

Ex Convict 1971

Chapter 1971

Maybe he had forgiven her when she cried in the streets trying to restore the photos he deleted.

He was just... too afraid to lose her again. He was scared that she was doing it for the baby and did not love him enough.

That was why he would not say he had 'forgiven' her so easily. He only hoped that she could pester and love him more.

In the evening, Hadwin Stephenson booked a private room in an old yet famous restaurant in J City. He invited Lina's parents to have dinner together.

Looking at their daughter's smiling face, Mr. Sweeney and Mrs. Sweeney were finally relieved.

They had all sorts of misunderstandings about Hadwin Stephenson, but their daughter had explained everything to

them.

Mr. Sweeney raised his glass and said, "Hadwin, we've misunderstood you. You've done a lot for Lina. Lina was able

to survive because of you."

Hadwin Stephenson's eyes darkened a little. The events from

"Those things wouldn't have happened to her if it hadn't been for me."

Mrs. Sweeney quickly said, "Fortunately, it's all over. It's over now. We're happy for you! Lina's dad and I only hope the baby can be born safely and you'll get back together!"

"Yes, we will!" Lina said before Hadwin Stephenson could speak. She had not told her parents that she was still on probation.

They enjoyed the meal together.

Hadwin Stephenson watched as the Sweeney family casually chatted, ate, and drank with smiles on their faces. The atmosphere seemed to be affecting him, which he had never felt before.

Eating at the Stephenson family's house never felt like this,

whether he ate with his mother or with other members of the Stephenson family.

He never felt anything but indifference.

Perhaps, he was the one unwilling to let go.

After finishing the meal, Hadwin Stephenson asked the driver

to send the Sweeney family back. However, Lina stubbornly took Hadwin Stephenson's arm and said to her parents, "Mom, Dad, why don't you two go back to the hotel first? I...

want to stay at Hadwin's place for a few more days."

3/3 She even looked up at him expectantly as she asked, "Can I?"

Hadwin Stephenson was speechless. She was already acting on the spot without prior approval. What else could he say? "Let her stay with me for a few days. I'll take good care of her."

Hadwin Stephenson said to Mr. Sweeney and Mrs. Sweeney.

"We're sorry to bother you!" said Mr. Sweeney and Mrs. Sweeney as they got in the Stephenson family's car.

The car slowly drove toward the hotel they were staying, while Lina got in Hadwin Stephenson's car.

"I thought you'd go back to the hotel with your parents since the swelling has gone down," he said.

She said cheekily, "I was hoping we could spend more time together! We've been apart for five years. Although I love you and you still love me, all those misunderstandings have taken a toll on our relationship. Don't you think we need to spend more time together?"

Hadwin Stephenson realized that he did not hate spending more time with her. He was even happy about it.

Lina showed up in Hadwin Stephenson's room again that night, holding her pregnancy pillow.

Chapter 1972

He rubbed his temples as he looked at her. "Are you going to come to my room from today onward to bond with me?"

"If you think it's doable, that'd be best," she said.

He was speechless as he drew close to her and pushed her up against a nearby cabinet. "Lina, am I not a man to you?"

Did she know how much restraint he needed to fight his desire when she lay by his side at night, with her arms grabbing him from time to time and her thigh resting on his lap across the pregnancy pillow?

"I've never thought of you as a woman!" she answered immediately.

He was between laughter and tears. "You sure do trust me."

She said matter-of-factly, "Who else am I going to trust if not you? You didn't even have your way with me after what happened to you yesterday!"

What she said left Hadwin Stephenson speechless for a moment.

He looked at her blankly. He recalled what had happened the night before because of what she just said. Her lips were so his blood seemed to be boiling.

"What's come over you? You look a little..." Before she could finish, he suddenly flung his arms around her.

She froze. "Hadwin?"

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"Let me hold you like this for a while," he murmured as he tried to hold her in his arms for an eternity.

She stiffened slightly as if remembering the night before. 'He didn't get drugged today, but he did drink during dinner. He's not gonna...

"Hadwin, I... I'm still pregnant. I... I can't do that sort of thing, but if you really have needs, I can fulfill you another way..."

"Is that all you think about?" Though he said so, his arms closed a little closer around her. However, he was careful not to press against her belly. "Don't worry, I won't do anything to you."

