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Lord Wade and his daughter, Cynthia Wade, did not feel the cold wind against their skin, but in their hearts, they sensed an undeniable feeling of being unwelcome.

In stark contrast, the sun couple appeared rosy and radiant, highlighting the difference between them.

However, neither father nor daughter dared to blame charlie Wade for their predicament, as they knew it was the consequence of their own past actions.

After inviting everyone inside, Lord Wade quickly said to Cynthia Wade, "Cynthia Wade, go make some tea. It's not yet dinnertime. Orrin, charlie, and I will have some tea and chat."

Gone was the dignified aura of the eldest daughter of the Wade family. Instead, Cynthia Wade now carried herself with the humility of a professional attendant. With a respectful smile, she said, "Dad, please wait a moment. I'll prepare the tea set and the tea leaves."

With that, she set about her task diligently.

Though Cynthia Wade no longer dared to expect charlie Wade to give her a Rejuvenation Pill, a vague hope lingered in her mind. From now on, she intended to seize every opportunity to display kindness and humility toward him. Perhaps, if she left a good enough impression, he might one day show mercy and grant her even half a pill.

Angie, recognizing that Cynthia Wade was still charlie Wade's aunt, didn't feel right letting her handle everything alone. She leaned over to Stefanie sun and softly said, "Stefanie, go help your uncle and aunt. Give them a hand."

Stefanie sun nodded quickly. "Okay, Mom, I'll go right away."

Hearing this, Cynthia Wade immediately stopped her with a smile. "Oh, Stefanie , you're a guest. There's no reason for me to have you do anything. Stay with your parents and Grandpa Wade—I'll handle everything myself."

Then, turning to charlie Wade, she smiled again and said, "charlie, sit down and spend some time with Stefanie ."

charlie Wade nodded gently, his thoughts stirring. "Aunt is nothing like before. The old Cynthia Wade was pampered and entitled—despite her age, she was more aggressive and hot-tempered than most young people. But now, she seems completely changed, as if she's been reborn."

As the host, Lord Wade invited everyone to sit on the sofa. Once they were seated, he turned to Orrin sun and said, "Orrin, if you're free, visit me more often. I'm an old man, and life at home can get quite dull. Sometimes, I just want someone to talk to."

Orrin sun replied respectfully, "Of course, Uncle wade. We don't have much going on these days, and since Stefanie is back to rest and prepare for the New Year, our family of three will visit often to keep you company!"

Lord Wade was overjoyed. Nodding with a broad smile, he said, "That would be wonderful! Most of the Wade family is now watching over the ancestral tomb at Yeling Mountain. At my age, it's not convenient for me to go up the mountain, so I often feel lonely."

With that, he turned to charlie Wade, who was sitting beside him, and sighed. "Honestly, I wish charlie could stay in Eastcliff a little longer. But every time he comes back, he's in a hurry and barely stays before leaving again. I rarely get the chance to have him keep this old man company."

charlie Wade simply smiled and remained silent.

After all, he now had his own family in Jinling and couldn't respond to this topic at the moment. If he mentioned his engagement to Stefanie sun, it would only lead to another awkward situation.

Sensing the mood, Stefanie sun smiled and said, "Grandpa Wade, Brother charlie Wade has a lot on his plate and doesn't always have time to visit, but don't worry! Once I quit the entertainment industry, I'll be a free spirit with plenty of time. I promise I'll visit you often!"

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"That's wonderful!" Lord Wade beamed with joy.

He had always been fond of Stefanie sun, having watched her grow up. During the years when charlie Wade was missing, even after he had given up hope of finding his grandson, Stefanie sun never did. She had been a little girl back then, yet her devotion and unwavering loyalty touched his heart deeply.

More importantly, when the Ten Thousand Dragons Palace attacked Yeling Mountain, the Sun family knew the Wade family was powerless to resist, yet they still stood firmly by their side. That kind of loyalty was truly priceless. The old man knew he couldn't make decisions for charlie Wade, but if he could, he would have already arranged for him to marry Stefanie sun without hesitation.

At the Sun residence, charlie Wade gifted the sun couple two Rejuvenation Pills. This gesture left them feeling too embarrassed to bring up the engagement in front of the old man, which, in turn, eased the pressure on charlie Wade and allowed him to feel more at ease.

Meanwhile, Aunt Cynthia Wade carefully prepared the tea set and tea leaves, personally brewing a pot of top-quality Jin Jun Mei tea for everyone.

As they sipped their tea and chatted, the conversation never veered toward the engagement.

Beyond his concerns about the marriage arrangement, the old man was also deeply interested in the latest developments regarding the Poqing Society.

Turning to charlie Wade, he asked for updates on the situation.

charlie Wade gave a brief summary before suddenly thinking of Stephen Thompson. He asked, "Grandpa, has there been any news about Butler Tang recently?"

