

***COVER STORY***

封面故事

# A Wish in the Metaverse 元宇宙的願望

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## A death in the family and curry fish balls 家中的噩耗和咖喱魚丸

When Sirius's father died last month, he thought all the surviving family members would gather and sit down in an office, where a moustache twirling, monocle wearing, solicitor would read to them his father's last will and testament.

Placing the piece of paper at eye level and enunciating with great clarity – 'This is the last will and testament of such and such' in a slightly pretentious manner. Sadly, this is real life and not a novel, so instead, Sirius's mother made an application to the probate court and was appointed as administrator responsible for settling the estate of her late husband. As administrator, she went on to collect her late husband's estate, which did not take long time at all since what little was left in Father Lee's bank account was more or less drained to pay off his debts.



李瑞斯的父親在上月離世。瑞斯曾以為剩下的家庭成員會聚首一堂，到辦公室聽著一個捻着小胡子、戴著單片眼睛的律師宣讀父親的遺囑。

律師將那張紙放在與眼睛平齊的位置，以清晰卻略帶裝腔作勢的口吻朗讀：「這就是遺囑的所有部分。對，就是這樣。」遺憾地，這是現實生活而不是童話故事，所以瑞斯的母親向遺囑認證法院提出了申請，希望被任命為管理人，賦予她處理丈夫遺產的權力。作為遺產管理者，她為打點丈夫的遺產奔波，然而這根本不是什麼費時的工作，畢竟李父在銀行帳戶中的錢或多或少都被拿去償還債務。



In the end, there were one thousand three hundred and thirty-seven dollars to be split between mother, son, and daughter. Mother Lee offered to transfer the money to her children, to which daughter replied 'Don't bother', and suggested that Mother Lee keep both her children's share and use the money to buy curry fish balls for dinner instead. A phenomenal proposal, both Mother Lee and Sirius thought, as curry fish balls had become quite the rare delicacy due to rising sea temperatures that turned into a global fish shortage. 'Tonight, we shall dine like royalty!' Mother Lee proudly proclaimed. Father Lee would have been ecstatic.

Father Lee also left Sirius something else that was of value. But before we get to that in the next chapter, let us take a moment to talk about our protagonist - Sirius.

Sirius Lee's parents were hardcore fantasy novel enthusiasts. Which is why Sirius is Sirius, and his sister is named Dora. Named after characters of their parents' favourite book. When he was a child, Sirius's parents drew lightning shaped patterns on his forehead with liquid eyeliner, and gave him black round spectacles to wear with the lens popped out. And while Sirius did get made fun of sometimes (mostly for having liquid eyeliner on his face), he did not particularly mind being Sirius. He felt that it was a dignified name. He does get annoyed when his dates ask if he is able to transform into a large black dog, to which he has to explain that contrary to popular belief, magic does not actually exist.

Perhaps owing to his namesake, Sirius developed quite early in life and had always been tall, reaching 6 feet tall by the time he was eighteen. He developed an interest in basketball at an early age after experiencing Yao Ming play the sport through first person archive VR footage. He showed remarkable aptitude for the game and was invited to represent his country in the under-19 world basketball championship at the age of sixteen. An opportunity he declined so he could pursue his studies instead. His passion for basketball paid off though, because it earned him a scholarship at one of the country's most prestigious universities, where he studied information technology and graduated at the top of his class.

最終，只有一千三百三十七美元可在母親、兒子和女兒間分配。李母提出將錢留給孩子們，女兒卻回答道：「不要費心了。」並建議母親一併保留孩子們的份額，用這些錢去買咖喱魚丸。李母和瑞斯都認為這是一個有趣的建議，打從海水溫度上升導致全球魚類短缺後，咖喱魚丸已成為相當罕見的珍饈。李母自豪地宣布：「就今天晚上，讓我們像皇室一樣用餐吧！」。如果李父知道這個決定，必定也會欣喜若狂吧。

李父還給瑞斯留下了一些有價值的東西。然而在進入下一章前，讓我們花點時間談談我們的主人翁李瑞斯。

李瑞斯的父母是幻想小說的狂熱愛好者。他們以最喜歡的書中的角色為子女命名，這解釋了瑞斯為什麼叫瑞斯，而他的姐姐叫朵拉的原因。在瑞斯小時候，父母用眼線液在他的額頭上畫出閃電形狀的圖案，並給他戴上沒有鏡片的黑色圓形眼鏡。雖然瑞斯有時候會被人取笑（主要因為他臉上的眼線液），但他並不介意自己被稱作瑞斯這件事，他覺得這是個莊重高貴的名字。當他的約會對象問他是否能夠如書中般變身成為一隻大黑狗時，他通常會覺得惱火。然而他也不得不解釋說，與世人的想像不同，魔法並不存在。

或是拜名字所賜，瑞斯很早就開始發育並一直在長高，在十八歲的時候身高甚至達到了六尺。他在小時候觀看了以姚明打球時用第一人稱錄影的 VR 片段後，便對籃球產生了興趣。瑞斯在籃球領域中展現了過人的才能，並在十六歲時受邀代表國家參加為十九歲以下組別而設的世界籃球錦標賽。瑞斯拒絕了這個機會，選擇了繼續求學。不過，全國最富盛名的大學之一也回報了他對籃球的熱情，為他提供豐厚的獎學金。瑞斯在大學學習資訊科技，並以全班第一名的成績畢業。



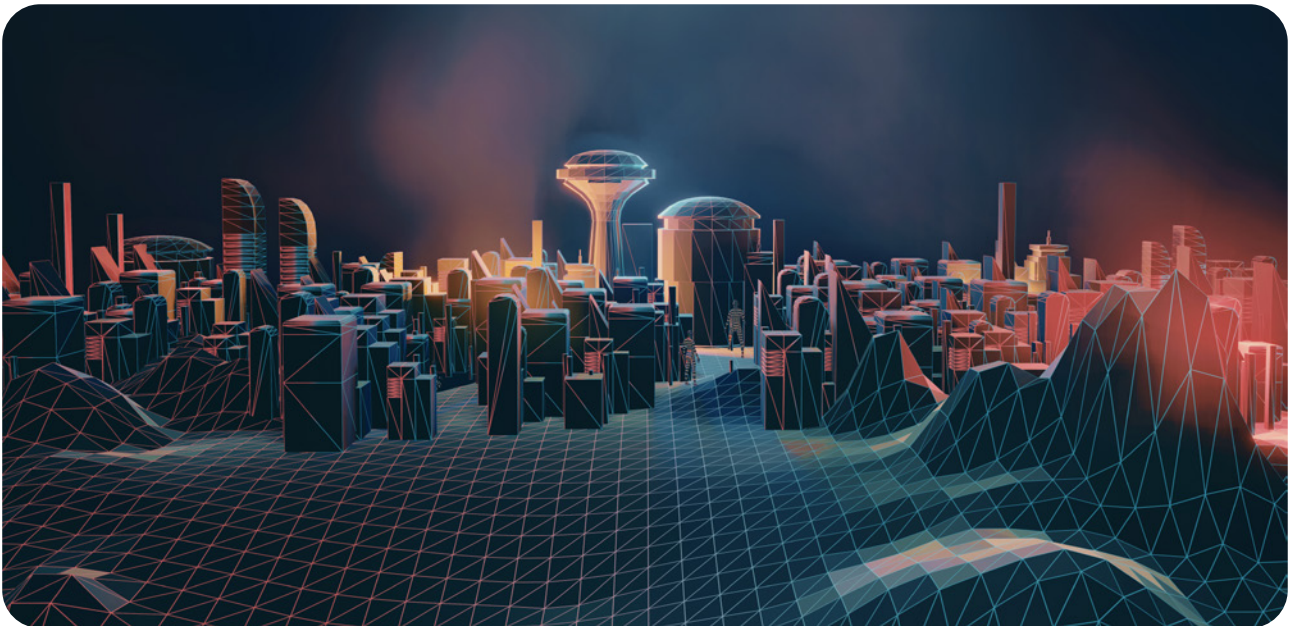


Sirius chose to study information technology because it was a much sought-after discipline that only took in the brightest. Their family was poor. Father Lee had squandered his money on a string of bad investments partly in Metaverse, and had acquired an unending pile of debts that would follow him to his death. At the time, Web 3.0 and the Metaverse stood on the cusp of greatness and the industry desperately needed I.T. professionals. Many I.T. graduates would go on to become major players in the field, and some would even become movers and shakers on the world stage. Sirius knew from a young age that he wanted to achieve financial independence as soon as possible, so it felt only natural to pursue the most lucrative option of all the degrees.

And at first, it was everything Sirius had hoped for. He landed a high paying job straight after graduation at a respectable company, where he would spend the first five years of his career designing infrastructure for Metaverse cities.

資訊科技是一門受歡迎的學科，一向只招收最優秀的人才，這也是瑞斯選擇學習資訊科技的原因。瑞斯的家庭貧困，李父在進行一連串元宇宙的投資中後漸漸揮霍了全部錢財，背了一堆至死方能擺脫的債務。在那個時候，網絡 3.0 和元宇宙如日中天，對相關專業人才非常渴求。眾多資訊科技學系的畢業生後都留在相關領域工作，某些更成為了撼動潮流、活躍於世界舞台的菁英。瑞斯從小就決定要盡快實現經濟獨立，所以踏入有利可圖的資訊科技行業是相當合理的決定。

所有事情都跟著瑞斯的期望穩定進行。瑞斯畢業後旋即在一所享負盛名的企業找到了一份高薪的工作。瑞斯在這間公司逗留了五年，為元宇宙中的城市設計基礎設施。



He then took his hard-earned money and invested heavily in cryptocurrencies and NFTs. Sirius understood that it was only a matter of time before the crypto-economy became mainstream. With the advent of improved VR tech and cheaper access, people's lives and society had become seamlessly integrated with the Metaverse. The governments pegging their national currencies against cryptocurrencies in an attempt to carve a piece of the (virtual) pie marked the beginning of the Meta-revolution, after which the crypto-economy truly began to take flight.

再拿著辛苦賺來的錢投資在加密貨幣和 NFT。瑞斯認為，加密經濟成為社會主流只是時間的問題。隨著 VR 技術的改進和設備變得便宜，人們的生活和社會運作已與元宇宙無縫結合。各國政府已將本地貨幣與加密貨幣掛鉤，試圖從虛擬生態中分一杯羹。這些舉動標誌了元革命的開端，加密經濟也正式步入新的世代。就這樣，瑞斯乘著這股東風，靠著投資獲得了豐厚的利潤。隨後瑞斯離開了他的工作，走上創業之路，成立了自己的科技初創企業。



Sirius rode the high tides of a new era and made a hefty profit from his investments. He arrived at a point where he felt comfortable enough to leave his job and open his own tech start-up.

He had struggled with the nuances of entrepreneurship at first, particularly with the management of people, but quickly grew accustomed to the role of a leader, and managing to start turning a profit after a mere three years of being

創業之初，瑞斯被各種瑣事包圍著，當中尤以人事管理問題讓瑞斯感到苦惱非常。但瑞斯很快就適應了領導者的角色，公司在成立短短三年後便開始盈利。他對行業做出了莫大的貢獻，以至於被提名成為全球資訊科技業十大傑出青年的獲獎人之一。瑞斯將該計劃的獎牌保存在他實體和虛擬的辦公室櫃子中，自豪地向世人展示他的成就。





in business. His contributions to the industry had been so significant that he was nominated and recognized as a recipient of Ten Outstanding Young Persons of the ICT World. The award plaque presented to him by the program is proudly displayed in the cabinet of both his physical and virtual office.

