



## Chapter 12 Forgiveness

"I'm sorry, I'm so sorry!"

Denise had already been crying uncontrollably when Bradley told them what Sierra had gone through in prison. Now, hearing his direct question, she sobbed so hard she could barely breathe.

"I really did go to see my sister. I handed the money to the prison officials and asked them to take good care of her. But then *he* found me... He said he was out of money and demanded that I give him more!"

"When I refused, he threatened to drag me away to pay off his debts. I was so scared... I had no choice but to give him the card."

"I didn't dare tell you. I didn't even dare see Sierra. I... I didn't know she would suffer so much."

"It's all my fault... all my fault..."

Denise gasped for breath, her face suddenly going pale before she collapsed.

"Denny!"

Chaos erupted in the Xander household. Some rushed to call for help, others hurried to lift Denise onto the couch, while the rest fretted anxiously.

Upstairs, Sierra stood watching the scene with cold indifference.



She had only come out to get a glass of water but was met with this performance.

Sean, carrying Denise toward her room, glanced at Sierra at the top of the stairs. His voice was full of impatience. "Move, don't block the way!"

Sierra remained motionless, looking down at him without a hint of emotion.

She felt nothing.

Not sadness, not anger—just a deep, bone-deep exhaustion.

Feeling anything for them was a waste of time.

The family doctor arrived quickly. Since he had always been in charge of Denise's health, he was familiar with her condition. It wasn't long before she regained consciousness.

But even awake, she didn't stop crying. She struggled to sit up.

"Don't move, Denny. You need to rest," Evan said disapprovingly.

"No, Evan, I have to apologize to Sierra. I wronged her." Denise insisted, trying to get out of bed.

Sean quickly intervened. "Denny, stop moving around. I'll go get Sierra for you, okay?"

With that, he turned and headed toward Sierra's room.

Sierra had just finished her shower and was about to go to



bed.

She was exhausted.

The entire day had drained her, but her meeting with Shane had been the worst of all.

Just as she was about to turn off the lights, a loud knock echoed through the room.

She ignored it at first, but the knocking grew more persistent as if the person outside would keep banging forever if she didn't open the door.

Sierra sighed and opened it.

Sean stood there, irritation clear on his face. "What took you so long?"

"Hurry up. Denny wants to see you."

He turned and started walking, assuming she would follow.

After a few steps, he realized there were no footsteps behind him.

Turning back, he saw Sierra still standing in the doorway.

His temper flared. "Did you not hear me? Denny wants to see you!"

Sierra let out a soft scoff. "So?"

Denise wanted to see her.



And that meant she was supposed to rush over like a loyal servant, waiting for Denise to forgive her?

Sean was stunned.

He had been so used to the old Sierra—the one who always followed them around like a lost puppy, the one who bent over backward to please them.

He almost snapped at her, but then he remembered what Bradley had told him earlier.

A little uncomfortable, he muttered, "I know you've been through a lot, but it's not like Denny did it on purpose. She even passed out from crying, you know?"

Sierra knew their bias ran deep.

But she hadn't expected it to be *this* deep.

Denise had fainted, and suddenly, the whole family was ready to move mountains for her.

Did they know how many times she had hovered on the brink of death?

Did they know how she had been beaten, humiliated, and treated like an animal?

Sean had been about to add, *She's your sister. Don't you care about her at all?*

But when he looked into Sierra's cold, lifeless eyes, the words stuck in his throat.



At that moment, Denise suddenly pushed past Eleanor and Evan, running toward Sierra.

Then, to everyone's shock, she dropped to her knees.

"Forgive me, Sierra! It's all my fault!"

"You can hit me! Do whatever you want! I just want you to forgive me!"

Sierra stared down at Denise, her face emotionless, her gaze as cold as ice.

Sean was the first to lose patience. "It's not like Denny wanted this to happen! It was that gambler of a father who caused this! Don't act like she's the villain here!"

Bradley also chimed in. "Sierra, we should've handled this better. If I had known, I would've taken care of it myself. I was just too busy at the time."

Eleanor, teary-eyed, added, "Sierra, don't blame Denny. Blame me. I should have gone to see you... but I was scared. I didn't want to see you cry. If I had gone, I wouldn't have let you suffer like this."

Evan frowned. "Denny is already on her knees. How long do you plan to hold a grudge?"

The room was filled with their voices.

Endless excuses.

Endless justifications.



Sierra's headache pounded.

The noise—so much noise.

It felt like she was back in that dark place again.

The mocking laughter of the other prisoners.

The whispers.

They had family who came to see them.

She had no one.

Three years.

Not a single visitor.

The pressure in her skull was unbearable, and the Xander family wouldn't stop talking.

Finally, she couldn't take it anymore.

"Enough!"

Her sudden outburst silenced everyone, including Denise, who had been on the verge of passing out again.

Sierra's gaze swept over them before landing on Denise.

"You want my forgiveness? You'll do *anything*?"

Denise flinched but nodded hesitantly. "Yes... Sierra, I'll do whatever you say. Just forgive me."



"Alright," Sierra said calmly. "Go buy some snakes. Sleep with them for a night."

The room fell into stunned silence.

Denise shrieked in horror. Bradley and Sean both exploded at once.

"Are you insane? Stop scaring Denny!"

Sierra's lips curled into a cold smile. "Scaring her? No. That's just what I went through every day in there."

The anger in the room died instantly.

Everyone stared at her in shock, unable to respond.

Sierra's head throbbed violently.

She had no energy left to deal with them.

Her voice was flat. "Stop bothering me."

Her gaze settled on Denise.

"Especially you."

Denise couldn't even meet her eyes.

Sierra turned and shut the door behind her.

For a long moment, the Xander family stood frozen in place.

Eleanor's voice trembled. "What... what did she mean? What really happened to her in there?"



Bradley clenched his jaw, his expression dark.

He didn't want to believe it.

But there was only one way to find out.

"I'm going to the prison tomorrow."

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