

## Chapter 5595

After Charlie's actions, Peter and Gustavo both became the talk of the town, causing quite a stir. Not only did this create a major PR crisis for the Rothschild family, but it also gave Peter and Gustavo an unbeatable advantage.

With their involvement in the incident now exposed, their safety was ensured. Therefore, Charlie felt that there was no longer any reason for him to remain in Brooklyn Prison. He intended to have Michaela arrange for his release tomorrow while he focused on acquiring the Four Treasures of the Study and finding a way to bring it back to China.

He believed that once the Four Treasures of the Study was unveiled in China, its history and the turbulent fate it had endured over the years would put the Rothschild family in an even more disadvantageous position. They would likely be compelled to release Peter.

As for Gustavo, since their acquaintance had been brief and he had aided Charlie, sparing his life could be seen as returning the favor. Whether Gustavo would lead a good or bad life in Brooklyn Prison in the future would depend on his own destiny.

At this moment, Gustavo was indeed feeling anxious about his future.

Just then, several armed FBI agents arrived outside his prison cell. When the iron door swung open, one of the agents stepped into the cell and politely stated, "Mr. Gustavo, I am the chief investigator of the FBI. We now require you to surrender your phone, and we hope you will cooperate."

Gustavo blurted out, "Why? This is the privilege that the Rothschild family promised me!"

The FBI agent responded, "Mr. Gustavo, we are here to protect you. Regardless of any agreement you made with the Rothschild family, from now on, everything must be managed by the FBI. If you refuse to comply, we will have to transfer you from Brooklyn Prison to Washington Prison. But I must warn you, in Washington Prison, you will be on your own, without anyone by your side, and life will be even more challenging."

Hearing this, Gustavo couldn't help but feel fear. He knew that he no longer had the authority to negotiate with the FBI, and thus, his treatment in Brooklyn Prison would undoubtedly not be the same as before. However, Charlie was right—having nothing was the most crucial thing. After all, with Charlie's help, he had saved his own life. So, albeit reluctantly, he took out his phone and handed it over to the FBI agent.

Once the agent received the phone, he promptly unlocked it using Gustavo's face and checked the backend of the video-sharing website. After confirming that the video had indeed been uploaded from this phone, he said to Gustavo, "Mr. Gustavo, your phone will be temporarily confiscated. I will hand it over to the prison administrator for safekeeping."

Gustavo nodded, knowing he had no other choice.

The FBI agent then informed him, "Mr. Gustavo, from now on, you cannot remain in this cell. We have arranged a solitary cell for you during this sensitive period. You will temporarily reside there. The FBI will provide 24-hour protection for your safety, and all your meals will be served separately. This means your supervision might be stricter than before, and we hope you can understand."

Gustavo, who hadn't anticipated this outcome, could only reluctantly nod and say, "I will follow your instructions."

The FBI agent smiled and said, "In that case, Mr. Gustavo, please follow me. You don't need to pack any personal belongings. We will provide you with new ones. If there's anything you need, you can make a list, as long as it doesn't violate prison regulations, and we will try to accommodate your requests."

The FBI also understood that Gustavo was the linchpin of the Sanchez family, unaware that Gustavo had been abandoned by his own son. In their eyes, Gustavo was still the kingpin of the drug trafficking group, and they naturally wanted to be as courteous as possible to avoid unnecessary trouble.

Gustavo had no choice but to leave his personal belongings behind and cast a reluctant yet grateful gaze at Charlie, saying, "Mr. Wade, I suppose this is where our paths diverge..."

Charlie smiled and nodded. Both he and Gustavo knew that they were unlikely to have another opportunity to meet.

Soon, the once-infamous Gustavo was escorted out of the prison cell by the FBI. After the FBI departed, Charlie retrieved his phone and messaged Michaela, requesting her to arrange his release from Brooklyn Prison the next day.

He was arrested due to illegal immigration. People like him are initially sent to prison when the US Immigration Bureau apprehends them. After spending a few days in prison, if it's discovered that these individuals have no passport or money, they are eventually released, left to fend for themselves on the streets of America.

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The American FBI, which had taken control of Brooklyn Prison, not only took Gustavo into custody but also Joseph, who had tried to kill Gustavo during the day.

Initially, Joseph remained morally steadfast in front of the FBI. When they asked him about the person who had instructed him to carry out the assassination of Gustavo, he staunchly refused to utter a word.

In his view, he had no plans to ever leave prison in his lifetime. As the saying goes, if you owe too much, you don't have to worry about it, and if you have too many lice, you don't need to scratch, so why would he provoke Gustavo's son?

However, he had severely underestimated the FBI's tactics.

The FBI had a single, highly effective strategy that had worked time and time again: if you don't tell us the truth, we'll send you to the toughest, harshest, and most dangerous prison in the United States.

While all of them were sentenced to life imprisonment, the specific circumstances of their incarceration mattered greatly.

Joseph could undoubtedly endure his time at Brooklyn Jail because he had established a reputation in New York over a decade ago. He was practically at home in the prison, and many of his younger associates even chose to serve their sentences there because of his influence.

However, if the FBI were to transfer him to other facilities, particularly ones housing violent criminals, sexual predators, and extreme murderers, he would lose his advantage.

Placing a tiger with a group of chickens, ducks, geese, cattle, horses, and sheep may make the tiger content, but putting the same tiger with another group of tigers would reveal a significant disparity.

Considering his living environment for the next several decades, Joseph no longer concerned himself with worldly morality this time. He quickly divulged the identity of the real mastermind behind the assassination. Gustavo's son had been apprehended by the FBI before dawn.

While the FBI in the United States ostensibly enforced the law impartially, they were, in fact, under the complete control of the U.S. government. The U.S. government had close ties with powerful families like the Rothschilds, so the FBI was naturally more inclined to assist a branch of the Rothschild family.

Upon extracting a confession from Joseph, they wasted no time in contacting the Rothschild family.

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Howard of the Rothschild family was frantic, like an ant on a hot griddle. He and his family had been subjected to relentless online ridicule, and they were now under attack from all sides. The Rothschild family, stripped of their dignity, desperately sought ways to salvage their reputation. Unexpectedly, the FBI approached them with news that filled them with excitement.

Thus, at the behest of the Rothschild family, the FBI urgently released Joseph's interrogation video online.

Though this video couldn't erase the fact that the Rothschild family had conspired with Gustavo, it could, at the very least, dispel suspicions of betrayal and duplicity.

But when this video emerged, Hector Sanchez in Mexico was utterly stunned.

The elder members of the Sanchez family began questioning him about the veracity of Joseph's claims. Hector had no choice but to brazenly accuse the Rothschilds of hatching a conspiracy. In his view, everyone knew the U.S. government was in bed with the Rothschild, so it made perfect sense for them to tarnish his reputation at this time.

The Rothschild family hadn't anticipated Hector's audacious counterattack, prompting them to immediately assert that they hadn't interfered in any way with the FBI's handling of the case, and that Joseph's statements were indeed truthful.

At this point, the situation had reached an impasse, akin to two individuals standing on opposite sides of a chasm, hurling accusations at each other without any resolution in sight.

In an effort to help the Rothschild family gain the upper hand in this war of words against Hector, the FBI launched an overnight investigation into Joseph's higher-ups. However, to their shock, they discovered that the sole person Joseph had identified as his contact had already been cremated in New York, leaving nothing but a plume of black smoke.

As a result, the war of words seemed destined to continue indefinitely.

