isaac Cameron, who's currently in Eastcliff. With him, it's 427 people." "Okay," Charlie acknowledged with a nod. "I'll have Isaac informed to come back later. Everyone is to assemble at the Martial Arts Hall at eight o'clock tomorrow morning."

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Master Vail wasn't sure what gifts Charlie had in mind for everyone, but he assumed it was something material, given the quantity involved. Though not particularly interested in material possessions himself, he felt compelled to express his gratitude on behalf of the group, "Master Wade, your thoughtfulness despite your many responsibilities is truly humbling. Allow me to thank you on behalf of everyone." Charlie, with a gentle smile, replied, "Master Vail Tian, there's no need for such formality."

Respectfully, Master Vail added, "Master Wade, if there's nothing else, I'll go inform Miss Ito to join you."

"Alright."

With that, Master Vail bid farewell and departed. He returned to the martial arts hall, where he summoned Nanako discreetly, whispering, "Miss Ito, Master Wade is waiting for you in the general manager's office. You should head over."

Upon hearing Charlie's name, Nanako's face lit up with surprise. "Mr. Wade is here! I'll go right away! Thank you, Master Vail!" She bowed respectfully before hurrying off.

As Master Vail watched Nanako dash off, he couldn't help but wonder, "I'm just relaying a message, why is she thanking me?"

Meanwhile, Nanako hurried to the general manager's office. Before she could knock, Charlie's voice beckoned her inside. With a smile, she cautiously pushed the door open, peeking in before entering fully. "Charlie, when did you return?" she greeted happily.

"Just today," Charlie replied, returning her smile.

But his expression quickly shifted as he noticed something unusual. "Nanako, how do you possess reiki?" he asked, surprised.

Nanako responded with excitement and a hint of shyness, "Did you notice?"

He nodded emphatically and continued, "Have you attained enlightenment?"

With a nod and a smile, Nanako confirmed, "I feel a profound change in myself—my senses are sharper, and I can sense the world around me. I believe I've achieved enlightenment."

Charlie couldn't contain his excitement at her revelation.

Never in his wildest dreams did Charlie imagine that there would be someone around him who could achieve enlightenment. It felt akin to wandering alone in darkness and suddenly finding kindred spirits to walk hand in hand with.

The excitement overwhelmed him, and he subconsciously took Nanako's hand, transferring a trace of reiki into her body. Confirming that Nanako's consciousness was imbued with reiki, he realized she had truly grasped the Tao and could control spiritual forces, much like himself.

Filled with curiosity, Charlie asked, "Nanako, how did you achieve this?"

Nanako truthfully recounted, "I happened upon an eminent monk giving lectures at Lama Temple. He recognized my potential and imparted the method of

enlightenment. Though I had no interest in Buddhism, I tried the method and unexpectedly attained enlightenment."

Charlie was left speechless, astonished by Nanako's humble revelation. "Do you realize that some individuals struggle for centuries without attaining enlightenment, and others devote their lives to enlightened masters without success? And yet, you achieved it so effortlessly..."

Nanako chuckled softly, thinking Charlie was jesting. "You're quite the joker, Charlie. Who could possibly live for centuries without enlightenment?"

Charlie smiled ambiguously, knowing he couldn't divulge anything about Maria, especially to Nanako.

However, the truth remained that Maria had taken the Evergreen Pill and lived for centuries without attaining enlightenment.

Reflecting on the ancestor of the Treadway family's lifelong dedication to Morvel Bazin, as depicted in the painting, Charlie pondered the sincerity between them.

Despite Morvel Bazin's unwavering support, the ancestor failed to grasp enlightenment.

In contrast, Nanako's success under a Buddhist master's guidance seemed remarkable.

Curious, Charlie inquired, "Nanako, could you share the details of your enlightenment?"

Nanako replied with a smile, "Certainly, I have no secrets from you, Charlie."

Following that, she recounted how she happened to meet her neighbor in the elevator, her encounter with Master Geoffrey at Lama Temple, her debate with Master Geoffrey about selflessness and true self, and how she discovered the entire process of enlightenment in the sea of consciousness. She shared all this without reservation with Charlie.

Upon hearing this, Charlie harbored no doubts about Master Geoffrey and the catalyst for the entire incident.

