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charlie Wade never had a good impression of Cynthia Wade.

As a child, he remembered that before his parents left Beijing, his aunt was like a firecracker, opposing them at every turn.

When they met again years later, she had already clashed with his mother-in-law, making their relationship even more strained. charlie Wade had even considered putting Cynthia Wade under house arrest in a village for two years if she refused to yield.

Therefore, when the old man spoke on Cynthia Wade's behalf, charlie Wade remained indifferent.

Seeing his cold demeanor, the old man realized he still harbored resentment toward Cynthia Wade. So, while she was still present, he said seriously, "charlie, you may have only seen part of the story. In the early years, your aunt had a good relationship with your father, and your mother treated her well. But later, when the entire Wade family turned against your parents, I failed to stand up for them. At that time, your aunt opposed your parents to protect herself."

The old man sighed as he continued, "Back then, the Wade family was in turmoil, and everyone feared for their survival, just as they did on Ye Ling Mountain. When disaster struck, each person only thought of saving themselves. No one considered their parents or siblings. This has long been a tradition of the Wade family—except for your father."

charlie Wade couldn't help but recall his childhood.

Before leaving Beijing, his parents were indeed ostracized by the entire Wade family, with his uncle leading the charge.

At that time, his parents were already in conflict with the Rothschild family, yet no one in the Wade family stood by his father's side. When his father was besieged by his siblings, the old man never once spoke up in his defense.

It was eerily similar to what had happened on Ye Ling Mountain.

The Wade family had never been truly united. A family bound by real unity puts family above personal interests. The stronger the enemy, the more they stand together to fight until the end.

The Wade family, however, resembled the final days of a crumbling feudal dynasty. Everyone cared only about preserving their own interests. As long as their own small domain remained intact, they remained indifferent—even if the entire nation was under siege.

Cynthia Wade sided with his uncle against charlie Wade's parents, driven partly by the nature of the Wade family and partly by self-interest. charlie Wade didn't dwell on right or wrong, but he couldn't help but feel a lingering discomfort.

Even the old man was no different.

Though he hadn't personally forced charlie Wade's family out, he had allowed others to corner his parents and did nothing to stop them from leaving. This was a grudge charlie Wade had never been able to let go of.

This time, charlie Wade let out a slight sigh. "I don't want to judge the past. But if I had to, I'd say it was an era of villains—where there were no good people."

Lord Wade looked somewhat uneasy.

He clearly understood the meaning behind charlie Wade's words.

bruce Wade had left the Wade family intending to sever ties on his own terms, ensuring that his conflict with the Poqing Society wouldn't drag the family into trouble.

He never revealed the truth to the Wade family. Instead, he actively went to war with the Rothschilds, using that as an opportunity to cut ties.

It was evident that he had long seen through the Wade family's nature. He knew that once he waged war against the Rothschilds, the Wade family would inevitably abandon him for their own self-preservation.

And the Wade family had not "disappointed" him.

charlie Wade sighed inwardly. The more he thought about it, the more ironic it all seemed.

charlie Wade's father chose to openly wage war against the Rothschild family, not to defy the Wade family but to protect them from being implicated. He also understood that once he provoked such a powerful enemy, the Wade family would inevitably sever ties with him.

It was akin to knowing that a lover would eventually betray you. To spare them the burden of your influence, you create the opportunity for their betrayal, allowing them to leave on their own.

Even in his final days, charlie Wade's father was still thinking about his family.

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He thought about his father, who disregarded his own fate, and his siblings, who only wanted him gone.

Orrin sun, aware of everything that had transpired, could guess what charlie Wade was thinking. With a light sigh, he said sincerely, "charlie, some people aren't born to live for themselves. Your father's lifelong mission was to care for his family. Whether it was the Wade family or your mother and you, he fulfilled his duty remarkably."

charlie Wade nodded gently.

He agreed with Orrin sun's words.