Early the following morning, when the verbal skirmish between the two sides had escalated to headline news on major TV stations and media outlets, Charlie was "escorted" out of Brooklyn Prison.

The reason he was "escorted" is primarily because many illegal immigrants, like him, didn't want to leave prison so soon.

For many illegal immigrants, life on the outside meant unemployment, lack of shelter, inadequate clothing, and language barriers.

After a few months in prison, they could not only find refuge from the elements and secure their basic needs but also work on improving their English language skills.

Staying there for a few months before being released increased their chances of finding employment.

Hence, many illegal immigrants viewed prisons as training grounds. It was more beneficial to gain some experience inside before reentering the outside world.

For this reason, illegal immigrants who were typically released shortly after being arrested often put up a fuss, attempting to complete their "novice village" experience within the prison.

When Charlie emerged, he also enacted a symbolic show of reluctance.

The compassionate FBI officers pushed him out of the prison, pointed to the intersection to the right of the prison, and impatiently instructed, "Go three intersections down and turn left. There's a relief center. If you hurry, you can get a meal."

With that, they walked back to the iron gate without looking back, as if they were afraid Charlie might change his mind.

Charlie stretched, checked the time, and planned to head to Chinatown first to meet with Hogan and discuss how to extract the Four Treasures of the Study from the United States. Later in the evening, he intended to seize an opportunity to visit the Peter family's estate and recover the Four Treasures of the Study.

Simultaneously, at the Rothschild family mansion, Howard, who hadn't slept all night, paced anxiously in the living room.

Many key members of the Rothschild family had returned and were now gathered around him, brainstorming solutions for the family's current predicament.

After listening to the lengthy discussions, Howard suddenly had an epiphany. "I've got it! All our problems stem from losing the Four Treasures of the Study! With its loss, our fortune has shifted. If we can't reclaim the Four Treasures of the Study, not

only will our current issues persist, but new troubles will surely arise. As long as we can reclaim this artifact our troubles will be gone."

With determination in his eyes, Howard addressed the assembly, "I, Howard Rothschild, solemnly swear today in the name of the Rothschild family! Whoever successfully brings back the genuine Four Treasures of the Study for our family will be the next rightful heir!"

#### Chapter 5596

In Howard's eyes, the Four Treasures of the Study held the key to the Rothschild family's prosperity.

With it, the family could thrive in any investment venture, even in times of turmoil, always seizing fleeting opportunities.

Without the Four Treasures of the Study, the Rothschild family would struggle to maintain its esteemed status, despite the abilities and courage of its members.

Therefore, Howard believed it was imperative to bring the Four Treasures of the Study back, regardless of the cost.

However, he knew that most of his descendants dismissed the Eastern concept of Feng Shui as mere superstition, lacking any motivation to retrieve the banner. They saw it as Howard's personal affair, unrelated to them.

As Howard witnessed the exposure of Peter's imprisonment and the abuse he endured, he grew even more determined to recover the Four Treasures of the Study. Once it left the United States, it would be nearly impossible to find again.

If the fortune of the Rothschild family started to decline, it wouldn't take long for the family to lose its prestigious standing.

To prevent this outcome, Howard had to use his ultimate weapon, the irresistible temptation of becoming the family heir, to rally the entire Rothschild family. They needed to unite and devote themselves wholeheartedly to finding the Four Treasures of the Study.

Suddenly, the descendants who had previously shown little interest in the artifact seemed to be injected with adrenaline. Almost everyone began eagerly preparing and showing their enthusiasm.

They didn't care about the mystical qualities of the Four Treasures of the Study; all they knew was that it was their only ticket to becoming the family heir.

As a result, the entire Rothschild family sprang into action, setting aside their previous endeavors to focus solely on the task of locating the Four Treasures of the Study.

After everyone had left, Howard sat alone at his desk and picked up his phone to make a call.

Once the call connected, he asked in a cold tone, "Any leads yet?"

The other person respectfully replied, "Not yet, Mr. Rothschild. The entire Cole family has relocated to London. Besides the mailman delivering letters, no one else has come or gone."

Howard inquired further, "Did you question the mailman? Did you notice anything suspicious?"

The other person quickly responded, "We've installed numerous infrared and thermal imaging devices around the Cole family's residence. We can capture any movement or action. The mailman only delivered a batch of letters and took nothing else."

Howard sneered and said, "My gut tells me that the Four Treasures of the Study must still be in Peter Cole's house. Peter couldn't have removed it so quickly, right under our noses! Maintain close surveillance on the Cole family, be on high alert 24/7. Not even a fly should escape from there!"

The other person assured him, "Rest assured, Mr. Rothschild. We've increased our manpower, and the Cole family is under constant watch, with no blind spots. We've also deployed multiple unmanned drones nearby, ready to track any movement."

Then, the other person added, "By the way, Mr. Rothschild, there's something I need to report."

Howard asked, "What is it?"

In a hushed voice, the other person said, "The FBI paid us a visit today. They didn't enter the Cole family's residence, but they came directly to us, reminding us not to overstep our boundaries. The situation with Peter Cole is sensitive, and the public is watching closely."

Howard angrily cursed, "The FBI is a bunch of imbeciles! Get in touch with the person in charge of the FBI in New York and inform them that I want them to stay away from the Cole family. I don't want any interference or negative impact on this matter. If I see anyone from the FBI within a mile of the Cole family again, they're fired!"

Without waiting for a response, he ended the call.

Just then, a knock on the door interrupted his thoughts. His eldest son, Steve Rothschild, respectfully asked from outside, "Father, may I come in?"

Howard raised an eyebrow, closed his eyes, and let out a silent sigh before saying, "Enter."

Steve walked into the room and carefully closed the door behind him. He looked at Howard, hesitating before speaking, "Father..."

Howard glanced at him and prompted, "What's the matter? Speak."

Steve hesitated for a moment before finally saying, "Father, during the meeting earlier, you mentioned that whoever retrieves the Four Treasures of the Study will become the family heir..."

Howard nodded silently and said, "Yes, I did. What about it?"

Steve, with a heart filled with grievances, said, "For all these years, the Rothschild family has followed the tradition of the eldest son inheriting the position. We've maintained a clear order of succession. Your sudden announcement today seems to disregard our family's rules..."

Howard snorted, "Rules? If we lose the Four Treasures of the Study, the name Rothschild will lose its illustrious glory! This is a matter of life and death for the family. In the face of that, rules mean nothing!"

He continued, "Whoever brings back the Four Treasures of the Study will ensure the continued prosperity of the Rothschild family! They will be the greatest contributors to the family! It's only fair and justified for them to become the family heir!"

Steve pleaded, "Father, ever since you took over, I have been the first in line to inherit the Rothschild family. My eldest son, Royce, is the second in line. We've dedicated years to training and education as heirs. All our efforts will be in vain if some lucky person stumbles upon the Four Treasures of the Study. It's... it's just not fair..."



Howard looked at Steve's pained and aggrieved expression, remained silent for a moment, and then said, "Steve, in the face of a grave family crisis, we must reward those who show bravery. Besides, I've already made my decision, and there's no going back."

Steve anxiously said, "Father... you..."

Howard raised his hand to silence Steve and calmly looked at him, saying, "You are my eldest son, and I want to give you a chance. So, let me share some inside information with you. I believe there's a high possibility that the Four Treasures of the Study is still in Peter Cole's house. While others search elsewhere, if you focus your energy on the Cole family's residence, you may have a better chance."