More than anyone else, he wanted her and the baby to be okay!

"And... what happened yesterday won't happen again."

"What happened yesterday? Did you really... take something you shouldn't have taken?" she asked in a mutter.

He stiffened. "Do you really want to know?"

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The inquiry seemed to carry an inestimable weight.

Lina froze and then hummed a reply. 'Yes, I want to know everything about you-good and bad!'

She wanted to know what had happened to him yesterday!

Hadwin Stephenson muttered, "I drank the wrong glass of wine. It was spiked, and the person who handed me the wine was my mother."

Lina was stunned. 'His mother drugged him?'

Chapter 1973

That same woman who looked poised but cold almost caused her unborn child to miscarry by beating her up. Lina did not have a good impression of Emily Flowers.

However, she never expected her to drug her own son!

She could almost guess why. After all, news had reported that Emily Flowers invited many socialites in tMason Swansonty to attend his birthday party.

Some even said it was a blind date party.

Lina bit her lip and said, “She... She’s against us being together, isn’t she? If she continues to refuse, then you...”

Hadwin Stephenson said, “I’m no longer her pawn. It’s up to

me to decide what to do. My mother won’t be bothering you again for years, and I won’t let her harm our child. They’ll be born safely.”

She let out a sigh of relief. “No matter what happens, even if your mother objects, I’ll still pester you. You said it yourself. You want me to keep pestering you and not give up!”

He could not help chuckling. The woman sometimes depressed him, but she never failed to cheer him up when he

was in a bad mood.

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forgive you if you fail to keep your word!” His voice captured her like a dense web.

“Nelson Corbyn, your mother is an ex-convict. How dare you reject me when I don’t even look down on you for that?” The girl’s voice was haughty and angry.

It was as if being rejected was a great shame.

Grace, who was on her way to the principal’s office, could not help but stop when she heard the voice. It was because she heard the words ‘Nelson Corbyn’.

“Just because you like me doesn’t mean I should like you back. Besides, my mother was wronged. The law has already cleared her name,” Nelson Corbyn said calmly.

Grace looked in the direction of the voice and saw Nelson Corbyn standing opposite a girl, who was blocking his way domineeringly.

“So what? She’s still an ex-convict. If you won’t be my friend, I’m going to tell everyone at school that your mother is an ex-convict and that they shouldn’t go to your store!” the girl said with a complacent smile on her young face.

Grace was somewhat surprised. ‘The girl seems to be about the same age as Nelson. Do nine-year-old children behave

like this nowadays?’

3/3 This girl was not innocent like how children her age should be.

From Grace’s point of view, she could not see Nelson’s expression but could see that the hands by his sides were clenched into fists. His shoulders seemed to be trembling slightly.

The girl seemed even more proud now. “Hmph, if you don’t want the whole school to know that your mother is an ex-convict and have your store go out of business, you’ll be obedient and do exactly what I tell you to do! Here, I want you to say you like me in front of everybody—”

“That won’t do, my dear!” Grace’s voice interrupted the girl.

Nelson Corbyn turned his head and froze at the sight of Grace, while the girl said with an angry face, “Who are you, old lady? Do you have anything to do with our affairs?”

“Why would I have nothing to do with my godson’s affairs?” Grace smiled faintly, but there was something fierce in the way she looked at the little girl. “Let me tell you, what you just said to Nelson is called a threat in law. I’m a lawyer, and I can tell you that this crime is punishable by imprisonment.”

Chapter 1974

The little girl’s expression changed, and Grace added, “In that case, you’ll also be an ex-convict! Besides, Nelson’s mom was in jail because she was wronged by bad people. But this time, you’ll be going to jail because you made a threat, not because someone wronged you.”

She was a nine-year-old girl, after all. Even if she was arrogant and stubborn, she was scared now. She stomped her feet and left angrily.

Grace turned to look at Nelson in front of her and rubbed his head. “If I hadn’t seen that, were you really going to give in to that girl?”

Nelson Corbyn said nothing, but his face flushed. It was admission to Grace’s words.

Grace said, “You should never forget that I’m here for you. I know you want to protect your mom, but you’re still young. So let me know if you’re ever in trouble and I’ll figure something out. I’ll protect your mommy with you, okay?”