After all, as Nanako described it, she coincidentally encountered her neighbor while getting off the elevator, who happened to be on the phone discussing an amulet. It



was Nanako herself who took the initiative to inquire further and got to know Master Geoffrey.

If someone had orchestrated all this for Nanako, it would naturally have felt somewhat contrived.

However, when Nanako took the initiative to recount all these details, both she and Charlie, as an observer, felt that everything unfolded naturally.

Because everything appeared seamless, Charlie immediately shifted his focus to understanding Nanako's method of enlightenment.

This was the first time Charlie had encountered the concept of blending his spiritual consciousness into his own sea of consciousness.

As there was scarcely any process involved in his own enlightenment journey—having attained the "Apocalyptic Book" and completing the entire process in one go—he had never experienced the steps to self-enlightenment.

Surprised, Charlie couldn't help but sigh, "It appears that enlightenment truly hinges on talent and opportunity. Only a select few can introspect deeply, and even fewer can delve into the depths of the sea of consciousness. It's exceedingly rare, let alone integrating divine consciousness with the sea of consciousness on top of that...

Nanako, you possess both talent and opportunity, enabling you to realize the Tao at such an early stage."

Nanako nodded, smiling, and replied, "Nanako isn't particularly keen on enlightenment, to be honest. I simply believe that achieving enlightenment will afford me more time and opportunities to accompany Charlie in the future, so I'm filled with motivation."

Moved by her words, Charlie couldn't help but sigh, "It's regrettable that I lack a suitable method for cultivating Reiki. Otherwise, I could share it with you and we could progress together."

Nanako smiled and reassured him, "Charlie, don't be disheartened. There's still a long journey ahead of us. Perhaps you'll come across suitable opportunities in due time."

Charlie nodded in agreement, saying, "Indeed, let's not fret over this. Opportunities will undoubtedly present themselves in the future."

With that said, he remembered something and swiftly retrieved a Cultivation Pill, handing it to Nanako. "Nanako, despite your enlightenment, you currently lack a cultivation method and access to natural reiki. Improving your strength would be quite challenging, even if you wanted to augment the reiki within your body. This elixir is specifically designed to replenish reiki. You should give it a try!"

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Although Nanako had recently attained enlightenment, she had already recognized a critical issue, the scarcity of reiki available to her and the lack of external sources to replenish it.

In today's era, acquiring reiki posed the greatest challenge for ascetics. With none naturally occurring in the world, the only external avenues for obtaining it were through pills, spiritual stones, or formations.

Individuals with a complete cultivation method could generate reiki within their bodies through practice. However, for people like Charlie and Nanako, lacking such a method made self-sufficiency unattainable.

Consequently, the small amount of reiki Nanako had generated upon enlightenment was quickly depleted after attempting to perceive it.

Charlie fared slightly better. Fortuitously acquiring spiritual stones early on had provided him with ample reiki. Additionally, with the aid of Cultivation Pills, he could partially offset any deficiencies in his reiki.

Although Charlie couldn't directly enhance Nanako's cultivation, he could fortunately assist her with pills.

Nanako understood that Charlie's elixirs must be highly valuable. Initially, she hesitated to accept one when offered, feeling compelled to decline politely.

However, another thought struck her, if she wished to strengthen herself and alleviate Charlie's concerns, she must accept his offering.

Otherwise, what basis did she have to talk about accompanying him on their journey?

With sincerity in her eyes, she looked at Charlie and said, "Charlie, although I know little about Taoism, my commitment to practice alongside you and journey together is as steadfast as the sun and moon. If you don't mind, I am determined to take care of you in the future."

Moved by her words, Charlie nodded, his smile reflecting his appreciation. "You are my only companion on this cultivation path. I hope you advance in your cultivation swiftly and may lend me a helping hand in the future."

Afterwards, Charlie presented the elixir to her.

Nanako reached out, accepting the elixir, and then inquired, "Mr. Wade, should I consume it all at once, or in several doses?"

Charlie gently tapped his forehead in realization. "I nearly forgot that you've just embarked on this journey. The reiki in the Cultivation Pill is not only pure but also abundant. It's best not to take the entire pill at once. It's preferable to divide it into ten parts and take one portion at a time to test it out."

Nanako nodded in understanding, meticulously dividing the pill into nearly equal parts. She then picked up one segment and addressed Charlie, "Mr. Wade, allow me to take one portion first and give it a try!"

