

Nigel gazed at Carly with affection.

Hayden watched the scene with satisfaction while Lucy, standing off to the side, curled her lips into a quiet smile. Her scheming hadn't been in vain, after all.

That night, Carly returned to her room.

Not long after, Lucy followed her in. "Carly."

Carly's tone was cold. "What do you want?"

"Carly, I just came to see you. In a couple of days, you'll be leaving for the Capitol with Mr. Hampton. I can't bear to part with you."

Lucy was genuinely reluctant to let Carly go, but Carly didn't want to see Lucy at all. "I'm fine. You can go."

"Carly..." Lucy reached out to take Carly's hand.

However, Carly shook her off. "What are you doing? Why are you so annoying?"

Lucy froze. "Carly, is that how you talk to your mother?"

"Mother?" Carly sneered. "You're not my real mother. Mrs. Hampton is my mother. At most, you're just my foster mom."

Lucy stiffened. She had gone through so much trouble to swap Carly and Celine, ensuring that Carly would become a billionaire heiress.

However, she never expected that once Carly became the heiress, she would refuse to acknowledge her. She had poured all her love and devotion into Carly. Carly was her only hope.

"Carly, you are my daughter. I love you."

Carly didn't want to hear it. "You love me? But what can you even give me? I'm already the daughter of the richest man now. My dad loves me, and he'll give me everything I want. I don't need your love anymore. Now, just leave."

Lucy panicked. "Carly, are you really not going to acknowledge me as your mother anymore?"

Carly snapped, "I'll say it one more time. You were never my real mother. I don't want my dad to misunderstand anything, so from now on, I can only call you Mrs. Tate."

Lucy was stunned that Carly was changing the way she addressed her. She grabbed Carly's hand. "Carly, please listen to me..."

"Enough! You're so annoying. I know the Tate family raised me, but my dad already promised to take care of you. Don't be too greedy. Now, leave."

Without another word, Carly shoved Lucy out of the room. Then, she slammed the door shut.

Lucy was left standing outside. Her face went deathly pale.

She never

expected her own

daughter to reject her like this or throw her out of the room. She still had so much to tell Carly. After all, Carly wasn't Nigel's biological daughter. She was terrified Carly would slip up.

However, Carly was already completely lost in her billionaire heiress fantasy. She didn't want to hear anything Lucy had to say.

"Carly! Open the door! I have something important to tell you!"

At that moment, Hayden walked over. He looked at Lucy, clearly annoyed.

"Lucy,

what are you doing? It's late. What could you possibly have to say to Carly right now? Don't disturb her rest."

Lucy met Hayden's gaze and didn't dare say another word. She was afraid he would figure something out.

Hayden glanced at Carly's tightly shut door and sighed. "Carly has reunited with her father and is going back to the Capitol. Even though I broke my promise to her mother, I'm at peace knowing she'll be with her dad. It's my life mission to protect Carly."