Nelson Corbyn’s eyes reddened, and he nodded after a long pause.

Grace looked at the time. It was almost the time she had agreed to meet with the principal, so she said, “Alright, go

Nelson Corbyn took a few steps, stopped again, and turned to look at Grace. “aunt Cummins, don’t tell my mommy about what happened today.”

Grace replied, “Okay, I got it.”

After a while, she arrived at the principal's office, where she was warmly received by the principal. Grace knew it was because of the Reed family.

"What? You want your second five-year-old son to study in the first grade?" the principal said with some shock.

"Yes, I hope he can be a transfer student and attend school directly. He has a sister who isn't related to him in the first grade here, so he wants to be in the same class as her," said Grace.

"But he's a little younger, and his learning progress..."

"You can let him take an entrance exam before joining the school. If he doesn't pass, the school can reject him and I'll have no problem with that," said Grace.

The principal said nothing more and agreed. He also set the date for the entrance examination.

After coming out of the principal's office, Grace went to the He family's house. Archer Barlow was not at home. Rosalind Bush was very nice to Grace now. She was attentive and served her tea.

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Grace knew what people like Rosalind Bush wanted. They just wanted more money or benefits.

As soon as Grace entered the He family's house, Mason stared at her intently. It was obvious he was staring at her to tell him about the admission.

Grace said, "I've spoken to the principal. You're allowed to join the school, but you have to take an entrance exam to see if you can keep up with the first grade's syllabus. If you fail the exam, you can't join the school."

Mason agreed right away as if the exam was a piece of cake for him.

Grace was not clear about her son's knowledge level. After all, Mason did not go to kindergarten like ordinary children, and logically speaking, everything he learned was what Secretary Wang had taught him before he was three years old.

However, no one knew exactly what Secretary Wang had taught the child. Mason had never been willing to

communicate with others.

Chapter 1975

Rosalind Bush was surprised when she heard that her former stepson was going to be in the first grade. "Well... Is Mason going to be in the first grade? Why don't you just transfer Veronica to another school? Emerald City's Foreign Language Primary School is a great primary school..."

Rosalind Bush began to ramble on about Veronica Barlow and Mason studying in Foreign Language Primary School. Then, her son could study there too.

“When the time comes, we’ll just move somewhere near Foreign Language Primary School so it’s convenient for the kids to get to and fro from school. We’ll be able to take better care of them too. Don’t you think so, Mrs. Reed?”

Grace looked at Rosalind Bush with a half-smile. She knew

what she was up to. Foreign Language Primary School was an aristocratic primary school in Emerald City, where many rich and powerful families sent their children to study.

With tuition fees running at hundreds of thousands of yuan a year and houses in the neighborhood being ridiculously expensive, Rosalind Bush wanted the Reed family to pay for it all.

“It’s not impossible. How about this? I can pay for Veronica and Mason’s tuition fees. But moving to a place near Foreign

Rosalind Bush’s expectant look suddenly turned pale as if she had eaten something nasty.

Grace lowered her head and said to Mason, “Okay, I’ve done what I promised you. What about what you promised me?”

“Do you promise I can video call Sis every day?” the little one asked sternly.

Grace said, “I promise, and Veronica also has my phone number, so she can call me whenever she wants to reach you.”

Mason extended his hand to Grace.

Grace held Mason’s hand as they prepared to leave the He family’s house.

Rosalind Bush instantly panicked at the sight of this. “Hey, where are you taking Mason?”

“What’s the matter? Can’t I take my son and leave?” Grace asked in reply.

“But... But...” Rosalind Bush panicked. It took her a while to come up with a reason. “Veronica will be worried if she doesn’t see Mason when she comes back.”

After all, having Mason in the He family was equivalent to the He family being associated with the Reed family. Besides, the

Reed

family had been paying them money every month to take care of Mason as he was staying with them. It was a lot more money than their salaries.

"I'll tell Veronica about it," said Grace as she ignored Rosalind Bush, who was stomping in panic.

Grace returned to the Reed family's house with Mason. Mick Reed and Jasper were already there waiting. Grace had also packed Mason's luggage last night and was ordering the servants to load them into the MPV.

"Young Madam, are you sure we don't need to tell Young master Reed?" the butler Uncle Kwan asked in worry.