He continued, "I've already sent a team to discreetly monitor the Cole family. You can join them and keep an eye on things. If they find the Four Treasures of the Study in Peter Cole's house, the credit will be yours. In that case, you will remain the first in line to inherit."

Steve's heart, previously filled with despair, suddenly sparked a glimmer of hope.

He asked with excitement, "Father, is everything you've said really true?"

Howard nodded with a hint of satisfaction and replied, "Steve, you're my firstborn and hold a special place in my heart. I truly wish for you to seize this opportunity and rightfully inherit my position."

While saying this, Howard narrowed his eyes and offered a reminder, "Times like these are when it's most crucial for you to take the lead, charge into the fray, achieve feats that no one can surpass, prove yourself to others, and leave them with nothing to criticize. My dear son, the chance to make a significant contribution has arrived!"

Steve felt a surge of determination, clenched his fists, and declared firmly, "Don't worry, Father, I will give it my all!"

## Chapter 5597

Near the Cole Family Manor, a group of elite agents, dispatched by the influential Rothschild family, lurked in the shadows both inside and outside the estate. They even purchased a neighboring villa, transforming it into their command center.

Within a room on the villa's third floor, overlooking the Cole Family Manor, an array of surveillance devices had been meticulously arranged. Thermal imaging cameras

lined the walls, capturing multiple angles of the estate. More than a dozen guards stood watch, ensuring the area remained secure day and night.

On the villa's rooftop, skilled snipers patiently awaited their orders. Equipped with thermal imaging technology, they possessed the uncanny ability to target and eliminate a mouse hiding in the bushes nearly a kilometer away.

Ever since Peter had swipped the Four Treasures of the Study, this area had been under constant surveillance. While they may not be able to prevent a fly from escaping the Cole Family Manor, no warm-blooded mammal could elude their watchful eyes.

At that moment, a helicopter descended upon the villa's courtyard. As it touched down, Steve and his son, Royce, disembarked together.

The on-site leader, Hank Gilbert, promptly approached Steve and greeted him respectfully, "Hello, Young Master. I'm Hank Gilbert, but you can call me Hank. I've prepared an office and a bedroom for you. If you have any other needs, please let me know."

Hank was one of Howard's most trusted confidants. Formerly a top agent in the Department of Homeland Security, he was renowned for his ruthless methods and numerous kills. Now, he specialized in handling the dirty work for the Rothschild family. Though he answered solely to Howard, Hank understood that Steve's presence here was to earn credit. If Steve accomplished this feat, he would undoubtedly become the future head of the family. Thus, Hank treated him with utmost respect.

Steve, too, recognized Hank as one of his father's most trusted right-hand men. If he could establish a closer relationship with him and gain his loyalty, it would greatly aid his future succession. With gratitude, he replied, "Thank you for your hard work, Hank. I hope that Royce and I won't be a burden to you."

Hank quickly reassured him, "Not at all, Young Master. You are here to guide our efforts. We have been stationed here for some time without any concrete results. Your presence might just bring us the breakthrough we've been waiting for!"

Steve hadn't expected Hank, a tough guy from the Department of Homeland Security, to be so amiable. Though it was merely flattery, Steve found himself oddly pleased by the praise.

Grinning, he responded, "Hank, if we find the Four Treasures of the Study here, you will undoubtedly become the Rothschild family's greatest hero!"

Steve knew that Hank held an important role in this hunt, so he heaped on the praise to let him know they were working together as a team so as to gain Hank's loyalty.

Hank smiled in return and replied, "If we do find the Four Treasures of the Study, it will be thanks to your wise leadership, Young Master!"

Hank was well aware that if he located the Four Treasures of the Study, Howard would not treat him poorly. Whether it was considered his "greatest achievement" or not didn't concern him in the least. The Rothschild family, like any other family, had its core members, and family interests often came before personal credit. Hank was content to enjoy the financial rewards and leave the empty glory of recognition to Steve. After all, Steve was likely to become his superior in the future.

Consequently, the two parties exchanged compliments about their business arrangement, and everyone was in high spirits.

Accompanied by Hank, Steve and Royce ascended to the villa's third floor. From there, they gazed upon the Cole Family Manor in the distance. Steve inquired, "Has the interior of the estate been thoroughly searched?"

Hank replied, "Not only have we conducted extensive searches, but we've also employed detection devices to scan the entire building and every corner of the yard. So far, we haven't found anything."

Steve was taken aback and asked, "If the Four Treasures of the Study is made of metal and our devices failed to detect it, does that mean it's not here?"

"It's hard to say," Hank explained. "Peter Cole is a cunning individual. If he had the audacity to swap the Four Treasures of the Study, he must have made meticulous preparations. This villa alone contains over ten hidden rooms, and there may be others we haven't discovered yet."

"Very well," Steve nodded. "Even if we have to turn the Cole Family upside down, we must find the Four Treasures of the Study!"

Hank sighed, "Turning the whole place upside down is currently not feasible. The FBI has warned us that going too far could cause significant trouble. Furthermore, we've already lost the upper hand to Cole. The entire nation is criticizing us. If we were to ransack the Cole Family, we would only find ourselves in a more disadvantageous position."

Steve nodded thoughtfully and mused, "Peter Cole is still in the hospital, but I doubt he'll remain there for long. Under external pressure, they won't send him back to

prison. Once he's released as an innocent man and returns here, he might just lead us to the Four Treasures of the Study."

With a calm demeanor, Steve continued, "Sometimes, instead of catching the mouse stealing the food, we should let it go quietly, follow it, discover where it hides the food, and then catch it all at once!"

Hank raised his thumb in agreement and exclaimed, "Young Master, you're absolutely right! If we release Cole and secretly tail him, he will undoubtedly lead us to the Four Treasures of the Study!"

Steve smiled faintly and declared, "Later, I will call my father and ask him to arrange for Peter Cole's release. Let's see if he returns here. If he does, then victory shall be ours."

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Meanwhile, in Chinatown, at Hogan's Roast Goose restaurant.

Despite today not being a weekend or a traditional Chinese holiday, Chinatown was adorned with decorative lights, bustling with activity.

A throng of people gathered outside Hogan's Roast Goose, where several lion dance troupes converged, their drums resounding as they performed at the restaurant's entrance.

Charlie, somewhat surprised and intrigued by the lion dances, turned to a man beside him and asked, "Hey, why are there so many lion dances happening outside Hogan's Roast Goose?"

The man smiled and replied, "The owner of the roast goose shop, Jordan, is now the new leader of the entire Chinese Bloom gang in Chinatown! Not only did they drive out the Burning Angel gang and reclaim control of Chinatown, but this morning, the new leader announced that Bloom will no longer extort protection fees from the merchants. It's fantastic news for us small business owners!"

Since its inception, Chinatown had always been under the control of gangs. Business owners in the area were forced to pay protection fees to either American or Chinese gangs. However, Bloom's decision to cease collecting these fees marked a significant change.

Charlie heard the news and knew it must have been Jordan's doing.

Jordan, an orphan left by illegal immigrants, had been following Hogan in Chinatown. He had witnessed the hardships and struggles of the local merchants. Now, as the leader of Bloom, he sought to effect real change for the people of Chinatown. It was a commendable endeavor.

Charlie couldn't help but appreciate Jordan a little more. After all, refraining from preying on the weak had always been one of Charlie's guiding principles. For a gang to prosper, they must look upwards, not downwards. If Jordan were to focus solely on extorting money from the small businesses in Chinatown, Bloom would struggle to expand under his leadership.