You might be surprised then, to learn that Sirius Lee, golden boy of the tech industry, chiselled abs, devilishly good looks, one of the greatest intellects of his generation, was now sitting on his fifteen-thousand-dollar office chair, in his office overlooking the harbour on the eighty eighth floor of the most expensive business centre in the central finance district, slumped over his desk with his head buried in his hands, feeling completely and utterly devastated. His father's death has ignited a reflection on his purpose of life. What can be gleamed from that reflection though, he isn't sure yet. Self-discovery driven by traumatic events can be confusing sometimes.

### Self-doubt, pounding glass, and dramatic fist pumping

It had been three months since the death of Father Lee. Father Lee and Sirius had a rocky relationship owing to their completely different trajectories in life, so when Father Lee passed, Sirius thought that he would feel sad but not necessarily depressed to the point of being inconsolable. He certainly wasn't able to predict his eventual reaction and current status. He felt empty and lethargic, like having a hole punctured into his psyche that has now become a void that is slowly consuming his very being. He felt irritable and uninterested. Basketball doesn't excite him anymore and his weekend games down at the park used to be his highlight of the week. He stood up and turned around to look out at the harbour view through the floor-to-ceiling window; he watched the ships and ferries, tiny dots from afar, slowly trudge towards their destinations. A sight that usually helped calm his nerves. This time it did nothing for him and he pounded the glass with his fist in frustration. He hit the glass hard enough to produce an audible thump but it wasn't actually that hard of a hit because Sirius pulled his punch, fearing that the blow would somehow shatter the glass and he would fall and suffer a premature, but somewhat comedic death. 'I.T golden boy found splattered on the sidewalk', the headlines would read. Sirius shuddered at the thought.

'What is wrong with me!' he yelled as he pumped his fist into the air. A gesture which a casual observer would consider a somewhat melodramatic display, but keep in mind that Sirius was holed up in his office and everyone has done silly things behind closed doors. Sirius was feeling bothered by his inheritance. The curry fish balls were fantastic and the family shared a pleasant meal that night. It was the other part of what he received that perplexed him. A large virtual plot of empty land in the outskirts of Mega City, and a miscellaneous collection of NFTs that were hardly worth the space that they occupied.

被冠以天之驕子的名銜、擁有迷人的長相及精壯的身材、被人們追捧為世紀偉大智者的瑞斯正坐在他那張價值一萬五千美元的辦公椅上，在中央金融區最昂貴的商業大樓的第八十八層俯瞰著下面的港灣。耷拉着腦袋，埋頭於桌子上，此時的他感到被徹底摧毀的絕望感。父親的死重新點燃了他對人生目的的思考，不過他還不確定在這輪反思過後能得到怎樣的解答，畢竟因創傷事件引發的情緒有時候會令人無比困惑。

### 懷疑自我、敲打玻璃、與戲劇性的握拳

父親去世已經三個月了。父親和瑞斯有著截然不同的生活軌跡，他們的關係一向崎嶇不順。父親去世時，瑞斯曾認為自己會感到悲傷，但也絕不會被鬱悶吞噬得無法忍受。瑞斯當然也無法預測自己目前的反應和狀態。他感到空虛和昏昏欲睡，就像心上被刺了一個洞，然後整個人慢慢地被它佔據。他感到很煩躁，對所有東西都提不起興趣。籃球不再讓他感到興奮，週末在公園的運動時光曾經是他每週最期待的事了。瑞斯站了起來，轉身透過落地窗觀察海港的動靜。遠處的船隻和郵輪變成地平線上的小不點，瑞斯看著它們緩緩跋涉，各自向目的地前進。這般景象通常能有效安撫他躁動的神經，這一次卻毫無幫助，瑞斯不禁沮喪地用拳頭敲打著玻璃。瑞斯的動作產生可聞的砰砰聲，但他實際上並沒有太用力。他拉開了拳頭，擔心自己或許會真的打碎玻璃、從高空墜落、最後以滑稽的方式迎來生命的終點。新聞將會以「科技界才子被發現濺散在行人路」的句子報導他的死亡，一想到這些就教他不寒而慄。

「我這是怎麼了！」瑞斯一邊大叫、一邊在空中揮舞著拳頭。在各位眼中看來這些描述或許有點誇張，但請記得此刻的瑞斯正躲在自己的辦公室中。每個人都在門關起來後做過些傻事，對吧？瑞斯對父親的遺產感到煩惱。咖喱魚丸是非常棒的主意，那天晚上一家人度過了愉快的晚餐時光。令他感到困惑的是他收到的另一份東西。是在都城郊區的一大片虛擬空地，和一些雜七雜八的 NFT。



Father Lee was a writer who fit the image of the starving artist remarkably well. Add that to his propensity for making bad investments and Sirius was not surprised at all that his father ended up buying a bunch of worthless NFTs thinking that it would have been a good investment. What confused Sirius though, was the gesture. It forced Sirius to re-evaluate his relationship with his father. Why would Father Lee leave all this junk to his son specifically. Why was he singled out. Was his father trying to leave him a message. Is there some sort of hidden meaning behind this. Sirius had the tendency to overthink at times and he's lost himself in the rabbit hole. Undoubtedly an unfortunate by-product of his massive intellect.

父親是個作家，一生都完美演出了藝術家受生計所困的戲碼。父親在投資方面沒有天份和眼光，還常對自己的決定感到沾沾自喜。自然地，瑞斯收到一堆一文不值的 NFT 時也不怎麼感到驚訝，但這些同時也是讓瑞斯真正感到莫名其妙的罪魁禍首。它迫使瑞斯重新看待他與父親的關係。為什麼父親要把這些垃圾特地留給他的兒子？為什麼他被特意挑選？父親是不是給他留下了什麼暗喻？這背後一連串的動作是否具有某種隱藏的意義？瑞斯有時候會陷入過度思考，不自覺的深陷執念而無法自拔，或許這是高智商人羣都在面對的苦惱。



His sister Dora didn't receive anything else besides curry fish balls (she didn't care either way). When Sirius asked his sister what she thinks about why Father Lee did what he did, she shrugged and said 'Dad's weird. He does weird stuff', which was a very in character thing for his sister to say, but was of zero consolation to Sirius. Before Sirius could wallow in his self-pity any further however, he looked at the clock and saw that it was already ten minutes past seven, and he was late for a meet-up with his friends. They were supposed to meet at six-thirty and go see a concert that would start at seven. 'Oh, how time flies when one ponders the mysteries of life', Sirius thought, as he scrambled to retrieve his VR glasses from the drawer of his office table. They were designed to look like a regular pair of black round spectacles. He wore the style so much during his youth that he grew accustomed to it. Sirius put on the glasses, and after a moment's calibration, his consciousness was transported into the Metaverse. Beamed down right in front of his group of friends, who had been waiting for Sirius just outside the concert venue.

瑞斯的姐姐朵拉除了咖喱魚丸就沒有收到其他東西（當然她也不在乎）。當瑞斯問及她對如何看待爸爸的行為時，她聳了聳肩道：「爸爸很奇怪，他做的事也很奇怪。」這番話很符合朵拉的性格，但對瑞斯來說卻沒有任何安慰作用。就在瑞斯進一步沉浸在自責情緒之前，他看了看時鐘，發現已經是七點十分，已經趕不上與朋友的聚會了。他們本來相約在六點半見面，然後一起去看一場七點開始的音樂會。瑞斯心想：「天啊，一個人思考生命奧秘時，時間過的飛快！」他慌忙從辦公桌子的抽屜取出 VR 眼鏡。它被設計成一副普通的黑色圓形眼鏡。瑞斯在年輕時便經常配戴同樣款式的眼鏡，所以他已經習慣了。瑞斯戴上了眼鏡，經過一陣子的校準後，他的意識被傳送到元宇宙。他瞬間來到了朋友面前，他們一直在音樂會會場外等著瑞斯。



## Loneliness in a Crowd

'Hey Duke! You're late man. Don't worry though. Opening act's a total dud' said the burly man with a lumberjack beard. This is Jack. He's Sirius's best friend. Jack isn't actually a lumberjack. He's just a hipster who likes red and black chequered flannel shirts and caulk boots a bit too much. They met during university where they bonded over a mutual love of coffee. Jack took a degree in coffeeology and now holds the title of barista extraordinaire at Sunbucks Coffee, where he pioneered and popularized the star pattern technique for pouring hand drip coffee.

Duke was Sirius's online handle, while Jack's real name is also Jack. Some people liked using online handles and some people didn't. When Sirius played basketball in university, his fans called him the Duke of Dunktown because he could slam dunk like it was nobody's business. Sirius doesn't play a lot of basketball anymore but he liked the nickname, so he kept the name but shortened it to Duke for his online handle.



'Sorry for being late gang, I was busy contemplating the meaning of life and lost track of time', said Duke.

杜克說：「抱歉我遲到了，我正忙著思考人生的意義，忘了時間。」



'Whoa, that is like profound stuff, dude. And I would totally want to hear all about it over an IPA or something later, but right now we got to get down with the vibe.'

「你怎麼盡是想些深奧的東西。我完全希望能邊喝點印度淡色艾爾邊和你討論，但現在我們還是享受眼前的狂歡吧。」

Jack may have the appearance of a brawny lumberjack, but he had the energy of a drunk surfer. He was right about the opening act though. The Milk Toast Musketeers, were a string quartet, who actually made pretty good music, but were a wholly inappropriate opening act for a rock and roll concert. They were bombing hard and the crowd was starting to transition from a state of listless disinterest to billowing annoyance. The lead Musketeer, feeling that the winds have changed, wisely decided to cut their usual thirty minute act short and announce the arrival of the main act – Fist of Zeus, and was met with thunderous applause from the crowd.

Sirius had never heard of the band Fist of Zeus before. He was more of a jazz enthusiast. It was Jack who introduced him to the band two weeks ago and suggested that they should watch the concert together. Sirius spent the two weeks listening to Fist of Zeus albums and concluded that while they were without a doubt an impressive band, he didn't feel like there was anything particularly special about them either.

## 身處人海卻形單影隻

「嗨杜克！你怎麼現在才出現？不過別擔心，開場表現也不怎麼樣。」留著像伐木工人般鬍子、體格粗壯的男人說道。他是傑克，是瑞斯最好的朋友。實際上，傑克不是一個伐木工人，他只是一個非常喜歡紅黑格子紋的法蘭絨襯衫和工裝靴的文藝青年。他們在大學時代認識，因同是咖啡愛好者而相熟。傑克攻讀了一個咖啡學學位，現在已是太陽巴克咖啡的特級咖啡師，他也在那裡開創和推廣了手沖咖啡的星型沖泡技術。

杜克是瑞斯在網絡上使用的名字，但傑克的真名依然是傑克。有些人喜歡用網名，有些則不然。當瑞斯在大學打籃球時，他的球迷叫他鄧克鎮公爵 (Duke of Dunktown)，因為瑞斯在賽場上無人能阻，反覆灌籃。瑞斯現在已不常打籃球了，但他仍然喜歡這個暱稱，所以他保留了這個名字，在網絡上繼續以杜克 (Duke) 自稱。

儘管傑克有著像伐木工人般的彪悍外表，但他對酒的熱情卻不輸任何人。傑克對開場表演的看法確是正確的。牛奶吐司火槍手是一組弦樂四重奏樂隊，他們的音樂相當不錯，但在搖滾樂場合表演就格格不入。他們的音樂轟炸著舞台，本是無精打采的觀眾們逐漸惱羞成怒。帶領樂隊的火槍手感到氣氛變得有點微妙，便明智地決定縮短原來是三十分鐘的表演，接著宣布著名樂隊宙斯之拳的到來，台下方始傳來雷鳴般的鼓掌。

瑞斯從未聽過宙斯之拳這隊樂隊。他更熱衷於爵士音樂。兩週前，傑克向他介紹了宙斯之拳，並建議他們一起觀看音樂會。瑞斯花了兩週時間聽了宙斯之拳的專輯。瑞斯認為，宙斯之拳令人印象深刻，但也不覺得他們有什麼特別的地方。





'Wait till you see them play live, partner. Their virtual live performances are the bee's knees' said Jack as he sipped his IPA, catching a bit of beer foam on his magnificent beard.