"None at all," Lord Wade sighed. "Since that day, Si Hai seems to have vanished without a trace. I've tried every possible way to locate him, but there's been no news."

charlie Wade felt a pang of regret and said thoughtfully, "I don't know what secret Stephen Thompson is hiding that would force him to leave without saying goodbye. But I believe, without a doubt, that he harbors no ill will toward me or the Wade family."

Orrin sun frowned in confusion. "Why would Sihai leave? Logically speaking, charlie needs support now more than ever. He's served the Wade family for years, knows its affairs inside and out, and has managed its business with great skill. I admire both his ability and character. If he had stayed by charlie's side as a right-hand man, he would have been invaluable. There's really no reason for him to disappear so suddenly and so completely."

charlie Wade nodded, deep in thought. "I've always had a feeling that, despite his years of dedicated service to the Wade family, Stephen Thompson wasn't actually working for the Wade family directly."

Orrin sun raised an eyebrow, intrigued. "charlie, what do you mean by that? Have you discovered something?"

charlie Wade explained, "My father's photo album appeared out of nowhere before. I believe Stephen Thompson deliberately placed it there for me to find, as a way of leading me toward certain clues. And right after that, he disappeared. If he had truly been working for the Wade family, there would have been no need for him to vanish. If he was loyal to my father, then it's unlikely my father could have foreseen events 20 years in the future. Someone must have given him a specific order—one that led him to act this way."

Orrin sun asked skeptically, "If Butler Tang had other motives and managed to hide them for so many years, why wouldn't he just continue doing so? By disappearing without a word, isn't he essentially exposing himself?"

charlie Wade sighed.

There were certain things he couldn't explain to Orrin sun in too much detail.

For instance, Orrin sun was unaware of his ability to implant psychological suggestions an ability that could alter a person's mindset and even reshape their self-perception.

The real reason Stephen Thompson vanished right after the appearance of the photo album was that he feared charlie Wade would uncover the truth by pressing further. Knowing he couldn't resist charlie Wade's psychological influence, he chose to disappear entirely, eliminating any risk of exposure.

At that moment, Lord Wade turned to charlie Wade and asked, "charlie, do you think we should arrange for people worldwide to search for Stephen Thompson's whereabouts? Hongqiao, now that you also have an AI model, combining both resources should make tracking him down much easier."

charlie Wade waved his hand dismissively. "Forget it. I know Stephen Thompson means me no harm. If he has secrets he believes I shouldn't uncover, there's no need for me to force the issue."

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Cynthia Wade, who usually enjoys talking and expressing her opinions, had been quietly making tea for everyone, barely uttering a word.

She couldn't help but glance at Angie, and the more she looked, the more envious she became.

Observing her flawless complexion, graceful demeanor, and youthful skin brimming with healthy collagen, Cynthia suddenly felt like an ugly duckling. She was even too self-conscious to lift her head.

As she poured the tea, she noticed the signs of aging on her own hands. Despite her dedication to skincare, time had inevitably left its mark. Even though she took great care to keep her index finger from touching water, at nearly fifty, her hands still bore the unmistakable signs of dryness and wrinkles.

When she saw Angie delicately holding her cup, her hands smooth and youthful like a girl's, Cynthia felt an even deeper sense of inadequacy.

Angie, on the other hand, was puzzled. In her memory, Cynthia Wade had always been someone who loved to show off—confident, outspoken, and self-centered. Back in the day, she had been one of the most assertive young women in Yanjing. Yet now, here she was, quietly serving tea, her demeanor subdued and uncharacteristically reserved.

Angie, unaware that her own appearance had barely changed in twenty years, had no way of understanding the reason behind Cynthia's silence.

As the men engaged in conversation, Angie refrained from interrupting, instead stealing curious glances at Cynthia Wade.

At one point, their eyes met. Realizing they had both been secretly observing each other, an awkward moment passed between them.

For Cynthia, the discomfort was even greater. When their gazes locked, her eyes instinctively fell on the corners of Angie's—an area most feared by women, where wrinkles tend to appear first.

Yet, to Cynthia's dismay, Angie's skin was as smooth and flawless as fresh tofu—soft, plump, and without a single wrinkle in sight.

Cynthia Wade felt an overwhelming sense of envy, realizing the vast gap between herself and others. She instinctively lowered her head, her final glance tinged with selfconsciousness.

At that moment, Angie finally understood why Cynthia Wade had been staring at her so intently.

It was the Rejuvenation Pill from Charlie Wade that had captivated her.

As a woman, Angie understood the irresistible allure such a pill would hold for a fiftyyear-old woman.

Cynthia Wade's envy was only natural.

However, knowing that Cynthia was Charlie Wade's aunt made Angie feel uneasy.

She couldn't help but feel a little guilty for having just taken an entire pill—something Cynthia Wade longed for but couldn't obtain.

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Yet, this wasn't her decision to make, so she could only pretend not to notice the awkwardness in the air.

Cynthia Wade, however, was no fool. Seeing the slight embarrassment on Angie's face made her feel deeply uncomfortable—so much so that she wanted to cry.