Jordan's decision to forgo the income from the less fortunate and instead concentrate on higher-level pursuits was a promising start.

Observing the vibrant scene at the roast goose shop, Charlie chose not to join the crowd. Instead, he took out his phone and called Hogan, arranging to meet him at a nearby park.

After their rendezvous, the two men found an empty bench. Charlie proceeded to recount his prison experience to Hogan, recounting the events as they had unfolded.

Upon hearing about the Four Treasures of the Study, Hogan was taken aback. He turned to Charlie and inquired, "Young Master, what is your plan regarding the Four Treasures of the Study now?"

Charlie replied, "Currently, my top priority is to safely retrieve the Four Treasures of the Study from the Cole Family and then figure out how to transport it back to China."

Hogan paused for a moment, then said, "Young Master, we should consider that the Rothschild family might be closely monitoring the Cole family. It might not be easy for you to obtain items from the Cole estate."

Charlie nodded and replied, "You're right, the Rothschild family values the artifact greatly. They may have thoroughly searched the Cole estate, and if they haven't found anything, they won't give up easily. They'll likely keep the entire Cole estate under surveillance. That's why I plan to visit the Cole estate later today and assess the situation."

Hogan raised a concern, "Young master, approaching the Cole estate too hastily might alert the enemy."

Charlie reassured him, "I won't be hasty. Before visiting the Cole family, I'll locate and neutralize anyone who might be secretly watching. I'm confident about that."

He continued, "By the way, Uncle Hogan, I intend to retrieve the Four Treasures of the Study tonight and find a way to transport it back to China. What do you think is the safest route?"

Hogan pondered for a moment before responding, "Young Master, the Rothschild family wields significant influence in the United States. While it appears they've only apprehended Peter Cole on the surface, in reality, they might have set up a dragnet within a hundred-kilometer radius of the Cole family estate. Normal channels, especially entry and exit routes, are likely under strict surveillance. Taking the Four Treasures of the Study out through these channels may prove difficult."

Charlie agreed, saying, "The Cole family's estate is located on the outskirts of New York. Once I have the Four Treasures of the Study, I'll first return to New York and devise a plan from there."

Curious, Hogan inquired, "Why do you want to return to New York, Young Master?"

Charlie elaborated, "Given the surveillance network everywhere else, it makes sense to return to New York. It's the Rothschild family's stronghold, with the highest level of security, but it's also where their vulnerabilities are most evident. This is precisely the location where we can identify a suitable point of entry!"

Chapter 5598 bookmark

At night, the Cole family's manor lay shrouded in darkness. Nearby, the windows of the villa next door were blacked out by Rothschild staff, giving the impression that it was uninhabited.

With nightfall, all activity at the manor ceased, and the parked vehicles within its boundaries fell silent. Unbeknownst to outsiders, inside the seemingly tranquil villa, a group of people gathered, including Steve Rothschild and more than forty individuals, including Royce Rothschild.

Among the group of over 40 people, aside from Steve and his son, approximately 30 individuals were tasked with continuously monitoring the Cole family manor's every move. The remaining 10 people were responsible for the villa's security.

The Rothschild family placed immense importance on their security, especially when the individuals present included the eldest son and eldest grandson of the current patriarch. Even though they had set up a net around the Cole family, the protection

of the family's core members was unwavering. They couldn't afford to be complacent about safety.

Steve Rothschild, concerned about his own safety, sought reassurance from Hank regarding the security within the villa.

To alleviate Steve's worries, Hank proudly explained, "Young Master, the personnel we have here are all top-notch agents equipped with identification friend-or-foe technology. Should the detector detect anyone without the identification equipment, it will immediately relay their location to our snipers."

"Furthermore, each of us wears personal identification equipment, and the system promptly verifies our identity. If surveillance equipment captures our face, the facial recognition system activates to confirm our identity. If it matches, it's considered safe. If not, we'll immediately alert the authorities."

"In addition, all our personnel outside wear 24-hour recorders that cannot be deactivated. The recorded data is uploaded to the cloud, and the intelligence center handles storage and analysis. When any two people encounter each other, cross-checking is possible. Whether it's me or not, your safety here is guaranteed at 100 percent."

Steve found this information extremely reassuring. It appeared that he merely needed to stay put with his son, awaiting Hank to uncover the clues and locate the Four Treasures of the Study.

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Meanwhile, after nightfall, Charlie arranged for Jordan to procure a vehicle and drove quietly to New Jersey, the location of the Cole family estate.

New York and New Jersey, being neighboring states, attracted many middle-class and moderately wealthy New Yorkers seeking a higher quality of life. The distance between them was less than an hour's drive, a manageable commute for those accustomed to driving.

Upon reaching New Jersey, Charlie refrained from heading directly to the Cole family manor. Instead, he parked about a kilometer away from it and visited a roadside café. He ordered a cup of coffee and sat near a window, sipping while surveying his surroundings.

The Cole family manor lay at the end of a road, making this the sole access point to reach it.

While sipping his coffee, Charlie noticed two black Cadillac SUVs parked outside a nearby motel. Despite the cars being turned off and their windows tinted darkly, they harbored occupants - four individuals in each vehicle.

Charlie surmised that these individuals were likely agents under the employ of the Rothschild family, stationed here on standby. If any emergencies arose, these eight individuals could quickly offer support. Moreover, the SUVs were robust and heavy, suitable for interception and capable of withstanding collisions even with regular vehicles.

Charlie thought to himself that the Rothschild family had already begun establishing a wide perimeter about a kilometer away. Venturing closer would undoubtedly subject him to heightened surveillance.

It seemed that acquiring the ,Four Treasures of the Study without exposing himself would be difficult.

At that moment, several middle-aged men in plain clothing entered the coffee shop. Charlie, attuned to his surroundings, observed their movements carefully. Their gait, posture, and precise control of fine movements suggested they were well-trained professionals. Charlie stirred his coffee silently, quietly scrutinizing them.

The men selected a table in the corner, ordered coffee from a waiter, and engaged in low-toned conversation. One of them, gesturing towards the motel across the street, muttered quietly, "These Rothschild people are a real headache. We better hope they don't stir up any more trouble. Another scandal, and our reputation's gone."

His companion nodded in agreement, lowering his voice, "Higher-ups want us to keep an eye on them for now. If they make any unusual moves, we're to intervene immediately. However, they've warned us not to get too close. The Rothschilds are on edge, and we don't want to provoke them by getting too close to the Cole house."

The first man sighed in exasperation, "They don't take the FBI seriously at all. Monitoring them is probably futile. Look at their personnel and equipment. They're miles ahead of us. If they're determined to do something, we won't be able to stop them."

One colleague chimed in, "I've heard from the equipment department that the Rothschild family brought in top-of-the-line thermal imaging gear. It can identify details within a few hundred meters, even down to the gender of a mouse. Who knows what they're up to?"

Another colleague added, "Our hands are tied here. If they're set on their course, no one can prevent them. The White House won't stand a chance. We just need to act



as if we're trying to thwart them. Mission accomplished. If public opinion goes south, we can always claim we did our best, but they didn't take us seriously."

A third colleague, who had remained quiet until now, suddenly spoke up, "Did any of you notice the helicopter that flew by this afternoon?"

Both of them nodded in acknowledgment. One asked, "What's special about the helicopter? There are at least a dozen Rothschild helicopters around here."

The third colleague adopted a mysterious tone, "Those helicopters are on standby nearby, none of them ventured within a mile of the Cole property. However, that afternoon flight was an exception. Do you know who was on board?"

