

Scholar 281

Chapter 281

Firstly, he had no knowledge in the finance market. Secondly, he did not have to worry about money for a while.

His financial freedom would allow him to purely dive into scientific research. He did not have to worry about funding, market value, and any life problems.

Honestly, Lu Zhou finally knew how David Shaw felt.

Although Wall Street gave him beautiful women and mansions, it did not give him any satisfaction.

Although the trillion dollar stock market was stimulating, this type of stimulation would only last for a few years. Eventually, the numbers would become meaningless, like a loveless marriage.

Especially for a parallel computing expert, the numbers had just become a digital game. David did not get any excitement from it.

However, science was different.

The joy that science brought was more than any money, woman, or car could bring.

Imagine that the whole world changed because of your research. You knew that the world was revolving around you.

Feeling empty?

Meaningless?

Impossible.

The universe was like a Mobius ring. It would never end.

Science was the same.

...

The entire town of Princeton was filled with a Christmas festive atmosphere.

On the contrast, Princeton campus was deserted.

Winter vacation had begun two weeks before Christmas and it would last until the second week after Christmas.

Other than some international students, most mathematics students chose this time to go on a holiday or to go back to their home town.

Lu Zhou planned to have a Christmas housewarming party. However, none of his friends were available.

Luo Wenxuan and his new girlfriend went back to China. He was a “hoses before bros” type of guy.

David Lawrence returned to his hometown Boston for a vacation. The second Lu Zhou came back from Boston, David took a flight to Boston.

As for his old friend in Philadelphia, even though she wanted to come, she was too busy with school.

According to her, her supervisor had just received a large outsourcing project from a client. The project was about planning a cooperate organizational structure for a nine-figure company. The deadline for the project was the end of January.

Chen Yushan's supervisor left a ton of work for her. Her excuse was that since Chen Yushan was not a Christian, she did not need a holiday.

While Chen Yushan was on the phone with Lu Zhou, she could not help but roll her eyes.

Lu Zhou expressed sympathy for Chen Yushan. However, her situation was beyond the scope of his abilities so he could only comfort her.

Three of Lu Zhou's close friends could not come. He suddenly realized that there was no one else he could invite.

These three were the only friends he had that lived close to Princeton.

As for those old professors from the Institute for Advanced Study, although Lu Zhou was close to them, their age difference was too big.

Thankfully Lu Zhou's three students decided to stay on campus, so Lu Zhou was not completely alone.

It was soon Christmas day.

The fireplace was burning with flames, and the streets were filled with snow.

Lu Zhou sat on the long dining table in front of the fireplace. He opened a bottle of champagne and slowly said to his three students.

"Next year is a new year."

Hardy raised his hand and said, "Professor, that's a useless statement. That's like using an equivalence proof on the same thing."

Lu Zhou: "..."

Shut up!

Lu Zhou ignored him and continued to recite his Christmas speech, he then expressed his vision for the new year.

“... From next year spring onwards, some newcomers will be enrolled. I hope that as experienced students, you will set a role model for them.”

Vera nodded seriously, remembering the words of her professor.

Qin Yue was more rigid. He did not change his expression.

As always, Hardy was obnoxious and he said, “Professor, don’t worry about it, I will set an example!”

Lu Zhou said, “Especially Hardy. I hope you can keep up the progress and keep up with your schoolmates. Otherwise, I might forget your name when new students come.”

Qin Yue nearly choked on the champagne and he quickly hid his laughter.

Hardy said with a painful face, “Oh, Professor, please, not like this!”

Laughter was heard around the living room. The atmosphere gradually became warmer.

Lu Zhou looked at his student and could not help but smile.

“Then you have to try your best.”

He was obviously joking. He would never forget the name of his own students.

Since they chose to hand their future to him, as long as they did not disappoint him, he would be responsible for them until the end.

However, if someone had made an academic misconduct, Lu Zhou would be disappointed with their character.

Lu Zhou raised his champagne glass, looked at the burning fire and said a final message to his students.

“I wish you the best for the new year, I also wish our research project a success. Toast!”

Hardy, Qin Yue, and Vera also raised their glasses, “Toast!”

The group continued to chat and drink.

Although the church bell rings were not heard, the laughter was filled with warmth.

Hardy, who was bragging about his alcohol tolerance, was defeated by Qin Yue in a few rounds.

Then after another few rounds, Qin Yue also passed out.

No one expected that in the hail research project team, Vera was the one that could handle her alcohol.

A row of empty bottles sat on the table. Vera’s white cheeks were only slightly blushing. No one knew where the alcohol in her body went.

Lu Zhou did not believe in the Slavic’s tolerance, but now as a mathematician, he did not even know what drink he was on.

Lu Zhou gazed at the dimly lit fireplace and started to think.

What if Santa suddenly climbs down that chimney?

Would he and his reindeers be burned to death?

Gradually, his consciousness drifted and slowly passed out.

Lu Zhou who had not been drunk in this foreign country for a long time finally collapsed...

Chapter 282

Feeling dizzy, Lu Zhou shook his head before he got up from the sofa.

He looked around the living room. He saw that the table was cleaned up except for Hardy, who was still passed out on the table.

Qin Yue on the other hand was also laying on the sofa. He was sound asleep.

Both guys were sleeping well. They would probably feel the pain after they wake up.

As for Lu Zhou, other than his stiff neck, he felt ok.

After all, the genetic agent improved his metabolic function. Although it did not increase his alcohol tolerance by much, it still improved his hangover recovery time.

Honestly, Lu Zhou started to feel the effects of the potion after staying at Princeton for a long time.

In Princeton, the amount of hair was negatively correlated with the amount of academic achievement. Edward Witten was half bald while Deligne was completely bald.

Every time the professors see Lu Zhou, they would ask him why his hairline was not receding.

Lu Zhou did not know how to explain either. He only said that it was part of his "Asian powers".

“What time is it?”

“It’s only six o’clock, you can sleep for a little longer,” whispered Vera quietly. She then added, “I wanted to carry you upstairs, but you were too dead.”

Lu Zhou, “It’s fine, the sofa is quite comfortable... Oh yeah, thanks for cleaning up last night.”

“You’re welcome,” said Vera as she shook her head and smiled softly. She then said, “I’m the one that should be thanking you.”

Lu Zhou did not understand the reason for this gratitude. Vera did not explain either. Instead, she went into the kitchen and started to prepare breakfast.

...

Vera’s cooking skills were decent. Lu Zhou could tell that like him, she was a skilled cook.

Vera was independent, caring, did not complain, and she was grateful for the small things in life... The only problem was that she was not confident enough.

Vera asked Lu Zhou three times if her sandwich, milk, and omelet “taste good”?

However, this did not matter too much. Confidence could be cultivated through achievements. Lu Zhou believed that he could teach her to become a qualified scholar.