Encouragingly, Charlie replied, "With me by your side, you can consume it with confidence."

With a sweet smile, Nanako swiftly ingested the portion of the elixir.

As it entered her mouth, the elixir transformed into a potent surge of reiki, flowing directly into Nanako's sea of consciousness.

Suddenly, the once tranquil sea of consciousness seemed to erupt into a tempest, stirring turbulent waves instantaneously.

Nanako Ito, too, sensed a remarkable surge in the energy within her sea of consciousness. Following the enlightenment, her heightened sensory abilities

skyrocketed to new heights, accompanied by a profound change in the abundance of reiki within her body. With a mere flicker of consciousness, reiki separated effortlessly from her body, granting her a divine-like perspective, seemingly controlling everything within the office and extending her perception to encompass seven or eight surrounding rooms.

Charlie could feel the reiki emanating from Nanako Ito. Observing her, he noted her brimming reiki and realized she couldn't intake any more pills.

After a brief moment, Nanako Ito withdrew the energy she had utilized for perception, raising her head to address Charlie. "Charlie, previously, I could only release a minuscule amount of reiki and struggled to control its movement. But just now, the reiki I released responded to my thoughts. Though it's still somewhat sluggish, the sensation is truly astounding!"

Charlie nodded in agreement, emphasizing the significance of mastering reiki control. "The mastery of reiki is crucial. In due time, you'll utilize it to cast spells and operate formations, all dependent on your ability to control reiki with your thoughts. Practice diligently, and once you've become adept, I'll teach you how to manipulate formations using reiki. Moreover, I'll provide you with a magic weapon for offense!"

Nanako Ito nodded earnestly, affirming, "Rest assured, Mr. Wade. I will devote myself wholeheartedly and never disappoint you!"

Charlie smiled knowingly before speaking, "Nanako, now that you've grasped the truth, there's no need to linger here. Concentrate on honing your reiki control since you've embarked on the path of martial arts."

Nanako Ito understood that the realms of monks and martial artists were distinct. Remaining here would serve no purpose and could hinder their progress. Thus, she agreed, "Indeed, I'll set out to find a suitable place for practice today. It's not convenient to stay at Thompson First with my father around."

Charlie couldn't help but sigh, "We truly ought to seek out a suitable location for cultivation practice. For now, you can head to my mountainside villa. It's serene and secluded."

Nanako Ito nodded in acknowledgment, her eyes filled with anticipation. "Will you be joining me there to practice?" she inquired.

Charlie responded candidly, "I'm ashamed to admit that I lack effective methods to advance my cultivation, so I seldom practice. As for the mountainside villa, aside from occasional elixir refinement, I have no other use for it."

Curious, Nanako Ito asked, "Do you still believe it's because you haven't cultivated the proper mental method?"

"Yes," Charlie nodded. "My current situation is akin to being in a self-taught elementary school course without access to middle school textbooks. Students in this predicament, despite their acceptance into school, lack guidance on how to progress to the next level. They're essentially wanderers in the realm of monasticism."

Observing Charlie's sense of helplessness, Nanako Ito interjected, "Charlie, don't underestimate yourself. In this world, no discipline has been established without predecessors paving the way, and the same applies to Taoist practice. Although you don't have a preexisting mental cultivation method, I believe that with diligent study, you might develop your own set of techniques."

Charlie refrained from commenting on Nanako Ito's words, acknowledging the theoretical possibility. Yet, he recognized the practical challenges. While it was true that some individuals could pioneer new paths, it often required exceptional genius beyond the ordinary.

He didn't consider himself such a genius, but Nanako Ito's words sparked some inspiration within him.

While it might be difficult for an elementary student to possess the talents of Newton or Gauss, diligent research and exploration at a basic level could potentially uncover insights into more advanced concepts.

Just as Nanako Ito had relied on her own exploration to achieve insights and develop a method for diving deep into the sea of consciousness without external guidance, Charlie contemplated that such endeavors not only accelerated her martial arts progress but also laid a solid foundation for her enlightenment.

With determination burgeoning within him, Charlie silently resolved to allocate more time to visit the mountainside villa in the future, where he could immerse himself in the study of Taoism. Perhaps, within the existing framework, he could uncover a breakthrough.

