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As the two entered through the underground parking garage and arrived on the first floor, Takehiko Ito saw charlie Wade and immediately greeted him happily.

He found charlie Wade pleasing to the eye no matter how he looked at him, and now that he knew charlie Wade's wife had run away, he felt even more comfortable looking at him, and the more he looked at him, the more he resembled the son-in-law of the Ito family.

So he patted charlie Wade on the shoulder and said with a smile, "It's been a long time, Mr. Wade."

charlie Wade smiled and said, "How has Mr. Ito been lately?"

"Very good, very good!" Takehiko Ito said cheerfully, "The new house is much more spacious and comfortable. I'm currently working on my yard. I plan to transplant some of the precious tree species that I planted in Japan to Nanjing. If you have any favorite varieties, just let me know, and I will definitely find the best one to transport over for you!"

charlie Wade thanked him, saying, "Thank you, Mr. Ito, but I may not have the energy to take care of the plants."

Nanako chimed in, "Dad, charlie Wadejun is usually very busy. Unlike you, he doesn't have time to tend to trees and flowers."

Takehiko Ito laughed and nodded, saying, "That's true. I don't worry about any work matters at all now. I just enjoy my retirement every day. Recently, I've taken to going to the farmers market. I walk there every day to buy some fresh ingredients and then walk back. It feels really good."

charlie Wade asked him, "Is Mr. Ito adapting well to life in Aurous Hill?"

Takehiko Ito laughed and said, "I've adapted, I've adapted very well. My appearance when I go out is very different from what I used to be. I've shaved my beard and dyed my hair black. Every day, when I walk around the most crowded places in Nanjing, people treat me like an ordinary middle-aged man. No one can

recognize my real identity. So I don't have to worry about being seen through. My legs have healed, and I feel very relaxed."

Takehiko Ito truly enjoyed his life in Nanjing. It was a life of ease and comfort he had never experienced before. While the young people in the city were busy and worked very hard every day, the middle-aged and elderly people with certain economic means lived a truly leisurely life.

At that moment, Nanako's aunt, Emi Ito, came out of the kitchen and said respectfully, "Onii-chan, Mr. Ha, Nanako, dinner is ready, please enjoy."

Takehiko Ito smiled and said, "Mr. Wade, Nanako brought back a lot of top-quality ingredients from Japan, as well as the most famous Uji matcha from Kyoto. She said she wanted to wait for you to come so we could enjoy them together. So I've been looking forward to inviting you to my home for dinner for a while now."

charlie Wade knew Nanako's feelings for him, and upon hearing Ito Takehiko's words, he subconsciously looked at Nanako with a hint of gratitude in his eyes.

Nanako, blushing yet excited, quickly said, "charlie Wade-kun, please move to the dining room!"

Inside the restaurant, many Japanese dishes were already laid out on the tables.

The Japanese value ritual, so they pay great attention to the plating and decoration of each dish, making it a truly pleasing sight.

charlie Wade wasn't particularly interested in Japanese cuisine. The flavors were relatively bland, and the seasonings were rather simple. The country's overall culinary style was like a large chain restaurant, with most of the time it was just a combination of Japanese soy sauce, wasabi, miso, and citrus vinegar.

However, since he was a guest, charlie Wade naturally couldn't reveal his true feelings. So when Nanako enthusiastically introduced various ingredients and cooking methods, charlie Wade would praise her enthusiastically.

At the dinner table, Takehiko Ito kept wanting to gossip about charlie Wade's wife leaving without saying goodbye, but he held back from bringing it up for fear of saying the wrong thing.

It wasn't until they had almost finished dinner that he finally managed to say, "Mr. Wade, did those ninjas who came from Japan to help you recently provide any

real assistance? If you think they're not up to par, I'll contact the Chinese authorities and send another batch of ninjas."

That's a pretty sophisticated question.

Instead of directly asking about the progress of the matter, they asked whether the ninjas had provided any substantial help. Although they were asking about the same thing, their motivations and feelings were quite different.

Asking directly would seem abrupt and gossipy, while this way of asking is much gentler and more natural. If it helps, then things have progressed; if it doesn't, then things are still uncertain.

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charlie Wade was quite honest and didn't figure out Ito Takehiko's little scheme. Instead, he said truthfully, "Thank you for your help, Mr. Ito. These ninjas are currently working under the command of Inspector Li Yalin, but I'm not quite sure about the specific progress yet."

Takehiko Ito nodded, feeling relieved.

Having been a boss for so many years, he understands his subordinates' basic logic very well. If they proactively report their progress, it proves that they are performing very well; if they don't proactively report their progress, it must be a complete mess.