During his years at the orphanage, he had encountered many unfortunate children.

Some had been gravely ill since birth.

Despite the orphanage's best efforts to treat them, some did not survive past early childhood.

Aunt Li had once spoken to the children with tears in her eyes, saying that some people are born either to suffer or to enjoy life.

Some children were born with illnesses, abandoned by their parents, and spent their short lives battling disease. When they passed away, they didn't even know what their original surnames were.

Although his father had not endured such hardships, he had carried the weight of the Wade family's future on his shoulders from a young age. He had dedicated himself to relentless study and traveled the world, all in preparation for elevating the Wade family to the top.

After severing ties with the Wade family, he arranged a safe future for his son and chose to perish alongside his wife.

This alone proved that, until his final moments, he never thought about himself—everything he did was for his family.

charlie Wade couldn't help but wonder: If his father were still alive, how would he feel about the Wade family now?

Would he harbor the same resentment as charlie Wade, or would he, as before, continue to protect this family without expecting anything in return?

charlie Wade believed his father would likely choose the latter.

But he couldn't do the same—at least, not yet.

Whether it was Lord Wade, Cynthia Wade, or Corran and Myles on Yeling Mountain, he could choose not to expel them from the Wade family. However, he couldn't bring himself to protect or care for them either.

Perhaps this was the fundamental difference between him and his father.

Yet, the more charlie Wade thought about the Wade family's selfish nature, the more disgusted he felt.

It seemed that this family only united when it was in their best interest—when his father was at his peak.

That needed to change.

As he recalled that the Qingming Festival would arrive shortly after the New Year, he turned to Lord Wade and said, "Grandfather, this Qingming Festival, notify all Wade family members to gather at Yeling Mountain for the ancestral rites. It's time to reinforce the family's values. If the Wade family can achieve true unity, I will continue investing resources into it. Otherwise, the Wade family will be dissolved on the spot. All partnerships and financial dealings with the collateral branches will be severed. As for other core members, including my eldest uncle, third uncle, and aunt, they will leave the Wade family. I will establish a trust to provide them and their children with a monthly stipend, but none of them will have any authority over the family's management moving forward."

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"charlie, you are now the patriarch of the Wade family. From now on, the family will follow your orders."

Lord Wade naturally complied with charlie Wade's decision.

Having already relinquished the position of patriarch, he had no objections.

Moreover, he understood that, to Charlie Wade, the Wade family had become a minor concern.

After all, if Charlie Wade wished, a single Rejuvenation Pill could generate wealth nearly equivalent to the entire family's assets.

At that moment, Cynthia Wade, having composed herself and finished her makeup, hurried back.

As soon as she sat down, she silently prepared tea for everyone.

Lord Wade turned to her and said, "Cynthia, Charlie plans to worship our ancestors at Yeling Mountain on Qingming Festival and take this opportunity to teach the Wade family an important lesson."

Cynthia Wade was surprised. Ancestor worship was an annual tradition, so why was Charlie Wade stirring things up this time?

However, she dared not question it and instead responded seriously, "It is only right for Charlie to discipline the family. In recent years, many have gone too far. Unlike other families, we have no sense of unity."

Charlie Wade said calmly, "This time, I intend to make rewards and punishments crystal clear, balancing kindness with authority. Those who prioritize the Wade family's interests over their own will receive more resources and benefits, along with my support in other areas. But anyone who puts personal gain above the family's well-being will be expelled without hesitation."

Lord Wade nodded. "Absolutely! I was too lenient before. I believed that as long as the family was prospering, it was best to let everyone enjoy the benefits without creating friction. But when powerful enemies came knocking, I realized that excessive kindness only breeds disloyalty. Sometimes, the more you accommodate your own family, the more they take advantage of you. The softer you appear, the bolder they become."

