

Chapter 3

Lindsay's words left Alex at a loss for what to say. Although it wasn't intentional back then, his sister did indeed go missing for so many years because of him, leaving her to fend for herself without enjoying the life of a wealthy heiress.

Lindsay added, "And let me say this one last time, I no longer care about any of you, so I'm not interested in competing for favoritism with Olivia."

Oliver, with a dark expression, said, "Think carefully. If you sever ties with us, forget about getting any more resources from the company."

Edmund Harper, the eldest brother, chimed in, "And it could get even worse—you might even get blacklisted."

Their words were meant to make Lindsay think twice about her future and back down from her rash decisions.

Yet, Lindsay suddenly laughed. "All of you are making it sound like you've given me so much this past year.

"Since joining Harper Entertainment, the resources and opportunities I've gotten were even less than those from the small company that used to exploit me.

"Not only are they fewer and poorer, but when I was slandered online, you did nothing to manage public relations.

"You even tried to take the opportunities I found for myself and give them to Olivia. You've got a lot of nerve using that as a threat.

"I've seen shameless, but I've never seen anyone as shameless as all of you."

As their expressions darkened further, Lindsay continued, "Fortunately, when I switched jobs, I didn't sign a contract with the company, so there's no need for a termination now."

Back then, Edmund and Oliver said since Lindsay was part of the family, there was no need for the hassle of a contract, and they wouldn't let her suffer any loss.

She didn't know what returning to the Harper family would be like and decided to keep her options open, so she agreed.

Sure enough, her precaution was not in vain. Otherwise, to terminate the contract, she would have had to pay a hefty penalty.

Unable to pay, she was sure if she didn't comply, they would definitely get her blacklisted.

"From today onwards, I'm done serving you. Do whatever you like."

She also said, "Since you didn't let the public know about my identity, I don't need to publicly announce I've left the family. We will never meet again!"

With that, Lindsay turned around and, without hesitation, quickly walked away with her suitcase.

After stepping outside, she paused the recording on her phone that was in her bag.

As the members of the Harper family watched her resolute departure, they were filled not only with anger but suddenly a sense of loss as well.

Grace, full of rage, exclaimed, "She actually left, how outrageous!"

Oliver scowled, "Since she's so defiant, I'll make her realize that without the Harper family, she is nothing, she will have nothing."

He felt that Lindsay's actions were directly targeting him for allocating the quota to Olivia, which infuriated him.

He turned to Edmund and said, "Brother, talk to your acquaintances in other entertainment companies. Make sure they don't sign Lindsay."

Edmund nodded. "Alright."

Seeing his normally obedient sister suddenly rebel, he thought of teaching her a lesson to show her that being willful would not give her any good outcomes.

With Edmund's agreement, Oliver narrowed his eyes. "Even if she thinks she's tough, I don't think she'll get far. She'll probably come back begging soon enough."

He would also alert the agents in the industry not to sign Lindsay.

Olivia, hearing her brothers' plans, felt a surge of joy.

However, she put on a guilty facade and said, "I feel like it's all my fault that Lindsay got so mad and left. Please, Edmund, Oliver, don't do this."

She added, "Once her anger subsides, I'll apologize to her. If you both coax her a bit, she will come back."

The more she said this, the more the family thought Lindsay was being unreasonable, and their disdain grew.

Indeed, Edmund spoke up, "This has nothing to do with you. It's just her lack of contentment."

The other Harper brothers agreed. "Exactly, she already obtained the status of Miss Harper, yet she keeps trying to compete with you, which is outrageous. You don't need to apologize to her, and we certainly won't coddle her.

"If we don't teach her a lesson now, she might cause more trouble in the future, disrupting our household."

Compared to Olivia, Lindsay really was too unreasonable.

Grace pondered for a moment, then patted Olivia reassuringly. "You don't need to worry about this. Your brothers know what to do. If Lindsay comes back, she'll be more compliant."

Olivia reluctantly nodded. "Okay."

Richard, as he listened to the conversation, thought that Lindsay would eventually come back once she couldn't stay away any longer.

Therefore, Richard did not object.

Lindsay returned to an apartment she had rented previously.

She had rented it after arriving in the capital and had not given it up even after returning to the Harper family.

Whenever there were conflicts with the family or when she felt unhappy, she would stay there for a few days.

After cleaning the apartment, Lindsay's phone rang.

Seeing the caller, she was momentarily dazed, a hint of scorn flashing in her eyes.

It was Justin Ford, the childhood friend she grew up with and her boyfriend, whom she had always tried not to think about deliberately.

After being adopted by her Moses, she lived next to Justin's grandfather's house, and the two old men were good friends.

She had just been rescued from human traffickers by her Moses at that time.

Having been beaten and abused by the traffickers, she had psychological scars and was hesitant to leave the yard.

It was Justin who took her hand and led her out.

Back then, he was like a ray of sunshine, shining into her heart.

After she emerged from her shadows, she liked to stick close to him.

He was five years older than her and was taken back to the capital by his family when he was in high school.

To keep up with him, she studied hard and skipped grades to attend a school in the capital city.

Two years after he entered the entertainment industry, she graduated from college and joined the industry as well.

After returning to the Harper family, she confessed her feelings to Justin, and he did not reject her.

She had always thought that Justin treated her differently from her family.

Yet, in her previous life, Justin had shown her what betrayal felt like.

Having been given a second chance at life, she no longer wanted any entanglements with him.

She answered the phone, her voice cool and detached, "What is it?"

Justin sensed that Lindsay's attitude was somewhat cold today, but he didn't take it to heart.

He asked, "Are you not going to be on that variety show anymore?"

Lindsay countered, "Who said that?"

She knew that Justin also hoped she would give her spot to Olivia, which was why he was calling to probe.

Justin replied, "Oliver told me you were giving up your spot."

Lindsay stated, "That's not happening. I won't give that spot to anyone."

Justin frowned slightly. "You're not listening to Oliver?"

Lindsay scoffed. "Why should I listen to him?"

Justin and Oliver were high school classmates and had maintained a good relationship.

It was also for this reason that in her previous life when Justin came to persuade her to give up her spot, she didn't suspect he was doing this for Olivia and thought he genuinely had her best interests at heart.

Justin's frown deepened. "Oliver is your agent; he surely wants what's best for you. Don't be willful."

Lindsay snorted. "What am I being willful about? Is it just because I won't give Olivia what she wants, I'm being unreasonable?"

She added sarcastically, "If I gave it up, the Harper family would think I'm sensible, and you could continue being in a happy relationship with your secret beloved."

She was truly fed up.

In her previous life, due to the Harper family and Justin's persuasion, Lindsay eventually gave up the spot.

With the Harper family's marketing efforts and Justin's care and assistance on the variety show, Olivia successfully crafted an innocent persona and quickly became a sensation.

The so-called better opportunity that Oliver provided for her was merely a secondary female role with not much screen time in a drama that was ultimately shelved due to issues with the male lead.

What she didn't expect was that Justin had already received an invitation to this variety show, but he had never told her about it. She discovered it during the premiere when she noticed he was one of the mystery guests planned for the show in advance.

When she noticed how well Justin took care of Olivia during the show, she realized they knew each other, and Justin showed exceptional care for Olivia.

She hadn't even finished watching the first episode when she left to film a movie on a closed set. When she finished filming, six months had already passed.

At that time, she was somewhat confused, unsure whether she wanted to continue her relationships with the Harper family and Justin.

Coincidentally, she had secured a role on her own—a lead role in an indie film—so she went to a remote mountain area to shoot the film.