Lu Zhou enjoyed his student’s breakfast and gained some energy. He then went out and started to run for a few laps.

When Lu Zhou came back sweaty as a pig, he threw his clothes that smelled like alcohol into the washing machine and took a shower. He then went back to the living room to wake Hardy and Qin Yue up.

Qin Yue was a good kid. When he saw that the table was clean, he apologized to Lu Zhou while blushing.

It was polite to help clean up after parties, whether one was a student or a guest. Qin Yue immediately realized his mistake.

However, Lu Zhou was not that stingy. After all, he let Vera clean up everything, so he did not have the right to be angry at Qin Que.

However, someone was not apologetic at all.

Hardy rubbed his eyes and looked at the time before he suddenly asked, "Isn't it only eight?"

Lu Zhou rolled his eyes and said, "Go back to your dorms to sleep!"

As if it mattered, Hardy said, "I don't live in a dorm, I rented a place outside with my girlfriend... She's back in Canada now."

Lu Zhou: "..."

What are you trying to say?

Showing off?

Seeing that this kid was still half conscious, Lu Zhou let this matter go.

...

After the three students left, Lu Zhou sat in his spacious living room and looked at his beloved fireplace. He was inexplicably happy.

He suddenly realized that he had not shared this joy with his fans.

Lu Zhou smiled.

He took out his phone and found a good angle of the fireplace that showed his spacious living room. He then took a photo.

However, just as he was about to post it on Weibo, he suddenly saw a ton of notifications from people tagging him.

Not only that, he was getting a bunch of direct messages from unknown ladies.

Lu Zhou was stunned. He did not post his photo but instead, he looked at the trending page.

On top five trending topics, he saw the words [\$400 million USD].

He clicked on a media blog post.

[Shocked! Famous mathematics professor solved a decade old battery problem, and received a \$400 million USD patent authorization profit!]

Lu Zhou skipped the exaggerating post and read the comments section.

[\$400 million USD... F*ck me, that's \$2 billion in RMB? What kind of patent is this valuable?]

[Lithium battery patent... Something to do with lithium dendrites. Anyways, phone companies are able to upgrade their next generation batteries because of this technology.]

[God Lu, sent out something! How about a screenshot of your daily interest returns.]

[Are you still missing a girlfriend? How about a boyfriend? Do you think I'm good?]

[Ah, although God Lu has never posted a photo of himself, in my mind, he must be a handsome man with glasses.]

This... I'm embarrassed.

Lu Zhou could not help but smile at the comments section.

Other than the fact that he did not wear glasses, he fit the description to a tee.

Lu Zhou saw that no one liked the comment, so he gave it its first like.

However, he did not realize that people were able to see the comments he liked.

Within minutes, new comments were popping out.

[I clicked on "Recently liked by" and thought it was a fake, didn't know it was Lu Zhou himself!]

[God Lu hasn't posted in a while, but I'm satisfied after seeing this like.]

[I have never seen such a shameless person... I'm following.]

[Shameless.]

[Shameless.]

[...]

The blogger's comments section exploded with a hundred new comments.

The small blogger was surprised by Lu Zhou's activity. They immediately sent out another post and even took a screenshot of Lu Zhou's "like".

[Wowww! Excited! I can't believe God Lu reads my page! I'm definitely passing my classes next year!]

Lu Zhou: ? ? ?

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[Mission rewards: 400,115 free experience points. 500 general points. One lucky draw ticket. (80% garbage, 10% special, 7% sample, 3% blueprints)]

Lu Zhou stood in the pure white system space. He looked at the experience points number on the screen and took a deep breath. His heart burst with ecstasy.

The system rounded Lu Zhou's net worth by the thousands. Although the system's calculation was off by \$100k or so in USD, the conversion rate into experience points was only a hundred or so, therefore Lu Zhou did not care.

On the other hand, these experience points also confirmed his previous speculation.

The system did not take loans and company evaluation into account. It did not even take "fixed assets" such as real estate into account either.

Lu Zhou looked at his characteristic panel and thought for a moment. He then immediately made a decision on his experience points distribution.

Information science had the technology branch of "artificial intelligence", so it could gain experience through channels other than the "mainline mission". As long as there were no bottlenecks in the technology branch, there was no need to upgrade this discipline.

Engineering and energy science were both at Level 1. They only needed 10,000 experience points to upgrade, so they had the highest return on investment. Therefore, Lu Zhou leveled up them both.

Although the system did not set a maximum level difference between the Level 2 biochemistry and Level 3 materials science, the two disciplines were closely related.

Therefore, Lu Zhou did not hesitate and spent 50,000 experience points upgrading biochemistry to Level 3, the same level as materials science.

Lu Zhou assigned 250,000 experience points to mathematics, which upgraded his mathematics to Level 6.

As for the remaining 80,000 experience points, he spent it all on physics and upgraded it to Level 4.

Although Professor Frank gave up on the 750 GeV characteristic peak issue, Lu Zhou had not given up yet. Level 3 physics was not enough for him to solve this problem, so he needed to strengthen his physics thinking ability and mathematics logic.

These experience points were all earned through materials science, so it was a bit ruthless not to spend any on materials science.

However, after careful consideration, Lu Zhou determined this was the best solution he could think of.

A blue loading circle spun on the information screen, and the updated characteristic panel soon appeared in front of Lu Zhou.

[

A. Mathematics: Level 6 (4,000/600,000)

B. Physics: Level 4 (33,215/200,000)

C. Biochemistry: Level 3 (4,000/100,000)

D. Engineering: Level 2 (0/50,000)

E. Materials science: Level 3 (13,000/100,000)

F. Energy science: Level 2(0/50,000)

G. Information science: Level 1 (3,000/10,000)

General points: 2,975 (one lucky draw ticket)

]

The experience required for Levels 3, 4 and 5 increased linearly by 100,000 each level. However, the Level 6 increased by two-fold. Lu Zhou remembered that his Goldbach's conjecture only rewarded him 200,000 experience points.

"I guess it's getting more and more difficult to level up."

Lu Zhou shook his head and looked at the lucky draw button. He prayed in his mind as he pressed the button.

The wheel spun at a rapid speed, Lu Zhou made a command and it slowly began to stop.

Then, magic happened.

[Congratulations, User, you won the "special" prize.]

Lu Zhou: ... ?!

Honestly, with a 10% probability, Lu Zhou did not expect to win this at all.

He could not help but feel excited...

[Received: "Patronage Appreciated"]

Lu Zhou: ? ? ?

What the hell is patronage appreciated?

Lu Zhou was instantly pissed.

I'd rather receive a f*cking garbage!

At least I can drink the coke!

Lu Zhou turned off the prize wheel. If this system space was not an illusion, Lu Zhou would definitely kick the system.

Lu Zhou was in a bad mood as he clicked on the mission panel.