Charlie Wade was her own nephew, yet why did he treat her with such distance?

She thought back to the time he had detained her in a Aurous Hill rental house over the New Year. She had been filled with resentment, crying to her father over video calls. But if she had known just how powerful Charlie Wade would become, she would have gladly stayed in Aurous Hill—even as a nanny for Elaine, that shrew—without a single complaint.

But now, it was too late for regrets. She had missed her chance to invest in Charlie Wade's rise. Unlike the Sun family, who had supported him more than twenty years ago and never wavered, she had no stake in his success. No wonder Charlie Wade treated them so well.

In contrast, she—his own aunt—had become nothing more than an unwelcome outsider.

With these thoughts, Cynthia Wade found herself reflecting on her life—a rare moment of introspection. She had been pampered since childhood.

Not only had her parents doted on her, but her second brother, Bruce Wade, had also adored her.

Later, when Bruce got married, her sister-in-law treated her like a younger sister.

Although Cynthia was spoiled back then, she always remained well-behaved and respectful in front of her brother and sister-in-law. She never overstepped boundaries, nor did she act out of line.

In truth, she had always admired Bruce Wade and Lydia (Ava) (Charlie's mother) deeply. At the same time, she had developed a strong sense of dependence on them. She believed that, with such exceptional people by her side, she would always be protected and cared for.

But life had not gone as she expected. Both of them passed away at the prime of their lives.

From that moment, the Wade family fell into decline. Her father no longer had the energy to give her special attention, and her eldest brother remained distant.

For a long time, Cynthia Wade had been pushed to the margins of the family. Meanwhile, her husband—whose success had been largely due to Bruce Wade's support—lost his momentum after Bruce's passing. Over the years, he had failed to distinguish himself, causing Cynthia to gradually lose patience with him.

Now, as she looked at her life, a wave of sorrow washed over her.

Her brothers still didn't take her seriously, instead keeping their guard up around her. Her father, though he wished to care for her, was now too old to do much. He had already handed over control of the family, and the resources of the Wade family were now in the hands of her nephew, Charlie Wade.

Yet, this nephew had no affection for her.

Her thoughts drifted back to Bruce Wade and Lydia (Ava), and a deep sigh formed in her heart.

"If my second brother and his wife were still alive, Charlie wouldn't treat me like this. They would still love and take care of me, just like before. But now... no one cares about me."

Lost in thought, Cynthia Wade grew increasingly sorrowful. Sitting alone with her head down, she sobbed quietly.

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Lord Wade finished the hot tea in his cup. Noticing that his daughter hadn't refilled it, he gently tapped the tea table and said, "Cynthia, pour some more tea for me."

Still crying with her head lowered, Cynthia suddenly heard her father's voice. Snapping out of her thoughts, she didn't even have time to wipe away her tears before hurriedly responding, "Okay, Dad."

She quickly picked up the teapot and poured him more tea.

Lord Wade glanced at his daughter and immediately noticed the tear-streaks on her face and her reddened eyes.

Frowning with concern, he asked, "Cynthia, what's wrong? Why are you crying?"

Hearing this, everyone turned their attention to Cynthia Wade.

Charlie Wade also noticed her tear-streaked face, the moisture cutting through her thick foundation. Beneath her sadness, he could sense a deep loneliness in her expression.

Realizing that all eyes were on her, Cynthia quickly wiped away her tears with both hands and tried to brush it off. "Huh? Oh, it's nothing... I was just lost in thought."

Lord Wade sighed, his heart aching for her. "What could you be thinking about that has you crying like this? You're a grown woman."

Cynthia hesitated, unsure of how to respond. Finally, she lowered her head and let out a soft sigh. "I was just thinking about my second brother and second sister-in-law..."

The moment she spoke those words, the weight of her emotions became unbearable. Her grief overwhelmed her, and she could no longer hold back the tears. She broke down, sobbing uncontrollably.

Everyone was taken aback.

At that moment, a new wave of embarrassment washed over Cynthia. She had carefully applied her makeup, and now, with tears streaming down her face, she knew it must be ruined. The thought of looking like a mess—especially in front of Angie—filled her with shame. If she cried any longer, she would end up looking like a clown.

Flustered, she quickly stood up and said in a panic, "You all continue chatting—I'm going to the bathroom."

"Go ahead," the old man nodded, waving her off.

Cynthia Wade hurriedly left, almost fleeing the scene. Charlie Wade watched her retreating figure and shook his head slightly.

Lord Wade, feeling sympathy for his daughter, turned to Charlie, let out a soft sigh, and said, "Charlie, your aunt hasn't had an easy life these past years."

After a brief pause, he quickly added, "Of course, I mean emotionally, not in terms of material wealth."

Charlie Wade gave a slight nod. Having spent years wandering and living under others' roofs, he had witnessed the depths of human nature—the joys, the sorrows, and everything in between. How could he not understand?