

Ex Convict 2161

Chapter 2161

Seeing that William refused to apologize no matter what she said, Jasper snapped. "If you don't apologize, I won't play with you anymore. I don't want to be your friend."

This was the biggest threat to children!

William's face instantly paled.

He reached out to grab Jasper and tell her that he only tried to push Nelson Corbyn away because he heard a sound. He never touched Nelson Corbyn. Nelson Corbyn tried to dodge him, so he lost his footing and fell down the stairs.

His hands caught nothing but air.

They were empty!

At this moment, the maids around him looked at him with scorn, disgust, and disdain.

He winced a little as he slowly lowered his hand. He hung his head low as he pitifully returned to his room.

The room was so quiet.

He had never found the room so quiet before.

'Is Jasper gonna stop thinking of me as a friend? At the end of the day, I'm just a toy. How could I be her friend... How could

2/3

I...'

William cowered in the corner. His entire body was curled up into a ball. 'It's so cold... I feel so cold...'

When Jason came back in the evening, Grace told him what had happened at Lina's place today.

Jason raised his eyebrows when he heard that William had pushed Nelson downstairs. "Did he really push him?"

"Jasper and Mick saw it, so that's probably the case. Nelson didn't deny it either. I asked William afterward and he said he did push Nelson, but it was because he heard a sound heading toward Nelson," said Grace.

"A sound?"

"He couldn't tell me the details, so I decided to check out Lina's place again. I'll also have to go to Nelson and ask what exactly happened," said Grace.

"Is Nelson okay?" asked Jason.

"I called Kyla and asked. He's okay so far, but some test results won't come back until tomorrow," said Grace. Then, she asked Jason a little hesitantly, "Do you think William pushed Nelson down the stairs on purpose?"

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Jason's eyes glimmered slightly before he suddenly said, "Jasper and Nelson are close, aren't they?"

"Yes, why did you mention that all of a sudden?"

"William likes Jasper very much too," he said.

Grace paused for a moment before understanding what he meant. "No way. Are you saying William pushed Nelson down the stairs because he was jealous that Jasper's close to Nelson?"

Jason said, "After all, it's hard to tell what's going on in one's mind, not to mention one's emotions. Even adults have trouble controlling their emotions, let alone a child. William has always been with Lily. Maybe he took after Lily's character."

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Grace hesitated for a moment before shaking her head and saying, "I still don't believe that kid could do something like that. I'll find evidence no matter what."

"Are you still going to defend the boy even if the evidence leads to William in the end?" he asked.

She looked at him. "What are you trying to say?" They were husband and wife, after all. She could tell that he was trying to hint at something.

Jason said, "Now that this has happened, let Philip Barlow take William away. Everyone will be happy then, right? Grace, you only brought William back to the Reed family because he had nowhere to go. I didn't object to it, but I can't say I approve of it either. After all, he's Lily's son."

Therefore, he paid extra attention to William even though he was only a child, fearing that the child would blame the Reed family for his mother's death and hold a grudge against them.

"Isn't this the perfect opportunity to give William back to Philip Barlow? Returning to the Barlow family will do the boy no harm but good," said Jason.

Grace pressed her lips together. Of course, she knew William could not stay with the Reed family forever, and the Barlow family wanted the child back now. It was only natural for the

2/4 child to return to the Barlow family, but... "Even if William does go back to the Barlow family, he's not going back like this. I must get to the bottom of this! If he's innocent, then I'll clear his name," said Grace.

Jason's expression changed slightly. He knew she was probably reminded of how she was wronged back then.

With a sigh, Jason grabbed Grace and pulled her into his arms. "Okay, if you think he's innocent, then I hope the child won't betray your trust."

The next day, Grace went to the hospital to see Nelson first. Nelson spent the night in the hospital for observation. There was nothing wrong with him, and when the test reports came out, everything was normal.

Grace was finally relieved.

“Kyla, I’m sorry for what happened yesterday, but I have a feeling that something else is going on, so I want to ask Nelson some questions to get to the bottom of this,” said Grace.

Kyla also said, “I asked Nelson afterward and he said William did try to push him. But William didn’t push him toward the stairs. He tried to push him the other way. He accidentally lost his footing on the stairs when he dodged William.”

Grace was doubtful. “The other way?”

“Nelson, did you hear anything when William pushed you yesterday?” she asked.

Nelson Corbyn frowned and shook his head. “No.”