He received an S+ evaluation on his last mission, so this time it was a reward mission.

The mission panel quickly appeared in front of him.

[

[Reward mission is activated! (Give up at any time without spending general points)]

Description: As a scholar, you should always be curious about the unknown. Any inference based on common sense should undergo rigorous experimentation. Otherwise, it is open to questioning.

Requirements: Analyze the carbon nanospheres under the modified PDMS film.

Reward: 1~??? Subject experience points, one lucky draw ticket. (???).

]

This reward mission was average. Perhaps it was because Lu Zhou had not solved debris No.2 yet. This time the system did not give him new debris to play around with. Instead, it gave him an unknown lucky draw.

However, this was not the main point. Lu Zhou read the mission requirements and description. He had a frown on his face.

Normally, the mission descriptions were all nonsense, but this time a whimsical piece of information was revealed.

That “open to questioning” phrase – was it hinting at him that the carbon nanospheres could do more than just solving lithium dendrites?

Lu Zhou frowned and thought for a moment.

This mission was not simple. In fact, it could even be said to be difficult.

With his current conditions, it was not easy to figure out how to prepare the carbon nanospheres.

However, Lu Zhou had a sudden moment of realization when he figured out a good way to solve this problem...

After leaving the system, Lu Zhou felt a strong stinging sensation on the back of his head. He almost passed out from it.

Not only did the discipline levels unlock permitted him to access the database, but it also transformed specific areas of his brain.

Normally, this process was a pleasure. It was like his brain and soul was immersed in warm water.

However, this time it was too intensive. It did not feel like pleasure. It was more like torture.

Lu Zhou persisted through the sensation and stayed silent.

That five minutes felt like an hour.

Finally, the pain from his head faded and Lu Zhou took a deep breath.

He suddenly noticed that his back was soaking wet...

Chapter 284

He first had to establish a mathematical model and analyze the physical properties of the model. Only then, could he inversely synthesize the carbon nanospheres material. After that, through a large number of experiments, he could find a way of producing carbon nanospheres.

However, Lu Zhou had no idea where to start.

This was like two large prime numbers, multiplying them was simple, any calculator could do it. However, finding two products of the multiplication of the two numbers, was almost impossible.

Lu Zhou stopped writing and took a deep breath.

At first glance, the carbon nanospheres were similar to C₆₀, C₅₀, and C₂₄₀. They all had a hollow spherical structure. However, upon further inspection, there was something fundamentally different about the carbon nanospheres compared to fullerenes.

First of all, it was not strictly a “sphere”.

Some people may argue that neither was fullerenes since a group of six-membered rings also had pentagon and heptagonal carbon atom rings.

However, the difference in carbon nanospheres was the reflection symmetry. It had no translational symmetry, so it could not even be represented by the traditional Bravais lattice.

This small ball was like two carbon nanomaterials that have been reassembled to create a new chemical bond.

The image of the ball was like two wool balls taken apart and re-twisted together.

If this was really the case, Lu Zhou could be facing a quantum mechanics problem involving chaotic system. Perhaps only Schrodinger’s cat could solve this problem.

This was only the geometric issue.

He had a lot more problems in terms of chemistry.

Lu Zhou sighed and patted his forehead as he tried to calm himself down.

The problems had to be solved one by one.

He should start with his best area, mathematics.

Although geometry was not an area he was good at, he still knew a little about it.

Abstractly, this was a topology problem. He needed to disassemble this asymmetrical “cage structure sphere”.

Lu Zhou stood up and walked to his office whiteboard. He thought for a while before he drew a composite structure cage ball composed of points and lines. He then marked down the known parameters next to each point and created a simple mathematical model.

[Set $A \in X; f, g \in C(X, Y)$, if there is homotopy of f to g , such that when $a \in A$, $H(a, t) = f(a) \dots$]

[...]

More and more formulas were being written.

Lu Zhou finally stopped writing and took a step back. He looked at the whiteboard filled with equations and started to think deeply.

He thought about many possibilities, but he always felt like all of the possibilities were missing something.

Suddenly, footsteps sound came from outside his office.

Vera pushed open the door while holding a stack of A4 papers.

When she saw Lu Zhou staring at the whiteboard, she hesitated. She decided not to disturb his thoughts, so she placed the documents on his desk and went to make a cup of coffee for him.

When Lu Zhou smelled the coffee, that was when he finally realized that someone was in his office.

He looked at Vera and asked casually, “Is there a problem?”

“The education office asked me to give you this list of interviewees,” said Vera as she pointed at the documents on the table. She then added, “I was afraid to disturb you so I didn’t knock.”

“It’s fine, my thought process isn’t that easily disturbed. Just don’t suddenly touch me from behind,” said Lu Zhou in a joking manner.

Vera smiled when she realized that she did not disturb Lu Zhou’s thinking.

She took a curious look at the shapes and equations on the whiteboard and asked, “What is this?”

“Nothing, some random question.”

Lu Zhou returned to his desk and turned on his computer. He then picked up the interview list and glanced at it.

This cohort of students was not bad, but just academic grades were not enough. He would have to spend time interviewing them.

The only thing that surprised Lu Zhou was that there were non-mathematics students applying to him.

Like an applied chemistry major from the University of Jin Ling, who wanted to research Fourier inversion transformation problems.

Even though it was not unusual for someone to jump disciplines, most people jumped from mathematics to chemistry, instead of the other way around.

While Lu Zhou was flipping through these resumes, Vera, who was staring at the whiteboard, frowned and said, “This 3D structure is very strange.”

Lu Zhou looked up from the resumes and asked, “What do you think about it?”

Vera, "Can I use a pen?"

Lu Zhou said with pleasure, "Of course."

Vera picked up a marker and walked to the whiteboard.

She drew a few lines on the caged sphere and marked the pentagons and heptagons. She then drew an irregular curve to divide the figures.

Then, a miracle happened.

After a three-dimensional disassembly and recombination, the asymmetrical cage structure sphere was disassembled into a circular tubular structure and a symmetrical sphere!

Lu Zhou looked at the 3D drawings on the whiteboard and was stunned. His eyes began to light up.

He had considered a myriad of possibilities, the combination of spheres and surfaces, sphere of different sizes, but he had not thought of this combination.

However, the disassembly came to an end.

Vera was confused. She did not know how to continue the transformation.

However, for Lu Zhou, this train of thought was enough.

"You're an absolute genius..."

Vera was stunned as she looked at Lu Zhou. She then looked at the whiteboard filled with topology drawings. A smile emerged on her face.

“I’m glad to help...”

She only thought that this shape was very interesting. Although it looked like a regular sphere, it was asymmetrical, which made it full of mystery.

Due to this mystery, Vera tried to make a topological transformation of the structure and finally found out that the structure was a combination of a symmetrical sphere and a cylinder.

