

Ex Convict 1581

Chapter 1581

However, his carelessness that year made it so that he could never be with Lina again. He did not even... have the right to be with her anymore.

Hadwin Stephenson lowered his eyes, hiding the glint in them.

"If you really want a wedding, it's possible. Once I settle my business in Emerald City, I'll go to your family and discuss our wedding's matters."

"Really?" Katherine Jackson looked delighted. She did not expect Hadwin Stephenson to agree.

"Since I'm already saying so, do you think it could be false?" Hadwin Stephenson asked lightly. As he looked at Katherine Jackson, his gaze suddenly turned sharp. "But you can't touch Lina. I'll take you down with me if you dare touch her!"

Katherine Jackson froze. The glint in the man's eyes was terrifying! Even though he agreed to marry her, he still had no feelings for her.

'I refuse to believe it! Sooner or later, I'll have Hadwin Stephenson fall for me! Lina is a nobody! She'll probably be old and ugly in a few years!

'Who is Lina to compete for a man with me? Lina was just lucky to know Hadwin first. If I got to know Hadwin first, then I'd be the one Hadwin loves now!'

Katherine Jackson took a deep breath and slowly smiled. There was a gleam of certainty in her eyes. "Okay, I won't touch her, but I'm going to be Mrs. Stephenson!"

Grace looked elegant and noble in the limited edition black gown. She had on matching heels, delicate makeup, and wore a ruby necklace around her neck.

Today was her first formal appearance at a banquet in five years. Grace was, of course, all dressed up. After all, as the mistress of the Reed family, she could not humiliate herself.

She had prepared a nice pearl necklace for herself, but after putting on her gown, Jason personally put the ruby necklace

on her.

"It's a nice necklace, and it matches your gown today," said Jason.

"Why do you have a women's necklace?" she asked curiously. After all, she had just bought the gown. Even if he had gone to get matching jewelry, he could not have done it so soon.

3/3 "I bought it some time ago. I came across this necklace and suddenly thought of buying it," said Jason. What he did not say was that he had somehow bought the necklace on impulse when he saw it.

It was as though he was subconsciously waiting for her and the day he could give her the necklace!

As Grace looked into the mirror at the ruby necklace around her neck, she remembered having told him that ruby was her birthstone since she was born in July.

Was that why he bought a ruby necklace when he did not need to?

Grace took Jason's arm, feeling the gazes all around her.

The corners of her lips raised a little. She was not scared and graciously allowed others to look at her. Some of these people expected Mrs. Reed to be unseemly or nouveau riche-like.

However, what they saw was a demure, elegant, generous, and confident woman!

Chapter 1582

Grace had a comely face, and she wore light makeup that highlighted her eyes. She had her long hair in an updo with a few strands falling over her face. Her appearance today complemented her elegant temperament.

People would not find her unworthy of Jason when she stood beside him. On the contrary, her tranquility matched Jason's beauty. Others would find the scene of them together a pleasant sight.

Some men looked at Grace with amazement, making Jason frown a little.

She looked beautiful today. It was not because of the clothes and jewelry she wore but her temperament and demure bearing.

One might not find her stunning at first glance, but one would find her pleasing to the eyes... It would be comfortable being around her.

This was probably her magic power. It made him seem more and more inseparable from her!

The look in the men's eyes made Jason upset as though they

apter 1582

were coveting a treasure he was carefully guarding.

2/4

"I'll take you to meet some people later. Of course, maybe you knew these people five years ago," said Jason.

Grace smiled, knowing that Jason had brought her to today's banquet to officially announce her presence to the upper class.

Jason took her to meet some people, some of whom Grace had seen before. There were also a few others she had not met before. Grace greeted them amiably.

After walking around once, Grace said, "I'm going to sit down and rest."

"What's the matter? Are you tired?" asked Jason.

"I'm not tired. It's just that my heels today are a little high, so the soles of my feet hurt a little after walking for a long time," whispered Grace. With that said, she licked her lip with the tip of her tongue as if a little embarrassed.

She was already a mother, but she had a unique charm whenever she made such a feminine gesture. Jason found it

attractive.

His Adam's apple could not help bobbing. Her little movement had awakened his desire. He would probably have his way

with her again if they were elsewhere.

When they reached the lounge area, Jason was stopped by another man. Grace recognized that person as a tycoon involved in microchips. They often appeared in the newspapers, and Jason had introduced her to them before.