The others leaned in, eagerly inquiring, "Who was it?"

The third colleague whispered, "I can't confirm, but I'm pretty sure there were direct Rothschild family members on that helicopter!"

"Really?" They both looked surprised. One of them inquired, "Why are direct Rothschild family members here? What are they doing?"

The colleague responded, "I'm not sure about their specific agenda, but based on the series of actions taken by the Rothschilds, it's evident that the Cole family holds great significance for them. Yesterday, our director had a meeting and mentioned that almost the entire Rothschild family had been mobilized, putting New York and a 200-mile radius under lockdown!"

"Lockdown?" one of them questioned. "I haven't heard anything about this."

The man went on to explain, "The current martial law is not public. The police are out blocking all land transportation, inspecting all vehicles leaving the designated area. Their reason is an anti-drug operation. They claim to have received a tip about a large drug influx into New York."

"In addition, all departing aircraft from the port now undergo two security checks, and even goods loaded into the warehouse must be rechecked. This is all happening discreetly and hasn't made it into the public eye."

"Moreover, cargo ships are prohibited from leaving the port, and customs is conducting thorough inspections. They're claiming externally that a batch of potentially weaponizable nuclear materials is leaving New York, heading for terrorists. But honestly, it's all a bunch of nonsense. Who in their right mind would sell nuclear materials from New York? It's just a ruse by the Rothschild family."

He added, "Oh, and by the way, helicopters can't even leave New York right now. The entire city is under a tight lockdown!"

The first person inquired, puzzled, "Where did you hear all this? How come I haven't heard about such a significant operation?"

The man clarified, "This all started just today. There's a group of core Rothschild family members overseeing every aspect of land, water, and air. High-ranking individuals are in a frenzy, but I don't have the full details."

Another person sighed, "I don't care what they're up to. I just know I'll be staying up all night again tonight. Who knows when this grueling situation will end."

At that moment, the waiter arrived with three cups of coffee. The three of them exchanged glances and ceased their hushed conversation.

They believed their discreet whispers in the corner wouldn't reach anyone's ears, but unbeknownst to them, every word was clearly heard by Charlie.

Charlie's mind raced. In his perspective, the Rothschild family's stringent guarding of the Cole family manor aimed to locate the four-square treasure building. Now, with the arrival of their core members, it was like an unexpected breakthrough had fallen into his lap.

Without anyone from the Rothschild family helping him, it would be an arduous task to sneak away the Four Treasures of the Study amidst such professional surveillance equipment.

With the arrival of the Rothschild family's core members, it was as if a golden opportunity had presented itself. Taking the Four Treasures of the Study without arousing suspicion and smuggling it out of the United States was best achieved with unwitting assistance from the Rothschild family as a mule.

No matter who from the Rothschild family had come this time, one thing was clear: they were there to aid him!

Chapter 5599 bookmark

Late at night, Charlie parked his car in a roadside parking space and disappeared into the depths of the alley.

Cole Family Manor stood proudly at the bend of a U-shaped river, nestled within the inner curve of the U. This unique positioning not only placed the manor at the end of the road but also encased it on three sides with the protection of the flowing waters.

Not too long ago, Charlie gave remote orders to Wesley. They employed advanced technology and close-range defense artillery to eliminate Jarvis Delgado in Cyprus. Consequently, he was fully aware that his credibility would be in doubt tonight. Therefore, he didn't rush over to Cole's house. Instead, he opted to approach it from the opposite side of the river, using the embankment.

In the cover of darkness, Charlie moved with the grace of a shadow, his presence carefully concealed. He meticulously scanned his surroundings, extending his reiki in a continuous sweep. When he found himself less than a kilometer away from the Cole house, he halted, releasing a surge of reiki to investigate the area within a few hundred meters of the estate.

It didn't take long for him to discover several members of the Rothschild family lurking around the Cole family manor. Some hid within cars, others along the riverbank, and a few even found refuge in the sheltering branches of trees. To make matters worse, a speedboat was moored by the river, concealing additional individuals on board.

Charlie continued his exploration, quickly spotting a neighboring villa adjacent to the Cole family manor. From the outside, the villa appeared dimly lit, but Charlie suspected that it held forty to fifty people within its walls, an unusually large number.

Without a doubt, this villa served as the Rothschild family's stronghold in the area, housing their core members.

Charlie meticulously assessed the situation within the villa. On its rooftop, he spotted several snipers armed with high-caliber anti-materiel sniper rifles. While lacking the formidable firepower of anti-aircraft guns, these rifles possessed enough single-shot force to cause considerable damage.

Furthermore, the rooftop brimmed with a multitude of surveillance devices, not only monitoring the Cole family manor but also maintaining a watchful eye on the entire villa.

Charlie understood the gravity of the situation. He couldn't afford to be detected by these professional surveillance devices, as exposure would spell disaster.

The most pressing challenge for Charlie lay in devising a plan to infiltrate the villa unnoticed, without raising any alarms.

Just as Charlie pondered his next move, a method of approach flashed through his mind.

...

Meanwhile, inside the villa adjacent to the Cole family manor, Steve Rothschild sat in a room shrouded in drawn curtains, his eyes fixed on the screen displaying a live feed of the surroundings.

In the footage, the world appeared in shades of black and white. The black outlines delineated buildings, roads, and trees, while the white shapes varied in size. Most resembled human figures, with a few resembling birds or other small creatures.

These white figures represented the hidden members of the Rothschild family scattered around the Cole family estate.

Each figure bore a green dot, a testament to Hank's sophisticated enemy identification system.

The system employed thermal imaging cameras to detect individuals within its range. The location and identity of each person, as transmitted by their own identification devices, were uploaded to a cloud server. The server then matched the identities and locations to the thermal imaging picture, marking friend or foe with a green dot.

If someone entered the monitoring range without a confirmed identity, the system flagged them with a red dot, issuing an alert to all.

Steve studied the white figures on the screen, a sense of unease gnawing at him. He turned to his son, Royce, and voiced his concerns. "Your grandfather tasked us with this surveillance, but something feels off."

Curious, Royce inquired, "Father, what do you mean? What's wrong?"

Steve's expression grew troubled as he replied, "While everyone else is blocking all land, water, and air routes, we're simply waiting here. What if the target doesn't come to us? Then all our efforts would be in vain."

He continued, his voice tinged with worry, "This mission is no ordinary task. It holds the key to our family's legacy. If someone were to seize this opportunity before us, everything would be lost."

Royce nodded, absorbing his father's words. "Father, what do you suggest we do?"

After a moment of contemplation, Steve proposed, "Royce, I believe we should divide our efforts. I will remain here to safeguard the Cole house, while you swiftly explore alternative avenues and assess the progress of the others. See if we can obtain the Four Treasures of the Study before anyone else does."

"Understood, father!" Royce affirmed, his voice filled with respect. "I'll make preparations for the helicopter immediately."

Steve interjected, "Leave the arrangements to me. I will also inform Hank."

He reached for the phone and dialed Hank's number.

In due time, a knock sounded at the door, and Hank, the trusted aide, entered the room. "Young Master, it's Hank," he announced respectfully.

Steve motioned for him to come in. "Come in, Hank," he said.

Hank stepped forward, his tone deferential as he inquired, "Young Master, how may I assist you?"

Steve conveyed his instructions. "Hank, inform the helicopter team to prepare for takeoff. We'll be returning to New York in twenty minutes."

Without hesitation, Hank replied, "No problem, Young Master. Shall I inform them to prepare for your departure or Young Master Royce's?"