However, upon contemplating his grandmother's residence nestled within the mountainside villa, Charlie foresaw potential complications. If he were to frequent the area for daily retreats, courtesy would compel him to greet his grandmother, inevitably slowing down his progress. Moreover, with Nanako Ito's frequent visits, explaining that to his grandmother would pose further challenges.

Thus, Charlie eagerly sought an alternative practice location.

Recalling Michaela's idea of purchasing the Quinton family's waterfront mansion under the alias of Miss Lavigne in Aurous Hill, Charlie found his mind drifting towards a potential solution.

Located in Croft Villa, the Quinton family's estate boasted scenic surroundings, secluded from the city's hustle and bustle. With minimal residents and abundant space due to the merger of two villas, the mansion offered an ideal environment for cultivation.

Originally acquired by Michaela and redesigned by his wife Claire, the mansion remained unused. Charlie saw an opportunity to purchase the property from Michaela and repurpose it exclusively for his cultivation endeavors.

Considering the limited number of households in Croft Villa, Charlie contemplated a more comprehensive approach. He envisioned acquiring all the residences in the villa, transforming the area into his own private retreat and base for cultivation.

Charlie's idea was spurred by the unique geographical location of Croft Villa.

Nestled on a gentle hillside, the community overlooked a barrier lake formed naturally. Accessible via a two-lane cement road leading from the foot of the mountain, the road was exclusively constructed for Croft Villa residents and visitors.

This meant that, aside from those associated with Croft Villa, few outsiders ventured into the area.

By ensuring that all property owners within the community were under their control, Charlie envisioned a secluded enclave, inaccessible to outsiders.

Drawing on Don Albert's connections within Aurous Hill's underground scene, Charlie considered the possibility of replacing the existing property company in Croft Villa with one affiliated with Don Albert's network. This would enable them to install their own personnel, further bolstering the confidentiality of the villa.

With such control, Charlie saw potential for significant undertakings within Croft Villa. Each villa within the community boasted ample underground space. Notably, Aurora's fondness for martial arts prompted her father to construct a dedicated training ground underground, a feature that could be leveraged for future endeavors. Examining the underground facilities of Croft Villa, Charlie envisioned the gradual transformation of these spaces into facilities comparable to a military barracks, offering immense utility in the future.

Inspired by his thoughts, Charlie turned to Nanako and exclaimed, "Nanako, I'll reach out to Michaela. She has access to a highly suitable training venue!"

## **Chapter 5693**

Due to the time difference, Charlie didn't immediately call Michaela. But he knew she could handle this matter easily. He planned to discuss and start planning with her in the evening.

"Nanako," Charlie said, "I don't think you need to keep practicing martial arts. Why don't you come with me to my Mountain Villa this afternoon and lend me a hand? After we're done, we can head back to Thompson First together."

Nanako nodded without hesitation and replied, "I will follow your lead, Charlie."

Then Nanako asked, "Should I go and greet Master Vail?"

Charlie waved his hand and replied, "Not now, he's probably still teaching. We can talk to him privately later."

"Alright!"

Charlie then took Nanako back to his Mountain Villa. When they arrived at the basement, Nanako was surprised to find a simple machine for filling oral liquid bottles. There were also many unused bottles and caps next to it.

"Charlie, why do you have pharmaceutical equipment here?" Nanako asked in surprise.

Charlie smiled and explained, "It's just a basic filling and sealing machine. I plan to prepare some elixirs to enhance the strength of the martial arts students at Elys-Champ. But with so many students, I can't afford to give each of them an elixir. So I decided to turn the elixirs into liquid and dilute them to make a batch of oral liquid."

He continued, "Originally, I prepared more than two hundred bottles. But when Serena, the senior disciple of Master Vail, brought the entire Mystic Harmony Sect to Aurous Hill, there were more people than expected. So I need to prepare some more for them and distribute them tomorrow."

Nanako suddenly understood and smiled, "Miss Gray is efficient and has strict management. She has control over more than two hundred people from Mystic Harmony Sect, regardless of age or gender. Even Master Vail doesn't dare to challenge her authority. If she and Mystic Harmony Sect wholeheartedly serve you, it will definitely be beneficial for you in the future."

Charlie nodded and said, "We need more manpower right now. We can't underestimate the two hundred people from Mystic Harmony Sect. It would be even better if their strength can improve further in the future."

