

Ex Convict 1701

Chapter 1701

The little one's skin was bruised, and his beautiful face was also slightly swollen. Grace could imagine how much more swollen his injuries were a few days ago.

"Does it hurt?" Grace crouched down and looked straight at the child in front of her.

Although Mason's face was still swollen, his beautiful eyes were staring at the school gate in front of him as though he had not heard Grace's question.

All he cared about was when his sister would be out of school and when he could see her. He did not care about the rest.

Grace raised her hand to touch one of his bruises, but the little one warily avoided her hand.

"I only want to check your bruises. I mean no harm!" Grace said quickly.

The little one stared at her for a moment before slowly saying,

"I don't like you touching me!"

"Then... Shall I take you to the hospital and let the doctor take a look at your bruises? It'll stop hurting after the doctor treats you," she said.

ignore Grace.

The little one exuded some resistance and alienation. Grace could do nothing about it.

Just then, Lina also walked over. She was surprised to see

the little one's bruises as well. "Gosh, his parents are really ruthless to hit such a small child."

Then, Lina bent down and smiled gently at the little one. "Hello, I heard your name is Mason. I'm Aunt Lina, a friend of the store owner over there!"

Unfortunately, the little one completely ignored Lina's gentle smile. Those beautiful eyes of his were just stubbornly staring at the school gate.

"Why is this child so weird?" Lina whispered to Grace.

"It's how he is. It probably has something to do with how he grew up," said Grace.

"You're right," said Lina.

Then, more and more parents began to wait at the school gate to pick up their children. At that moment, the school gate opened and the students were let out.

When the quiet little one saw the figure he was expecting, a smile instantly appeared on his expressionless face. Although

the smile

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was faint, it was still a smile.

The little one rushed to the little girl who had a bag on her back.

Lina was surprised. "What a huge change!"

"The siblings are really close," said Grace before walking up to the little girl. "Hello, we've met before. My name is Grace, and you can call me aunt Cummins. I'm a friend of the owner of the store over there. Your brother has a lot of bruises. Can I bring him to the hospital to get treated by a doctor?"

Veronica Barlow raised her chin slightly to look at Grace. She remembered her. Besides, every student in this school was familiar with the store owner because they often went there to buy snacks to eat after school.

"You don't want your brother to be in pain, do you? Besides, some bruises can turn into something major if they're not treated in time." Grace continued to persuade the little girl.

She knew that Mason listened to the little girl very much.

"Why do you want to bring Mason to see a doctor?" asked Veronica Barlow.

Chapter 1702

Although she was only seven years old, she was noticeably more precocious than other children. There was wariness and vigilance in her eyes when she looked at Grace.

She knew more about self-protection because of what she had faced in life and was not ignorant like regular children her

age.

"Because my

child is about Mason's age. I can't help wanting to help Mason when I see that he's hurt. Plus, it's not a difficult task to bring Mason to a doctor," said Grace. She spoke flatly, showing that she had no other intention.

The little girl was momentarily silent before turning around to look at the little boy who had been following her. It was as if she was hesitating about something.

The little boy said, "Sis, it doesn't hurt."

"Even if it doesn't hurt, you're still wounded. Aren't you limping

around?" said the little girl before looking up and saying to Grace, "aunt Cummins, just give me a minute. I'll be right back. to accompany Mason to the hospital with you."

With that said, she spoke to the boy and told him to wait for her at the store's entrance.

"Ci, be a good boy. I'm just going to put my bag away. I'll be right back for you!" The little girl stroked the boy's head to comfort him.

Then, the little boy let go a little reluctantly.

The little girl then ran in the other direction and was soon out of sight.

Lina said to Grace, "I'll accompany you to the hospital later.

I have a car, so it's more convenient. Besides, I have nothing else to do today."

Grace thought about it and said, "Thank you."

"These siblings are an interesting case. The boy was beaten up so badly. I heard from Kyla that they never even went to the hospital. How pitiful," said Lina. However, she deliberately lowered her voice when she said this, lest the little boy heard her.

She felt sorry for the siblings after learning about them from Kyla. Lina was an only child with no brothers and sisters, so she envied how close they were.

The little boy listened to his sister and stood as still as a statue at the store's entrance.