Steve gestured toward Royce. "I have urgent matters that require Royce's attention. We cannot afford any delays."

Hank nodded, then transmitted the message via the walkie-talkie. "Attention, helicopter crew. The Young Master will be departing for New York in twenty minutes. Please make the necessary preparations."

The main pilot's voice crackled through the device. "Understood! We'll be ready to take off in twenty minutes!"

Hank turned to Steve, seeking further instructions. "Young Master, is there anything else I can assist you with?"

Steve raised a question that had been nagging at him. "You mentioned earlier that our security system is foolproof. But is there any possibility of failure? Can someone enter or exit without detection?"

Hank smiled confidently. "Young Master, all our professional equipment operates with multiple redundancies. We've taken every precaution. Even if one device were to malfunction, it wouldn't compromise our monitoring and security. As long as these systems remain operational, no one can slip past us, whether it be beneath our noses or onto the grounds of the Cole family undetected."

Steve felt a measure of relief, ready to dismiss Hank when Royce interjected. "Hank, you mentioned the redundancy in our equipment. I'd like to know, what if there's a sudden power outage?"

Hank paused briefly, then offered a reassuring smile. "Our security system primarily relies on thermal imaging radar and various monitoring devices. During a power outage, these devices would indeed become ineffective."

He continued, "However, you need not worry, Young Master. This villa is equipped with two separate power supply lines, each from a different provider. Unless the entire power grid collapses, even if one line were to fail, the other would seamlessly take over."

Royce pressed further. "But what if the opposition manages to sabotage both power lines?"

Hank hesitated momentarily before replying, "That... that shouldn't happen. I personally inspected the power lines, and they are buried underground, impervious to tampering. Moreover, we have stringent security measures in place..."

Before Hank could finish his sentence, darkness enveloped the room, plunging them into pitch blackness.

Instinctively, Hank questioned, "Power outage?"

Chapter 5600 bookmark

The abrupt power outage plunged the room into darkness, casting doubt in the eyes of three individuals momentarily.

As Hank grappled with confusion in the darkness, an uproar erupted from the intercom.

One voice exclaimed, "Why the power outage? All our monitoring gear is down!"

Another added, "Every detection device is offline! The central control room's visibility is zero and the ID system's dead too!"

A third voice questioned, "What's happening? This place has two power lines, right?"

Another retorted, "What good are two or three lines now? The issue's the power outage! Where's the logistics head? Why wasn't there backup power arranged?"

Someone lashed out, "Nobody mentioned setting up emergency power! Even FBI missions don't always carry backups, unless it's to the Middle East or Afghanistan! With this much gear and power load, what backup can handle it? A Cummins diesel generator? Should I fetch a power truck for you to use?"

"Damn! Are you giving excuses?"

"Are you arguing? Do you even comprehend how crucial the monitoring gear in the control room and on the roof is? Don't just yap without sense! Speak only if you have something useful!"

The sudden blackout rattled the typically composed team.

For a villa equipped with dual power lines, power outages were a rare occurrence, maybe once in a decade.

Originally a private estate, the house was acquired by the Rothschilds to oversee the neighboring Cole Manor. To them, this seemed like setting a trap for mice—utter domination over a weaker entity.

Furthermore, situated a few dozen kilometers from New York, within the Rothschild family's stronghold, everyone's sense of security was unusually high. Their primary concern was whether the intended target would dare sneak into the Cole family villa under their noses. No one fathomed the audacity of this intruder.

It was akin to the police setting a trap for a criminal suspect, worrying only about the criminal's absence or escape, never anticipating the suspect's daring entry into their headquarters.

Hank, conducting a security assessment, had never foreseen an attack here.

Despite the power cut, he didn't feel a sense of imminent intrusion.

On the contrary, he suspected the outage was a deliberate ploy by intruders aiming to snatch the Sifang Treasure Tower!

Although the Rothschilds had installed state-of-the-art defenses, relying on high-tech gear had its downside. A power outage rendered them defenseless.

Anyone who's played Red Alert knows no matter the cannons, prism towers, or SAM missiles if power is short, all defenses collapse.

Jarvis Delgado understood this cutting power to the Cyprus copper mines nullified Wesley's defenses, regardless of their strength.

However, initially overconfident, Jarvis had no inkling of crisis. But Charlie was different.

He knew better than to let his shoes get wet near the riverbank; thus, when near water, he wore rubber boots that are called well prepared.

In the darkness, Hank heard the chaotic radio chatter and commanded, "Enough noise! Send someone to check the circuit immediately. Stay alert! Keep eyes on the Cole family! The mouse might be returning to its nest! This time, we will steal the stolen goods together!"

Upon hearing this, Steve Rothschild, excited, exclaimed, "Hank's right! The Coles have come back for the Four Treasures of the Study! I knew Peter Cole wasn't truthful! He claimed to move the treasures alone, unassociated with the family. Most likely, the entire Cole family planned this return! It's them!"

He urged Hank, "Don't act hastily! Wait till they bring out the treasures before nabbing them! Remember, don't let them escape! We can't let them walk away with the treasures!"

Hank thought, "Do I need this lecture?" But respectfully said, "Understood, Young Master. We're keeping a close watch on the Cole family. They won't escape."

Royce chimed in, gleeful, "Dad! With the Four Treasures of the Study, we're in the clear!"

Steve, pumped up, added, "Our trap is set. It's time they come, and they finally have! Grandfather's foresight is spot-on!"

He instructed Hank, "This is on you now. If they escape, we'll all be starving!"

Hank assured, "Young Master, not even a fly will escape today!"

Steve clenched his fists, suppressing his excitement. "Wait and watch the Cole family!"



Gritting his teeth, he adjusted his collar, his demeanor fierce. "Stealing from our family and causing us grief, the Coles! The worst part about the De family's passivity is their indirect threat to my position as first heir. Whoever I catch today, I'll deal with it personally!"

Steve's hostility had a basis.

Originally the first heir, the theft of the Four Treasures had sidelined him. Howard had announced that whoever found the treasures would be the new heir, effectively deposing Steve. Finding the treasures would merely correct a mistake failing would lead to disaster.

He despised the Cole family more than his father, Howard, did.

Royce added, "Dad, if we catch them, don't hand them to the police. Once we recover the Four Treasures, I'll make them disappear!"

Steve nodded, "Last time, Peter was cunning, alerting the police beforehand. We won't repeat that mistake. Once we recover the treasures today, anyone found will vanish from this world!"

Chapter 5601 bookmark

As Steve finished, a chilling voice pierced the room, questioning, "How do you plan on making me vanish?"

In the dimly lit room, an unexpected voice startled the trio instantaneously!

Through the faint window light, they could discern the figure before them, yet his face remained obscured.

However, judging by his demeanor and voice, the man seemed relatively young, though the moment of his arrival had eluded their senses. His countenance, cold and sardonic, struck fear into all three of them.

The speaker was none other than Charlie.

The power outage in the villa resulted from Charlie's direct use of energy to disable the two power lines across the river.

Aware of their extensive high-tech defenses, he opted to cut the power. Regular houses lacked backup, but this high-end villa area had two lines and a main supply. Disconnecting the two lines left residences within kilometers in darkness.

The outage rendered their high-tech surveillance defunct. Charlie entered like a ghost, undetectable to anyone.

It was then that Hank realized the power outage targeted not Cole Manor but the frontline headquarters.

He was the first to react, instinctively drawing a pistol and aiming at Charlie, without a word, pulling the trigger.