This was an unimaginably difficult elementary geometry problem.

However, this was only an interesting topology phenomenon.

Even though she did not complete the transformation, she had already done enough!

“Of course you helped! You helped a lot!”

Ideas were flowing from Lu Zhou’s brain. He took a photo of the whiteboard and closed his laptop before he said to Vera, “I’ll have to go away for a few days, so take care of the office for me.”

Lu Zhou walked to this office door and suddenly remembered something. He then looked back at the girl and said, “Oh yeah, if anyone comes to find me, just give them my address and tell them to find me there.”

Chapter 285

This was a common occurrence for the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study. Who would not be excited about sudden inspiration?

Since everyone at Princeton was the same type of person, they knew exactly how Lu Zhou felt...

...

Lu Zhou went back home and locked himself in his small house. He started his new retreat session.

Although Vera did not solve the problem completely, her ideas brought great inspiration to Lu Zhou.

If this idea was feasible, it could solve the problem of creating carbon nanospheres in the laboratory.

Both carbon nanotubes and fullerene materials could be prepared with current methods. The difficulty was how to reconstitute the chemical bonds and combine the two structurally distinct macromolecules into a larger, more complex molecule.

A week went by.

Lu Zhou spent almost all of his time either sleeping, eating, or building his mathematical model.

Finally, the second Monday after New Year's Eve, he completed the initial build of the mathematical model.

"The only thing left is to perfect this mathematical model. Then I have to get a research team to verify these possibilities through repeated experiments."

Lu Zhou stretched his back and leaned against his chair. He looked at the research results for the past week and could not help but smile.

Being rich is really different.

Before this, he had to borrow equipment from other people. Now, if he wanted to do an experiment, he did not even have to do it himself. He could just buy a few pieces of equipment and hire a few PhD students to do it.

Of course, Lu Zhou had other options that could save him money. For example, he could publish the mathematical model in a thesis, and make other research teams do his work.

With his achievements in computational materials science, there should be a lot of research teams who would be interested in any thesis he put out as well as people who were willing to do these experiments.

However, if he did this, the patent rights could land in the hands of another research team.

Even though Lu Zhou was unsure if this was worth as much as the modified PDMS film, this still came from the high tech system. Lu Zhou wanted it in his own hands.

What if it would be useful one day?

In twenty years, anything could happen.

Lu Zhou got up from his chair and stretched his limbs. He was about to go make himself a cup of coffee in the kitchen.

However, his doorbell suddenly rang.

Lu Zhou had an idea of who was here as he walked downstairs and opened the door.

Unsurprisingly, Mr. Woolf stood outside his door with a briefcase in his hands and a beaming smile.

"It's nice to see you again, Professor Lu. How was your Christmas?"

Lu Zhou shook his hand. He then smiled and said, "It's not bad, come inside... Do you want to drink anything?"

"Thanks, water is fine."

The two sat in the living room. Woolf opened his briefcase and took out a stack of documents before he handed them to Lu Zhou.

“According to your request, we have already prepared the company organizational structure for you. There’s also a list of future expenses. If you think this is all fine, we’ll rent an office in Philadelphia for you, and hire staff according to the standards of this document...”

Lu Zhou took the stack of documents from Woolf and briefly flipped through the pages.

Lu Zhou requested AM to register a patent company for him in the Cayman Islands and to register a branch in the United States. The branch was primarily for dealing with intellectual property.

Although Star Sky Technology only had one customer, Umicore, Star Sky Technology still had the Chinese market to expand upon.

Lu Zhou did not want to waste time on analyzing the market size, patent pricing, and negotiating patent fees with chemical companies. Therefore, the best choice was for him to hire someone to handle his intellectual property.

Plus, the cost he had to pay was minuscule for him.

“I’m satisfied with your plan, let’s just follow it. Also, arrange a time for business executives to come meet me at Princeton.”

Lu Zhou placed this project plan aside. He suddenly remembered something so he spoke.

“Oh yeah, what if I acquire a research institute in the United States using my Cayman Islands company as a parent company... If I then receive profits generated by the intellectual properties from the research institute, will I be obligated to pay tax on this profit?”

Woolf smiled and said, “Of course not. When have you ever seen Microsoft and Google pay taxes on their IP income? They even enjoy tax rebates from overseas IP income.”

F*ck me, are they really that daring?

Lu Zhou was shocked by this new piece of information.

However, Woolf, who sat opposite him, was not focusing on this.

Woolf smelled money talk from Lu Zhou, so he continued to ask eagerly, "If you need legal help on intellectual property, please be sure to contact me. Our intellectual property services are world class!"

Lu Zhou did not believe him, so he just laughed.

Originally, he did not want to sign this deal with Woolf. After that, Lu Zhou remembered that most of AM's clients were in the materials science industry, so there really was no one better than Woolf to make this deal with.

Therefore, Lu Zhou was tempted. He asked, "Do you have any materials science research customers that are on the verge of bankruptcy or shortage of funds? Or maybe a company with carbon material research and development capabilities?"

Woolf was stunned by the questions. He said, "Verge of bankruptcy? Honestly, I'm not sure about my client's financial situation. But a lot of them are research teams... Is there anything I can help you with?"

Although Lu Zhou was unsure if AM handled mergers and acquisitions, he still asked, "Actually, I want to acquire a research team with carbon nanomaterials research and development capabilities."

When Woolf heard Lu Zhou, he had a bright smile on his face as he said, "This is easy! Leave it to me."

Really?

Lu Zhou was stunned, and he could not help but ask, "Do you also provide services for corporate mergers and acquisitions?"

Woolf smiled confidently and said, “Of course. Although our main business deals with patents, our lawyers offer a wide range of other services. If you ever get sued and need to go to court, please contact me. We have the best lawyers in the United States...”

Lu Zhou: “...”

Chapter 286

The materials science community had not seen a “major breakthrough” in years, so this was undoubtedly an excellent result. Since “finding the seventh line of the periodic table” was also nominated, this year’s chemistry community was full of high spirits.

Also ranked was Google’s AlphaGo, a deep learning system built by a Monte Carlo decision algorithm. It had become the father of modern artificial intelligence.

Also awarded was a breakthrough in space exploration technology where the seeds of humans were gradually sprouting in space...

However, these research results were not ranked in any particular order. After all, achievements in different fields could not be compared fairly.

However, [Science] journal editors still had the power to input their subjective opinions on the rankings.

A lot of people speculated online that with the [Science] rankings, Lu Zhou had the hope to become the second mathematician after John Pope to win a Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

Of course, this was only the opinion of the non-experts.

After all, [Science] only reflected the opinions of [Science], not the entire scientific community.

The Nobel Prize committee had very strict judging criteria for the selection of brilliant achievements in the applicable field. As an outstanding achievement in the applied sciences, the modified PDMS film was not treated like the discovery of gravitational waves, which won the Nobel Prize immediately in the year following the confirmation of results.