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“No particular sound?” Grace asked again without giving up.

Nelson Corbyn carefully recalled before shaking his head. “I really didn’t hear anything. I was wearing my hearing aids at the time. I would’ve been able to hear it if there was a sound.”

Grace’s heart sank. ‘Was William lying?’

‘But... the kid didn’t look like he was lying when he said that.’

If a five-year-old was telling a lie, there was no way an adult could not notice it unless they were already a good liar at such a young age!

Therefore, Grace went to Lina’s place again after leaving the hospital.

Once she reached the mansion, Lina asked Grace as soon as she saw her, “What the hell happened yesterday? Did William really push Nelson?”

Grace roughly told Lina what she knew. “What do you think is going on here? Was there a sound?”

Lina frowned. “We were on the first floor while Nelson and William were on the stairway. Logically speaking, there was no way the three of us could have missed it if there was a sound on

the stairs at that time!”

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Grace’s face grew more and more serious. After all, William telling lies was the last thing she wanted to see.

“But nothing is absolute. I’ll have someone check the house to see if there was anything that could have made the sound. Perhaps we missed it,” said Lina.

“The three of us and Nelson missed it?” Grace thought the odds were slim.

Lina laughed drily. "Alright, I know you don't want William to be involved in this. But what if he did push Nelson on purpose? Maybe he wasn't trying to push Nelson down the stairs but was just trying to scare Nelson? After all, most of the time, children pull pranks without thinking of the consequences!"

Grace sighed. If William did it and the 'sound' was just a lie he made up, maybe it was better to give William back to Philip Barlow as Jay had said.

At night, William lay curled up in bed. Jasper had not talked to him for two days. Even though he ate at the same table as her as usual, Jasper did not give him any attention.

All the servants in the house saw this, of course. They gave him the cold shoulder. They used to scold and stop their children

when they saw them bullying him.

However, they now pretended not to see it.

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There had been a lot of talk about him pushing Nelson Corbyn down the stairs in the residence.

The servants' children began calling him names behind his back, telling him to get out of the residence.

'Jasper, has she... Has she given me up too? She doesn't want me anymore?'

William hid under the covers, feeling so cold!

He missed Jasper sharing a bed with him and telling him

stories.

He had been practicing the piano these days, only wanting to get better and play more complicated songs so she could like him even more. He would feel satisfied as long as she smiled at him.

However, all she did now was glare at him.

It was as if she was looking at a naughty kid!

She must think he was naughty!

William's tiny body kept curling up.

The next day in kindergarten, William plucked up his courage and asked Jasper Reed, "Jasper, can you... please not ignore

me?" He sounded like an abandoned puppy.

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Jasper looked at William. "Why did you push Nelson down the stairs?"

"I wasn't trying to push him down the stairs. I... I heard a sound heading toward him and I was... I was just trying to push him away. I... I wasn't trying to push him down the stairs," he struggled to explain.

"You liar! Nelson said he didn't hear anything!" Jasper got even angrier.

William's little face turned utterly pale. "I... I'm not lying. There really... was a sound... By the way, doesn't... Doesn't Nelson Corbyn have hearing problems and can't hear..."

Jasper retorted, "Nelson was wearing his hearing aids that day. He could hear! William, you refuse to admit your mistake and are even telling lies. I hate you!"

With that said, she turned around and ran away, leaving William still standing there alone.

'Does she... hate me?'

He felt so upset all of a sudden.

'What do I have left if even she hates me?'

Mick Reed was standing nearby, with his peach blossom eyes that were similar to Jason's staring at William. He seemed to be

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thinking about something.

The entire day at kindergarten, William's mind was in a mess as he kept recalling Jasper saying, 'I hate you!'

Chapter 2164

'I don't want that!

'I don't want her to hate me!

'As long as she doesn't hate me, I'll do anything!'

After school in the afternoon, Grace was occupied with something else, so she asked Uncle Kwan to pick up the three children from school.

The three children sat in the minivan. On the way back, William kept peeking at Jasper Reed, but she did not talk to him. Instead, she kept talking to Mick Reed about kindergarten.

When the three children reached the Reed family's house and got down from the car, William suddenly grabbed Jasper Reed's sleeve and asked a little cautiously, "If... If I apologize to Nelson Corbyn, will you stop hating me?"

"Are you willing to admit that you deliberately pushed Nelson downstairs and lied?" asked Jasper Reed.