Oddly, the trigger seemed to be locked by a safety mechanism. Though it could be pulled halfway, the pistol's hammer remained inactive.

Before he could grasp what had occurred, Charlie materialized before him with blinding speed, tapped his shoulder lightly, and calmly remarked, "Best not to cross Ross. Slip up, and you'll be my loyal dog."

As Charlie spoke, Hank dropped to the ground, assuming a canine posture, mimicking barks, "Woof!"

Steve and Royce were stunned. They never imagined Hank, a ruthless individual, would grovel before Charlie, attempting to please him like a faithful hound.

Innumerable thoughts raced through their minds. They pondered fleeing or seeking aid but feared Charlie's unnoticed appearance suggested their calls for help might prove futile. Worse, provoking him might lead to their demise.

Charlie cast a cold glance at the pair and said, "You two are core Rothschild members, right? Introduce yourselves, eldest to youngest."

Steve, horrified, stammered, "Who are you? What's your aim?!"

Charlie scowled and struck him across the face, knocking out several molars.

Ignoring the pain, Steve spat bloodied teeth defiantly. Accustomed to a life of privilege, he'd never been treated so disrespectfully. Enraged, he snapped, "Do you know who I am? How dare you!"

Charlie retorted, "I asked for introductions, and I'm not patient. Answer, or I'll end you both. Leave one alive, and that's enough for me."

Saying this, he stared at the father-son duo coldly, warning, "If you don't want your bodies on the streets, cooperate!"

Trembling, Royce interjected, "Please, don't be angry. My father's slow. I'll answer your questions!"

Pleased, Charlie nodded, "Speak."

Royce hastily introduced himself and his father, revealing their lineage within the Rothschild family.

Charlie was taken aback. The core members here were genuinely core—the eldest son and grandson, typically first and second heirs of the family.

With them, securing the Four Treasures of the Study or even leaving the US might no longer be an issue.

Addressing the pair, Charlie laid out the terms, "Cooperate, and your lives are spared. One chance. Fail, and I kill you. Understand?"

The two nodded fervently, "We do."

Satisfied, Charlie turned to Hank and inquired, "How many here under your command?"

Hank reported, "Over a hundred, Master."

Charlie probed, "Can you facilitate my access to Cole Manor?"

Hank hesitated, admitting, "I'm not in full command. Howard's informants remain. If I act rashly, they'll report. Once Howard orders, they won't heed me."

Charlie pressed, "If I acquire the Four Treasures, can we bypass their blockade?"

Hank shook his head, "Silent escape's impossible, They're recording every move. Even if we find a way, videos would give us away."

Turning to the Rothschilds, Charlie ordered, "If silence isn't an option, they're useless. Help me dispose of them!"

Horrified, Steve and Roy quaked in terror.

Ready to execute Charlie's command, Hank aimed at Steve first.

In a desperate plea, Steve offered, "Don't shoot! I have a plan!"

At that critical moment, Charlie intervened, allowing Steve to speak.

With a look of relief, Steve proposed, "Sir, you can take my helicopter! Members of the Rothschild family can freely enter and leave the blockade area with their own helicopters."

Chapter 5602 bookmark

"Leave in your helicopter?" Charlie glanced at Steve, puzzled. "Where exactly can your helicopter take me?"

Steve hastily replied, "It has a range of about three hundred miles. Anywhere it flies, you're good to go!"

He quickly added, "I've already alerted the pilot to get ready for takeoff. You're free to leave whenever!"

Charlie inquired, "And where do you plan for me to go once you're ready to take off?"

Steve responded promptly, "I intend for my son, Royce, to head back and assess the situation at home, check on everyone's progress, and gather any news..."

Charlie remained composed, "You're sending your son back home instead of letting him venture outside the blockade. How can you guarantee your helicopter's passage in and out of the blockade area?"

Steve replied instinctively, "As the primary heir of the Rothschild family, my helicopter can surely come and go without obstruction. No one will dare to stop me."

Charlie gave a faint smile, "Whether anyone dares to stop you, that'll only become apparent once you try."

Turning to Hank, Charlie instructed, "You'll accompany Master Royce on the helicopter ride. Fly directly outside the blockade. If there's no interference, return straight away. If there is, claim that Master Royce wants to test air traffic control's strength."

Royce visibly relaxed upon hearing he'd be allowed to leave via helicopter, as if narrowly escaping a calamity.

In his mind, as long as he could leave and if the helicopter faced interception, he could call for help and find a way out. But Charlie's next words instantly shattered his hopeful scenario.

Charlie glanced at Hank and stated calmly, "Remember, if Master Royce tries to seek help or abandons you at any point, don't hesitate to shoot him. Aim for his head and make it count."

Hank responded firmly, "Master, I won't hesitate. If he tries anything, I'll act swiftly."

Royce went pale with fright.

He knew Hank's elevated status within the Rothschild family. Being the old man's most trusted bodyguard and strategic advisor meant Hank was always armed around Rothschild family members.

If he sought aid from others, there was a high chance Hank would shoot him before he finished asking.

Charlie arranged for Hank to oversee the entire process. Hank's stature meant no one would directly shoot him. Therefore, if Royce sought assistance, the person he asked wouldn't have a chance to retaliate. If Hank intended to eliminate him, it would be effortless.

Royce realized he had no way out. Regardless of whether the helicopter got intercepted, he'd have to return obediently.

Just as Royce despaired, Charlie turned to Steve and said sternly, "Listen up. If your son tries any tricks, not only will he face the consequences, but you won't survive either. Understand?"

Steve nodded hastily, apprehension evident in his eyes. "I understand... I understand..."

At this moment, Hank's walkie-talkie crackled with a report from his subordinates, "Boss, I've reached out to the power supply company. The circuit got hit bad. The one across the river? It's sliced clean. Tonight ain't gonna see enough folks to fix it up. Earliest would be dawn tomorrow. Should we haul in a power supply truck?"

Hank turned to Charlie, awaiting instructions. Charlie's response was quick, "Tell'em to hold off on the power supply truck tonight. If they've cut the circuit, they're gearing up. Bringing in trucks now won't do much. Stay on high alert, watch the Cole family closely. Don't let your guard down."

Hank relayed Charlie's words to his team without hesitation.

The response came back, "Got it, boss. We're on it!"

Charlie knew there were hundreds of eyes fixed on Cole Manor. He could slip into the manor unnoticed, but getting away with the Four Treasures of the Study in broad daylight, especially the four-square treasure banner from the stone lion, was out of the question. And taking the treasures forcibly might expose him.

The bigger issue of dismantling the Clearance Society wasn't resolved. Revealing himself to the Rothschild family would create more problems than solutions.

So, Charlie sought a safer path. If he could stealthily bring back the treasures to China, he'd fulfill Peter's trust.

It was nearly three hours until dawn. Charlie decided to check the feasibility of the helicopter route.

Ten minutes later, Steve's helicopter lifted off from the villa's backyard.

Despite the spacious cabin's capacity for over twenty people, only Hank and Royce occupied it. Charlie sat casually, glancing at Steve in the dim light, asking, "As the first heir of the Rothschild family, why get your hands dirty?"

Steve grimaced, "You don't know... My father declared today that whoever retrieves the Sifang Treasure Mansion will inherit the Rothschild legacy. It's like erasing my claim as the first heir."

Charlie nodded knowingly, "No wonder you're out here late, working hard despite your age."