"Yes, just tell him I'm taking the kids on a trip if he asks," said Grace.

Uncle Kwan responded in acknowledgment.

Moments later, Grace and her three children got into the MPV. It slowly drove away from Reed Residence.

Chapter 1976

In the mourning hall of Reed Residence, Jason looked at his father's memorial tablet in front of him with a touch of bitterness at the corner of his lips. "Dad, I'm sorry. I thought I would never forgive that woman and have her die to atone for her sins, but I love Grace so much that I don't want her to suffer. So forgive me, Dad!"

Holding the lit incense sticks, he respectfully bowed three times to his father's memorial tablet before inserting them in the burner and turning around to leave the mourning hall.

When he got back to the main house, Uncle Kwan said, "Young master Reed, Young Madam brought Young Master Mo, Second Young Master, and Young Lady out on a trip."

"Okay, I got it," Jason said without further questioning. They had agreed at the beginning to never let him know if she was taking the children to see that woman.

That was exactly what she did. She just told him they were going on a trip.

'Maybe this is for the best, Jason thought to himself.

Outside a kindergarten, it was the children's outdoor playtime. Many were gathered around to play games, but William was the only one looking at a piano score as he sat on a small

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William looked at the piano score carefully, aunt Cummins said she was taking Jasper and the rest to L. City, so he would be attending kindergarten alone in the next few days. Although no one in the kindergarten knew that his mother was a convict and discriminated against him, he did not want to play with the others.

He just wanted to be with Jasper, and he knew that Jasper loved his piano skills. She always liked to play with him, and they would practice difficult piano scores together.

He never found it difficult to play the piano before. The teachers who gave him piano lessons had always said he was a genius.

However, playing the piano with Jasper made him feel scared. Jasper could read music scores as well as he could. She could even understand music and interpret it better than him.

During the time he had spent with Jasper, he could feel that Jasper was improving.

If he fell behind on his piano skills one day, would he lose his value as a toy?

William did not notice that someone was secretly taking photos of him with a camera in a corner not far away...

Grace came to L City with her three children to visit her
and his wife.

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Old Lawyer Watts had already prepared guest rooms for them to stay in during their stay in L City so that his wife and her three grandchildren could spend more time together.

Mrs. Watts had recovered now. Her eyes were full of
gratefulness when she saw Grace. "Grace, thank you. Thank you for doing this for me."

"Mrs. Watts, I can bring the three kids to see you and Mentor whenever you miss them, but Jay won't..."

Chapter 1977

"I understand that. I understand!" said Mrs. Watts as her nasal voice broke a little. "I'm content with the ways things are now. I... I don't expect Jason to forgive me and see me. I know it's already the biggest compromise for him to spare me."

Old Lawyer Watts patted his wife on the shoulder and comforted her. "Alright, don't be upset. Grace brought her kids to see you today. That's something to be happy about!"

"Yes... Yes, it's a happy occasion!" Mrs. Watts immediately said and cheered up. "I'm going to make the kids some delicious food and take them to some interesting places in L City!"

The three children had very different personalities. Jasper and Mrs. Watts were the closest, so she kept clinging to Mrs. Watts. Meanwhile, the boys Mick Reed and Mason, remained silent in the living room.

Of course, strictly speaking, Mick Reed was watching Mason. Mason looked totally dazed, seemingly indifferent to everything around him.

Grace knew that Mason was different from ordinary children because of what he had experienced in his childhood. She could only be patient as it would take time for his condition to

improve.

2/3 Grace immediately understood that the little one wanted to call the sister he was not related to, Veronica Barlow, so she said, "Okay."

She said as she took out a phone and video called Veronica Barlow. Grace had bought Veronica Barlow a phone and would pay for the phone bills, so the little girl need not worry about the mobile data.

When Mason saw Veronica Barlow on the video, his expressionless face immediately came alive. Although his expression still did not change much, his eyes seemed to sparkle.

Grace looked at the changes in Mason somewhat emotionally. To Mason, Veronica Barlow was the only person willing to protect him. She was also the only one who treated him well in the past few years.

It was like imprinting in animals.

There was no telling what would happen to the children. Every time Mason called Veronica Barlow 'Sis', it reminded her of her past with Jay.