Grace narrowed her eyes and stared at the little one. For some reason, the little one felt familiar.

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It was as if she had seen him somewhere.

'Is it because the child is beautiful? Isn't there a saying that beautiful people are alike?'

"What's the matter? Why do you keep staring at that child?" asked Lina.

"I just think the family that adopted him is a little strange. They adopted a boy when they already had a son of their own. And it doesn't seem like they adopted him because they like him," said Grace.

After all, if they loved the boy, they would not have hit him until they broke a cane.

Chapter 1703

"Who knows? There are all sorts of weird people these days. I've also heard that some people adopt children with certain birth dates to ward off evil spirits for their families," said Lina as she curled her lips.

Grace pressed her lips together, seemingly thinking of something.

Just then, the little girl ran back. This time, without a bag but a small crossbody pouch. She took the boy's hand and said to Grace, "aunt Cummins, I'm ready to accompany Ci to the hospital."

Grace smiled. "Okay, let's go."

Lina shrugged and drove the car over. They got in the car, and Grace asked the little girl, "Did you tell your parents?"

"I left a note," said Veronica Barlow. However, she knew that there was no point in leaving a note. Even if she and Ci were gone for one night, her father would not care-let alone her stepmother.

Her stepmother wished she and Ci were gone.

They drove to the hospital. Grace saw Veronica Barlow's

tiny hand tightly holding Mason's hand as though these two

and found him a specialist. Grace gasped when the little one took off his clothes in front of the doctor. Even Lina was shocked.

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The bruises were worse than what they had seen with his clothes on. The doctor said with a frown, "What's the matter with you adults? This is almost abuse. How can you beat up a child like this?"

Grace did not explain but asked the doctor if his bruises were serious.

The doctor touched the bruises on the little one's body with his hand. Mason would frown and show slight pain only when the doctor exerted some force. Otherwise, he would remain expressionless.

The doctor got Mason to do an X-ray and a blood test just to be on the safe side.

After a series of examinations, the doctor said to Grace

and Lina, "The child doesn't seem sensitive to pain. If pain is divided into ten levels, level five or so would probably be quite painful for the average person. But it's only a slight pain to

him."

Grace and Lina were both stunned.

"Such a person exists?" Lina could not help asking.

The doctor said, "With so many people in the world, there are

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probability of one in 100,000, but it's just a difference in pain tolerance. Some people feel no pain at all. Those are relatively

rare."

Grace looked at the little one who was silent. It was as if he did not care about these matters. It turned out that the reason why he said it did not hurt was that he was less sensitive to pain than average people.

However, Grace did not think it was a good thing. After all, people would only want to defend themselves when they felt pain.

If Mason was a lot less sensitive to pain, he would not think of it as an injury when his body got hurt.

"Uncle Doctor, is my brother alright? When will he recover?" asked Veronica Barlow.

"It's just skin trauma. His bones aren't hurt, so he just needs to apply some ointment to his bruises," the doctor said. Then, he said to Grace, "You adults can't beat him like this anymore. He's just less sensitive to pain and doesn't know it, but you adults should know better!"

Chapter 1704

Grace responded and went to get the prescription filled with the rest.

It was just a couple of ointments and a spray to relieve the pain and heal the bruises.

Grace handed the medicine to the little girl. "Here, this is Mason's medicine. You need to apply it several times a day. The instructions are on the box. Do you know how to read these words?"

"Yes!" said Veronica Barlow.

"Then remember to apply this medicine to Mason's bruises every day," said Grace.

"That's no trouble at all! Mason is my brother!" Veronica Barlow put the medicine into her crossbody pouch and pulled out several crumpled bills that ranged from one dollar, two dollars, and up to fifty dollars.

"Here's 93 dollars. I know it isn't enough for today's medical

expenses. I'll pay you again when I have enough money!" Veronica Barlow said in a grown-up tone.

It was obvious that this money was all she had.

alright. I'll pay for Mason's medical bills today. You don't have to pay."

"No, we're not related. We can't use your money. Besides,

I have money. I can pay for Mason's medical bills!" said Veronica Barlow. Then, she was a little embarrassed. "Uh... I'll pay for the rest later."