Steve sighed, "No choice... If I lose my status, my son loses his future. I've got to secure his legacy."

"Why this spot though? Why not partner up with agencies to block it off?" Charlie inquired.

Steve admitted, "My father believes the treasure's highest chance is here, so here I am."

Charlie revealed, "The Four Treasures of the Study you're after? They're with the Coles. And I'm here to take them."

Although Steve had an inkling, Charlie's words stunned him. Charlie's stealth and reach indicated an extraordinary capability.

Initially excited about the treasure's location, Steve soon felt regret and frustration.

Unable to shake off Charlie, Steve faced potential life-threatening risks. If he knew the treasure's location earlier, he'd have used excavators from the start, securing the treasure before Charlie.

Seeing Steve's dismay, Charlie smirked, "Steve, you seem troubled."

Steve, flustered, denied, "No, no, you misunderstood..."

Charlie suggested, "Steve, we don't have to be enemies. If I take the treasure today, it might be in your favor."

"In my favor?" Steve was taken aback.

Charlie explained, "Didn't your father say the one who brings back the treasure will be the heir? But what if no one gets it? You'd still be next in line, wouldn't you?"

Chapter 5603 bookmark

Charlie's words sent a jolt through Steve, catching him off guard.

It made sense if he pondered it. The one who snags the Four Treasures of the Study first would be the prime successor. He urgently aimed to reclaim those ancient artifacts before someone else swooped in and swiped his chances.

But what if no one could regain control of the Four Treasures of the Study? Even if he blocked others' advancements, wouldn't he still be the leading heir?

The difference, of course, would be that although he retained his position as the prime heir, the Sifang Mansion would no longer belong to the Rothschild family.

Choices were scarce for Steve now.

His life rested in someone else's hands, and he felt fortunate just to be alive.

Subconsciously, he queried Charlie, "Sir, can you ensure that the Sifang Mansion won't slip into anyone else's grasp within the Rothschild family?"

Charlie furrowed his brow slightly, questioning coldly, "You're asking for guarantees quite liberally, aren't you? What makes you think you have the right to ask for such assurances?"

Quickly, Steve apologized, "I'm terribly sorry, I didn't mean it that way. Please don't misinterpret my words..."

Charlie pressed on aggressively, "Then, what did you mean?"

Wiping sweat from his forehead, Steve hesitated before saying, "I... I just want to know... what are your plans for the Four Treasures of the Study..."

Charlie glanced at him calmly and stated, "You obtained the Four Treasures of the Study from China, so my task is to return them to their rightful owner, Zhao, and back to China."

Looking directly at Steve, Charlie assured, "So, don't fret too much. Once the Four Treasures return to China, they'll be safeguarded. China won't permit this national treasure to leave its borders again."

Steve's relief was palpable. A faint smile crept onto his lips, and he couldn't help but rub his hands together in contentment, murmuring, "Fantastic, absolutely fantastic..."

Charlie, with a smile, inquired, "What's so great about it?"

Steve rushed to explain, "This treasure originally hails from China. Returning it to its rightful place is best..."

Charlie probed further, "Your father always dreamed of reclaiming the Four Treasures of the Study for the Rothschild family. Why aren't you aligned with his wishes?"

Thinking Charlie was testing him, Steve immediately responded, "Sir, truthfully, my father still clings to great-power ideology. He believes if something was taken from him, it's rightfully his. But that's preposterous. We live in a civilized society! These artifacts were acquired wrongly in the past and now it's only right they return to their origins. I've had a modern legal education and a strong sense of justice!"

Charlie nodded approvingly, querying, "So, even if it goes against your father's wishes, you'd assist me in returning the Four Treasures to China, despite being the heir to the Rothschild family?"

Steve nodded resolutely without hesitation. He clenched his fists and affirmed, "Yes, I will!"



Then, in a humble tone, Steve added hurriedly, "But, sir, I have a small request. I hope you can grant it."

Charlie remained composed, "Tell me about it."

Steve implored, "After you return the Four Treasures of the Study to China, please keep our conversation tonight confidential..."

Charlie feigned comprehension, smiling, "Ah, I understand. You fear your father's retribution."

"Yes..." Steve admitted, "I'll assist in returning the treasures, and you'll keep our secret. A win-win situation, wouldn't you say?"

Charlie smiled subtly, "If your father knew you aided outsiders in removing the treasures from the US to secure your position as the heir, he'd be furious, right?"

"More than just furious..." Steve sighed, "He might even kill me! You don't understand, he values the Four Treasures more than anything. To him, besides his life, nothing surpasses their importance."

Charlie acknowledged, "Let's talk about cooperation then."

Steve eagerly agreed, "Sir, please! As long as it's within my power, I'll do my utmost!"

Charlie revealed, "I'll spare your life and your son's, but you must find a way to get me and the Four Treasures out of the US. In return, I'll return the Four Treasures to China and assure your continued role as the heir."

Steve assented without hesitation, "Sir, I agree to your terms. However, I'm concerned it might take some time to get you out of the country. My family has sealed off New York. If my helicopter can't fly tonight, I'll have to wait for another opportunity."

In the distance, the sound of a helicopter roared. Charlie's eyes gleamed as he remarked, "Your son's returned."

Steve instinctively said, "I hope they haven't encountered any trouble!"

A few minutes later, Hank and Royce reentered Charlie's room.

Steve couldn't wait and asked as soon as they walked in, "So, did anyone stop you?"

Royce replied with a bitter tone, "Yes... The National Security Agency's radar detected our helicopter near the blockade zone. They radioed us, warning that our airspace is off-limits due to homeland security. They asked us to stay away from the cordon and didn't force a landing after verifying our identity, but the area is off-limits."

Hank added, "The level of control is as tight as it was post-9/11."

Hearing this, Charlie marveled at the Rothschild family's power.

They kept a low profile, barely appearing in the media. Despite rumors, their true strength remained unknown until today.

The family's ability to mobilize various U.S. government departments—FBI, CIA, Food and Drug Administration, even the National Security Agency—to tighten the blockade around New York showcased their unparalleled influence.

Charlie realized that leaving the U.S. was a daunting task. The blockade, monitored by recorders uploading real-time data, posed a risk. Any attempt to escape would likely expose his identity, leading to a global manhunt.

Considering these risks, Charlie understood he needed a foolproof plan.

Moreover, simply escaping the blockade wouldn't suffice. Rothschild's influence might widen it. The safest bet was to leave the U.S. discreetly.

He turned to Steve, asking, "Your family has properties globally. Would your father allow any members to leave the U.S. amidst this?"

Steve explained, "My father prioritizes retrieving the Four Treasures. Other matters are sidelined. Leaving the U.S. might not be sanctioned. Even family members abroad are returning due to the heir's selection."

Charlie pondered, "Canada is close. Maybe—"

Interrupting, Royce remembered, "Queen Helena of Northern Europe is visiting Canada next week. Grandpa urged me to bond with her."

Steve clarified, "Despite plans, in the present crisis, it's uncertain if he'd permit that."

Charlie questioned, "Why does the Rothschild family seek an alliance with the Queen of Northern Europe?"

Steve elaborated, "Our reputation in Europe's not ideal. Marrying into European royalty has been declined for centuries. But Helena's an exception. She's unconventional and doesn't follow tradition, making her more acceptable."

Steve continued, "Other royal families seek traditional marriages, whereas Helena's open to love and defies conventional norms. This makes her a potential match for the Rothschilds."

Charlie speculated, "If Helena left for Canada tonight, would your father send Royce immediately?"



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