Cynthia Wade suddenly had a moment of realization and said with shame, "Dad, you're right. Even I used to prioritize my own interests. When my second brother provoked the Rothschild family, my eldest brother secretly convinced us to turn against him, aiming to drive him out of the family. He told us that only by severing all ties with my second brother could we shield the Wade family from retaliation. Otherwise, if a conflict broke out between the Rothschilds and the Wade family, we would all suffer tremendous losses."

“At that time, I was only thinking of myself. Even as a daughter, I had a share in the Wade family’s assets, and I feared that any decline in our wealth would diminish my own worth...”

“Later, when Wan Pojun threatened to kill Ye Lingshan, my eldest brother and I both advocated surrendering. We believed that even if we had to give up half of our fortune, at least we could preserve the other half. In truth, we were acting out of self-interest. We feared being left with nothing and wanted to minimize our own losses...”

At this point, Cynthia Wade could no longer hold back her tears. Choking up, she said, “My biggest regret is not standing by my second brother from the start. Now that he’s gone, I want to apologize to him, but I no longer have the chance...”

Overcome with emotion, she found herself spiraling into deep regret and shame. Thinking back to the past and her current predicament, she felt nothing but sorrow.

Once her emotions took over, she couldn’t help but cry out loud.

charlie Wade observed her carefully—she was not putting on an act.

It seemed that his aunt was truly remorseful.

Recognizing one’s mistakes was, in itself, a sign of growth.

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charlie Wade sighed, then noticed a Pu’er tea cake beside Cynthia Wade’s tea tray. Looking at her, he suddenly asked, “Aunt, where’s the tea knife for the Pu’er?”

“Tea knife?”

Cynthia Wade was momentarily taken aback before hurriedly responding, “charlie, if you want to drink Pu’er, I’ll brew a fresh pot for you.”

“No need.” charlie Wade shook his head and said calmly, “I just need the tea knife.”

Cynthia Wade retrieved a silver tea knife from beneath the tea table. Resembling the arrowhead of an ancient bow, the knife was specifically designed to pry apart the tightly compressed Pu’er tea cake.

charlie Wade took the tea knife and pulled a Rejuvenation Pill from his pocket.

The moment he revealed the pill, Lord Wade was stunned.

Cynthia Wade, however, remained unfazed. Having neither seen nor tasted a Rejuvenation Pill before, she didn't grasp its significance.

Lord Wade, on the other hand, felt his heart pounding like a drum, his breath catching in his throat.

Under everyone's watchful gaze, charlie Wade used the tea knife to carefully split the pill in half.

A fresh medicinal fragrance filled the air. Handing half to Lord Wade, charlie Wade said, "Grandfather, I appreciate your decision to entrust me with the Wade family. I may not always have the time to be by your side in the future, but rest assured—regardless of the past, as long as you stand with me now and in the days ahead, I will always honor and take care of you."

Lord Wade trembled with excitement.

He had never expected another chance to obtain a Rejuvenation Pill.

Even half a pill was more than he had dared to hope for.

Overwhelmed with joy, he reached out with shaking hands as charlie Wade handed him the precious half. Unable to contain himself, he quickly declared, "charlie, you have my word—I won't repeat the mistakes of the past. From now on, I will stand by your side without hesitation."

charlie Wade gave a slight nod.

At this point, his relationship with the old man was no longer just that of grandfather and grandson—it had also become one of ruler and subject.

Though Lord Wade was his grandfather, charlie Wade was now the head of the Wade family. That meant his grandfather had to align with him completely.

The Wade family was vast and filled with diverse individuals. Ever since his father's passing, unity had been nonexistent. Now, charlie Wade needed to establish a strong image and make it clear to everyone what benefits came with standing by his side.

His gaze then shifted to the remaining half of the Rejuvenation Pill before glancing at Cynthia Wade beside him.

Tears streamed down Cynthia Wade's face, and when she suddenly noticed charlie Wade looking at her, an overwhelming sense of nervousness gripped her.