Lina asked, "Why do you insist on paying? What if the bill is 1,000 dollars? Are you going to insist on paying too?"

Veronica Barlow answered firmly, "Yes!"

Lina was a little surprised. After all, a seven-year-old girl was replying so firmly like an adult.

"Do you have 1,000 dollars?" asked Lina.

Veronica Barlow shook her head. "No, but I can save up the money. I get pocket money every month. I won't eat snacks or buy toys. I'll save up the money to pay you back! Ci is my younger brother, so I, the elder sister, should be responsible for paying his medical bills."

This girl seemed more responsible than many adults.

Mason looked at Veronica Barlow and said, "Sis, I won't see a doctor again."

"Of course, you should see a doctor when you're ill." Veronica

Barlow looked at Mason with a straight face and said, "I have

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money. As I said, my mom left me a fortune. It'll all be mine when I'm 18. I can take care of you then!"

As she listened to the girl speak with a straight face, Grace suddenly felt her nose getting sore.

If her own brother had been alive, perhaps she would be just like this little girl after her mother's death.

Mason blinked her beautiful eyes and replied, "Okay, you'll take care of me, Sis."

His indifferent voice had a touch of trust in it. It was only directed to Veronica Barlow.

Chapter 1705

Veronica Barlow wanted to give the money to Grace again, and Grace took it this time. "Okay, I'll take the money. You can pay me the rest when you've saved enough money. We'll send you home now."

Lina drove Grace and the two children to the He family's house.

When they got there, the two adults sent the two children to the door of the He family's house. Their stepmother, Rosalind Bush, opened the door. When she saw the two children, she immediately shouted at Veronica Barlow, "Where the hell did you go, girl? If you don't want to stay in this house, then get out as soon as possible with that drag!"

"I left a note. I brought Mason to the hospital!" Veronica

Barlow said with a straight face.

"Note? Hmph, what hospital? I think the two of you just went somewhere to play! Did you destroy someone else's property

and need to pay compensation? I'm telling you, all the money

in this house is mine and your dad's. None of it belongs

to your dead mother!" Rosalind Bush scolded Veronica Barlow, thinking that Grace and Lina were here to ask for compensation after the children had caused some trouble.

"Don't talk about my mom like that!" Veronica Barlow instantly

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“So what if I talk about your mom? You’re still dependent on your dad and me! I’m warning you, you’d better behave yourself-”

Lina could not help but interrupt and say, “What are you talking about? You’re their stepmother. Even if these two children aren’t your own, you’re still a mother. How can you scold them like that? Not to mention the way you beat the kid up. Do you know how many bruises Mason has on his body?”

Rosalind Bush snapped. “As you said, I’m a mother. How I educate my children is my business. What does it have to do with you?”

“You...” Lina’s face reddened with anger.

Grace stepped forward and said to Rosalind Bush with a straight face, “Yes, you can educate your children, but it doesn’t mean you can hit them. The hospital has test reports for Mason’s injuries. If necessary, I can give these materials to the police or the local child protection agency. If it’s proven that you’re abusing your children, you’ll be sentenced right away!”

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Rosalind Bush’s expression changed. “Are... Are threatening me? Which family doesn’t hit their children? Do you have to go to jail for a couple of beatings?”

Grace said, “That depends on what kind of beatings. The injuries on Mason today aren’t ordinary beatings. Also, I’m not simply threatening you. I’m a lawyer, and I can take legal

The atmosphere instantly froze.

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“What’s the matter? Who is it?” The owner of the house, Archer Barlow, shouted as he came out. He could not help pausing at the sight of the confrontation before him.

Grace said, “Hello, Mr. He. My name is Grace, and I’m a lawyer. We accompanied the children to the hospital today. Li Ci is suffering from a lot of injuries, so please don’t be so heavy-handed when you’re educating him next time. Otherwise, you’ll be suspected of child abuse.”

Archer Barlow instantly turned pale and said, “Yes... Yes, we’ll pay attention to it! So sorry to have bothered you!”

With that, Archer Barlow pulled the two children into the house and shut the door!

Lina snapped. “Parents like them are really... I think they’ll beat the kids up again! If you adopt a child and don’t take good care of them, you might as well let others take care of them. Why adopt them in the first place? Hmph!”