3/4

They seemed to want to talk to Jason about something, so Jason said to Grace, "I'll go over for a talk. You can rest here."

"Okay," answered Grace.

After Jason left, she took a glass of champagne from the waiter and looked around the fancy banquet as she sipped on

1.

As she looked around, she realized that many people in the banquet hall had their eyes on her. Most of them were women, and the look in their eyes ranged from curiosity, envy, to hostility.

Grace smiled faintly. Of course, she knew that since she wanted to stand beside Jay, she would have to endure more of such looks in the future.

She could put up with these looks!

Just then, Grace suddenly saw a figure and could not help feeling surprised.

Chapter 1583

Hadwin Stephenson!

Hadwin Stephenson had come to the banquet today, and the person standing next to him was Katherine Jackson. Katherine Jackson was wearing the same gown she wanted to try on before this.

Hadwin Stephenson also saw Grace, and his expression could not help changing slightly.

Katherine Jackson looked at Hadwin Stephenson and could not help smiling. "You're old friends with Mrs. Reed of the Reed family, aren't you? Why don't you go and say hello?"

With that said, Katherine Jackson took Hadwin Stephenson's arm and led him to Grace.

Hadwin Stephenson walked up to Grace passively.

"Hello, Mrs. Reed. I'm Katherine Jackson," Katherine Jackson greeted with a smile on her face.

"Hello," said Grace as she gave her a complicated look. After all, maybe Hadwin Stephenson and Lina would not have broken up if not for this woman.

However... there might have been other women even if Katherine Jackson had not appeared.

After all, what Hadwin Stephenson wanted more than romance was absolute control over the Stephenson family.

2/4

"Speaking of which, I have some relations with Hadwin and Mrs. Reed too. Hadwin's ex-girlfriend seems to be your best friend, Mrs. Reed. I heard she's not married yet. Aren't you going to introduce your friend to some elites, Mrs. Reed?"

Katherine Jackson said with a smile, but she was being blunt with her words.

Grace looked at Katherine Jackson and saw that Hadwin Stephenson seemed to have turned pale under the lights.

"You don't have to worry about that, Miss Jackson. Lina's my friend. I'll help her whenever she needs me. And I naturally won't let anyone who wants to harm her off!" Grace said solemnly as she wiped the smile off her face, making her point to Katherine Jackson.

If Katherine Jackson wanted to harm Lina, she would definitely protect Lina and... not let Katherine Jackson off!

Katherine Jackson smiled. "With you protecting her, Lina will surely be alright. By the way, Hadwin and I will be going back in a few days to make preparations for our wedding. You're

welcome to the wedding dinner, Mrs. Reed."

3/4

'Wedding dinner?' Grace's red lips were pulled into a smile, and she looked at Hadwin Stephenson somewhat sarcastically. Since the man had decided to marry Katherine Jackson, why did he bother appearing in front of Lina and setting off waves in her heart when she was starting to move on?

Just then, another voice rang out. It was a woman in a red gown. She had on gorgeous makeup and wore expensive jewelry. She looked extremely flamboyant.

"Who do you want to protect as soon as you come back, Mrs. Reed? Speaking of which, Mrs. Reed, you came back from the dead after five years. You left Emerald City for five years and returned all of a sudden. Why don't you tell us what you've been through the last five years?" she said.

Grace recognized the woman as Simona Menzie, the daughter of the president of a real estate company that Reed group worked with.

Real estate had been booming in recent years, so the Menzie family became nouveau riche. Their assets had increased tenfold. From a second-rate real estate company, it had become one of the top real estate companies in Emerald City.

Simona Menzie was also one of the women who had their

4/4

eyes on Jason.

Grace had done her homework before coming to the banquet. She got some detailed information from Terrence and knew who was attending, as well as which women had shown an interest in Jay in the last five years!

Chapter 1584

After all, you could only win battles by having a deep knowledge of your enemy.

Simona Menzie was followed by some of Emerald City's socialites. Many of them had their eyes on Jason as well and were gathered to watch the show. After all, with Simona Menzie sticking her neck out, they were happy to see how things would unfold.

1/4

Seeing that Grace was quiet, Simona Menzie got even more aggressive. "Back then, you 'faked your death' to leave Emerald City and Mr. Reed. Did something happen? Someone said you left for some other man. Mrs. Reed, if you don't explain, there'll be a misunderstanding and your reputation will be affected."