William's tiny body stiffened as his face flushed, but the word 'yes' just could not get out of his mouth.

'I didn't do it, nor did I lie. Why should I admit it?'

Looking at William's refusal to admit it, Jasper angrily shook him away and walked toward the house.

William followed slowly, his head hanging low.

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'I... messed up again. Would she have stopped being angry with me if I had just said yes? Would she not have hated me anymore if I admitted to everything and apologized?

'Would we have returned to the way we used to be?'

Just then, William was suddenly hit by a pebble. He instantly stopped in pain and covered the spot where he was hit.

"Your mother was a bad person, and you're a bad person too!"

"Yeah, why don't you just leave? Are you going to push us down the stairs too? Oh, we're so scared!"

"What are you looking at? I'm gonna beat you up, so what?"

Several of the servants' children who were older than William were nearby. One of them picked up a pebble from the ground and threw it at William again.

William was in pain.

He glared intently at them. "I didn't push him down the stairs!"

"He still won't admit it! How shameless!"

"What a good liar!"

"Yeah, Young Lady said he pushed Young Master Corbyn down the stairs!"

Then, another child picked up a pebble and threw it at William.

William scrambled to avoid the pebbles but still got hit, which hurt him very much!

"I didn't push him! I didn't!" William denied it desperately.

However, his denial was futile.

He rushed over and tried to beat up the children who had thrown pebbles at him.

However, they were all older than him. He was no match for them. Eventually, they knocked him to the ground.

"How dare you lie? Why won't you confess that you did it? Your mother did bad things, and so you're doing bad things now too! Admit you pushed him down the stairs!" Those children said as they beat up William.

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"No, I didn't. I didn't push anyone!" he shouted as his tiny body curled up to protect his hands.

His hands mattered the most to him. He wanted to use them to play beautiful songs on the piano. That was what... Jasper loved

most.

By the time the adults noticed this and pulled the children away, William was already badly beaten.

William was limping toward his room when he met Jasper Reed.

Looking at the way William looked, Jasper was surprised and subconsciously asked in concern, "What happened to you? Who hit you?" However, as soon as she spoke, she remembered that they were still in the midst of a cold war. She immediately shut her mouth again.

William looked at Jasper and mumbled, "Do you... Do you want to practice playing the piano? I... I can play it now." It was all he was good at.

Besides, he did a good job of protecting his hands, so his hands were not hurt. He could play those complicated pieces!

Jasper Reed's eyebrows furrowed. She did not like seeing him all bruised. 'He's still insistent on playing the piano. Doesn't he know how badly bruised he is? Doesn't he feel any pain?'

2/3 William walked toward Jasper step by step. "I... I can play the piano. I... I've learned a lot of new pieces. Why... Why don't I play the piano for you? Jasper... Don't hate me. Don't ignore me..."

Jasper stared blankly at the person approaching her and was a little shocked.

However, she heard him say, "I didn't push Nelson Corbyn down the stairs. I didn't lie..."

She instantly came to her senses and was mad again. "You still won't admit it? I hate liars. I never want to play the piano with you again!" With that said, Jasper turned her head and ran away.

William's eyes filled with despair.

He stared blankly at the hands he had tried so hard to protect. Even the only advantage he had was no longer useful.

She used to love playing the piano with him, but she no longer wanted to do that!

If the only thing he had was no longer useful, then... what did he have left?

Maybe he had nothing left!

Grace lost her temper when she came back and saw William's bruised face.

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Grace said to Uncle Kwan, "Remind everyone in the house that bullying isn't allowed in the Reed family's house. If I find out about this again, they can leave the Reed family. This applies to everyone! If Jasper and Mick are the ones bullying others, I'll punish them too!"

"Yes," said Uncle Kwan, knowing that it was time to give the servants a good lecturing.

After all, the servants' children were the ones who bullied William, but it had something to do with the servants' usual behavior too. Uncle Kwan knew that some children would tell their parents after they bullied William and their parents would praise them.

Grace looked at William again. "Let me know if someone bullies you again."

William looked blankly at the person in front of him. She... was different from his mother.

Chapter 2166

In the past, his mother did not care even if he got in a fight with someone outside and got bruises all over his body.

All his mother did was drink, watch TV, and talk about how glamorous she used to be...

"Here, why don't I treat your wounds?" Grace took the little one back to his room. Then, she took the medical kit and carefully tended to William's wounds.