Grace’s eyes glimmered as if she had thought of something. ‘Adopt... The He family only adopted Mason!’

In the evening, Grace brought up the topic with Jason. “What do you say if we adopt another child?”

Chapter 1706

Jason looked at Grace in confusion. "Why do you suddenly want to adopt a child?"

"I saw that Mason kid we met at the amusement park again when I was at Kyla's store today." Grace then told Jason what had happened today.

"The child isn't related to that family, and his adoptive parents are awful to him. Perhaps they'll continue hitting him in the future." Grace did not think Mason's adoptive parents would restrain themselves after what she said to them today.

After all, once hitting children became a habit, it was hard to change it.

"Since they adopted the child, how about we ask them to pass him to us?" asked Grace.

Jason smiled faintly. "You seem to care a lot about that child. Do you like him so much?"

"Maybe it's because he's about the same age as Mick and Jasper." Grace hesitated a little before saying, "Plus, there's something special about the kid."

"Special?" Jason raised his eyebrows slightly. "What's so special about him?"

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"He's not as ignorant and capricious as the average child. Even though he had bruises all over him, he said it didn't hurt. But it's all the more heartbreaking," said Grace.

Jason said, "I don't mind adopting the child, but I don't think he'll be willing. I remember that the boy is quite close to his sister. He wouldn't want to leave her."

"But even if we adopt him, I won't stop them from seeing each other again. I'd bring him to see his sister."

"But even so, he won't be willing," said Jason.

"Why?" Grace was puzzled. "If he joins our family, he won't be beaten and scolded. He'll receive better education too..."

"But his sister wouldn't be there, would she?"

"But I can bring him to see his sister."

Jason said, "But they're not going to be together every day. If he's no longer with that family, he won't see his sister when he wakes up, and he won't see her every night before going to bed. If I were him, I wouldn't want to leave that family either."

From what she had told him about that child, he knew just how important Mason's sister was to him.

It was also because Mason was a child that he was purer than an adult. He would not weigh the pros and cons in making choices.

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Since that child seemed to be indifferent to everything else but only cared about his sister, then he surely would not want to leave her-not even for a minute or a second!

Grace wanted to say something else but Jason said, "Why don't we go and ask the child tomorrow? Didn't you say he waits for his sister at the school gate almost every day? So why don't we just go to the school gate and ask him?"

'That's... true! We have to ask him if he agrees to the idea!' Grace agreed but asked in confusion, "Are you going to ask him too?"

"Since you care about him, I care about him too. It won't hurt to go see him anyway," said Jason.

The next day, Grace took Jason to Kyla's store.

Kyla smiled after seeing Jason. "Mr. Reed, thank you." She knew that Jason had helped her a lot. If it were not for Jason, Paisley Daniels's misdeeds would not have been exposed.

"You're still not with Martin Weiss," said Jason.

Chapter 1707

Kyla said frankly, "Yes, we're not. Not now, not ever. We'll never get back together."

"He made a mistake, but won't he be able to win your heart again even if he spends the rest of his life frying?" asked Jason.

"Jay!" said Grace, scared that Kyla would be offended by Jason being too straightforward.

Somewhat uncharacteristically, Jason continued to stare at Kyla as if wanting to hear her answer.

Kyla said, "I'll never love him again, even if he spends the rest of his life making it up to me and repenting."

She spoke with such determination!

Jason's brows furrowed slightly. "Why? He hurt you because he was deceived. He didn't do it intentionally."

Kyla said, "But he did it on purpose at first. He approached me and made me fall in love with him with another motive in mind. Also, he had every opportunity to investigate the truth, but he didn't. He preferred to believe that I was a villain who was responsible for everything. Even if I did have feelings for him, they've long since died from the pain he has caused

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Jason's eyes darkened, and his face seemed to be enveloped with a layer of gloom.

Grace quickly tugged at him and said to Kyla, "Kyla, I'm sorry. Don't mind what Jay had said."

"It's alright. There's nothing I can't say about what has happened with Martin Weiss and me," said Kyla.

Just then, someone came to pay for their things. Kyla greeted the customer. Grace whispered to Jason, "Why did you ask Kyla these?"