Only time could tell whether or not an applicable technology was great.

However, just like the “Father of Artificial Life”, Craig Venter, if one day the Nobel Prize Committee awarded the medal of chemistry to Lu Zhou, no one would be surprised.

After all, the lithium dendrites problem had troubled the entire materials science community for decades.

Another major event that occurred at the beginning of the year was Trump’s inauguration declaration at the White House.

However, this had nothing to do with Princeton, and Lu Zhou was not someone who was interested in politics.

...

The second week after New Year’s Eve, Professor Lu gave his students a long holiday break.

The first reason was to make up for their Christmas vacation. The second reason was that until Chinese New Year, Lu Zhou was going to be very busy and he did not have time to deal with his students.

As for how the students would spend their hard-earned holiday, Qin Yue said that he would go back home for Chinese New Year while Hardy said that he wanted to go travel in the Mediterranean with his girlfriend. Lu Zhou had wanted to give Hardy some “holiday homework”, but in the end, he restrained the impulse and smiled, wishing Hardy a happy vacation instead.

When Lu Zhou asked Vera if she had any holiday plans, the little girl did not have anything to do, so she had a blank look on her face.

Lu Zhou sighed at seeing Vera like this.

If it was something else, Lu Zhou would recommend them to see their parents and to enjoy a relaxing family reunion.

But for her...

He could only find something meaningful for her to do.

Lu Zhou thought for a moment. He then said, "Mathematics is a subject that needs inspiration. Studying in the library all day could mean ending up in a thinking pit. This year the American Mathematics Society will hold an academic exchange conference for young scholars at Berkeley. The thesis you gave me last time was pretty good, I recommend you to submit it."

When the little girl heard that she might be doing a report, she suddenly panicked and nervously said, "I... I haven't done a report before."

"No one is born to do this. You have to learn to adapt," said Lu Zhou. He looked into her eyes and said, "If you're worried about travel expenses, you shouldn't. Registration fees, plane tickets, etc, can all be paid for with the research project fund. If you're afraid of going on stage, I hope you can overcome this fear. Trust me, this is good for you."

Among his three students, Vera was the most talented and Lu Zhou had the highest expectations for her.

One day, she would be standing on the stage of the International Congress of Mathematicians and report her results in a one-hour presentation. If she could not overcome her stage fright, then she would never become a world-class scholar.

When Vera heard Lu Zhou, she started to blush. She was overwhelmed by it.

Lu Zhou waited for a long time and when he did not hear a reply, he did not want to give her any room for retreat, so he continued to ask, "Your answer is?"

"Okay..."

Although she sounded hesitant, this was a huge improvement.

Lu Zhou sat in his office chair and nodded with satisfaction.

“Then go and prepare. There are still three days left until the deadline. You don’t have to come to my office for the next three days. Just focus on editing your thesis. I’ll take care of your flights, so you only have to apply.”

Lu Zhou forcefully made these decisions for her before he kicked her out of her office.

Vera stopped at the office door. She hesitated for a bit before she turned around.

When Lu Zhou noticed Vera’s expression of hardship, he asked, “Is there anything else?”

Vera lowered her head and smiled embarrassedly. She said, “Nothing, I just wanted to thank you... No one has ever cared for me before.”

Just this?

Lu Zhou said, “You’re welcome. After all, I’m your supervisor.”

...

Lu Zhou finished his work at Princeton and drove his Ford Explorer to Princeton. He went to Star Sky Technology’s North American branch office building.

He had to admit that AM’s service was satisfactory. Not only did they solve all of the problems he thought of, but they even solved some unexpected problems.

Of course, the charges were not cheap.

Since the office was still under renovation, the floors were filled with construction materials, and there was nothing much to see.

Lu Zhou walked around for a bit before he left the office building and went back to his car.

Visiting his company building was only to satisfy his curiosity. It was not his main reason for coming to Philadelphia. He came to Philadelphia to meet with a consultant that AM arranged for him.

Apparently, the woman was a professor at Wharton, an expert in business administration with a double-degree in international trade.

Although the relevant plans had already been made, anything on paper was not enough. Some things had to be discussed face to face.

Lu Zhou arranged a time to meet with this expert and planned to talk with her face to face.

Chapter 287

Although everyone was being used as free labor for their supervisor, few people were being exploited as much as her.

Suddenly, the office door was pushed open. Michelle Parsis walked in wearing a fur coat.

This sophisticated woman dressed elegantly and her professional makeup perfectly covered the wrinkles around her eyes.

She looked at her student with her head down on the table and said blankly, "I'm about to go meet with a customer. Did you finish preparing the graphs for the Chinese lithium battery anode material market?"

Chen Yushan, who was still lying on the table, tiredly opened the drawer and took out a USB before she said, "It's basically finished."

Management was a very broad subject, this meant that its scope of studies could be very narrow or very wide.

On one day, one could be planning a company's organizational structure while on the next day, one could be conducting market research on China's lithium battery anode material market. The types of service people in management offered would depend on the requests of the customers.

Although AM only offered company structure planning, Parsis was able to sniff out that the contract between the Cayman Islands Star Sky Technology company and the Belgian Umicore company excluded the Chinese market.

This discovery was a huge surprise for her. People like her were the ones that conducted market research and developed plans to maximize intellectual property profits.

This type of "value-adding services" was her way of expanding her customer base.

After all, customers did not come for free. The Wall Street elites not only had to meet the needs of their customers, but they also need to help their customers and to find out what else they needed.

Mr. Parsis took the USB from Chen Yushan and stuffed it into her purse. She then said blankly,

"I'll check your homework, but for now, go take a nap. Say hello to Los on the way out. Ask her to hand in her report by tomorrow."

Chen Yushan obviously did not regard her words as compassionate. Parsis only wanted her to rest so she could work better.

"Okay, professor, I'll go right now."

Chen Yushan stood up from her desk and wobbled out the door.

...

At the same time, Professor Sarrot was facing the toughest moment of his life in a small Silicon Valley research institute.

Facing a man sitting in front of him, fifty-year-old Sarrot argued in a fierce tone.

“... Our team in the field of organic synthesis is world-class! Cornell University provides us with technical support, do you know what this means? Buying my team for \$10 million, why don't you go rob a bank instead?”

Facing this furious professor, Woolf only smiled and spoke in a calm voice, “Of course I know that Cornell University is one of the Ivy League schools and has given birth to 54 Nobel Prize winners, and there are many famous professors there as well... But what does that have to do with you?”

Professor Sarrot froze, so Woolf continued to speak slowly, “From what I know, professors at Cornell University usually don't have to worry about funding, and they usually wouldn't set up their company in Silicon Valley. So, Professor Sarrot, have you sent out this month's paychecks?”