She wondered if the two children would fall in love when they grew up. Looking at the current situation, Mason probably regarded Veronica as his one and only. However, Veronica...

probably simply regarded Mason as her younger brother.

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One-sided persistence was the worst in relationships. If Veronica Barlow did not fall in love with Mason, would Mason be willing to let her go?

Grace felt worried and then burst into laughter. 'What am

I thinking? The kids are still young. They have no idea what romance is.

'Perhaps the two children think of each other as siblings. Perhaps they'll become boyfriend and girlfriend in the future or they'll grow apart as they age!

The future was a long way to go, and who could be sure of what would happen? She was worrying too much.

"I'm going to do my homework. Mason, be a good boy. Do whatever aunt Cummins says. I bought some chocolate that my classmates said was delicious today. We'll share it when you come back!" said Veronica Barlow.

"Okay, I'll be good," said Mason, looking just like a gentle sheep. One could not imagine that he had beaten a group of older children to the ground.

After ending the video call with Veronica Barlow, Mason

returned the phone to Grace. Then, he obediently climbed into bed, pulled the covers over him, and lay down as if preparing to go to sleep.

Chapter 1978

Um... He was indeed 'obedient'! Grace could not help smiling.

After seeing Mason making a video call, Jasper also wanted to call her dad and William.

"Be good now. Coming here is our little secret. Didn't we agree on keeping this from Daddy for a while? How about this? I'll call Uncle Kwan and ask him to get William to have a video call with you," said Grace.

She had an agreement with the children not to tell Jay about coming here. As for Mrs. Watts's real identity as their grandmother, Grace planned to tell them when they were older.

After all, there was more to it than what a few words could explain.

Therefore, Jasper soon held Grace's phone and had a video call with William.

Grace then asked her oldest son, "Is there anyone you want to video call? ... Except Daddy, of course.""

The little one shook his head. He did not have anyone in particular that he wanted to have a video call with. He could not understand why Mason and Jasper were so happy to them.

The people who mattered to him were his parents, Mason, Jasper. The others... did not matter!

At night, Grace looked at her three children who were already sound asleep and smiled. Then, she took out her phone and sent a short text message to Jason.

Grace: [We're safe. Don't miss us.]

That was all she sent out.

In Reed Residence, Jason looked at the text message on his phone and his slender fingers gently swiped over every word on the phone.

"How can I not worry? Grace, come back soon. I miss you," he muttered.

He missed her so much. He missed her warmth, her scent, her everything...

"Good night." He slowly uttered the two words and kissed the message on his phone screen.

'They're safe. Don't miss them!

'They're safe. Don't miss them!'

However, every word seemed to be engraved in his mind. Then, his heart was full of 'longing'.

In a presidential suite in Emerald City's famous five-star

hotel, a tall, handsome man looked through the photos on the coffee table. All of which were of William.

Except, he was not looking into the camera in any of them. It was obvious that they were taken secretly.

"Is this the child Lily gave birth to?" the man asked.

"Yes, but we're not 100% certain because Lily is already dead. There's no way we can do a DNA test." Standing in front of the man was a thin man in his 40s with a scruffy beard. He was a well-known private investigator in Emerald City.

"It doesn't matter. I'm not trying to prove whether he's related to Lily anyway. Find a way to get me his blood or hair sample,"

the man said.

"That's not a problem," the private investigator said. After all,

in his opinion, it was just a child staying with the Reed family.

How hard could it be?

"Also, I don't want anyone else to find out about this. You know what will happen if I ever find out that you revealed it to anyone else," the man said coldly.

The private investigator froze and immediately replied, "Yes, yes, I understand. No one else will find out about this!"

Chapter 1979

1/4

Lina had been having the time of her life these days. She would accompany her parents around J City during the day as if they were here for a holiday. She even made them a travel itinerary.

If it were not for the fact that she was pregnant and could not exhaust herself, she would have gone with her parents to various tourist attractions in J City.

She had also become a regular to Hadwin Stephenson's office. No one would stop her now. Even her access to Hadwin Stephenson's office became unimpeded.

"Miss Sweeney, Mr. Stephenson is having a meeting. He said you can go and wait for him in his office if you're here," the secretary said.