He thought this was fine. charlie Wade couldn't find Claire, and sooner or later he would lose faith in her. The next step after losing faith would be giving up, and the next step after giving up would naturally be to find someone else.

In high spirits, he showed no sign of anything amiss, and said very seriously, “Mr. Wade, if you need any assistance from the Ito family, please feel free to ask. The Ito family will do its utmost!”

charlie Wade casually thanked him, but his expression betrayed his melancholy.

Ito Takehiko was a smart man. He had already gotten the answer he wanted from charlie Wade’s expression, so he didn’t mention it again for the rest of the time.

Because his thoughts were all on Lin Wan’er (Alani), charlie Wade said goodbye to the Ito family father and daughter as soon as he finished eating.

As he drove to Zijin Villa after leaving Shanheyue, he sent a message to Lin Wan’er (Alani): “Miss Lin, is it convenient for you? I have made a new discovery and would like to talk to you about it in person.”

Lin Wan’er (Alani) quickly replied, “Young Master Wade is welcome to come anytime. I am always at the villa on the mountaintop.”

charlie Wade replied, “Okay, see you later.”

As charlie Wade drove to Zijin Villa, Lin Wan’er (Alani) sent Lydia (Ava) (Charlie’s mom) a WeChat message: “Xiao Xiao is coming to see me, saying she has made some new discoveries.”

Lydia (Ava) (Charlie’s mom) replied: “It probably has nothing to do with the stray cat army or Black Forest King, but it is most likely related to me.”

Lin Wan’er (Alani) sent a tongue-out emoji: “I think so too.”

Lydia (Ava) (Charlie’s mom) asked her, “Did Zhen Xiaoxiao buy it?”

Lin Wan’er (Alani) replied: “Zhen Xiaoxiao is right beside me, but she wasn’t bought, she was adopted.”

After clicking send, she reached out and touched a calico kitten that was a few months old lying next to her. The kitten rolled over with a look of enjoyment, its four paws flailing around as if swimming in the air.

Lydia (Ava) (Charlie’s mom) replied, “Then let’s talk again after Xiaoxiao leaves.”
“good.”

The “Xiao Xiao” that Lin Wan’er (Alani) and Lydia (Ava) (Charlie’s mom) mentioned was charlie Wade’s nickname.

But charlie Wade had no idea about any of this.

When he arrived at Lin Wan’er (Alani)’s mountaintop villa, he immediately noticed the difference from before: the calico cat beside Lin Wan’er (Alani).

He asked in surprise, “Miss Lin, where did this kitten come from?”

Lin Wan’er (Alani) smiled at him and said, “Young master, this kitten is one that I just adopted. It used to live with other stray cats on Zijin Mountain, but it was always bullied by those stray cats, so I brought it home to raise.”

charlie Wade thought the calico cat was quite beautiful, with its eyes scanning everywhere, seemingly very intelligent.

So he went up to the cat, patted its head, and asked Lin Wan’er (Alani), “What’s this little guy’s name?”

Lin Wan’er (Alani) replied with a sweet laugh, “Young master, I call it Xiao Xiao.”

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“Xiaoxiao, that’s a pretty name.”

charlie Wade muttered something casually and pinched the kitten’s chin.

The kitten was quite well-behaved, half-closing its eyes and raising its head slightly as he handled it.

charlie Wade was somewhat surprised and said, “This kitten is quite bold; it’s not afraid of people at all.”

Lin Wan’er smiled and nodded, saying, “Xiao Xiao is more affectionate than the average stray cat. Maybe it’s because it gets bullied in the cat community, so it feels that people are more reliable than its own kind.”

After saying that, she looked at charlie Wade’s handsome face and features as he lowered his head, and thought to herself, “If the young master knew that his mother was still alive, he would be very excited, wouldn’t he? For twenty years, I thought that my dearest relative had long since passed away, but I never expected that my mother was still alive. There is probably nothing more comforting than this.”

At this moment, perhaps liking charlie Wade’s gentle kneading, Xiao Xiao slowly

got up, arched her back, and stomped her feet back and forth a few times with her two front paws before burrowing into charlie Wade's arms.

Lin Wan'er smiled and said, "It seems that Xiao Xiao really likes you, young master."

As she spoke, she took out her phone, opened the camera, and said, "Young master, shall I take a picture of you and Xiaoxiao?"

charlie Wade didn't think much of it, nodded slightly, and looked at the camera while holding Xiao Xiao.