「等你看到他們的現場表演就知道了，他們的虛擬音樂會實在無與倫比。」傑克喝著他的印度淡色艾爾，茂密的鬍子上粘了一點啤酒泡沫。



'Do you ever drink anything else besides IPAs, Jack?'

「除了印度淡色艾爾，你還嘗過其他的嗎？傑克。」



'Not if I can help it' said Jack, as he chugged the rest of his beer down and ordered another after letting out a monstrous belch that sounded more like a foghorn.

「還是不要了吧。」傑克說。他把剩下的艾爾灌了下去，打出一個像霧角般響亮的嗝後又點了另外一杯。

Back at the concert, the crowd was chanting 'Fist of Zeus! Fist of Zeus!' Sirius thought it was a bit overwhelming at first but slowly he began to feel himself being sucked in by the crowd's energy. When he first arrived here, the time setting for the concert venue was set to be perpetually at the golden hour just before sunset. The daylight felt redder and softer, like being basked in the warm glow of a sizzling fireplace on a cold winter afternoon. It was all beginning to change now. Sirius could see the light fading as the sun disappeared over the horizon. Tall, bright white clouds gathered in the dark skies above. He could hear the thunder approaching, the intervals between lightning strikes getting shorter and shorter. A storm was approaching. He could feel a physical tingling sensation, and he tasted something metallic in his mouth, as if a mild electrical current was passing through his body. He smelled the scent of chlorine in the air and he felt dizzy.

讓我們回到音樂會現場。觀眾們正高呼「宙斯之拳！」「宙斯之拳！」瑞斯起初還覺得有點壓抑，但也漸漸被人們的熱情牽動。當他踏足會場時，場地被定格在日落前陽光如黃金灑落的時分。光線和煦柔和，置身其中猶如待在燒得滋滋作響的壁爐旁，即便是在冬日午後，紅紅火光依舊溫暖地擁你入懷。然而現在一切都開始變得不一樣了。瑞斯看到太陽消失在地平線上時逐漸退去的餘暉，高聳、明亮的雲層聚集在黑暗的天空中。瑞斯感覺到雷電離他越來越近，閃電的間隔也越來越短，顯然地一場風暴正在逼近。他感覺到身體的刺痛感，嘴裏傳來金屬的味道，像有一股溫和的電流正徐徐流過他的身軀。他聞到了氯氣的味道，不禁覺得頭暈目眩。



Suddenly, lightning struck the stage. There was a bright flash and in an instant, four men clad in black leather clothes appeared on-stage. Each of them wielded an instrument and together they formed a classic four-piece band. For a moment everything was still and Sirius felt electricity coursing through the air. It was the Fist of Zeus and they were ready to rumble.

At first, Sirius felt the rhythmic pulse of the bass, low and heavily distorted. His body trembled with every beat as if he was standing right next to the row of speakers. Then came the opening guitar riff. It was a shrill melody, fast and relentless. The guitarist opened his mouth and unleashed a guttural roar. It took Sirius by surprise and he couldn't help taking a step back. It was unlike anything he had ever experienced before. Augmented reality technology had allowed for the direct stimulation of a person's neural receptors and senses, which meant that a person could theoretically, always enjoy music under the best possible circumstances while inside the Metaverse. Sirius had been to jazz performances in the Metaverse before. Those were usually calming experiences that encouraged soulful reflection. This was entirely different. This was primal, pure unabashed vigour distilled into music, and it excited Sirius to no end.

一道閃電突然擊中了舞台，亮光一閃而過。瞬間，四個身穿黑色皮衣的人站在了舞台上。四人揮舞著樂器，成就了經典的四人組合。在這片刻，彷彿一切都靜止了。瑞斯感到空氣中飛舞的電流。這就是宙斯之拳，他們此時正在舞台上摩拳擦掌。

起初，瑞斯感受到低音結他節奏強勁的脈衝，是低沉且失真的律動。他的身體隨著每一個節拍而顫抖，就像他站在了揚聲器的旁邊。緊接著是開場的結他的連復段。這是一段尖銳刺耳的旋律，滿載急速跳動和強烈旋律。結他手張開了嘴，從喉嚨爆發出吼聲。這讓瑞斯大吃一驚，不由得後退了一步。這與他以往經歷過的不同。擴增實境技術對人體的感應神經和五官進行直接刺激，意味著用家可以在元宇宙環境下享受沉浸式的音樂旅程。瑞斯曾在元宇宙中觀賞爵士樂表演，但都是些平靜、安撫心靈、引人深思的演出。現在的表演截然不同，體現了最原始純粹、不加掩飾的活力和慾望，無疑使瑞斯陷入無盡頭的精神亢奮。



The band was approaching the climax of the act. They were playing their most popular song – Wanton fury of the thunder god. A circle mosh pit had formed which Jack had joined with zero indication of hesitation. Sirius also decided to join in, but only after showing a fair bit more hesitation than Jack did. As they approached apotheosis, thunderbolts and lightning began raining down upon the crowd and Sirius was struck several times. He didn't feel any sort of pain since it was all part of the act, but he did feel minor jolts which reverberated with the music. It was then, while running around in a

樂隊的演出即將進入高潮。他們正在演出他們最受歡迎的作品《雷神的狂怒》。台下形成了一個圓形的衝撞區，傑克毫不遲疑地加入其中。瑞斯只展露了比傑克多一丁點的猶豫，但也隨之決定參與進去。當眾人快進入神化之境之時，雷電向人群方向傾盆而下。瑞斯被擊中了幾次，卻沒有感覺到任何疼痛。這是表演的一部分，他感受到輕微的、隨著音樂迴盪的震動。瑞斯繞著人群轉圈奔跑，與他人互相碰撞、又反覆被閃電擊中，聽著樂隊頌唱雷神那破胸而出的

circle, slamming against other people, being repeatedly struck by lightning, and listening to a band sing about the indiscriminate fury of a Greek thunder deity. Sirius noticed that a lady was being bullied by group of people in the standing stall where was the most economic area. The lady left right the way while gangsters were still taking delight on what they did. Sirius was indignant, and thinking how to block this kind of the deficiency of the Metaverse.

When the action died down and the crowd started to disperse following the end of the concert, Sirius came down from cloud nine and found himself sitting next to Jack just outside the venue.

憤怒。瑞斯此時的目光被一位女士吸引，她在站立區被一群人欺負。那是最便宜的觀看區域，在歹徒還在為自己的行為傲然自得時，那位女士已黯然離去。瑞斯對此忿忿不平，思考著該如何在元宇宙堵上這些犯罪漏洞。

音樂會結束後，場面回歸平靜，人潮緩緩退去。瑞斯從九號雲端登出，發現自己正和傑克在會場門外坐著。



'Jack, I have to tell you something.'  
「傑克，有件事我必須要告訴你。」



'Woah buddy, I didn't know you felt that way about me.'  
「哇你這小子，我不知道你對我有感覺。」



'What? No! Why would you... never mind. I was trying to say, I understood something Jack, during the show, about myself.'  
「什麼 ... ? 不是！為什麼你 ... 唉算了。我是想說，在表演途中我明白了些什麼。一些關於我的事。」



'Yeah, Fist of Zeus can do that to you, pal. They're pretty hardcore.'  
「這就是宙斯之拳的力量呀！他們就是這麼厲害。」



'Listen, meet me at O'Sullivan's Bar in half an hour and I'll tell you all about it. They'll be shutting down this space in another fifteen minutes anyway.'  
「聽著，半小時後來奧沙利文酒吧來見我，我會告訴你這一切。反正再過十五分鐘他們就會關閉這個空間。」



'Make it forty-five minutes. I got to feed my pet goldfish and they're pretty picky eaters.'  
「那就四十五分鐘吧，我得去餵餵我的金魚，它們太挑食了。」



'Fine, I'll see you in forty-five. Duke signing out' said Sirius, and he took off his VR glasses.  
「好吧，四十五分鐘後見。杜克登出。」瑞斯說到，並摘下了他的 VR 眼鏡。



## Hipster lumberjacks and the lonely beginnings of a quest

When Sirius logged off from the Metaverse it was around fifteen minutes past ten. He needed a change of clothes before meeting Jack at O'Sullivan's. Not an issue. He can stop by home for a quick change of clothes first. As Sirius was walking out, he exchanged glances with the cleaning lady and they politely nodded at each other. She saw that he was soaking wet and she rolled her eyes as Sirius turned to leave.

## 伐木工人的鬍子和獨自踏上旅程

當瑞斯從元宇宙中登出時，已經是十點十五分了。他需要在去奧沙利文酒吧前換套衣服。這應該不是什麼問題，他可以先去家裡，快速換一下衣服。瑞斯走出辦公室時與清潔工人交換了一下眼神，兩人禮貌地互相點了點頭。她看到了瑞斯全身濕透的模樣。當瑞斯轉身離開時，她不由得翻了一個白眼。



It was ten forty-five on the dot when Sirius arrived at O'Sullivan's. Jack was already there and he was sitting in the corner booth. Sirius always thought that it was quite amazing how his friend somehow appeared even more hipster in real life than in the Metaverse where you had infinite options for accessorizing. Maybe it was because the render of his avatar couldn't quite capture the magnificence of his man bun and lumberjack beard. Someday, technology will catch up.

瑞斯在十點四十五分抵達奧沙利文的事後，傑克已經在角落的卡座等待著。元宇宙明明有無限的服飾配搭，但傑克在現實生活中的穿著卻更新穎時髦，瑞斯一直對此感到很好奇。或許元宇宙的虛擬人物設計還未能完全捕捉到他的髮髻和壯觀鬍鬚造型的精髓，總有一天技術會趕上的吧。



'I thought you had to feed your goldfish.'

「你不是要餵你的金魚嗎？」



'Nah, amigo. Turns out there weren't all that hungry.'

「沒有啦，原來它們也不是很餓。」



'I thought goldfish don't stop when ... never mind. Can I get you a drink?'

「我以為金魚吃個不停 ... 這好像不太重要。你要喝點什麼嗎？」



'I'll have an IPA please.'

「印度淡色艾爾。」



'I don't know why I asked.'

「確實好像沒有問的必要。」

Sirius ordered an IPA for Jack and an Old Fashioned for himself at the bar and brought back their drinks to the corner booth.

瑞斯為傑克點了印度淡色艾爾，為自己則點了杯古典雞尾酒。他將兩杯酒帶回了卡座。



'Cheers, comrade. You said you wanted to talk about something?'

「乾杯！我的朋友。你剛才想說什麼？」



'You know after my father died a few months ago. I thought I'd be fine but it turns out I might be depressed.'

「你知道的，我父親在幾個月前死了。我本以為我沒事，但原來我並不好，很鬱悶。」



'You were depressed? No way, Jose. I didn't realize.'

「你？鬱悶？不可能，我完全不覺得呀。」



'I am an expert at masking my emotions. It is an emotional self-defence slash coping mechanism.'

「我在掩飾情緒方面可算是專家了，可以說是應對情緒的自我防衛機制吧。」



'You got to let those feelings fly, friend. Bottling up your emotions aren't a healthy way of dealing with trauma.'

「你必須扔掉那些情緒呀，把它們壓抑起來並不是健康的創傷處理方式。」

Sirius was slightly taken aback, not being used to his friend dispensing surprisingly valid words of wisdom. 'Point taken. But I think I may have figured out a way of getting myself out of this existential crisis.'

瑞斯稍微吃了一驚，他並不習慣他的朋友發出能令他如此感嘆的智慧之言。「有道理，但我想我可能已經想出了一個讓自己擺脫存在危機困境的方法。」



'And, when did you figure this out?'