"Nothing, I'm just asking," said Jason. Martin Weiss had made a mistake that disappointed Kyla greatly.

What about him? He had committed a mistake too, but Grace was still by his side! However, the memories he was missing haunted him.

Before long, the tiny figure walked toward the school gate again.

It was Mason!

Grace and Jason walked to the school gate as well.

Just like before, the little one walked up to the school's iron gate and squatted down to wait quietly. His face appeared completely indifferent.

3/3 Even when Grace and Jason stood beside him, he seemed to ignore them as though they were invisible.

Grace crouched down and said, "Mason, remember me?"

The little one slowly turned his head to look at Grace and nodded.

"This is my husband. You can call him Uncle Reed," said Grace.

However, it was spoken in vain because the little one had no intention of greeting Jason.

"Did your sister apply the medicine for you? Do you feel any better?" asked Grace.

"She did, but I'm not in pain." His childlike voice seemed to speak with some confusion. He did not understand why he felt no pain, but his sister said he had to apply the medicine on his bruises so that they would heal quickly.

Chapter 1708

Since he felt no pain, what difference did it make if his bruises healed quickly or slowly?

"Even if it doesn't hurt, it may affect your health if you're injured and you don't get yourself treated. You're only suffering from superficial injuries this time, but if you hurt your bones and you don't seek treatment just because you're not in pain, then you may have to walk with a limp forever." Grace tried to explain things as simply as she could.

The little one was silent as if thinking over her words.

Grace added, "Would you like to change your home? What about staying with me and Uncle Reed? Then no one will ever hit you again and you won't suffer from these kinds of injuries."

Mason instantly grew vigilant. The way he looked at Grace had also changed. He appeared fierce, like a small animal that was ready to pounce and bite at any time.

Grace felt that Mason was looking at her as though he was looking at his enemy. She felt a sudden pang of pain in her heart.

Jason took a step forward and stood between the little one

and Grace, just in case Mason did something to hurt Grace.

"I only want to be with Sis!" the little one said stubbornly and growled at Jason like a small animal protesting against an unusually powerful beast.

Jason stared at the little one's face. His eyes suddenly darkened, and he narrowed his eyes as if to take a closer look at Mason.

Just then, school was over and the students came out one by one. The little one immediately rushed to Veronica Barlow when he saw her coming out. His small hands grabbed Veronica Barlow tightly.

"I'm never leaving my sister." He seemed particularly determined.

Carrying a small school bag, Veronica Barlow asked curiously, "Who wants to separate us?"

Mason's eyes turned to Grace. The next moment, Veronica Barlow rushed up to Grace and said, "I thought you were nice. I can't believe you want to separate Ci and me. I'm telling you,

we're not going to separate from each other. I... I'll try to save

up to pay back the medical fees I owe you!"

"You can pay me back anytime you want, and I don't want to

separate you from your brother. I just... want to adopt your brother and give him a better home."

"No thanks. I'll take care of Ci!" Veronica Barlow held Mason

tightly. "I'll take good care of Ci. He's my brother and family.

With that said, she asked her brother who was in her arms, "Ci, am I right?"

"Yes, I only want Sis to take care of me!" Mason also said affirmatively.

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The two little ones hugged each other, making Grace look like a bad person. Students and parents were also looking their way.

"It seems that the child is refusing to come with us, and the same goes for the sister. We'd better go," said Jason.

Grace sighed and nodded. Before leaving, she said to the two siblings, "Since you've refused, I won't mention it again. Here's my phone number. Call me if you get into any trouble."

With that said, she handed Veronica Barlow a piece of paper with her phone number on it.

Veronica Barlow hesitated a little but took Grace's note

anyway.

Chapter 1709

Before Jason left, he stared at Mason again. His eyes seemed to be thinking about something.

Jason kept his head down in silence after they got back in the car. Grace asked, "What are you thinking about?" He instantly came back to his senses and smiled faintly, saying, "Nothing. Let's go back to Reed Residence."

At night, a figure arrived at the mourning hall. Jason walked in and looked at the black and white photo of his father hanging in front of him.

