

Chapter 7056

Although Kūin failed to attain enlightenment in his lifetime,

He will surely inspire others in the future, lead them into Buddhist monastic life,

And find enlightenment within the vastness of the Buddhist teachings.

The moment she stepped out of Kinkakuji Temple,

The melodious sound of bells echoed behind her.

The bell rang repeatedly, with no sign of stopping.

The monks, each attending to their duties within the temple, paused when the bell exceeded thirteen.

The bells of Kinkaku-ji Temple were rarely rung,

Only to announce the time on important occasions.

And the bells never exceeded twelve.

Once the bells exceeded twelve, all monks were required to drop their work and immediately proceed to the main hall.

The bells would continue to ring for ninety-nine and eighty-one times, signaling the abbot's passing. While

Japanese monks tend to be more secular, the monks of Kinkaku-ji, influenced by Kōin, possessed a far greater degree of piety than the average Japanese monk.

They were like a small boat drifting in the Dharma,

Needing a prominent flagship to guide them, and Kōin was that flagship.

Kōin's passing was like losing their guide on the vast ocean for these deeply devout monks.

Many monks, tears streaming down their faces, hurried toward the main hall.

Hundreds of monks, their eyes red, silently walked and sprinted toward the main hall.

They didn't dare to run, fearing to disturb the abbot's ascent to the Western Paradise.

Hearing the bells, Maria paused again.

Her thoughts drifted back to Kyoto over a hundred years ago.

Back then, her residence wasn't far from Kinkaku-ji Temple.

One day, she took her children to enjoy the cherry blossoms in her courtyard,

Recounting their history.

She explained that the cherry blossoms were actually introduced from China over a thousand years ago during the Nara period,

During the heyday of the Tang Dynasty.

As the children peppered her with questions about this history,

The bells of Kinkaku-ji Temple echoed relentlessly throughout Kyoto, echoing as they do today.

When the children asked her why the bells tolled incessantly,

She explained that the 9981 tolls symbolized the return to the true nature.

Japanese Buddhism, after nearly two thousand years of development and localization, incorporated much of the wisdom of ancient Chinese people.

The ancient Chinese I Ching considers nine to be the largest yang number.

In other words, it's also the largest single digit in the decimal system.

Therefore, nine represents maximum and perfection.

Eighty-one, nine squared, signifies even greater perfection.

She did not convey the message of death to these children,

But smiled and said, "The reason why Kinkakuji Temple rings the bells eighty-one times is because their abbot has completed his merits,"

"And everyone in the temple is celebrating for him."

At that time, an ignorant little boy looked at her and said crisply,

"Miss, I also want to be the abbot in the future,"

"And I want Kinkakuji Temple to ring the bells eighty-one times for me!"

Maria shook her head helplessly and smiled,

"Of all people, Zhengping is the most competitive."

"You want to compete for everything."

The little boy pointed at the largest snowman in the yard with his frozen red hands,

And said proudly, "Miss, I want to do everything to the best of my ability,"

"Even build the biggest snowman!"

"So it will be no problem for me to be the abbot of Kinkakuji Temple in the future!"

The light and shadow of a hundred years ago whizzed through her mind,

And Maria couldn't help but sigh in her heart,

Some things seem to be unintentional jokes and teasing,

But in fact, they have been predestined.

She looked up at the sky and murmured in her heart,

"If there really is a Western Paradise in this world,"

"I might even be the one with the most connections in that paradise."

"You are all good children."

"You must have gone there long ago and you must all be waiting for me there, right?"