「你是在什麼時候發現的？」



'It has been a while since my Dad passed away. But I did realize that all my life, I've only been looking out for myself. I've been selfish, my depression may be my punishment.'

「離我父親去世已經過了一段時間了。但我確實意識到，在我的一生中，我一直只為自己著想。我一直很自私，所以我的抑鬱症可能是對我的懲罰。」



'You did what you had to do to survive. I get that. But your grief is not your fault.'

「你只是為了生存做了些必須做的事。我明白這一點，但你感覺到的悲痛並不能看成是你的報應。」



'Right, but now I'm not that kid trying to escape the poverty line anymore. I'm grown up and I have all the things I thought I wanted in life. I, Sirius Lee, will use my powers for the betterment of mankind. Love your neighbour as yourself. That sort of thing.'

「對，我已經不是那個試圖脫離貧困線的小孩了。我已經長大，我擁有我想要的各種東西。我，李瑞斯，將用我的力量來改善人類的生活。像『愛自己一樣愛你的鄰居』，諸如此類吧。」



'Woah, mate. Don't you think you dialling it up to eleven here? Maybe take it down a notch and focus on yourself first. Got to help yourself before helping others.'

「哇，你不覺得一下子做得太多事了嗎？也許可以先慢慢來，從關注自己開始，畢竟在幫助別人前先要幫助自己，對吧。」



'I have ignored my duty for far too long and I must do this now. Will you aid me in my quest, Jack?'

「這是我的職責，但我對它視而不見太久了。現在的我必須這樣做，你會一直幫助我嗎傑克？」



'No can do, brother. I'm sorry.'

「沒辦法，兄弟。我很抱歉。」



'What? What do you mean?'

「什麼？你是什麼意思？」



'I said I can't help you Sirius. You must walk your own path. I'll be rooting for you though.'

「我不能幫助你，瑞斯。你必須靠自己走剩下的路。不過我會支持你的。」





'I ... understand.'

「我... 明白了。」



'You can come talk to me about your solo quest though, if you feel like it.'

「不過你隨時可以來和我談談你的追求和理想，如果你還想這樣做的話。」



'Thanks, Jack.'

「謝謝，傑克。」



'Any time, chum.'

「別客氣，隨時歡迎你。」

And thus, our protagonist embarked on his lonely quest. Deep down, he was disappointed that his friend declined his invitation, but that was okay. He was good at hiding his emotions. There was a birthday party not far away from their table. When the birthday girl going to cut the cake after the birthday song. Her parent asked her to make a wish first. While she closed her eyes, making a wish in silence. Sirius whispered to himself "may your wish come true".

就這樣，我們的主人翁開始了孤獨的探索之路。他的內心深處難免對朋友的拒絕感到失望。但沒關係，他還是那個善於隱藏情緒的瑞斯。離他們桌子不遠處有一個生日聚會，壽星唱完生日歌像要切蛋糕時，她的父母叫她先許個願。當她閉上眼睛，默默地許下願望時，瑞斯低聲對自己說：「願你願望成真。」



## Wobbly first steps and the importance of good advice

It has been a month since the concert and O'Sullivan's and Sirius is hard at work planning his transition from golden boy of I.T to golden boy of philanthropy. And like any major research project, he began by googling 'How to become a philanthropist' and going through the top results.

The first suggestion read – become a blood or organ donor. Sirius already signed up to be an organ donor but he wasn't able to donate his organs just yet on account of him still being alive. Blood on the other hand, he could donate on a regular basis, but that was still capped at donating six times a year at the absolute maximum. A good supplemental effort for sure, but definitely not the main component of his plan.

Next on the list was – become a volunteer. So, Sirius began looking for volunteer opportunities. By his calculations, if he reserved two full work days for running his company, and eight hours per day to get the recommended amount of sleep, take out an estimated amount of time for travelling and eating; that would give him at least eighty hours of time to volunteer in a week. Seemed like a pretty good plan, Sirius thought. Turns out, it was a pretty bad plan. The burn out kicked in after about two months.

To maximize the use of his time and the quality of voluntary work he provided, Sirius decided to leverage his technical expertise by volunteering as a practical career councillor and giving advice to students looking to enter the I.T industry. Sirius would schedule online townhalls every day and students from all over the world could come in and ask him questions. He even paid a recurring subscription for an instant translator that would help him understand all the different languages spoken by students coming in from all over the world.

## 搖搖曳曳的第一步、論好建議的重要性

音樂會和奧沙利文的事情已經過去了一個多月。瑞斯正努力規劃他的角色該如何從資訊科技企業才子過渡至慈善企業家的角色。如同在開始重要研究項目前一樣，瑞斯在谷歌上搜索 "要如何成為一名慈善家"，並瀏覽了排名較前的結果。



第一個建議：成為血液或器官捐贈者。瑞斯之前已報名成為器官捐贈者，但由於他還活著，所以捐獻器官這件事不太可行。另一方面，他也可以定期捐血，但每年的捐獻次數只能不多於六次。這些是很好的方向，但絕不是他計劃的重點。

第二個搜尋結果顯示：做義工。根據他的估算，如果他保留兩個完整的工作日放在公司運營上和維持每天八個小時的睡眠時間，再減去通勤和吃飯的功夫，將使他在每週內有至少八十小時的時間參與義工活動。看起來確實不錯的計劃，瑞斯暗中欣喜。但事實證明，這是個相當糟糕的決定，瑞斯在計劃開始大約兩個月後便進入的倦怠期了。

為了充分利用他的時間和確保義工工作的質量，瑞斯決定利用他的技術專長擔任職業生涯顧問，為希望進入資訊科技行業的學生提供職涯建議。瑞斯每天都會在網上的市政廳解答來自世界各地學生的提問。他甚至成為了一個即時翻譯器的恆常付費用戶，希望能透過翻譯器理解不同學生所說的語言。



On the first day of the event, every young adult with half a mind to enter the I.T industry (which was a lot) tried to enter the virtual townhall, and within half an hour the server overloaded and went offline. No one had managed to ask any questions because the event hadn't even started yet. Sirius decided that if a virtual townhall wasn't an option, he would take questions through email and social media platforms, record his answers in the form of webinars and distribute them to the world instead. This worked marginally better than the first attempt but Sirius still felt frustrated because half the incoming messages were stupid questions, a quarter were just general comments and insults, which meant only a quarter of incoming messages were genuine meaningful questions. And it was such a waste of time sorting through all the rubbish messages and emails. This doesn't seem to be the way forward either, Sirius thought. He was trying to become a philanthropist, but now he was turning into an educational youtuber. Time to head back to the drawing board it seems. Good thing he only paid three months recurring for that instant translator.

After taking a week off to recover from his voluntary ordeal, Sirius resumed his quest for becoming the ultimate philanthropist. Next up on the list was – start a charity. Now this, this was something Sirius could sink his teeth into. In hindsight, maybe he should've considered the whole list instead of immediately diving in from the top. He was too eager to commence and he paid the price. It doesn't matter. He was once more back on the right track.

But, what would his charity be doing? He needed a vision, an inspiration, an aspirational destination. He dug deep into himself trying to think and came up with nothing. Years of looking out only for himself had driven blind to the needs of his fellow man. He needed help. His sister was usually full of ideas so Sirius decided to give her a call.

在活動的第一天，每一個有心進入資訊科技行業的年輕人（是非常多的年輕人）都試圖進入瑞斯的網上市政廳。不足半小時的時間就發生了伺服器超載的情況，市政廳也隨之下線。活動沒能成功開始，也沒有學生能提出問題。瑞斯決定，如果虛擬市政廳不可行，他可以通過電子郵件和社交媒體收集問題，並以網絡研討會的形式紀錄他的答案，再發布至全球各地。這比第一次的嘗試的效果來得好，但瑞斯依然感到沮喪，因為收到的問題中有一半都是愚蠢的提問，四分之一是一般的評論和侮辱性話語，意味著只有四分之一的信息是真正有意義的問題。整理所有垃圾信息和電子郵件是如此浪費時間，以致瑞斯覺得這似乎也不是該前進的方向。他本想成為一個慈善家，但現在卻變成了一個教育類的 Youtuber。看來是時候退一步籌備其他方向，幸好他只為了翻譯器預繳了三個月的費用。

瑞斯休息了一週。從一連串折磨中恢復過來後，便重新開始經營他成為終極慈善家的目標。列表中的下一個代辦項目：創辦一個慈善機構。此次，瑞斯終於能全神貫注地投入其中。事後看來，瑞斯認為自己該考慮先列出一個清單，而不是依搜尋結果的排序決定。他太急於求成了，以致付出了慘重的代價。但這不阻礙瑞斯的決心，他再一次回到了正確的軌道上。

但這個慈善機構能做些什麼？他需要一個願景，一個靈感，一個向之前進的目標。他心無旁騖地沉浸於思考中，卻一無所獲。多年來他只專注於自己的追求，忽略了身邊人的需要。他需要一些幫助。他的姐姐滿腦子都是主意，瑞斯決定向她打個電話。







'Dora, I need your help.'  
「朵拉，我需要你的幫忙。」



'You must be desperate.'  
「想必你是窮途末路了。」



'I'm trying to start a charity but I don't know what it's going to be about. Have you got any ideas?'  
「我想成立一個慈善機構，但不知道它能做些什麼。你有什麼想法嗎？」

There was a palpable silence. Sirius could hear the crickets chirping in his head.

那是一種叫人心悸的寂靜。瑞斯彷彿聽到腦海中滿是蟋蟀般鳴叫。



'I am so sorry, Sirius.'  
「對不起，瑞斯。」



'About what?'  
「對不起什麼？」



'About you getting all the weird genes in our family. Listen, if you cared enough about something to start a charity for it, you wouldn't have had to think about what that thing was. It would've come to you naturally.'  
「關於你承載了我們家族中所有奇奇怪怪的基因。聽著，如果你對某件事足夠關心，甚至為這件事成立慈善機構，你就不必考慮那件是什麼，他自然就會出現在你面前。」



'But I've already thought long and hard on this, there are so many worthy causes that I don't know which one to pick.'  
「但我在這個問題上已經糾結了許久，有價值的東西太多，我不知道該選擇什麼。」



'That either means you don't actually care enough or you haven't thought hard enough.' With that, Dora hung up the phone and Sirius was left in stunned confusion. Well, you weren't much help – he thought, and he decided to give Jack a call instead.  
「這要麼代表你實際上還不夠關心這些事，要麼你沒有認真思考。」就這樣，朵拉掛斷了電話，只留下困惑不已的瑞斯。原來你也沒有什麼幫助，瑞斯心想。他決定致電傑克。



'Jack, I'm starting a charity for my quest.'  
「傑克，我正打算為了我追求的目標成立一個慈善機構。」



'Brilliant news. What does it do, your charity?'

「真是好消息。它是做什麼的？你的慈善機構。」



'That's the part I haven't figured out yet and I was hoping you could give me some suggestions.'

「這是我還沒有想明白的部分，我希望你能給我一些建議。」



'You had a pretty tough time growing up. Have you thought about getting something from that angle?'

「你的成長過程挺艱難的，你有沒有想過從這個角度作為思考的切入點？」



'I don't think drawing lightning shapes on their children's faces is common practice.' For an accomplished business owner, Sirius could be remarkably dense at times.

「我不認為在孩子們的臉畫上閃電形狀是常見的做法。」對於一個名成利就的企業家來說，瑞斯的腦袋有時候總是缺根筋。



'Well yeah there's that, but also, you weren't provided with a lot of resources when you were growing up. Have you thought about helping out kids who are in that sort of situation?'

