

Why Me?

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Andi Taelen (TAY-len) goes in for a job interview when she and her father move to China. Her sister, Zero, goes in for another. Andi and Zero are SO in for it.

Oh yeah...no comments...NO NEW CHAPTERS!!!

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1 - Beijing

My first thought was "Are you joking?"

I see this goth albino kid sitting in the chair in front of me, when I'm supposed to be interviewing with a new boss. Who is this guy?

"Jack Spicer," he introduced himself. "And what might your name be?"

"Why? Where's your dad? Are you Jack, Jr.? Because if it's you I'm interviewing with, I may just leave now." I turned to leave.

"Are you interested in being rich?"

I turned back around.

Andi had always said I was the greedy one, and I wasn't gonna argue.

"Yeah," I said curtly.

"Then welcome to the business," he grinned, evilly.

Something said he was going to just screw me over, but I didn't care. He offered me money, and I wasn't about to turn him down!

"How much am I getting paid?"

"Well, if I have enough money to buy an ENTIRE LABORATORY in my BASEMENT, I guess I have enough to pay you, hmm?"

"I guess, but what am I doing?"

"Can you fight?"

"Ish," I shrugged. Andi was always the better fighter. "I'm a techie."

"Really?" his face lit up. "Can you hack?"

"Better than Bill Gates," I laughed.

He seemed almost too thrilled. He gave me an email address and told me to keep track of all the emails that came through. What was I, FreeCreditReport.com!?

I got paid \$80 an email, though, so it was ALL good.

And that's how my story begins.

~~Zero Taelen

2 - Castle

I stood before a large monastery, ready for my training. Zero had gone off on a job interview, which, judging from her text message, had gone well.

Greedy.

She always was.

Can't teach an old dog new tricks, I suppose.

I took a deep breath in, ready to become a Xiaolin monk. They were the elite, the top corps in fight training--and they were all I needed to complete my experience with the martial arts.

Just as I was about to enter, i heard a rustle in the forest behind me. I turned, holding my staff ready for anything.

Out stepped a young man with hair so dark it had a hunter green sheen to it.

"Andrea Taelen?" he asked. I tensed, completely silent. "My name is Chase Young."

"Chase Young?" I relaxed. This man was *legend* in martial arts history. But how was he still alive? He fought with the Xiaolin Master Monk thousands of years ago!

"Yes. I'm here to offer you a far better opportunity than any these bumbling Xiaolin idiots can give you."

"How do you know my name?"

"A boy named Jack Spicer told me of your sister--he seems to have taken quite a shine to her, even if the feeling isn't mutual. Can't say I blame her. At any rate, he began complaining about her sister--that's you--and how all Zero said she did was talk about her fight skills. You've...piqued my interest with your resume, dear girl."

"How do you intend to train me?" If he was legit, I would only become a better fighter. If he was a conman, I could fight my way out.

There are few who are more deadly than me.

"I will take you to my home--a castle, if you will--and train you there. You shall become a member of a force stronger than even the Xiaolin."

"And what, may I ask, is this force called?"

"The Heylin."

Something in that word made my heart jump. It made me feel stronger, more alive. As though the Heylin were simply my calling.

"If you join me," he continued, his voice now giving me chills of excitement, "I will make you a force to be reckoned with--one whom all will fear. All you need to do is make a pact, Andrea."

"Call me Andi. I agree to this...pact. I'll have to tell my father."

"Already done. He thinks you've been enrolled to a private monastery."

"How--?"

"Don't worry about that right now," Chase grinned, the sun glinting off what seemed to be perfectly white fangs. "Now, down to business."

Chase held out his hand to me, for a handshake. As soon as I took his hand, a pain shot up my arm, as though I had been cut.

I yanked my hand away, and there, in my hand, was a fresh cut--not deep enough to draw blood, but enough to bring blood to the surface of my skin.

It was in the shape of a dragon circling a reptilian or feline eye.

"Is this the pact?"

He nodded.

"Welcome," he grinned darkly, "To the Heylin."

~~Andi Taelen