As soon as Lina entered the office and put down her bag, her phone rang. She picked up the phone and saw that it was a

call from Anthony Sherman.

Speaking of which, she and Anthony Sherman had not talked to each other for quite a while. However, she had texted him when she came to J City to find Hadwin. He even expressed his

wishes that she and Hadwin could make up with each other

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he should be at work right now.

"I just... want to ask how you're doing recently. Have you made up with Mr. Stephenson?" Anthony Sherman's voice sounded a little hoarse.

"I guess so," said Lina.

"In that case... Then..." Anthony Sherman was hesitant as if he had some difficulty saying it.

Lina said, "What's the matter? Just tell me whatever you have to say. We haven't known each other for long, but we're considered friends."

The other end of the line was silent for a long time. "Lina, you're a good woman. I never wanted to hurt you, but I... I... Anyway, I'm sorry! Lina, I'm so sorry!"

With that said, Anthony Sherman abruptly ended the call.

Lina stared at her phone, finding it strange. 'What does he mean? Why is he suddenly apologizing?

'He hasn't even done anything wrong to me!'

Therefore, Lina called him back, wanting to get to the bottom

of it. However, there was a busy signal on the other end of the line. Then, his phone was switched off.

Lina frowned, feeling vaguely worried. She called again.

It was the same as last time.

3/4

"What's the matter? Are you calling Anthony Sherman for something?" A voice rang in her ears out of the blue.

Lina looked up, only to see that Hadwin Stephenson had walked into the office and was standing next to her. "Have you finished your meeting?"

He said, "Yeah. Do you often talk to Anthony Sherman on the phone?"

His voice sounded jealous. Lina quickly ended the call and said, "Not really. He just called me and said something ambiguous, so I wanted to ask him about it."

"Something ambiguous?" He raised his eyebrows slightly as if he was interested. "What did he say?"

"He asked me how we're doing, told me I'm a good woman, and apologized to me." She was confused.

Hadwin Stephenson's eyes glimmered slightly, "You and Anthony Sherman seemed to get to know each other through a blind date, didn't you?"

His voice sounded faintly dangerous. Lina shuddered and peeked at Hadwin Stephenson. "Well... Does it bother you?"

Chapter 1980

"What do you think?" he asked nonchalantly.

"Well... We met on a blind date, but we're just friends. Even though... we did go on dates with marriage as the end goal, we didn't do anything intimate..." Her voice grew quieter under his gaze.

'Come on. Why do I feel guilty?' Lina thought to herself as she bit her lip.

She was single then, so there was nothing wrong with going on a blind date!

Besides, she and Anthony Sherman had never done anything that crossed the line.

"Is that so? Does that mean you have never even held hands with him?" Hadwin Stephenson's voice lazily rang out in her

ears.

"Yep," she answered.

The next moment, he was breathing on her cheek, and that handsome face was magnified before her.

"Hadwin, what... What are you doing?" she asked in a stammer.

2/3

Yeah." Her face flushed slightly.

His lips were close to her ear while his warm breath sprayed on her ear.

Lina only felt that her ears were getting hotter and hotter. She wanted to raise her hands to cover her hot ears, but he pulled her hands down first. "You didn't do this either?"

As he finished speaking, his lips touched her ear.

Lina's face instantly reddened, and she felt her blood surge.

'Come on! Does he know he's tempting me to do things I shouldn't do in my current condition?'

"Did you do it?" His voice muttered.

"No... No way!" she stammered, trying to put some distance between them.

She was pregnant. She could not get too 'excited'.

He seemed to smile with satisfaction. His fingers grabbed her chin, forcing her to look at him. He used his other hand to

wrap it around her waist and drew her closer to him.

“Lina, since you’re pregnant with my child and want to pester me forever, you’re forbidden from being intimate with other

men, got

it?” He stared at her with a straight face.

“Well... Can I at least shake hands and hug my idols?” She thought it over and bargained.

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He frowned slightly. She... seemed to have a lot of idols, and she would have new ones almost every year. He could figure out just from the photos of her idols on her phone.

There were probably dozens of them. If she shook hands and hugged each of them...

Hadwin Stephenson’s scalp tingled just from his imagination alone.

“Of course, I promise there’ll be nothing more than handshakes and hugs,” added Lina.