「是這樣沒錯，但同時你在成長過程中也沒有得到很多資源。你有沒有想過幫助那些處於相同情況的孩子們？」



'I can do a make a wish.'

「我可以辦一個幫忙實現願望的機構。」



'You can do a make a wish. There you have it. There's your charity idea. You'll need to assemble a crew though. Can't run a charity all by your lonesome even if you are the golden boy.'

「對，實現願望的機構，這就是你開始慈善事業的第一步。不過你需要組建一個團隊，即使是才子也不能靠一己之力經營一個慈善機構。」



'What should I call it?'

「我應該叫它什麼？」



'You'll need to figure that one out yourself, homeboy. I swore I'd never help name anything ever again after what happened twenty years ago at that summer camp.'

「你需要自己解決這個問題，我的朋友。在二十年前的那個夏令營事件後，我發誓我再也不幫人起名字了。」



'What happened twenty years ago at that summer camp?'

「二十年前的那個夏令營發生了什麼事？」



'That's not important to this story. You've got a lot to think about so don't let me keep you from your quest. Glad to hear it's going well though!' and he hung up the phone.

「這對這個故事不重要啦。你有很多事情需要考慮，所以不要讓我這些芝麻綠豆的小事打擾你思考了。不過我還是很高興聽見你的進展順利！」傑克就這樣掛斷了電話。

## On the importance of closing doors and straightforward names

So, Sirius began to think of names to call his charity. At first, he tried to come up with a funny name, something clever, witty, or even punny, but eventually decided against it. People probably didn't want to associate comedy with underprivileged children.

A serious, no-nonsense name then. Something inspiring. To motivate the masses. Something like Save the Chi-, no I think that one already exists. Make a Wi-, no I think that one's taken too. Why are all the good names taken. Probably, because they're good names. Maybe, The Poor Kids' Fund? That one's not taken. Because it's a bad name.

'So frustrating!' he yelled, as he sank to his knees and held his arms up high, like a soldier being shot in the back. This time, he forgot that his office door was open, and the cleaning lady just happened to walk by. They exchanged glances. This time she didn't even wait for him to turn around to roll her eyes.

'Ahem, carry on, would you please' he said, and he stood up and straightened his suit pants. She didn't have to wait for him to say that. She's been working this job on auto-pilot for decades now.

Sirius dug deep. He thought about getting struck by lightning at the concert and tried to remember the peace and clarity it brought him. He thought about his childhood, trying to wipe liquid eyeliner off his forehead and getting it everywhere on his face instead. He thought about when he was a child, how he desperately wished all his hopes and dreams would come true. There it is. He'll call it the - 'Wish Come True Foundation'. It was definitely straight to the point, a little bit on the nose, but it told people exactly what it was that the charity is trying to accomplish. Because in the age of rapidly shrinking attention spans, sometimes you couldn't afford to be fancy and had to be brutally direct instead.

## 就算四處碰壁，名字也要直截了當

於是，瑞斯開始為他的慈善機構起個名字。起初，他試圖想出一個有趣的名字，一個聽上去聰明的、談諧的、甚至能語帶雙關的名字，但最終他決定不這樣做。人們可能不想把幽默感和貧困兒童聯繫起來。

那就取一個嚴肅、不苟言笑的名字如何？鼓舞人心、可以激勵大眾的名字。像拯救兒...，不，我想那個可能已經被人用了。許個願...，啊不行，我想那個也可能已經被佔用了。為什麼所有好的名字都被搶先了？可能他們都是好名字吧。也許... 貧困兒童基金？這個沒有被人搶佔，可能因為這個名字不好吧。

「天啊，煩死了！」瑞斯大叫。他跪在地上，高舉雙臂，就像一個士兵剛被射中了背部一樣。這一次，他忘了他辦公室的門是開著的，而清潔工人也剛好走過。他們交換了眼神，這一次，她甚至沒有等瑞斯背過去就已經翻了翻白眼。

「咳咳，請繼續，麻煩你了。」瑞斯站了起來，整理一下他的西裝褲。然而清潔工人不需要這句話才能重新投入手上的工作。她已經在這裡工作十年了，對她來說只是些流水作業。

瑞斯再度回復專注。他想到了在音樂會上被閃電擊中的情景，並試圖記住它帶來的平靜和明晰。他想起了童年時光，想把額頭上的眼線液擦掉，卻把它弄得臉上到處都是。他想到了小時候是如何拼命地要實現全部的願望和夢想。瑞斯決定叫它「實現願望基金會」。這名字直接了當，恰到好處，也準確告訴人們這個慈善機構要實現的目標是什麼。在這個注意力迅速萎縮的年代，我們或許無法再承受太花哨的東西，有些事還是需要粗暴地直搗核心。



# WISH COME TRUE FOUNDATION



Sirius was feeling quite pleased with himself after that bit of mental exercise. He had a name, and perhaps more importantly, he had plans. As with all new projects, he was going to do testing and soft launch in the Metaverse first before expanding operations outside of the virtual world. He already had the perfect location – the large piece of virtual land his father left him. It was in the outskirts just outside the limits of Mega City. Close enough to be connected to the action, but far enough where building restrictions would be more relaxed. The space was large enough to accommodate different kinds of facilities to cater to the different sorts of wishes they would receive, and the area around was empty so there was room to expand when the need arises. Sirius was confident that they would eventually. Now, all he had to do was assemble his crew. He checked that his office door was shut, pumped his fist in the air and let out a triumphant cry of satisfaction. 'Hoorah!' Things were looking up for the golden boy.

瑞斯思來想去後，對自己的進度感到相當滿意。他有了一個名字，但也許更重要的是，他有了一個計劃。就像所有新項目一樣，他打算現在元宇宙中進行測試和試行，再把業務擴展到虛擬世界以外。他有了一個完美的地點，就在他父親留給他的那一大片虛擬土地上。它位於都城以外的郊區。這片土地足夠接近市中心讓瑞斯發展業務，但也足夠遠而讓瑞斯能不受太多建築條例規限。這片土地很大，可以同時容納不同類型的設施，方便他們處理不同類型的願望。加上周圍的區域是空置的，空間不足時還能擴展，而瑞斯相信這將只是時間問題。現在，他需要做的是組建他的團隊。他檢查了自己辦公室的門已經關好後，在空中揮舞著拳頭，發出滿意的凱旋之聲。「萬歲！」事情正順利地發展。



### Giant paper clips and a billion booths

It was two weeks after the cleaning lady rolled her eyes at Sirius' dramatic re-enactment of a soldier getting shot in the back. He was in high spirits, because today, he was going to visit a virtual conference for recruitment. He was going to assemble his crew. When Sirius arrived at the venue, he saw that there were booths as far as the eye could see. Billions of individuals, sitting in their own designated areas, playing promotional videos they made of themselves, making speeches and listing their achievements, ready to sell their talents to the highest bidder. It felt something out of a fever dream and Sirius didn't know where or how to start looking.

Along came a giant paperclip with crudely drawn on eyes. It must've noticed Sirius' face of confusion because it bounced over to him and said 'It looks like you're feeling a bit lost. Would you like help?'

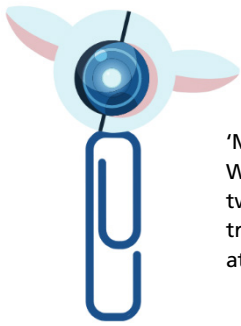
Sirius let out a tiny yelp, feeling a bit startled by the stationery monstrosity. 'Gah! What on earth are you' he said.

### 巨大的萬字夾和恆河沙數的攤位

自清潔女工對瑞斯戲劇性地出演士兵背部中槍而翻白眼後，已經過去了兩週。瑞斯興致勃勃，因為今天他要去參加一個虛擬的招聘會。他要為新團隊招兵買馬。當瑞斯到達會場時，目之所及都是展台。數以億計的人就坐在他們特定的區域，播放他們製作的宣傳片、發表演講、對自己的成就侃侃而談，希望向出價最好的人出售他們的學識和才能。這感覺是一個熾熱的夢境，瑞斯甚至不知道該從哪裡或如何開始尋找。

就在此時，一個巨大的萬字夾走了過來，上面畫著略為粗糙的雙眼。它一定是注意到瑞斯不知所措的臉龐，因為它正向瑞斯蹦蹦跳跳地走來。「看來你有點迷茫，您需要幫助嗎？」

瑞斯細喊了一聲，老實說他有點被這個奇怪的文具怪物嚇到了。「呀！你到底是什麼東西？」瑞斯說。



'My name is Clipper and I'm your virtual conference assistant. Would you like help?' said the giant paperclip. Its inner wire twisted upwards as it 'spoke'. Sirius thought it may have been trying to smile, but if it was, it wasn't doing a very good job at putting him at ease.

「我是克里帕，是你的虛擬會議助理。您需要幫助嗎？」巨型萬字夾說道。它的線圈在它“說話”時會向上扭動。瑞斯認為這可能是它的笑容，如果是真的話，那它並不太能讓瑞斯安心。



'I'm trying to assemble a crew. For my quest.'  
「我正試圖組建一個團隊。為了我的目標。」



'And what sort of quest would that be, Sir?'  
「那是個怎樣的目標呢？先生。」



'I'm going to start a charity to fulfil the dreams of underprivileged people and I need to hire a crew to help me run it.'  
「我將創辦一個慈善機構，協助貧困人口實現他們的夢想。我需要僱用一些員工幫助我管理它。」



'A most respectable quest, sir. In which case, I'd like to introduce you to the sort function, which you can access if you tap the menu button on the upper left rim of your VR glasses.'  
「真是一個崇高、值得尊敬的目標，先生。在這種情況下，容許我向您介紹排序功能。您可以點擊您 VR 眼鏡左上角的選項按鈕來啟動這個功能。」

Sirius tapped the upper left rim of his VR glasses and lo and behold, a holographic menu appeared before his eyes asking him for additional input.

瑞斯點了一下他 VR 眼鏡左上方的邊緣。一個全息選項列表出現在他眼前，要求他輸入更多資料。



'What do I type in?'  
「我應該輸入什麼？」



'Usually, folks would type in key skills that they feel that the person they're looking to hire should possess. For charities, a lot of folks think they should find people in areas such as operations or marketing first, but I recommend first hiring a Human Resources manager'  
「通常人們都會輸入他們認為僱員需要具備的關鍵技能。對於慈善機構來說，很多人認為他們應該尋找有企業運營或行銷背景的人，但我建議先僱用一名人力資源經理。」



'Oh, and why is that, Clipper?'  
「喔？這是為什麼，克里帕。」



‘Because then you can just let him or her handle the rest of the recruitment.’

「因為這樣您就可以讓他或她處理餘下的招聘工作。」



‘That seemed like such an obvious answer that I feel ashamed for asking.’

「這似乎是一個很明顯的答案，我為我愚蠢的提問感到羞愧。」



‘No harm done. Here, let me just sort that for you, and there.’

「無需介意，先生。讓我為您整理一下，還有這些。」

The billions of booths were now reduced to just the handful. Much more manageable. Sirius approached the nearest booth. The banner read – Helen the HR Manager, I love people, and people love me!

數以億計的攤位現在只剩寥寥可數，看上去更容易處理了。瑞斯向最近的攤位走去。橫幅上寫著：「人力資源經理海倫。我愛人人，人人愛我！」



‘Hello Helen, what sets you apart from the competition?’

「你好，海倫，是什麼讓你能在競爭中脫穎而出？」



‘I love people and people love me.’

「我愛人人，人人也愛我。」



‘A most valuable quality. You’re hired.’

「這確實不可多得。你被錄用了。」

They shook and exchanged credentials.

他們握了握手，並交換了資料。



‘Would you handle the rest of the hiring please? Here’s a list of people I need.’ And with that, Sirius left Helen to sort through the billions of potential recruits.