Simona Menzie said maliciously, implying that Grace had cheated on Jason with another man.

The socialites beside Simona Menzie were smiling with traces of curiosity in their eyes. After all, no one here knew what Grace had done in the past five years.

Grace looked at Simona Menzie coldly and suddenly sneered, "Someone said? Miss Menzie, why don't you tell me who that

someone is?"

Simona Menzie's expression froze. She had not introduced herself but Grace called her 'Miss Menzie' right away. In other words, she knew who she was?

"Of course, it's somebody else. I'm not at liberty to say who it is," said Simona Menzie.

"Not at liberty? Miss Menzie, if you won't say who it is, can I assume that this someone doesn't exist and all this slander is coming from you?" asked Grace.

Simona Menzie's expression changed as she said hastily, "I never said anything like that. Don't you slander me like that!"

Grace said calmly and coldly, "Miss Menzie, aren't you the one slandering me? Me leaving for another man? You said that yourself, didn't you? You said someone else said it but you won't say who it was. Legally speaking, you were the one who said it! You'll lose if I decide to sue you!"

Simona Menzie's face instantly turned grim. She wanted to embarrass Grace at first. She thought Grace would have nothing on her, but who knew things would become so serious?

"I... I don't remember who said it. Mrs. Reed, there's no need for you to be so aggressive!"

"Excuse me, do I have to be gentle and nice when someone slanders me?" Grace looked as if she had heard a joke.

Simona Menzie's face was red. None of the people who followed her over stood up for her.

Everyone could see that Mrs. Reed was not someone who let others ride roughshod over her. She even caught Simona Menzie's weakness in an instant, putting Simona Menzie at a disadvantage.

"You... Why are you so hesitant to explain it if you haven't done anything shameful? You even mentioned something about suing? Isn't it because of your guilty conscience?" Simona

Menzie blurted out.

However, her face turned from red to pale as soon as she said it. By saying this, she had declared her stance and opinion. Besides, could one say the word 'shameful' so casually?

If anyone here spread her words just now, the consequences she would have to face tomorrow... Simona Menzie shuddered at the thought of this. She was about to say something else to make up for it but another voice rang out...

"Since when do you have the right to question my wife?"

Chapter 1585

Simona Menzie instantly shuddered and turned to look at the person who just appeared. 'It's... Jason!' Instantly, all she could think of was that... she was done for.

"Are you done with your conversation?" asked Grace as she looked at Jason.

"Yeah," he answered and stepped forward. "What's the matter? Is someone bothering you?"

"It's nothing much. Miss Menzie probably doesn't know that I'm a lawyer. Since she wants to slander me, I'll take legal action. It's inevitable that I'll sue Miss Menzie," Grace said with

a smile.

Jason's eyebrows raised slightly. It seemed that his wife was tougher than he expected.

He had previously thought of helping her if anyone dared to give her a hard time at this banquet.

However, it seemed she would give others a harder time if they dared do so!

Simona Menzie hurriedly explained when she heard this, "Mr.

Reed, don't get me wrong. I... I didn't mean to slander

Mrs. Reed. I was just... worried that your wife will be misunderstood, so I thought I'd ask her to talk about what she's been doing the past five years after leaving Emerald

City."]

"Misunderstood?" Jason stared at Simona Menzie coldly. "Who misunderstood? Anyone who misunderstood should step

forward now."

Who dared to step forward?

Simona Menzie was alone.

“Mr. Reed... Really... I just said that because many people have misunderstood your wife. I... I meant no harm. Believe me...” Simona Menzie said with a ghastly pale face. No matter how stupid she was, she knew she had now become cannon

fodder.

“What are you? Who are you to ask my wife to tell you her whereabouts in the past five years? Since when does the Menzie family have the right to ask about the Reed family’s affairs?” Jason asked without mercy.

Simona Menzie could hardly continue standing when she heard him speak.

Just then, a man in his 50s quickly walked over. It was Simona

Menzie’s father.

3/3

After hearing that his daughter was giving Grace a hard time, Mr. Menzie had come over at once. Then, he happened to hear Jason’s previous sentences. His face immediately turned pale like his daughter’s.

He quickly said to Jason, “Mr. Reed, it’s all a misunderstanding. Of course, we dare not ask about your family affairs, Mr.

Reed.”