Lu Zhou's asking price was \$20 million USD, but the lower Woolf negotiated, the higher his commission would be.

If it was not for the few pieces of valuable equipment, Woolf would not want to pay a single penny.

AM was serving the scientific community?

Nope, that was the only advertisement.

AM only served the rich.

Sarrot turned bright red and he did not speak.

If he was facing an ignorant person, he could speak out of his ass. He would not be fazed even if he was facing investors at the MRS Conference.

However, Woolf was an investor that knew this industry inside and out, so his child's play would not work here.

Woolf's ability in negotiation was on another level.

In fact, Woolf knew exactly what Sarrot's weakness was.

The reason why Sarrot set up his company in Silicon Valley instead of New York was that it was easier to get funding there.

Any famous materials science professor normally would not do something like this because funding was not a huge issue for them. Plenty of companies were willing to cooperate with them, so they needed talent more than money.

Materials science was different than computer science and materials science talent in Silicon Valley was no match for universities on the east coast.

As for Sarrot...

A few years ago, he could still get funding. After all, that was the golden era of lithium batteries.

Microsoft, IBM, Tesla, and even the US energy department jumped on the lithium battery train. There seemed to be no shortage of funds in this industry, and billionaires were being created left and right.

However, the situation turned sharply in recent years.

P.G Bruce, a big name in the field of lithium-air batteries, was criticized for his Nature Chemistry thesis. No one could replicate his research results. Professor Bruce was so close to success but failed in the end.

Although most people believed that Bruce made an “honest mistake”, some people labeled him as a “liar”. Because of this, the entire lithium-air battery industry was hit hard.

Sarrot was only a small name in the field of lithium-air batteries. He wanted to pick up the crumbs left by the big names, but now he was left to feed himself.

Honestly, with the financial situation of his current research team, he could not even pay the researchers’ salary, much less conducting experiments.

“I guess you still need some time to think about it...” said Woolf. When he saw that Professor Sarrot was still frozen, he shrugged and stood up from the sofa. He then said, “I’ll go take a walk nearby.”

When Sarrot saw that the opportunity was slipping away from his hands, he suddenly changed his mind.

Finally, he could not hold it anymore.

“Wait a second.”

Woolf stopped walking and turned around before asking in a relaxed tone, “You changed your mind?”

Sarrot uttered, “You’re a villain.”

Woolf smiled and said, “Same, same.”

Chapter 288

The inspection of the equipment could not be done sloppily, Lu Zhou wanted to be safe and see it in person.

Compared to the research team, Lu Zhou needed the equipment more.

In a high talent-density area like Silicon Valley, Lu Zhou could hire a carbon nano-material and organic synthesis engineer for \$100,000 USD per year. He could then hire a few laboratory assistants, interns, and that would be a research team right there.

However, the equipment was different. It was a seven or even eight-figure investment.

Even a slightly better SEM electron scanning microscope would cost millions of dollars. For example, an entire set of instruments for a CVD vacuum tube furnace for preparing carbon nanotubes which were commonly used for preparing fullerene materials would cost at least \$20 million USD.

From a cost-saving perspective, it would be more efficient to purchase an entire research laboratory, as opposed to buying equipment from manufacturers.

Lu Zhou did not have to pay a particularly expensive price to get a decent amount of good quality second-hand equipment. Compared to second-hand equipment that was eliminated from research institutes, these equipment were a lot more reliable.

Not only that, Lu Zhou did not need to find or train new staff.

Once Lu Zhou hung up the phone, he looked at Professor Parsis and smiled apologetically.

"Sorry to keep you waiting. That was a work-related call."

"No worries. I'm sure time is valuable for a distinguished scholar like you," said Michelle Parsis. She smiled and asked, "Can we start now?"

Lu Zhou nodded and said, "Of course."

Lu Zhou had to admit that the University of Pennsylvania really was the incubator for the world's business elites, as both the students and the professors were highly skilled.

With the explanation from Parsis, Lu Zhou already had a general framework idea for the Star Sky Technology organizational structure.

This included the functions of the various departments in the company, which talents were needed in which positions, the employee salary system, and etc. Any problems Lu Zhou could come up with, she had already considered them for him.

If she wanted to go into the business world, with her skill set, she could get any management position.

Of course, working in a company would not be as comfortable as a professor.

Especially for the kind of professors with a double doctorate in business administration and international trade. Not only could she receive a salary from the University of Pennsylvania, but she could also do consulting for outside companies at an hourly rate.

She could teach students, and occasionally she could publish theses. She could even use her students as free labor for her big cases. This kind of life was definitely better than a nine to five work in an office.

“... This is the basic situation. Since your company mainly deals with intellectual property, I recommend you set up several offices around the world and use them to supervise the use of patents in these overseas markets. Also, if the budget allows for it, I recommend you to hire a team of 10-20 professional lawyers to specifically deal with intellectual property infringement cases.”

Lu Zhou took note of her advice. As he put away the documents, he said, “I’ll seriously consider your opinion.”

After this meeting, his cooperation with AM on his patent management company came to an end.

All he had to do now was hire a manager and hand in this document to them. This manager would then set up the Star Sky Technology framework according to this document, and the Star Sky Technology North America branch would start running like a well-oiled engine.

Then he could extract himself from the cumbersome entrepreneurship process and focus on his research.

However, for Michelle Parsis, what she talked about just now was specific in the AM contract. For her, the main purpose of her trip had only just begun.

“I noticed that you haven’t developed into the Chinese market. Actually, I have a report on the Chinese anode material market, I don’t know if you’re interested or not.”

Lu Zhou joked, “Is there a charge?”

Michelle Parsis smiled and said, “Of course not. But if you think my research report is good, I can provide a much more detailed analysis of this market. Also, I can help you developed an intellectual property licensing strategy for the Chinese market... Of course, this part is not free.”

Lu Zhou took the research report document and briefly skimmed through it.

He thought that this research report was pretty well done. However, he was not an expert in economics, so he could not understand the specifics behind this report.

Lu Zhou liked to let professionals do professional things.

Michelle Parsis quietly waited for Lu Zhou to finish reading the report. She then said, “What do you think?”

“It’s mostly good,” said Lu Zhou as he placed the document down on the table. He then said with a smile, “I can see that you’re a professional.”

“Of course,” said Michelle Parsis. She smiled and said, “Anyhow, I’m an expert in this field.”

“Then I’ll follow your plan, but for the follow-up details, I hope you can contact Star Sky Technology directly. I’ll ask the managers from Star Sky Technology to contact you around mid-January,” said Lu Zhou.

Professor Parsis smiled and said, “No problem, then I wish us happy cooperation?”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Happy cooperation.”

After the meeting, the two walked to the parking lot together.

Before Lu Zhou went in his car, he suddenly remembered something and he looked back at Professor Parsis to ask, “Oh yeah, you’re a professor from the University of Pennsylvania, right?”