Lin Wan'er pressed the shutter button, and a close-up high-definition photo was taken. Because the lights in the courtyard were dim, the phone automatically turned on the flash. In the photo, charlie Wade's angular features were highlighted by the flash, making him look even more handsome than in real life, as if an automatic beauty filter had been applied.

Lin Wan'er handed her phone to charlie Wade, smiling as she said, "Young Master, take a look, is the photo alright?"

charlie Wade didn't care about any of that. He glanced at the photos casually and then smiled, "They're pretty good."

Lin Wan'er smiled happily, took back her phone, and casually opened WeChat to send the photo to Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom).

She had never thought of taking photos of charlie Wade as a memento before. She wanted to take photos of charlie Wade just now, firstly because she thought the picture of the man and the cat was very harmonious, and secondly because she wanted to send the photos to Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) to see.

For many years, Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) has never dared to get close to charlie Wade. Back when charlie Wade was in the orphanage, it might have been a little better, as his staff could secretly take some photos for her to see. But in recent years, charlie Wade's strength has grown stronger and stronger, and the people she kept by charlie Wade's side have gradually withdrawn and kept their distance. It's probably not easy for her to see a recent photo of charlie Wade on a regular basis.

At this time, An Seikei had already left Kinkaku-ji and gone to Aomori Prefecture, which is several hundred kilometers away from Kinkaku-ji.

Aomori is located in the northernmost part of the Japanese mainland and is famous for its apples and other cash crops.

Anseongkei has her own plantation here, as well as deep processing production lines for apple-related products. Aomori's apple production accounts for half of Japan's total, and Anseongkei accounts for half of Aomori's apple production. Moreover, the main export business is handled by her company.

After Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) and Ye Changying got married, in addition to helping their family make money, they also invested in many industries around the world using various shell companies and nominee shareholders. These included highly profitable technology, energy, and industrial companies, as well as small businesses that were not very profitable. For example, their investment in

Apple in Aomori was large in scale, but the actual profit was not high. However, this did not matter to them. Their investment in Aomori was mainly due to the geographical conditions and the special nature of the industries there, which brought them many conveniences.

Aomori Prefecture has a low population density, about one-third of the average population density in Japan. The advantage of a sparsely populated area is that it is easier to hide, especially in the form of plantations, which are less likely to be discovered by outsiders.

Moreover, Aomori's geographical location is quite convenient for Ansei. A few hundred kilometers to the south are the developed areas of the Japanese mainland, such as Tokyo and Osaka, and a few dozen kilometers to the north is Hokkaido. Aomori is only separated from Hokkaido by the Tsugaru Strait and is also connected by an undersea tunnel. By boat, one can go east to the Korean Peninsula and the Russian Far East, and west to the vast Pacific Ocean. From Aomori Port, it is only seven or eight thousand kilometers to San Francisco, which is very convenient.

An Seiki controlled Aomori's apple export business by acquiring a large number of plantations and by driving down export prices and profits, making it impossible for competitors to keep up.

Others grow apples to make money, but she doesn't care about making money, so her profit margin is the lowest. With a low profit margin, the price-performance ratio in the eyes of consumers is naturally higher.

Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom)'s main purpose in controlling Aomori's apple exports is to use these exports to create a cross-border freight channel, thereby enabling him to transport special goods through apple exports.

Fearing charlie Wade's investigation, she moved here after the death of the Void Concealment Mage, settling in the largest plantation under his command. The hillsides were covered with apple trees, all managed by her people, and a hidden security system had long been established, ensuring her safety to a great extent. At this moment, she was in her own building on the plantation, tasting the apple juice she had just extracted using the traditional pressing method, when she suddenly received a photo sent by Lin Wan'er. She was overjoyed and held her phone in both hands, carefully looking at charlie Wade in the photo.

She hadn't seen such a clear photo of charlie Wade in a while. Looking at her son's handsome features and the rare relaxed smile on his face as he held the kitten, her mood instantly improved.

At this moment, Sister Sun walked in and said respectfully, "Madam, Jing Qing wishes to see you."

As Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) zoomed in on charlie Wade's photo and carefully examined his son's face, he smiled and said, "Let Jing Qing in."

"Yes, madam."

Sister Sun turned and went out, and soon came in with Jing Qing.

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Jing Qing approached Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) and said respectfully, "Madam, Jing Qing is about to depart for home. I've come to say goodbye and see if there's anything else you'd like to tell me."

Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) put down his phone, smiled and said, "There's nothing to explain. You've worked hard these past few days."

"Amitabha." Jing Qing put his hands together and said respectfully, "Madam, you flatter me. It is my honor to be able to serve you."

Jing Qing's feelings for Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) were not flattery, but rather a heartfelt respect.