He continued, "Wait here for a moment, I'll go prepare the medicine and come back to fill the bottles."

With Nanako's help, Charlie quickly made another batch of oral liquid. In total, he filled more than four hundred bottles, totaling seven hundred bottles.



With the extra two hundred bottles, Charlie planned to use them as incentives among the students. Those who made the fastest progress and had the best attitude would receive additional rewards, which would increase their motivation.

After filling the bottles, it was already dark when they left the Mountain Villa.

Since it was past 7 o'clock, Charlie and Nanako returned to the city together.

After returning to Thompson First, Charlie first took Nanako to the underground garage and parked the car he had driven from Zilian Mountain Villa in the designated parking space.

Charlie turned off the car and planned to accompany Nanako to the elevator before heading back to his own villa.

As they were about to leave the car, a woman from the opposite parking space had already gotten out of her car. After locking it, she carried her bag and walked towards the elevator lobby.

Nanako recognized her and said to Charlie, "Charlie, that's the neighbor I mentioned. I overheard her talking on the phone with her friend the other day and learned that Master Geoffrey was coming to Aurous Hill."

Charlie nodded slightly and smiled, "Seems like I should thank her when I have the chance. A simple phone call unexpectedly helped you discover the Dao."

"Yes!" Nanako agreed with Charlie and said, "If it weren't for her, I probably wouldn't have had the opportunity to discover a breakthrough."

Nanako turned to Charlie, inquiring, "Charlie, would you like to meet Master Geoffrey? Perhaps he could offer you some inspiration as well."

Charlie shook his head and said, "I have a unique situation, so I should try to avoid meeting people who have already discovered reiki."

Charlie glanced at the woman's back and suddenly became a little suspicious. He used his intuition to sense her.

He didn't doubt the woman, but he wanted to confirm his suspicions. If she was just an ordinary person who didn't know martial arts or possess reiki, it would prove that he was overthinking.

After sensing her, he found that the woman wasn't a martial artist or cultivator. This put his mind at ease.

The two of them left the car and walked normally to the elevator lobby. When they arrived, one of the elevators had just opened its doors.

The woman walked into the elevator, swiped her card, and turned around to see Nanako and Charlie entering. She was pleasantly surprised and said, "Oh, it's you!" Nanako smiled and nodded, "What a coincidence, just finished work?"

"No," the woman smiled and said, "I'm just a housewife. I don't have a job to go to. I just came back from having dinner at my best friend's place."

After saying that, she curiously looked at Charlie and asked Nanako, "Is he your boyfriend?"

Nanako blushed but instinctively shook her head repeatedly and said, "He's my friend. We happen to live in the same neighborhood, and I got a ride with him."

Nanako didn't dare to admit or acknowledge Charlie as her boyfriend in front of their neighbor. After all, Charlie himself was an owner of Thompson First.

If they were to run into him and Claire again someday, it would be very awkward.

The woman listened to Nanako and nodded, then asked Charlie, "Do you also live in this building, sir?"

Charlie shook his head and said, "I live in another building."

Satisfied with the answer, the woman smiled and said, "I thought you two were a couple. You look good together."

Nanako shyly said, "No, no... we're just ordinary friends..."

The woman nodded and didn't tease them further.

The elevator quickly arrived on the first floor, and Charlie bid farewell to the two of them and walked out. He headed back to the villa area.

Little did he know that the woman who was in the same elevator with him was one of his mother's subordinates, and her early return was all part of a plan.

Lily was concerned that Charlie would have doubts, so she intentionally found an opportunity to appear in front of him. This way, he could confirm that she was an ordinary person who didn't know martial arts or possess reiki.

And by timing her arrival in the underground garage before Charlie, she further reduced the possibility of suspicion.

After all, people are subjective creatures. If someone closely follows you to the same place, a suspicious person might think they are being followed. But the opposite is not true, and the level of suspicion is greatly reduced.

Lily interfered with Nanako's discovery of reiki, and to prevent Charlie from suspecting anything, she had to dispel all of his doubts. Otherwise, with Charlie's character, he would definitely investigate until the end.

A few minutes later, Charlie returned to the Thompson First villa area.

Inside the villa at that moment, Elaine and Jacob were watching TV in the living room on the first floor.