

## Chapter 72 Not Right For Each Other

What exactly had she promised Chris?

Kimberly hesitated for a moment before it came back to her, her smile showing a trace of resignation. "It was about the project proposal, right?"

He truly was... dedicated to his work, never letting it slip from his mind, even appearing at the Holden family's doorstep late at night to remind her.

Chris tilted his head back slightly, gradually standing upright with one hand casually tucked into his pocket.

"Good to hear you remember."

"If you're ever confused, just visit us at Howard Group. I'll be there to guide you."

Kimberly's eyes brightened. "Really?"

She pressed her lips together, pretending to be shy. "Won't that bother you?"

Chris looked at her intently. "Not at all."

He could tell how eager and excited she was. Noticing she wasn't as upset anymore, he quietly sighed in relief.

It was fortunate she wasn't upset; he was admittedly not good at consoling others, women in particular.

"Well then, I'll come by Howard Group to see you tomorrow!"

A vibrant smile spread across Kimberly's face.

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Truth be told, she had mostly moved past her initial misunderstanding with Chris. Though she felt unjustly treated at the time, after dealing with Lenard's harsh criticisms and the conflicts with William's family, she put it behind her.

In comparison to those ordeals, her issues with Chris seemed minor.

More importantly, she urgently needed the chance to work with Chris. She was determined to prove herself and help reverse the Holden family's fortunes.

And only Chris could offer her that opportunity.

Chris murmured a soft "hmm," his eyes briefly dropped to admire her glowing expression.

For some reason, Kimberly had so easily forgiven him, but he felt a strange and unexplainable sensation in his heart.

He said, "I'm truly sorry about today. I didn't expect... that she would betray my trust."

By "she," he referred to Kallie.

Deception was something Chris despised above all; it was a line he couldn't tolerate being crossed.

Yet he had never thought someone he considered almost like a sister would deceive him.

Reflecting on this, Chris pressed his lips together, his expression shadowed by the thought.

As the conversation turned to this unpleasant memory, Kimberly's smile slowly disappeared. She shrugged trying to appear unaffected. "It's fine. I share some of the blame as well."

Chris opened his eyes wider, a puzzled expression crossing his face. "How were you at fault?"

"I probably shouldn't have mentioned it without any proof. Considering

you see her almost as a sister and have years of history together, it makes sense that you would take her side over mine."

There was something about this confession that seemed... a bit off?

Chris's brow creased slightly, unsure why her words struck him as unusual, but they certainly felt out of character for her. He said earnestly, "Kallie and I have nothing beyond a sibling-like relationship. We're not blood relatives, but I've always seen her as a sister. Please don't get the wrong idea."

"What could I possibly misunderstand?"

Kimberly appeared somewhat puzzled, finding his insistence a bit overdone. There was a distinct feeling that he was trying too hard to clarify.

"Nothing."

Chris's expression grew darker; he suspected she was pretending to be ignorant, which only added to his irritation.

Why was it so hard to make himself clear?

Kimberly awkwardly replied with an "oh," and after a moment of staring at each other, she couldn't help but ask, "Is there anything else, Mr. Howard?"

"It's late. You should get some rest. I'll be heading back now." Chris gave her a meaningful look, said his goodbyes, and walked back to his car. The window rolled up slowly, obscuring him from view.

Kimberly watched the Maybach pull away, then turned her attention back to the waiting Rolls-Royce. She approached, opened the door, and climbed in.

"Are you done talking?" Mabel glanced at Kimberly thoughtfully, pretending to ask casually, "What were you talking about for such a long time?"

"He came to remind me about the project proposal we're working on with the Howard Group. He told me to come see him tomorrow so he can help me make some revisions."

As Kimberly finished explaining, she glanced up to find Mabel looking at her with surprise.

"You mean... Chris is personally going to help you with the project proposal?"

"Yes, is that an issue?"

Mabel narrowed her eyes, observing her seemingly naive niece, her lips twitching slightly. "That's a big issue"

She sharply asked, "Does Chris have feelings for you?"

Kimberly choked on her own saliva, staring at Mabel as if she had seen a ghost. She wished she could write "How did you know?" across her face.

She was on the verge of confessing but backed out. What if Chris was only joking?

If word got out, it might look as though Kimberly was trying to stir up a scandal with him.

Feeling a twinge of guilt, Kimberly shifted her gaze away. "No, there's nothing like that, Aunt Mabel. Please, don't say such things."

Mabel smiled to herself at Kimberly's denial but chose not to press further. She gently warned, "It's better if it's nothing. Chris can be quite ruthless, and you two aren't suited for each other."

Kimberly frowned a little, finding Mabel's words somewhat harsh.

She glanced at Mabel with curiosity. "Do you know Mr. Howard well?"

"Not personally, but I've heard quite a bit about his activities abroad."

Mabel hesitated for a moment, choosing to share Chris's "terrifying" side with Kimberly. She feared her naive niece might fall into another trap after barely escaping Declan's.

"Chris is known as the 'underworld kingpin' in some circles abroad. He has ties to both the criminal underworld and legitimate business. His most profitable venture abroad is his casino. It's a goldmine! Do you know when Chris expanded his operations overseas?"

Kimberly, still reeling from the revelation of Chris's dual connections, shook her head. "How would I know that?"

From her past experiences, she knew Chris as a genius businessman.

Every investment project he managed was a dark horse, surprising everyone when it broke through. Each project he invested in turned a

profit, without exception.

Except for his investment in the Walsh Group, which had betrayed her in her past life.

In that regard, Chris was indeed a force to be reckoned with.

As for his international dealings, Kimberly had no knowledge. She was aware he owned a large business abroad, but the specifics of that business were unknown to her.

Mabel couldn't contain her frustration any longer. "Why don't you know more about this?"