She had no idea what he intended to do with the remaining half of the pill.

Would he keep it? Or would he give it to her?

Though she knew the chances of receiving it were slim, a thought lingered—Lord Wade had fully submitted to Charlie Wade yet had only received half a pill. Given that she had opposed Charlie Wade in the past, had yet to prove her loyalty, and had no opportunity to do so thus far, could she possibly be granted half a pill as well?

Just then, Charlie Wade looked at her and said calmly, “Aunt, I will keep this half of the Rejuvenation Pill for the Wade family. Whoever can truly prioritize the family’s interests over their own will be the one to receive it.”

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When Cynthia Wade heard this, she wasn’t disappointed. Instead, she keenly recognized that this was an opportunity granted to her by Charlie Wade.

At present, the Wade family had largely let Charlie Wade down. Among them, the least disappointing was naturally the old man, followed perhaps by herself.

Although she had offended Ma Lan, she was still somewhat better than her elder brother, Corran Wade, and the others.

Moreover, aside from the old man, she was the only one who knew about the half Rejuvenation Pill as a reward. This meant she already had a head start.

As long as she worked hard and performed well in the future, she could undoubtedly earn Charlie Wade’s favor.

Unable to contain her excitement, she said, “Charlie, don’t worry! From now on, I will always prioritize the interests of the Wade family!”

Charlie Wade nodded, handed the half Rejuvenation Pill to Lord Wade, and said, “Grandpa, please keep this half of the Rejuvenation Pill for me.”

Lord Wade was taken aback.

Keep it for him?

Wasn’t he afraid that he might not be able to resist taking it himself?

This was the Rejuvenation Pill—the very thing he desired most in his life, perhaps the only thing he truly longed for.

And he had never even had a whole Rejuvenation Pill before.

Now, charlie Wade had split one into two, giving him half while asking him to safeguard the other. It was truly a test of his willpower.

Quickly, he said, “charlie, this pill is priceless. I’m just an old man. If I fail to keep it safe, or worse, if someone steals it, it would be a tremendous loss, and I wouldn’t be able to explain it to you. I think it’s best if you keep it yourself. What do you say?”

charlie Wade smiled and replied, “It’s okay, Grandpa. Only the few of us here know about it. As long as we don’t tell anyone, no one else will find out.”

In reality, charlie Wade’s decision to have the old man safeguard half of the Rejuvenation Pill carried a touch of ironic humor.

At the same time, it served as a test and a means of tempering the old man’s willpower.

Realizing that charlie Wade had already made up his mind, the old man had no choice but to nod and say, “Then I will keep it safe.”

charlie Wade smiled and suggested, “Grandpa, why don’t you take your half of the pill now? That way, you can avoid any complications later tonight.”

Lord Wade certainly wanted to take it, but he felt somewhat embarrassed in front of the Wade family.

However, since charlie Wade had spoken, there was no need for him to hesitate.

After all, this pill was priceless and held immense significance for him. The effects would be immediate, and at his age, looking even a few years younger could make a world of difference.

So, he carefully picked up the half-pill, placed it in his mouth, and closed his eyes to experience its pure medicinal power.

The Gu couple, having already experienced the effects of a whole Rejuvenation Pill, weren’t particularly surprised when the old man took half and instantly became much younger.

After all, compared to what they had just witnessed, this transformation was far less shocking.

However, Cynthia Wade, standing nearby, watched in astonishment as her father appeared six or seven years younger in an instant. The sight left her completely stunned.

At that moment, she finally understood why the old man was so willing to follow Charlie Wade—even to the extent of relinquishing control over the entire Wade family. For someone his age, the temptation was simply too overwhelming.

As her eyes fell on the remaining half-pill resting on the tea table, a deep sense of longing and urgency surged within her, reaching its peak in that very moment.

At the family dinner that followed, Cynthia Wade was more attentive than ever—perhaps a hundred times more than before.