「請你處理剩下的招聘工作。這是我需要的人員的名單。」就這樣，瑞斯留待海倫整理那幾十億潛力招聘對象的資料。

As Sirius was about to log out, he caught Clipper waving him goodbye in the distance, his inner wiring twisted upwards. If that was designed to look like a smile, it wasn’t convincing anyone. Sirius forced himself to smile back and removed his VR glasses.

當瑞斯準備登出時，他發現克里帕正在遠處向自己揮手告別，它的線圈又再一次向上扭動了。如果那是為了看起來像個微笑，也是個相當沒有說服力的微笑。瑞斯強迫自己報以笑容，並摘下了 VR 眼鏡。



## Riding high and the calm before the storm

It's been two weeks since Sirius's recruitment drive. Helen the human resources manager dealt with the rest of the recruitment. Larry the lawyer sorted out their registration and in another six weeks, the Wish Come True Foundation would commence operations. Alexa the advertising manager had already planned out a promotional campaign and they were initially expecting to receive roughly a hundred wish requests per month. Doing the test run virtually meant that Sirius was able to get away with having a smaller crew as a lot of the operations behind the scenes could be automated.

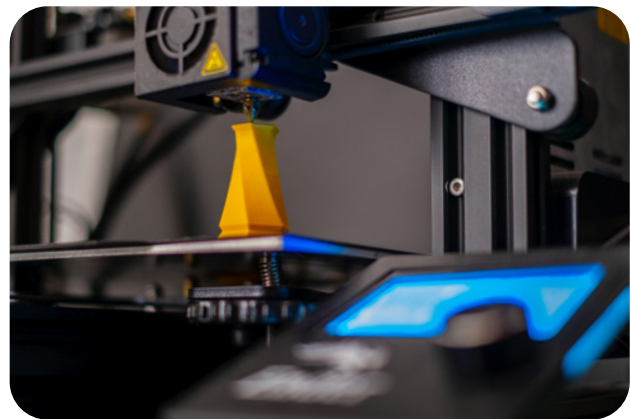
## 意氣風發地迎接暴風雨前的寧靜

距離瑞斯的招聘活動已經過去了兩週，人力資源經理海倫也處理了餘下的招聘工作。律師拉里整理了機構的註冊事宜，再過六星期實現願望基金會就能正式開始運作。廣告經理艾莉克薩已經計劃了一個促銷活動，預計每個月會收到大約一百個願望請求。使用模擬環境進行測試意味著瑞斯能夠以較少的員工完成，因為很多幕後的動作都被轉為自動化工序了。



The key component that made it all come together though, was a large scale virtual holographic 3D printer placed in the centre of the foundation facility. An expensive device purchased out of Sirius' own pocket that would allow for near instantaneous generation of virtual environments and assets. A small sacrifice for his grandiose vision. If a child wanted to go skydiving or, fight an evil galactic empire with laser swords, the device could simulate it. But it can be so much more than a glorified video game console. An aspiring musician for example, without the means to purchase quality instruments could practice with equipment to their heart's content inside this virtual space. A history student, could experience bygone times in recreations of historical events within the simulation. Sirius would create a virtual space to help underprivileged children fulfil their hopes and dreams with the power of technology. Not a bad humanitarian effort, he thought.

然而，試行成功與否與一台放在基金會設施中心的大型虛擬全息3D打印機息息相關。這台昂貴的設備是瑞斯私下掏腰包購買的，它可以瞬時生成虛擬環境和虛擬資產。這是他為他那宏偉的願景做出的一點犧牲。如果一個孩子想要跳傘，或者用激光劍對抗邪惡的銀河帝國，這個設備都能模擬出來。它比單一個遊戲設備來說要高級得多。比如，一個有抱負的音樂家如果沒有能力購買高品質的樂器，就可以使用虛擬空間內的設備盡情練習。一個歷史系學生，可以在模擬的歷史事件中體驗過去的種種。瑞斯將創建一個虛擬空間，利用技術的力量，幫助貧困兒童實現他們的心願和夢想。他想，這不失為貢獻於人道主義的力量。



As he surveyed the virtual landscape left to him by his father and all the developments that have been made on it, Sirius wondered if this was what his father would have wanted. Did he expect Sirius to use his inheritance in this manner? Would he be proud of his son's achievements? Even though Sirius would deny it, did Sirius secretly yearn for his father's approval? Sirius brushed these thoughts aside. He had more important things to focus on. Like what to say on stage when they present him with the Nobel peace prize, or what suit to wear to the Times magazine interview for the most influential person of the year. Things were looking up for the golden boy, he thought as he logged off for the day.

### Little Timmy and the speech that started the foundation

It was the inaugural opening event of the Wish Come True Foundation and Sirius was busy making preparations. The media would arrive in another hour and he wanted to make sure his avatar's appearance was customized to perfection. It would then be put in AFK mode and deliver a pre-recorded speech to the press, while Sirius performed the final checks and configurations on the holographic printer. A task, he didn't feel comfortable delegating to his team of very qualified (but overworked) technicians. It was their first day and Sirius would not tolerate any mistakes, miscalculations, or misunderstandings.

'Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Wherever you are in the world, thank you all for being here with us today. Your presence here means a lot to me and every one of us at the foundation. As you all know, the advent of Web 3.0 and the Metaverse has brought unprecedented growth and innovation to not only the Information Technology industry, but to all aspects of life. Healthcare, finance, and entertainment, for instance are just some of the examples of industries that have made great strides in integrating with this technology and have made numerous noteworthy advancements because of it. But as much as the Metaverse has become integral in the workings of our daily lives, there are yet so many who aren't able to make use of its wondrous gifts. State-of-the-art VR equipment isn't cheap and even older model VR glasses can be inaccessible for the disadvantaged members of our society. Which is precisely why the foundation was set up. Our goal is to help underprivileged children develop themselves with the aid of what the Metaverse has to offer. After all, children are our future. We must teach them well and they will lead the way.'

Thunderous applause. Sirius heard it from all the way from the main chamber of the facility. It meant that his avatar had performed its objective and the crowd will be here after thirty minutes for the presentation. Sirius was ready.

當他打量著父親留給他的虛擬土地和上面的各種發展項目時，瑞斯想知道這是否他父親想看到的。他是否希望瑞斯能以這種方式使用他的遺產？他是否會就他兒子的成就感到驕傲？雖然瑞斯否認，但他又是否暗地裏渴望著父親的認可？瑞斯把這些想法扔到一邊，現在的他有更重要的事要做。例如，當他獲頒諾貝爾和平獎時，他該在台上如何致辭？或者該穿什麼衣服接受《泰晤士報》的年度最具影響力人物的採訪？他這個才子正備受幸運之神的眷顧，這是他在登出時腦海中浮現的東西。

### 小蒂米和那份啟動基金會的宣言

這是實現願望基金會的開幕典禮，瑞斯正忙碌地準備著。媒體將在一小時後到達，他需要確定他虛擬化身的外觀完美無缺。它將進入待機模式，並向媒體發表事先錄製好的演講，而瑞斯則會對全息打印機進行最後的配置和檢查。他覺得把這項任務交給他非常優秀（但同時也過度勞累）的技術人員團隊並不合適。這只是他們第一天運作，瑞斯不能容忍任何參差、計算錯誤和誤解發生。

「早上好，下午好，晚上好。無論大家身在何處，感謝您們今天與我們同行。你們的到來，對我和基金會的每一個人都是意義非凡的。正如大家所見，網絡 3.0 和元宇宙的出現不僅對資訊科技行業帶來前所未有的增長和創新，對生活的各方面來說也是如此。醫療、金融和娛樂產業只是在技術整合方面已取得莫大進展的一些例子，這些進步都非常值得大家的持續關注。儘管元宇宙已成為了我們日常生活中不可或缺的一部分，社會上仍有許多人無法享受這份祝福和恩賜。先進的 VR 設備並不便宜，即便是老式的 VR 眼鏡，對於我們社會中的弱勢成員來說也是難以觸及的。這正是基金會成立的原因。我們的目標是幫助貧困兒童利用元宇宙中的資源發揮所長。兒童代表了我們的未來，我們必須投資於下一代的教育上，他們定會帶領我們進入更光輝的時代。」

台下掌聲雷動。瑞斯在設施的主會場聽完了這場演講，他的化身已經完成了它的使命。眾人將在其後的三十分鐘後待在這裡，期盼著瑞斯的演說。瑞斯已經準備好了。

Little Timmy was also ready. His family were one of the earliest applicants when the foundation started taking requests. Timmy was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder when he was three years old when his mother realized that her son preferred solitude and actively avoided eye contact with others. A session with a clinical psychologist confirmed his diagnosis and their family had been learning to cope with his disability ever since. A strain on the family, since they aren't always able to afford the training that Timmy sorely needed.

Timmy is now twelve years old and aspires to be a politician, which is problematic considering the challenges he faces with public speaking. He finds it difficult to engage with his audience since he actively avoided eye contact. And so, Sirius developed a simulation with the help of a team of mental health professionals to help Timmy overcome this predicament.

The crowd had gathered in the main chamber with the holographic printer waiting for the magic to happen. Timmy had logged in with the latest model VR glasses that Sirius had arranged to be delivered directly to Timmy's home the day before. Timmy followed Sirius onto a podium in front of the crowd. The child kept fidgeting. The nice people that sent him his new VR glasses had asked him to deliver a speech to the media on behalf of the foundation. He was obviously distressed. He wasn't sure if he could do it. Sirius knelt down and spoke to Timmy.

小蒂米也準備好了。他的家庭是基金會在接受申請時最早的申請人之一。蒂米在三歲時被診斷為自閉症譜系障礙患者，當時他的母親意識到她的兒子喜歡獨處，並主動避免與他人的目光接觸。與臨床心理學家的會談證實了對蒂米病況的診斷，此後他們家一直在學習如何應對他的殘疾。這個噩耗對蒂米的家庭來說無疑是一種壓力，他們並不總是能負擔蒂米的訓練。

蒂米現在十二歲，希望能成為一名政治家。然而考慮到公開演講時需要的能力，要實現這個理想對蒂米來說是一個不小的挑戰。他發現自己不能打動群眾，因為他總是主動迴避與台下的眼神接觸。有見及此，瑞斯在心理健康學家團隊的幫助下開發了一個模擬項目，幫助蒂米克服困境。

眾人聚集在安置了全息打印機的主會場，期盼著魔法的發生。瑞斯在活動前一天已將最新款的 VR 眼鏡送到蒂米家中，現在蒂米配戴著這副眼鏡登入了主會場。蒂米跟著瑞斯走到人群前的講台上。這孩子一直躁動不安，這位給他送 VR 眼鏡的好心人要求他代表基金會向媒體說些什麼，這讓他感到慌張。他不確定自己是否能做到。瑞斯跪了下來，和蒂米說話。



'Timmy, I know you've prepared a speech for us today. Are you ready to talk to these people?'

「蒂米，我知道你今天為我們準備了一則演講。你準備好與這些人交談了嗎？」



'I can't. I don't want to.'

「我不能。我也不想。」



'But you know, this is actually about more than just delivering a speech. It's actually also a game and I think you'll like it. You see those people in the crowd will slowly start to fade away if you don't maintain eye contact with them. If you win by stopping them all from disappearing by the end of your speech, your mom promised to make you favourite dinner – pickles and skittles sandwich.'

「這實際上不僅僅演講喔。他也是一個遊戲，我猜你會喜歡的。你看，如果你不和他們保持眼神接觸，人群便會慢慢退去。如果你在演講結束時能阻止他們全部消失，你就贏了！你媽媽答應給你做最喜歡的晚餐 - 酸黃瓜和彩虹糖三文治喔。」



Timmy thought about this for a moment. He's afraid of speaking. But he likes games, and doesn't like losing. More importantly, he loved pickles and skittles sandwiches. It was the perfect union between salty and sweet. Summoning the courage, Timmy started to deliver his speech, and deliver he did with gusto and a level of audience engagement that would make Lionel Logue proud. In the end, to his mother's surprise, Timmy managed to keep every single audience member intact. And as he took off his VR glasses at the end of the presentation, his mother thought he looked more confident than usual. But really, all Timmy could think about at that moment was pickles and skittles sandwiches.