Simona Menzie felt a little more confident when she saw that her father was here. “Yeah, it’s a misunderstanding. Mr. Reed, I only did it for you. I was just worried that the Reed family will be badly affected if people misunderstand that your wife did something bad. So I asked your wife to tell-”

Mr. Menzie was instantly dumbfounded when he heard his daughter say this. He was apologizing, but his daughter was adding fuel to the fire. ‘Why did I give birth to such an idiotic daughter?’

“Shut up!” Mr. Menzie slapped his daughter. Simona Menzie stumbled and almost fell to the floor from the slap.

Chapter 1586

Simona Menzie covered her face and looked at her father in

disbelief. “Dad, I was right. I-”

“How dare you say such things? Who do you think you are to have her explain to you?” Mr. Menzie snapped, thinking that his daughter was going to ruin the Menzie family!

However, what Jason said next seemed to confirm Mr.

Menzie’s speculation.

“It seems that the Menzie family is indeed getting a little ahead of themselves. I’ll have the company reconsider our cooperation.” His cold voice rang out.

Mr. Menzie went stiff. As if Jason had lost interest in this matter, he said to Grace, "Are your feet feeling any better?"

"Yeah, they are," she said.

"Then let's get something to eat. You haven't had much to eat tonight."

"Okay." Now that he had brought it up, Grace did feel hungry.

Jason took Grace's hand and went to the dining area. Mr.

Menzie gave his daughter another slap and said bitterly,

"Great! You've ruined the Menzie family, you dumb*ss!"

2/4

Simona Menzie's cheeks were red and swollen. She covered her cheeks, looking like a mess. She was not as well-dressed

and beautiful as before.

The other members of high society slowly dispersed as if they had enough of the show.

After all, people now understood that Mrs. Reed was not an easy target after the commotion Simona Menzie caused. Even though she had left for five years, she was still the mistress of the Reed family and doted on by Jason.

Katherine Jackson appeared to be deep in thought. Then, she looked up at Hadwin Stephenson and said with a slight smile, "It seems that Grace is quite capable. Even after being missing for five years, Jason's feelings for her haven't changed. It looks like the Menzie family will be kicked out from Emerald City's high society."

"Katherine Jackson, you don't know what love is," Hadwin Stephenson said coldly.

"Really? If I knew nothing about love, I wouldn't have spent the last five years with you. Or are you trying to say that your feelings for Lina haven't changed?" asked Katherine Jackson.

Hadwin Stephenson was silent. If she knew what love was, she would understand it was difficult to love another if you had

really loved someone.

The person he loved had always been Lina!

His silence only fuelled Katherine Jackson's determination to get him. "Hadwin Stephenson, you'll fall in love with me one day. You'll come to realize that Lina doesn't deserve to stand by your side!"

'She doesn't deserve it?' Hadwin Stephenson only found it ridiculous. He was the one who did not deserve to be with her!

He was the one who no longer deserved to stand by Lina's side!

On the other side of the banquet, Patrick looked at Brian and said, "I thought you were going to rush over and be a hero who saved the beauty, but you didn't do anything. What's the matter? Have you really gotten over her this time?"

Brian smiled lightly. "She can solve it herself without me running over." Grace was different now.

Though she was strong, she would not necessarily fight back in the face of other people's attacks. She only got tough when they crossed the line.

Even if Jason had not shown up, she would have crushed the woman who intended to pick on her so hard that she would not have been able to fight back.

Grace was now stronger and more courageous than before. It would not be easy for others to bully her even if they wanted

Chapter 1587

"Speaking of which, when are you leaving? Didn't you say you've taken on a new project?" Patrick asked again.

"I won't be leaving for now," muttered Brian. Even after five years, Grace still had no feelings for him.

However, he could not bear to leave. He wanted to stay in Emerald City. It would be good even if he could only look at her from afar.

Patrick sighed. Needless to say, his best friend's decision to stay probably had something to do with Grace.

'But if things go on like this, when will Brian truly get over Grace? If he can never get over her, won't...'

Patrick suddenly shuddered at the thought of this! He only hoped it would not happen!

After having something to eat with Jason, Grace went to the patio to get some fresh air. She saw Hadwin Stephenson standing alone on the patio, gazing at the moon in the sky.

There was a full moon tonight, and it hung upside down in the sky like a disk.

Suddenly, as if aware that someone else was here, Hadwin

Stephenson turned his head to look in Grace's direction. She was slightly startled.

"Why are you alone?" asked Hadwin Stephenson.