Michelle Parsis smiled and said, “Yeah, why?”

“I have a friend that is studying there, I wonder if you know her?”

Michelle Parsis asked, “Sure, what is her name?”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Her name is Chen Yushan and she’s studying a master’s degree at Wharton. I heard that she has encountered some difficulties with her research project. It’s also in the area of management. I can’t really help her, but I’d appreciate it if you could help and take care of her.”

When Michelle Parsis heard this name, she was instantly stunned. She had a subtle but weird expression.

She coughed and tried to change her facial expression as she said, “I think I’ve heard of her before, but I don’t know her well. I’ll check it out when I get back.”

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded. He then said, “Then thanks so much.”

Talking to me?

Chen Yushan gulped and asked her boss, "Every year is different, but this year is on 28th... Why?"

Professor Michelle Parsis looked at her with a blank expression.

Suddenly, Parsis squinted and a smirked appeared on her face.

This smile was almost horrifying enough to scare Chen Yushan.

Thankfully she did not actually jump out of her chair. Otherwise, she definitely would have offended this woman who was going through menopause.

Professor Parsis paused for a second and looked at the calendar on her desk. She then said, "You've worked hard over the past few months. Chinese New Year is in two weeks. From now until then, take a good break and rest a little."

Chen Yushan: "..."

Is she...

Giving me a holiday?

This fortune came so sudden that Chen Yushan started to doubt if she heard it wrong.

She was just calling her family yesterday to tell them that she could not go back home this year.

Several master's and PhD students in the office looked at her with envy.

Professor Parsis had never used this tone to speak with her students before. For a strict woman like her, her students were her employees – the kind of employees with a \$300 per month salary.

The younger and prettier the student was, the colder and more demanding her attitude was.

However now...

The sun was rising from the west!

Michelle Parsis paused for a second and her smile started to become warmer and warmer as she said, “Oh yeah, one more thing. I’ve reconsidered the thesis research report you did on the Indian retail market. Your work in that thesis was tremendously helpful, so I moved your author position from fourth to first.”

Chen Yushan was still frozen and she looked at her professor as she said, “But Professor, I only helped to collect the documents and graphs...”

“Only?” Michelle Parsis looked at her with a serious expression and said, “Miss Chen, I have to tell you that the auxiliary work of collecting documents and graphs are just as important as writing the thesis. This work can not be described with ‘only’. This is justice, I will stick to my decision and put you side by side as the first author.”

Chen Yushan: “???”

...

The third week after New Year’s Eve, Lu Zhou took a flight to the West Coast.

Lu Zhou did not know if it was because his student’s name was in the conference submissions list, but he was invited to attend the Berkeley mathematics conference by Mr. Francis, the president of the American Mathematical Society.

Lu Zhou originally did not plan on attending this conference.

However, Francis was too enthusiastic. Since Lu Zhou had to go to San Francisco anyway, he accepted the invitation. He promised to attend the conference and see how his little apprentice was doing.

After all, this was her first report ever, and Lu Zhou was a little worried.

He landed at SFO and was picked up by Professor Tao Zhexuan.

Ever since the academic conference last year, the relationship between the two had been good.

Since Professor Tao's research direction was broad, whenever he encountered problems in number theory and functional analysis, the two would chat online about the problem. When Professor Tao heard that Lu Zhou was attending the Berkeley conference, he immediately asked to pick Lu Zhou up from the airport.

Professor Tao sat in the car and asked, "So I heard you have been studying Collatz conjecture recently?"

Lu Zhou smiled and replied, "Yeah, are you interested as well?"

"Sort of. I used to research it a long time ago, but unfortunately, I didn't succeed. My intuition tells me that this is a complex analysis problem, but after some in-depth research, I found out that I was wrong. It even has a connection with the Langlands program," said Tao Zhexuan. He smiled embarrassedly while driving and said, "But you should be able to solve this problem with your capabilities. You're the leading figure in number theory right now. If even you can't solve it, then it might take centuries before the next mathematician can."

Although Tao Zhexuan's statement was a bit exaggerated, it was not outrageous. Not many people were in the field of additive number theory. The classical number theory problems were Goldbach's conjecture and Waring's Conjecture.

Now that Goldbach's conjecture was solved by Lu Zhou, unless someone made significant contributions to Waring's conjecture, Lu Zhou would be the top leading number theory mathematician.

Lu Zhou smiled and explained, "You're exaggerating too much... Actually, I'm not the one doing this research project. It's mainly done by my students. I'm only giving them suggestions. I've got no idea what the end result will be."

"Oh I see, I thought you were the one researching this problem," said Tao Zhexuan with a disappointed expression.

If Lu Zhou was the one solving this question, he would be looking forward to it.

It seemed now that he should not have such high expectations.

...

The American Mathematical Society arranged the hotel for this academic conference to be near Berkeley. As an invited scholar, Lu Zhou was booked a room by Mr. Francis. He only had to check in at the hotel counter.

Professor Tao sent Lu Zhou to the hotel. Since he still had a class to teach, he invited Lu Zhou to visit his house someday and promptly left.

Lu Zhou put his luggage in his room and did not stay at the hotel for long. He went downstairs and called a taxi.

Professor Sarrot's research institute was in the south part of the San Francisco Bay Area. It wasn't far from his hotel so he wanted to resolve this matter as soon as possible.

After Lu Zhou got on the taxi, he called Woolf and arranged a time to meet at the institute.

Lu Zhou thought that he would arrive first.

However, when he arrived, Woolf was already waiting for him at the entrance.

Woolf greeted Lu Zhou and said, "I didn't expect you to come today. If you had told me earlier, I could have picked you up."

Lu Zhou replied, "Something happened so I had to change my schedule. Who cares about this. Let's deal with the matter at hand."

Lu Zhou let Woolf lead the way into the institute.

Compared to those large research institutions, this private research institute was undoubtedly a lot smaller. It was only three floors and the location was not optimal and it was difficult for commuters.

However, it still contained the essentials.

This laboratory had all of the equipment for any experiment Lu Zhou wanted to do.

Lu Zhou walked into the third-floor office and was prepared to greet the man in charge. However, he suddenly saw Professor Sarrot sitting on a sofa.

The two made eye contact.

Professor Sarrot did not expect that the person who was going to buy his research team was Lu Zhou, so he was pleasantly surprised.

Lu Zhou did not expect that Professor Sarrot was the "Lithium-air battery" guy from the MRS Conference. He knew that this name sounded familiar...

Lu Zhou confirmed that he did not misrecognize Sarrot.

Then...

Without hesitating, he turned around and started to leave.

However, Professor Sarrot exclaimed before Lu Zhou could even take a step.

“Wait a minute! I’ll sell it to you for eight million dollars, no, five million dollars! Please don’t go!”