蒂米暗想了一會。他害怕說話，也喜歡遊戲，也不喜歡輸。更重要的是，他太喜歡酸黃瓜和彩虹糖三文治了。那是鹹和甜之間的完美結合。鼓起勇氣吧。蒂米興致勃勃地發表了演講，觀眾的參與程度甚至能讓萊納爾•羅格感到驕傲。讓蒂米母親感到驚訝的是，蒂米直到演講最後都留住了每一位觀眾。當他在演講結束並摘下 VR 眼鏡時，母親認為他看起來比平時更有自信了。然而實際上，蒂米的腦海只有滿滿的酸黃瓜和彩虹糖三文治。



## A difference in expectations and a dramatic reveal

The next day in his office, Sirius fired up his computer and started browsing the news websites, wanting to see all the positive things that have been written about the Wish Come True Foundation.

He discovered, much to his surprise and horror then, that the first headline that he came across read: 'IT's golden boy exploits underprivileged children for fifteen minutes of fame'. He quickly cycled through the several other news sites to find that they were more or less touting similar information.

Sirius felt his heart drop. This wasn't the outcome he had envisioned. Had he really taken advantage of all those poor souls to fuel his own ego? When did he let his hubris consume him? Sirius sat in stunned silence. It felt somewhat similar to the time he was struck by lightning during that virtual concert all those months ago. Only, instead of peace and clarity, this time he felt chaos and confusion. He called the foundation to survey the damage. Otis from operations picked up. Everything was ... fine? More than fine actually. Their daily influx of applications matched their projections and applicant satisfaction levels were through the roof. Sirius put down the phone and sighed. It wasn't a sigh of relief. Those news reports had sowed the seeds of doubt in Sirius's heart. Stole the spark from his thunder. He may have succeeded on his quest but did he do it for the right reasons?

He stood up from his office chair and stared out into the harbour, not sure of what to make of himself. There was a beep on his computer, an incoming message. Sirius was in no mood right now. He was too busy having a dramatic moment of self-reflection. Another beep, this time from his phone. Sirius felt a bit frustrated. 'I'm trying to have a dramatic moment here', he muttered under his breath. And another beep, this time from his VR glasses. Someone was beeping him from the Metaverse. Sirius put on his VR glasses.

## 與預期的落差、猶如戲劇般的揭示

翌日，瑞斯打開了辦公室的電腦，並開始瀏覽新聞網站，想看看所有關於實現願望基金會的報導。

令他驚訝和恐懼的標題映入眼簾：「IT 界才子為了十五分鐘的名聲，剝削貧困兒童」。他迅速瀏覽了其他的新聞網站，發現大部分都在傳達類似的信息。

瑞斯的心沉了下來。這不是他設想的結果呀。難道他真的利用了這些可憐的靈魂成就了自己的自尊？在什麼時候他讓傲慢吞噬了自己？瑞斯就這樣坐著，錯愕得一句話也說不出來。這感覺又回到幾個月前他在那場虛擬音樂會上被閃電擊中的瞬間。只是，這一次他不再感受到安寧，取而代之的是排山倒海般湧出的混沌和迷惘。他打給基金會了解損失情況。運營部門的奧蒂斯接了電話。一切 ... 都很好嗎？實際上不只是好，每天湧入的申請都符合預期，申請者的滿意度甚至達到了巔峰。瑞斯放下了手中的電話，深深地嘆了口氣。這並不是一種帶著解脫的嘆息，那些新聞報導確實在瑞斯的心中播下了猜疑的種子。他或許已經完成了他的追求，但他又是否為了正確的理由而做？

瑞斯從他的辦公椅站了起來，盯著窗外的港灣，不知道自己到底該怎麼做。他的電腦上傳來嘟嘟的聲響，是一條新信息。瑞斯現在沒有任何心情。他的內心世界正反覆上映著自我反思的小劇場。另一聲提示音，這次是從他手機發出的。瑞斯感到有些沮喪。「唉我還沒有想完呢！」瑞斯嘀咕。又是一聲提示音，來自他的 VR 眼鏡。有人在元宇宙中找他。瑞斯戴上了他的 VR 眼鏡。



'Don't you know it's rude to interrupt someone having a dramatic moment?'

「難道你不知道打斷別人的思路是很不禮貌的嗎？」



'Maybe. But not if I supplant it with a dramatic reveal', said the giant paperclip.

「也許吧，但如果我用一個足夠重要的事件來打斷它，你可能就不這樣想了。」巨型萬字夾說。



'You're Clipper, that conference assistant.'

「你是克里帕，那個會議助理。」



'Yes Sirius, but the truth is, I am your uncle!'

「是的瑞斯。但事實上，我是你的叔叔！」



'No! Wait, what? That makes absolutely no sense at all. Why are you in this story?'

「不！等等，什麼？這完全沒有道理。為什麼你會出現在這個故事裡？」



'Sirius, because I am the Deus Ex Machina.' said Clipper, as his inner wirings twisted upwards to form a ghastly smile.

「瑞斯，因為我是你的救星！」克里帕又扭曲了起來，掛著令人毛骨悚然的微笑。



'Gah! Can you at least change your avatar uncle, that thing is seriously giving me the creeps.'

「天啊叔叔！您能不能至少換個頭像！每次見到那東西都讓我寒毛直豎。」



'Sorry, it was the only one that came in the conference assistant's cosmetics pack and I didn't feel like paying for extra downloadable content. Hold on a second'

「對不起，這是衣櫥裡唯一一個頭像，我可不想為額外的內容付錢耶。你等等喔。」

Clipper vanished and Uncle Lee's avatar took its place.

克里帕消失了，李叔叔的頭像重新顯示上線的狀態。







'Better?'  
「好點了，對吧？」



'Much better.'  
「好多了。」



'Follow me, I want to show you something.'  
「跟我來，我給你看看東西。」

Sirius followed his uncle to the store room at the foundation.

瑞斯跟著叔叔來到基金會的儲藏室。



'Could you open that please, Nephew?'  
「你可以開門嗎？外甥。」

Sirius waved open the storage door.

瑞斯揮了揮手，打開了儲藏室的門。



'What are we doing here uncle?'  
「我們在這裡做什麼？」



'Do you recognize these?'  
「你認得這些東西嗎？」



'Dad's worthless NFTs.'  
「父親那堆毫無用處的 NFT。」



'Did you know they could do this!'  
「那你知道它們能這樣嗎？」

Waving his hands in elaborate movements like casting some sort of magic spell, Uncle Lee arranged the pile of worthless NFTs to form a giant mural.

李叔叔像施展某種魔法一樣誇張的揮動著雙手，那堆看似沒半點用處的 NFT 卻有序地排列起來，拼湊出一幅巨大的壁畫。



'Do you recognize this now, nephew?'  
「你現在認得這些東西了嗎？瑞斯。」



'That's ... a famous piece of digital art, isn't it? "The Bored Baboon". What's the meaning of this?'  
「呀... 這是那個有名的數碼畫作《百無聊賴的狒狒》？這有什麼意思？」



'When your father knew he wasn't long for his world, he reached out to me for help.'  
「當你的父親知道他快不久於世，他去找我幫忙了。」



'Help with what?'  
「幫忙什麼？」



'He wanted me to watch over you. Despite all your magnificent achievements, he was still worried about you and he didn't know how to express his feelings directly. So, he wanted to teach you a lesson. Typical Asian father behaviour perhaps? And watch over you I did. From afar, as Clipper.'

「他拜託我照顧你。儘管你的事業已取得輝煌的成就，他依然擔心你。他不知道該如何直述他的感受，所以他想給你上一課。這也的確是典型亞洲父親會做的事。當然我也作為克里帕，在遠遠靜靜觀察著你的一切。」



'Ah.... I see. An Inner-self?' Sirius stared at the giant mural.  
「啊... 我明白了。關於尋找自我嗎？」瑞斯緊盯著那幅巨型壁畫。

Uncle Lee motioned at the giant mural. 'Your father was a brilliant artist but clear instructions weren't exactly his forte. Maybe he just wanted to make sure you're okay. The point is, Nephew, that you didn't need my help, or your father's lesson. You've been doing perfectly fine on your own up until now. You broke out of your comfort zone to help others. No matter if your intention is completely altruistic or not, that doesn't change the fact that you've created something beautiful for the benefit of your fellow man.'

李叔叔對著壁畫說：「你父親是個出色的藝術家，但留下明確指示卻不是他擅長的事。也許他只是想確保你安然無恙。關鍵是，侄兒，你不需要我的幫助，你甚至不需要接受這個父親留給你的「教訓」。目前為止你都做得非常好。你突破了你的舒適區，開始幫助別人。不管你的意圖是否因利他主義推動，你為人們帶來些美好的東西也是不爭的事實。」



Sirius stood silent pondering his uncle's words.

瑞斯就這樣靜靜的站著，細細思考叔叔的話。



'And don't let all that noises get to you, Nephew. Any cause worth fighting for will have its fair share of detractors. Just keep doing what you're doing. Your father would've been proud.'

「不要讓其他東西干擾你，侄兒。任何值得為之奮鬥的事業中都會出現詆毀你的人。繼續堅持做你正在做的事吧，你的父親會感到驕傲的。」

Sirius looked deep in thought. He then looked at the giant mural and smiled.

瑞斯看起來陷入了沉思。然後他看著那幅巨大的壁畫笑了。



'You think that thing's worth anything now?'  
「你認為這東西還有價值嗎？」



'It reminds me of who I am, and of what I want to be.'  
「它提醒了我是誰，和我想成為誰。」

## On prevailing in the face of adversity

It had been six months since the Wish Come True Foundation inaugural opening event. Public opinion had begun to swing in Sirius's favour and several other virtual charities had emerged to take up the cause. The foundation was now receiving funding from governments and large corporations. With the extra capital they were able to expand their charitable services to the underprivileged of all ages.

Timmy still regularly writes to Sirius. They've developed a close bond after their initial encounter. Sirius had invited Timmy to speak at the inaugural opening event of their foundation's branch, the Wishes Come True Too Foundation, that was opening down in Mega City Two next month.

Sirius sat in his office and reflected on all that has happened. Less than a year ago, all he cared about was the money he made and how he could make more. Now, he's still trying to make money, but he's also become a philanthropist. Life had taken him down a winding path. He looked at the replica of the Bored Baboon mural he now had on his office wall. Did he learn anything? Perhaps he did, perhaps he didn't. He decided it didn't matter. He was happy with what he was doing. He stood up and looked out at the harbour and felt calm. All was well.

## A cleaning lady and her adventures around the world

Cleaning Lady stretched her legs on the couch after a long day of hard work. Rolling her eyes at idiots all day took a surprising amount of effort and she could feel the strain placed on her aching eyes by decades of hardship as she rubbed them slowly with the tips of her fingers.

After her husband passed away all those years ago from an industrial accident, Cleaning Lady was left with three young children to raise on her own. She didn't receive a proper education so her employment options were rather limited. Her mother told her she was good at cleaning so that was what she did for thirty years of her life. Over the years, the pain of losing her husband numbed into a dull ache. She was so busy with the children that she didn't have time to properly mourn her husband. Now that her children are all grown up and scattered all over the world, Cleaning Lady is left alone in a small apartment that used to be filled with people. Well at least there's more space now, she thought.