"I came to get some air after having something to eat. Jay and the others have some things to talk about," said Grace. After all, such banquets were where businessmen talked business and socialized. "What about you? Why aren't you Katherine Jackson?"

with

"She went home first because she has something to do," said Hadwin Stephenson.

Grace took a few steps forward and walked up to Hadwin Stephenson. "Lina loved you. Even though you've split up, she keeps saying both of you don't share the same ideas, not that you don't love each other. It's just that between love and career, you chose the latter."

Hadwin Stephenson's face turned grim when he heard that. He could not help but clench the hands hanging by his sides.

"Hadwin Stephenson, Lina remained on friendly terms even after breaking up with you. She never hated you or

complained about you. Since you've made your choice and are going to marry Katherine Jackson, why did you appear in her life again and mess it up?" said Grace.

She knew how hard it was for Lina to get over the man in front of her. She was scared that Hadwin Stephenson would set off waves in Lina's heart but could not give her anything more.

Would this not hurt Lina a second time?

"She... told you about me?" Hadwin Stephenson's voice

trembled.

Grace said, "She only told me that you appeared in front of her. Lina wants to start a new life. She doesn't want to be stuck in the past. If you ever loved Lina, don't disturb her peace."

Hadwin Stephenson was silent as he clenched the hands by his sides. His nails sank deep into his palms, but he did not seem to feel any pain.

The worst pain to him was probably the pain of not being able to be with Lina.

Just then, Jason walked over and saw what was going on. He said to Grace, "Are you done talking?"

"Yeah, I'm done. Let's go. I want to go home. The children

Chapter 1588

"Okay," answered Jason as he held Grace in his arms. He glanced at Hadwin Stephenson before leaving.

Hadwin Stephenson's face was filled with endless pain and even extreme despair!

Even though he was alive, he appeared to be a mere shell at

this moment.

1/4

Jason felt a pang in his heart and stopped in his tracks. Some broken images flashed through his mind, but they were so fast that he could not even tell what they were.

“What’s the matter? Jay?” Grace turned her head and looked at Jason who had stopped and was in a daze.

“Nothing.” With a flutter of his eyelashes, he picked up his feet again and left the banquet hall with her. Once in the car, Jason leaned back, took a breath, and closed his eyes.

“Are you tired?” A soft female voice rang out in his ears.

“A little.”

“Then take a nap first. It’ll take more than half an hour to get to Reed Residence from here,” said Grace. Jason tried to relax, but his heart somehow seemed to beat faster and faster. The desperate look on Hadwin Stephenson’s face kept flashing through his mind. It was as if he had been that desperate too.

‘When was it? When was I ever that desperate?’

Suddenly, another scene seemed to flash through his mind again. This time, he saw it. He saw himself holding an urn and wailing in pain.

His voice sounded so desperate. It was as if he did not want to live but was forced to keep living.

“Why am I not the one who died? Why? I did you wrong. I should be the one to die!” He kept crying, looking so miserable.

‘Why... Why would I say something like that... Is this... what happened after I mistakenly thought Grace was dead?’

‘Was I so desperate because I thought she was dead?’

‘My head... hurts so much!’

It hurt like it was about to explode. A groan escaped Jason’s

mouth. Suddenly, he felt as if he had fallen into a dark pit. The suffocating sense of despair filled his body.

"No... No... Why..." A broken groan escaped his mouth.

'How can I get out of this despair?'

Suddenly, a voice rang in his ears...

"Jay, what's come over you? Is there something wrong? Can you hear me? Open your eyes!"

The voice kept on shouting as if pulling him out of despair.

Then, he felt her fingers massaging his forehead, relieving his pain.

The pain faded little by little. Jason slowly opened his eyes, and he instantly caught sight of that comely and quiet face.

Her face was now full of anxiety. "Are you having another headache? Should we go to the hospital? Or should I ask Uncle Kwan to contact Dr. Guzman and ask him to go to Reed Residence as soon as possible?"

Chapter 1589

Jason did not answer. His dark eyes just stared at the person in front of him. There was a layer of sweat on his forehead.

'How much did I love her back then? Why was I so distressed after mistakenly thinking she had died?'

Previously, the broken memories that surfaced in his mind made him feel like an onlooker watching something that had happened. This time, it felt like a personal experience.

He felt the pain of his old self so clearly that he almost broke down with despair!

"Jay?" His silence made Grace frown. She even raised her hand and waved it before his eyes.