Previously, he was devoted to Buddhism and believed that all beings were equal under the Buddha. However, after successfully attaining enlightenment under Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom)'s guidance, he realized that both Buddhism and Taoism were under the Heavenly Way, and that all beings were not equal because everyone's distance from the Heavenly Way was different.

Take himself as an example. After attaining enlightenment, his lifespan was several decades or even hundreds of years longer than that of ordinary people. Does this mean that all beings are equal? Of course not.

Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) herself had not attained enlightenment, and was probably much further away from the Dao than Jing Qing had after attaining enlightenment. However, in Jing Qing's view, the opportunity to get closer to the Dao was entirely due to Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom)'s support, so she should be respectful and grateful to her.

Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) looked at charlie Wade's photo for a while longer before reluctantly putting down her phone. She first replied to Lin Wan'er: "Thank you, senior."

Then he said to Jing Qing, "You've been in Japan for a while now, which has caused a lot of trouble back home. Now that everything here is settled, you can go back and take care of your business."

Jing Qing nodded slightly and said, "I plan to set off for Tokyo later and take the earliest flight back."

Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) smiled and said, "Alright, you can decide according to your own time. If you decide to leave later, I will have someone take you there." Meanwhile, the top-floor villa of Zijin Mountain Villa.

Lin Wan'er looked at charlie Wade and Xiao Xiao with a smile and asked softly, "Young Master told me on the phone that he had made a new discovery. May I ask what it is?"

Holding Xiao Xiao, charlie Wade said to Lin Wan'er, "I met Nanako today and while chatting with her, I discovered a detail that I had previously overlooked. Back then, at Qixia Temple, she was enlightened by a monk named Jing Qing, which is why she was able to attain enlightenment. I was wondering, what kind of

person would be willing to risk exposing themselves to enlighten a stranger?”

Lin Wan'er (Alani) heart skipped a beat.

charlie Wade noticed Master Jing Qing, which meant he had caught a glimpse of what Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) was hiding.

So she asked charlie Wade, “Does Young Master think that the identity of this Master Jing Qing is questionable?”

“Yes.” charlie Wade nodded emphatically.

Lin Wan'er said, “I can't say for sure about such things. For cultivators, their secrets are important, but sometimes they also feel that inheritance is necessary.

Just like my master, when he was in seclusion in the Hundred Thousand Mountains, he still took my father and Sara as his disciples.”

As Lin Wan'er said these words, she felt nauseous. She already knew Meng Changsheng's despicable character, but in order not to arouse charlie Wade's suspicion, she could only force herself to use him as an example.

charlie Wade said, “It's normal to say it's for the sake of inheritance, but Nanako's going to Qixia Temple was not accidental, but rather something someone else did intentionally.”

After saying that, he recounted how Nanako was deliberately lured by a woman in the elevator, including the fact that the woman had disappeared.

Upon hearing this, Lin Wan'er frowned.

She knew that once charlie Wade grasped the source of Nanako's enlightenment, the matter would inevitably be exposed.

Furthermore, the fact that the woman had already left Jinling only fueled charlie Wade's suspicions.

However, she also knew that Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mom) was powerless to do anything about it, because charlie Wade had his own methods. Not to mention a young woman, even someone like Master Jingqing, who had cultivation but not high cultivation, would probably not be able to keep the secret in front of him. As long as charlie Wade found that woman, he would find out everything.

Now that things have come to this, she dares not try to guide charlie Wade's judgment anymore, because she is a smart woman. She feels that once charlie Wade begins to notice and analyze these anomalies around him, he will look at problems with a dialectical and truth-seeking mindset. If she keeps trying to lead his judgment in the wrong direction, he will definitely realize that something is wrong with her.

Therefore, Lin Wan'er immediately said decisively, “I think your analysis makes a lot of sense. If Cai Cai Zi was deliberately led to Qixia Temple and then Master Jing Qing came forward to enlighten her by chance, then it proves that they must be in cahoots, and this may become an important breakthrough!”

“Right!” Receiving Lin Wan'er (Alani) affirmation boosted charlie Wade's confidence, and he no longer doubted Lin Wan'er (Alani) previous guidance.

He said seriously, “It will probably be very difficult to find that woman now, but it shouldn't be too troublesome to find Master Jingqing. As a well-known figure in

the Buddhist community, his whereabouts should be relatively easy to track. Nanako said that she recently presided over the funeral of Master Kōin of Kinkaku-ji Temple in Japan, so he should be returning to Japan soon!”

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P.S.: My back has been hurting a lot lately, so I’ve been a little slower with updates. Please forgive me.