Chapter 290

That was because Lu Zhou promised Sarrot that he would give Sarrot five minutes to give a reason.

Professor Sarrot did not waste any time. He sat back down on the sofa and said, “I’ll sell my Sarrot’s Research Institute to you for five million dollars. I know that you won’t be able to find a research institute in Silicon Valley cheaper than this. I don’t want anything, all of the patents and research results are yours. I just want you to let me stay in the research institute.”

He was right. Five million dollars for the entire research institute was like paying 10 cents on the dollar.

It would be impossible to find cheaper second-hand equipment than this. Also, second-hand equipment could be unreliable, especially for cutting edge instruments. A slight error could cause an experiment to fail.

Sarrot was hurting inside when he quoted this price.

Even if he sold the equipment as second hand, he could at least get seven or eight million dollars.

However, this was not about money.

Lu Zhou would not be convinced so easily. After all, their first impression of each other was too aggressive. He only remembered people throwing shoes on the podium.

“So that I can watch you defraud people with my name?”

Professor Sarrot argued, "What do you mean defraud? Have I ever used research funds to buy cars? To pick up girls? Never! I spent all of the money on experiments! Everything I do is for science! If I don't exaggerate my experiments to outsiders, then no one would fund my research..."

Lu Zhou did not take Sarrot's argument seriously. However, the five million dollar price was far below his expected price, making it difficult for him to refuse.

In fact, as a professor at Cornell University, Sarrot was definitely skilled.

In a place like Silicon Valley, one could easily hire an expert in SEM images research. Finding a research team that could complete projects smoothly was a lot more difficult.

After all, everyone had their own projects to do. Most people did not want to jump ship and give up on their own project.

Although Sarrot was not a big name in the materials science industry, he was definitely still mildly famous. Although he liked to bullsh*t, he did not have a bad academic record.

However, he was no saint.

After weighing the pros and cons, Lu Zhou decided to give him a chance.

As for whether Sarrot could perform, it would depend on himself.

Lu Zhou paused for a second before he slowly said, "I can give you a chance."

Sarrot was filled with joy, he was about to speak but was interrupted by Lu Zhou, "But I have to tell you, you only have one chance. If you want to stay in my research team, you have to be honest. Don't try to fool me with those 'honest mistakes'."

Without hesitation, Sarrot patted his chest and said, "I swear, on the name of God."

Lu Zhou said, “Unfortunately I’m an atheist, so I’ll have to write your words on a contract.”

Sarrot made a helpless expression. He then shrugged his shoulders to show that he did not care.

Lu Zhou gave Woolf a look, signaling him to give out the contract.

Woolf looked at Lu Zhou with hesitation, as if he was asking, “Is this okay?”

However, Woolf saw that Lu Zhou nodded, so he did not say anything else. He took out the contract from his briefcase and quickly filled in the contract prices.

Lu Zhou stood up from the sofa. He then looked at Sarrot and said, “I’m sure you have already read the contract, the only thing that changed is the price. Of course, you can look at it carefully. I’ll look around the research institute. Once you read it over, you can call me.”

...

Sarrot was very smart.

He knew exactly what he needed. He also knew what a scholar needed.

The reason why big names are big names was not because of their big brains. It was because they could always receive research funding. Someone was always willing to pay for their research.

For the materials science industry, almost all of the results were made from enormous amounts of research funding.

Without the money, researchers could not publish in [Science]. Without the [Science] publication, there would be no research results, and no one would be willing to invest without research results.

Therefore in some sense, the relationship between academic status and research funding was like the chicken and the egg theory.

The latter was easy to obtain as long as you had the former.

Hence, when an investor wanted to sell their stock in Sarrot's Research Institute. Sarrot would borrow a loan from the bank and bought back the equipment in his research institute.

This was why he was willing to sell the research institute to Lu Zhou for only a loss of five million dollars.

He did not care about the research team as it would only rot as time went on.

He did not care about the money either. Five million dollars was enough for him to pay back his loans.

Although this meant that he would have nothing at all, he believed that starting from the beginning was the correct decision.

Doing research for Lu Zhou would mean that he would never have to worry about research funding again. Even if Lu Zhou ran out of money, there would be tons of companies willing to fund the research project.

He would be happy to work for free, as long as he produced results, and as long as his name was in the thesis.

When results were out, no one would talk about his past or his previous lack of integrity. He would become Cornell University's leading expert in lithium batteries, bringing glory to his name...

His instinct told him that this day would eventually come. This investment was definitely worth it!

Sarrot did not make Lu Zhou wait for long. He read the contract from beginning to end and signed his name.

In addition to the research institute transfer contract, there was also an employment agreement and confidentiality agreement.

Lu Zhou hired him as head of the research institute for a \$100,000 USD salary. As for bonuses or other benefits, it would depend on Sarrot's future performance.

Once the contracts were signed, it was time to talk about the research.

After letting Woolf leave, Lu Zhou plugged his USB into his laptop and pulled up the molecular model using the program "Hyperchem".

Sarrot looked at the spherical structure on the screen and showed interest.

"This is?"

Lu Zhou said, "You don't need to know what this is. I'm not even sure if it has any value other than some interesting mathematical properties. I need you to complete a set of experiments for me to verify my calculations of this material. If you do what I say, I'll include your name in the thesis."

Lu Zhou clicked the mouse.

The graphics on the screen began to change as he continued to speak, "I can't give you any more information. I can only tell you that this image is obtained from the combination of carbon nanotubes and fullerene materials. Chemically speaking, the two materials are π bonded, forming carbon nanospheres."

Sarrot frowned and stared at the model for a second. He then said, "It sounds like a good project, but how will we fuse the fullerene and carbon nanotubes together?"

Actually, he wanted to ask what this thing was for, but Lu Zhou clearly did not want to explain it to him, so he gave up on asking.

Lu Zhou looked at Sarrot like he was retarded as he asked, "Good question. If I knew how to synthesize this thing, why would I ask you?"

Sarrot smiled when he realized that his question was nonsense.

Lu Zhou continued and said, "The people from Star Sky Technology will contact you in a few days. I'll email you regarding the research. Also, I'll come here and inspect your research progress every month..."

"... I will be at the University of Berkeley for a few days. If you have any questions, you can call or visit me. Any questions?"

Sarrot immediately nodded and said, "Nope."

Lu Zhou nodded as well.

Once the contracts were signed, the research project was explained, there was no reason for him to stay here any longer.

Professor Sarrot would contact Star Sky Technology regarding the research funding. The experiment would start by the end of this month.

Once Lu Zhou copied the USB data on the computer, he was ready to leave.

Suddenly, Sarrot remembered something and asked, "Oh yeah, since this research institute is yours now, would it be a bit inappropriate calling it my name? I'm saying, do you want to change it to Lu Zhou research institute?"