In the photo, his father looked gentle. There was a soft smile on his lips. There seemed to be a hint of joy in his deep eyes too, as though they carried rays of sunshine.

If he looked at the shape of his father's eyes, they were somewhat similar to the boy called Mason whom he met today.

He had only given the child a cursory glance at the amusement park before this.

Although he had heard about the child from Grace, it was only today that he got a good look at the child.

He did not think of it at first but then he realized... the child's

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It was just that the look in those eyes was different!

He slowly entered the inner hall, where there was a woman's photo in front of his father's memorial tablet. It was... the woman who had abandoned him and his father.

The outline of this woman had been imprinted in his mind for too many years!

However, looking at the woman in the photo now, some features seemed to overlap with Mason's features. The child's lips and forehead... bore a resemblance!

The curvature of their earlobes looked similar as well!

'Is it possible? Could it be what I'm thinking? The child's... an orphan that the He family adopted. The fact that he's an orphan fits the requisite.

'If it's as my speculation, why did Secretary Wang give the child to the He family? Or was it a coincidence? Did the He family want a child, so they adopted him? How did the child end up at an orphanage instead of with Secretary Wang?'

For a moment, there were too many questions in his mind but no one could answer them.

Jason pressed his thin lips together tightly. Moments later, he took out his phone and made a call. "Help me look into a five-year-old boy named Mason Swanson. I want all his history and the

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information about his adopted family. Also, look for a way to get a sample of the boy's blood.

In any case, he had to find out if it was as he thought!

Just as Jason finished giving his instructions and put away his phone, he heard footsteps coming over. He looked up to see a thin figure walking toward him.

"What are you doing here?" asked Grace, who had just put her two children to bed. A maid told her he was at the mourning hall.

She knew that he did not usually come here. Apart from coming here on tomb-sweeping day, winter solstice, and the anniversary of his father's death, he would only be here if he was in a bad mood,

'Today isn't one of those special days, so does that mean... he's in a bad mood?' wondered Grace.

Chapter 1710

"It's nothing. I just thought I'd come and have a look," said Jason. After all, he did not want her to get excited before he confirmed things. It would be better to wait until he got the final result before telling her!

"Are you in a bad mood?" asked Grace.

"What's the matter? Do you think I came here because I'm in a bad mood?" Jason said with a slight twinkle in his eyes.

"You're not in a bad mood?" Her almond-shaped eyes stared at him.

"No." He shook his head and pulled her into his arms. "I'm not in a bad mood. On the contrary, I'm feeling quite good." At the very least, Mason might be their lost child, and she would be overjoyed if it turned out to be true!

He would be able to see her smile. These days, there would be a lingering sadness in her eyes even though she was smiling.

Grace was confused. "Did anything happen today that made you so happy?"

"Isn't the fact that you're right by my side good enough to make me happy?" he whispered as he lowered his head to kiss her lips.

one he loved.

'Grace and I are still together after going through so much. I won't end up like my father! Grace... isn't like my mother. She'll always be by my side and will never leave!

'Never!'

In the restaurant, Anthony Sherman looked at Lina who appeared to be in a trance as she stared at someone passing by the restaurant window. He could not help asking, "What's wrong? Why do you keep staring?"

“Ah!” Lina finally came to her senses and quickly said, “Nothing. I just thought that person’s back is a little familiar, but... it’s not someone I know.”

With that said, Lina lowered her head and began to eat the food in front of her.

“That person’s back looks a bit like Hadwin Stephenson’s.”” Anthony Sherman’s voice rang in Lina’s ears.

Lina’s body stiffened.

Yes, that person’s back did look like Hadwin Stephenson’s. For

a moment, she even thought she saw Hadwin Stephenson but realized it was not him after taking a closer look.

“Sorry!” she looked up at Anthony Sherman and said earnestly.

Anthony Sherman smiled. “What’s there to be sorry about?”

Lina hesitated a little before saying, “Perhaps we can’t be a couple, after all. Sorry. After everything that has happened, you’ve been encouraging me, supporting me, and believing in me. I appreciate that, but... I’m sorry that I can’t seem to like you romantically.”

“Is it because the person you like has always been Hadwin Stephenson?” Instead of getting furious, Anthony Sherman said it as though he had expected it.