But there were problems that came with a quiet home. Problems like boredom and too much time to kill. Cleaning Lady had too much time to kill. She had toiled for the sake of others throughout the majority of her life and now with no one to take care of and nothing else to do, she felt bored. She turned on the TV, not necessarily because she wanted to watch something, but to listen to some background noise as she slowly drifted off on the couch.

## 奏起那突破逆境的勝利之歌

自實現願望基金會開幕式結束後已過了六個月。公眾輿論對瑞斯非常有利，幾個虛擬的慈善機構也相繼活躍於類似的範疇。基金會正接受來自於政府和大企業的資助，本著這些支持，基金會將能夠將慈善服務範圍擴展至所有年齡層的貧困人口。

蒂米仍然會定期寫信給瑞斯。他們在初次見面後就保持了聯繫。瑞斯曾邀請蒂米在基金會分會的開幕典禮上發言，這基金會下月將在都城二期營運。

瑞斯坐在他的辦公室裡，腦中運轉著所有事件。就在不到一年前，他還在關心他賺來的錢、和如何賺更多的錢。現在，他仍然想努力賺錢，但也成為了慈善家。生活的種種讓他走上了一條曲折之路。他看著現在掛在辦公室牆上那《百無聊賴的狒狒》壁畫的複製品。他學到了什麼嗎？或許有，也或許沒有。然而他覺得這並不重要。他對自己正在做的事由衷的感到高興。他站了起來，看著港灣，心裡感受到久違了的平靜。一切都很好。

## 清潔女工和她的異想世界

經過一天的辛勤工作，清潔女工在沙發上伸了伸腿。為了整天對著那白痴翻白眼，她可是付出了巨大的心力。就在她用指尖慢慢揉搓雙眼時，她彷彿感覺到這幾十年來的艱辛是如何折磨著她的眼睛。

多年前，她的丈夫在一次工業事故中去世，自此她便獨自撫養三個年幼的孩子。她沒有接受過良好的教育，所以她的就業選擇相當有限。母親曾告訴她，清潔打掃是她擅長的事，所以這工作一做便是三十年。事到如今，失去丈夫的痛苦已經變成麻木的鈍痛。她的孩子都長大了，分散在世界各地，她則被單獨留在一個曾經住滿人的小公寓中。至少現在有更多的生活空間，她心裡想著。

但一個安靜、沒有任何吵鬧的家也不盡是好事，感到無聊的情緒和太多可供消磨的時間等都對她構成了不少困擾。清潔女工覺得她實在有太多沒事做的時間了。她一生中大部分光陰都在為他人服務，現在已經沒有人需要自己照顧，也沒什麼事情可以做，她感覺生活又更枯燥了。她打開了電視，不一定是因為她想看什麼，而是讓房間充斥一些噪音，好使她能在沙發上慢慢的睡著。

「盡情環遊世界吧！你再不會被困在家裡了！」這是電視上的廣告，宣傳著為旅行體驗訂製的VR眼鏡。這副眼鏡安裝了一百八十個國家和它們主要旅遊景點的導遊服務。「這看上去不錯。」她心想，但無奈地眼鏡超出了她的預算。如果能至少試戴一次就好了，她和她的丈夫一直都幻想能到世界各地遊歷。



'Travel the world to your heart's content. Never feel trapped in your own home again.' It was a commercial on the TV advertising VR glasses customized for travelling experiences. These come pre-loaded with 180 countries and guided tours for major tourist attractions. Now isn't that neat, she thought. Out of her budget unfortunately. It would be nice to try them on at least once. She and her late husband had always fantasized about traveling the world together.

Didn't her crazy boss's set up some kind of charity foundation. She wasn't sure she'd qualify but there's no harm in trying. So, Cleaning Lady wrote the foundation a letter asking if they had these types of VR glasses and whether she could try them on. She had always wanted to visit Zhangjiajie. Her friends tell her it's one of the most beautiful places on earth.

Three days later, Cleaning Lady received a box and a letter in the mail. The letter read

慢著。她那瘋狂的老闆不是成立了什麼慈善基金會嗎？她不确定自己是否符合條件，但試試也不壞。清潔女工給基金會寫了一封信，問他們是否有這種類型的 VR 眼鏡，和她是否能試戴看看。她一直都想去張家界，朋友告訴她那是地球上最美麗的地方之一。

三天後，清潔女工在信箱中收到了一個盒子和一封信，信中內容如下。



Dear May,  
親愛的梅姨：

I'm so glad you've decided to write us this letter. I have a little gift for you that I hope you'll enjoy. Consider it a personal thank you for the many years you have worked with us.

我很高興你決定寫這封信給我們。我有一份小禮物要送給你，希望你會喜歡，就當成是你多年來與我們一起工作的感謝吧！

Yours sincerely,  
Sirius  
此致  
李瑞斯

P.S. The instructions should be fairly easier to understand, but feel free to find me in my office if you need some extra help.

備註：使用說明應該不難理解，但如果你有什麼問題，歡迎到我的辦公室找我。

Cleaning Lady opened up the box and sure enough, inside were a set of VR glasses like the ones advertised on the TV commercial she saw three days ago. She felt a feeling that had been absent from her life for a very long time. A surge of excitement blossomed from deep within.

Nowadays, when Cleaning Lady bumps into her boss, they would exchange stories about virtual travelling. Sometimes Cleaning Lady's children would join in on her adventures if they could spare the time. Sirius commented that Cleaning Lady seemed a lot more energetic lately, to which she would say 'I guess lately I haven't been rolling my eyes as much.'

清潔女工打開了盒子，果不其然是一副 VR 眼鏡，看上去就像她三天前在電視廣告上看到的一樣。她感受到什麼正在萌芽，是一種她生活中好久沒有出現的感覺。興奮的心情在她內心深處盛情綻放了。

現在，清潔女工在碰見她的老闆時，兩人會交流關於虛擬旅行的故事。清潔女工的孩子在空閒時也會加入到她的冒險旅程中。瑞斯覺得她最近似乎更精力充沛了，對此她的評論是：「我想這是因為我最近沒有翻那麼多的白眼。」



## On fathers, and sons, and magnificent beards

Jack sat and stared at his half-finished IPA. Jack loved IPAs but he didn't feel like finishing this one because he was feeling on edge. Two weeks ago, Jack sent his father a message on Chitter saying that he wanted to meet. It wasn't a premeditated move on Jack's part, it just sort of happened.

Jack and his father didn't have a bad relationship, but their relationship wasn't a good one either. His father was a lawyer, and he always hoped that Jack would someday take up the family business. So, when Jack decided that he wanted to study coffeeology, his father didn't stop Jack from doing so, he wasn't exactly supportive either. His father didn't understand Jack's obsession with coffee, or IPAs, and he certainly didn't understand Jack's obsession with beards. And so, finding that they had less and less in common, father and son had drifted apart over the years. Jack didn't think much of it. He had enough things in life to deal with and would rather not try and untangle years of emotional distance. But seeing his best friend's father's passing spurred Jack into action.

## 父子和那依然茂密的鬍鬚

傑克正坐著，眼睛也離不開他那杯還沒有喝完的印度淡色艾爾。傑克太喜歡印度淡色艾爾，但他卻不覺得自己能喝完這杯。現在的傑克很緊張兮兮。就在兩週前，傑克在社交媒體上給他父親發了一條信息，表達想和他碰個面的想法。這不是傑克計畫的一部分，但這件事卻順其自然的發生了。

傑克和他的父親的關係並不壞，但也不是很好。他的父親是一名律師，他一直希望傑克有朝一日能繼承家族的事業。因此當傑克決定要學習咖啡學時，他的父親顯露出不反對卻也不支持的態度。他的父親不理解傑克對咖啡或印度淡色艾爾的癡迷，也當然不能理解傑克對鬍鬚的執著。父子倆的共通點越來越少，兩人也隨時間疏遠。傑克對此沒有多想，畢竟生活中要處理的東西已經夠多了。要他額外花時間處理兩人的心結，他可沒有這個閒心。即便這樣，看到最好的朋友的父親去世後，傑克覺得自己需要做點什麼。



'Maybe it's not too late to fix it?' Jack said.  
「現在才開始修復關係，還不算太晚吧？」傑克說。



'Of course, it isn't. Maybe you two just need a little nudge in the right direction. Have you considered family therapy?'  
「當然還不晚。也許你們兩個只是需要得到一些提點。你考慮過接受家庭治療嗎？」



'Ever since Dad hurt his hip last year, it's been kind of hard getting him out of the house. Besides, how am I even going to get him to agree on coming?'  
「去年爸爸的臀部受傷後，要他走出家門已經很難了。還有我怎能讓他同意呢？」



'I've got just the thing. We offer virtual counselling services at the foundation. As for getting him to come...'  
「我們正好有辦法。基金會提供虛擬諮詢服務，至於 ...」

And that was how Jack got his father to agree to come to the foundation centre. By saying that his best friend wanted advice on a legal conundrum regarding accounts and record keeping requirements for virtually established charitable foundations. Jack's father never could resist the opportunity to flex his legal knowledge, and if he could help a friend of the family while at it, then that just makes it better.

Jack's father had been spending more time in the Metaverse since his hip injury and he was in a particularly good mood when he arrived at the doors of the foundation. When his son came out to greet him at the door, he realized that he couldn't remember the last time they've seen each other and was somewhat saddened by that revelation.

這就是傑克如何讓他父親同意來基金會的前因後果。傑克美化了一下自己的請求，說他最好的朋友有一難題，需要尋求法律意見，而這難題也涉及了虛擬慈善基金會的帳目和檔案保存領域。傑克的父親從不拒絕任何能發揮他專業才能的機會。如果他同時也能幫助傑克的朋友，那就更好了。

自從弄傷臀部後，傑克的父親花了更多的時間在元宇宙上。他到達基金會的門口時，心情很是愉悅。當自己的兒子從基金會出來並在門口迎接他時，他意識到他並不記得他們最後一次見面是什麼時候了，一想到這裡不禁有點難過。



'Dad! Long time no see. I've missed you.'

「嗨爸！好久不見，我想你了。」



'Likewise, son. Likewise'

「我也是，兒子。我也是。」



'Is that ... a beard on your avatar? I thought you didn't like those.'

「你化身上的... 鬍子嗎？我以為你不喜歡這些。」



'Well, not exactly. Its just ... I've never been able to grow one myself outside. But now that I have one in here, I kind of like how it feels.'

「不全是... 只是我長不出來鬍子。但在這裡我能有自己的鬍子，感覺還不錯。」



'Well, I'm glad you like it, Dad. It's a pretty cool beard.'

「很開心看見你喜歡你的新形象。我覺得這鬍子挺酷的，爸。」

Jack's father flashed his son a sheepish grin.

傑克的父親向他的兒子露出了一個羞澀靦腆的笑容。





‘Come on in, Dad. Sirius is waiting inside. I’ve been talking to a lot great people who work here at the foundation and there’s this counsellor lady I want you to meet.’

「進來吧，瑞斯在裡面等著呢。我和很多員工談過了，我想你見見一位女輔導員。」




‘Sure, son. I think that sounds like a swell idea.’

「當然，兒子。聽起來是個不錯的主意。」



### May our wish come true

Technology is always a two-edged sword. Cybercrime may be magnified in Metaverse despite its glamorous applications. It all depends how we cultivate a healthy eco-system through regulation, governance, and education. Let’s work together to create an exciting, healthy, and sustainable TwinWorld. This is the Wish of the Industry. 

### 願各位美夢成真

科技向來是把雙刃劍。關於元宇宙的一切總是被說得五光十色，但當中關於網絡犯罪的風險是不能被忽視的。元宇宙旅程的下一章會如何書寫，將取決於我們會如何通過監管、管治和教育來孕育健康健全的網絡生態。請大家共同努力，攜手創造一個令人興奮、完善和可持續的雙生世界。 