The next moment, her hand was instantly in his grip. His palm was full of the warmth of her hand. She was alive, not just ashes in a cold urn like in his memory!

Jason suddenly leaned over and hugged Grace. "Tell me, how much did I love you before?"

He whispered with an eagerness in his voice that he had never heard before.

Grace was stunned. She did not understand why he was suddenly asking that but replied, "You loved me very much. You could give anything for me, including your own life."

2/4

Although she had not recovered her memories from when she fell off the cliff, she could imagine what it was like just from Terrence's description. She knew how much the man in front of her loved her.

Jason buried his face in Grace's neck. He took in her scent, reassuring himself that she was indeed in his arms. It seemed like the only way to make him feel safe.

“Then you mustn’t die before me!” he uttered the words almost with difficulty.

When the car arrived at Reed Residence, Jason almost hurriedly dragged Grace back into the bedroom. He pressed her onto the bed.

“Jay, wait. I... I still have my makeup on. I’m still wearing a gown and jewelry-”

She had not finished when he interrupted, “I’ll do it...” he said as he lifted his hand, taking off her gown and throwing it

onto the floor. He took off the ruby necklace and laid it on the bedside table.

He wanted her so badly right now. An indescribable fear and uneasiness made him long for her.

His kisses rained down on her. She could feel his urgency.

“Jay, what happened? Is your headache... Are you really okay? Do you need a doctor?” she asked.

“No, I just want you now... Grace, I want you and I want you to want me...” he said hoarsely.

Grace’s face turned a little red, but she still replied, “Okay, I want you...”

This time, she raised her hands and removed the clothes on his body...

The intimacy was memorable.

“Jay, is what Brian just said true? You... knew who the perpetrator was but didn’t do anything for the benefit of the company?

“Why you? Why does it have to be you?

“What do I do? Even if... I can forgive you, my body just can’t seem to... accept you.”

She leaned over the sink, throwing up so hard that her face was pale.

He stood outside the bathroom, only finding his breathing becoming stifled as though he was in an ice cave. His heart

continued to sink...

Chapter 1590

The way she looked at him and every word she said caused

him severe pain!

“Ah!” He suddenly opened his eyes, and what he saw was darkness.

His head was still in constant pain. The more painful it was, the more fragments of memories swarmed into his head.

Jason clenched his teeth tightly to suppress his desire to scream due to the pain. He did not want to disturb the woman sleeping next to him.

Grace was still sound asleep. Perhaps she was tired today, she was deep in slumber.

Jason almost staggered out of bed. With all his strength, he went to the next room linked to theirs. He opened the door and closed it with difficulty before falling to the ground, gasping.

‘Ouch... My head hurts so much it feels like it’s going to burst...! The pain spread to his body.

The doctor had said that the process for him to recover his

memories might be more painful than ordinary people. He

would get a headache every time he remembered something from the past.

However, he had never been in such pain.

It hurt so much that... he seemed to be losing even his rationale.

His hands clutched his head, his fingers almost sinking into his skull. Groan after groan escaped his mouth.

Al... I can’t...

‘I can’t be too loud. I’ll... I’ll wake Grace up!’

He shut his mouth and bit his lip, letting the blood trickle down the corners of his lips.

‘Grace... Grace... He repeated her name over and over again in his heart. Those fragments of memories flashed through his mind as though they were going to tear his soul apart.

On the bed in the other bedroom, Grace was still sound asleep, unaware of the movements next door.

One side was heaven, while the other was hell.

The sun fell on Grace’s face through the window. When she

slowly opened her eyes, what she saw was the familiar figure.

Jason, dressed in a black shirt and long pants, was staring at her with a complicated look. There seemed to be joy, an earnestness of having found a lost treasure, and fear.

However, when she tried to look more closely, his eyes returned to the way they usually looked.

“What time is it?” she asked.

“It’s past ten o’clock,” he said.

She was shocked. “Ten o’clock? Why didn’t you wake me up sooner? Mick and Jasper’s breakfast... And...”

Jason said, “They’ve already had breakfast. I had someone send them to kindergarten. I didn’t let them wake you because you were sound asleep.”

She suddenly seemed to recall something. “Why aren’t you at work?” It was not a rest day today. He should have gone to

work by now.

“I want to rest at home today,” said Jason.

Grace just realized that his face looked a little haggard, and his voice was a little hoarse.

“What’s the matter? Is there something wrong? Is your headache from yesterday any better?” she asked as she sat up and reached toward his head.