

## The Pickpocketing Siblings

“Did you hear a word I just said, Olivia?” Noah bawled.

“What?!?!” Olivia said, waking up from her daydream world.

Olivia had been living with Noah ever since she was 9 years old. She hated living with her eldest brother who was 23 years old. He had just graduated from university that summer and he already had a pickpocketing business.

It all started when he was graduating high school. Their father died when they were just babies and their mother was the only one who would take care of Olivia, her older sister, and her brother. One day after school when Olivia was in 5th grade, their mother fell very sick. Their mother could no longer take care of Olivia and her brother so he sold their house and bought a smaller one for just the two of them. Their mother was in hospital and needed surgery. Her brother gave all the remaining money from selling their old house to the surgeon but that wasn't enough; Noah had to start thinking of another way to get money. The first thing Noah had thought of was pickpocketing. But after getting all the money for the surgery, their mother still passed away which left them without a dime. Olivia's older sister, Charlotte had already planned out her own life in New York City while Olivia and Noah were stuck in Florida all by themselves. Every time Noah heard Charlotte's name he would go ballistic. He claimed that Charlotte abandoned them but Olivia had a different image. Noah doesn't remember, but Olivia does. Charlotte offered them a house but Noah had a huge ego which made him say no. Now, they were here in a tiny house, planning how to pickpocket people.

“OLIVIA!” Noah screamed into her ear, shaking her violently.

“WHAT!” Olivia yelled back at her older brother.

“The plan!”

The plan was that Olivia would bump into people on the street and fall down pretending to be hurt. If something fell out of their pocket Olivia would try to distract the victim so Noah could pick up whatever fell out of their pocket. If nothing fell out of their pocket when the stranger was helping Olivia up, Noah would pick out whatever he could get, then they would head back home and sell it.

Living with Noah was like hell to Olivia. He would boss her around and annoy her to death. Noah was basically a snake and a spider combined. He acted like water, like he was so important to every single human being, except he wasn't. Olivia always wondered why Noah had no friends at school, but as soon as their mum passed away, she started to realize that it was because of his toxic, manipulative self. Noah only got along with Olivia. She was the only one he was good with, kind too, but he had soon become rotten to everyone. “Olivia, go take a nap” he said, irritated.

“Fine,” she said storming back into bed, except she had no plans of going back to sleep. They couldn't afford 2 beds so Olivia slept on the couch.

As soon as Olivia hit the couch she portrayed a sleeping impression. She saw her brother check both directions and saw him stare at her for a good minute before taking a broom and sweeping some dust off the floor. Something that looked like a storage compartment in the ground came into view. He quietly opened it and took out a Nike shoebox. As he opened it, a bright light shined through. There it was, her pure gold necklace. The last thing her mother had ever given her. Under that, there were iPhones and wallets filled with credit cards in them. All these years he pretended to sell them while he collected them for himself. Just as Olivia was about to confront his brother, she smelt something, something familiar. Her mother's signature perfume. It smelt of jasmine and lavender. He took out a piece of paper and scribbled some numbers on it. He reached back into the storage compartment and took out a stash of cash. It was their mother's money she had given to each of them. He placed the jasmine lavender perfume with the stash of money, necklace, and piece of paper. Next, he emptied his favourite bag and placed everything in it. Finally, he put a box in, which looked like their mother's old jewellery box. He zipped up the bag and started walking toward Olivia. He poked her in the back "startling" her awake.

"What?" Olivia asked.

"Here you go sis, I'm sorry but I can't take care of you," he said, handing the bag over to her with a plane ticket to New York. "I talked to Charlotte last night and she is happy to let you live with her," he said almost in tears. Just then, the unexpected happened. Noah gave Olivia a tight squeeze, handed her the fuzziest coat they owned and pushed her out before she had a chance to utter a single word. That was the most selfless thing she had ever seen him do! She stumbled off the doorstep and onto the local bus which was headed to the airport. She took in the last glimpse of her tiny, cosy, cottage-like house, away from her brother who only cared about her, away from her home. Although it didn't feel right to leave their house, or her brother, she knew it was for the best. Her only wish was that her brother could come with her, after all they had been through, together.

Written by Yutika – age 12