

## Chapter 3

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What a familiar scene.

Even the tear hanging precariously at the corner of her eye was exactly the same as in my past life.

Back then, I had been utterly deceived by this fragile, helpless act of hers. When she knelt before me, I actually felt pity. I found myself helping her and Ryan, doing everything I could to help them achieve their "true love".

As the Snowfang Pack's princess, I was destined to shoulder the responsibilities of my people. My future didn't have to revolve around Ryan. Even though Saya's arrival left a bad taste in my mouth, it wasn't enough to shake my dignity.

When Ryan had wanted to break off the engagement, I didn't throw a tantrum. Instead, I earnestly offered him advice out of the respect and history we shared.

"Saya comes from a lower-ranked wolf pack and is mute. While she saved your life, the elders or the clans may never accept her as your Queen, no matter how hard you try to convince them. It'll only bring her trouble.

"Why not take a step back? Settle her in my territory as a servant for now. In the future..."

I left the implication hanging—In the future, he could do as he pleased.

Those few words resolved her immediate crisis but set me up for disaster.

Slap! Slap! Slap!

The crisp sound of slaps echoed in the banquet hall.

In my past life, I rushed forward to help Saya up the moment she knelt.

This time, I merely watched coldly as she slapped herself, hard and without hesitation.

One strike after another, the sound echoed through the room.

Annie tugged gently at my sleeve, whispering, "Your Highness, today is your coming-of-age ceremony. The hall is full of guests—if this continues..."

The banquet hall was packed with guests today, many of whom were already reaching for their phones, eager to capture the drama.

Annie made a move to step forward, but I placed a hand on her arm.

"What's the rush?"

"Saya!" Ryan's voice was low and dangerous now, his expression darkening.

In just a few seconds, Saya's cheeks were red and swollen. Tears pooled in her eyes, making her look pitifully fragile.

She glanced at Ryan, then at me, biting her lip as she continued her self-inflicted punishment.

I took a slow sip of my wine, completely at ease.

I was suddenly curious—how far was she willing to take this performance?