William remained silent as Grace applied the ointment to his body.

"Let me know if it hurts." Grace was afraid that she was being a little too forceful, but the little one stayed silent even though it hurt.

William pressed his lips together. For some reason, the pain seemed to diminish... 'Is it because of the ointment? Or... is it because of aunt Cummins?'

The next day, William's face was still swollen. Grace thought of letting the little one skip kindergarten for a few days until his wounds recovered.

However, William insisted on going to kindergarten.

Therefore, Grace had no choice but to send him there. She told

2/3 the kindergarten teacher to pay more attention to the little one.

During recess, a teacher came to the bed William was napping on and patted him gently, hinting him to get up.

William got out and followed the teacher out of the nap room with a puzzled look on his face. Then, he went into a room.

In the room, he once again saw the man who claimed to be his father!

Philip Barlow instantly felt upset when he saw the bruises on his son, even though the current situation would help him bring the little one back to the Barlow family. After all, the more miserable he was in the Reed family, the more willing he would be to leave.

However, he still felt an indescribable pain.

'Is it because the child is mine? Is it because he's my only son?'

"You look so ugly right now. Were you beaten by the children of the Reed family's servants?" asked Philip Barlow. Although he was not in the Reed family, he knew what he ought to know.

William watched him warily like a guarded kitten.

"You have a bad reputation in the Reed family's house right now. Everyone said you pushed Nelson Corbyn down the stairs. Even if you said it wasn't you, no one believed you, right?" said Philip Barlow.

A hint of gloom flashed across William's eyes, which were

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similar to Philip Barlow's. Then, his nervousness and wariness turned into frustration. He lowered his little head.

"Even the servants' children dare to beat you up now. It's because they think you're no better than they are." Philip Barlow crouched down and looked straight at his son, saying, "But if

you're the Barlow family's heir, someone with the same status as Jasper and Mick Reed, who would have the guts to treat you like that?"

The little one shivered a little.

He asked, "Do you want to stay with the Reed family or return to the Barlow family with me? Once you return to the Barlow family, no one will dare to look down on you again, let alone call you the son of a criminal!"

William slowly raised his head and looked blankly at the person in front of him. What he said was tempting him to say yes.

He did not want to be despised or looked down upon again, let alone hear people call him a criminal just because he was the child of a criminal.

Chapter 2167

Someone even said it was expected of him to do such an evil thing!

He did not do it!

He did not push Nelson Corbyn down the stairs at all!

However, just as he opened his mouth, a figure flashed across his mind again.

It was Jasper! If he returned with his father, he would be leaving the Reed family and Emerald City. He would never see Jasper again, would he?

"I'm... not leaving." Finally, the three words escaped his mouth softly.

Philip Barlow raised his eyebrows slightly. It seemed his son was really stubborn. "Are you staying because of Jasper Reed?"

William was silent.

"Do you think Jasper will think highly of you even if you continue staying with the Reed family? You're just a playmate to her, and she doesn't care much about you. Look, did she choose to trust you in this incident? Like all the others, she's convinced that you pushed Nelson Corbyn down the stairs. She doesn't believe you no matter how you explain it, does she?" said Philip

Barlow.

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William widened his eyes and looked at Philip Barlow in disbelief, wondering why he knew everything so well. It was as if he had witnessed it himself.

Philip Barlow smiled faintly. "If she believes you, she wouldn't be ignoring you and refusing to play with you in kindergarten."

He knew how the little ones got along in kindergarten.

"aunt Cummins will find out the truth. aunt Cummins's a lawyer. She... She'll help me find evidence. Then everyone will know I didn't push Nelson Corbyn down the stairs. Jasper... will believe me too." William's face reddened slightly as he defended himself.

Philip Barlow said, "Grace is just a lawyer, not the police. If Jasper only trusts you when the truth comes out, she trusts you just as much as she trusts other people. Why would you be reluctant to leave someone like that?"

William's face turned even redder. After holding it in for a long time, he finally said, "I'm not leaving... no matter what."

"But you'll never get what you want if you stay with the Reed family!" said Philip Barlow.

His pretty yet childish dark eyes gleamed with doubt. 'Isn't what I want to be with Jasper? I feel content as long as Jasper smiles at me every day!'

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Philip Barlow said nothing more. He only said, "You can keep my phone number. If you want to return to the Barlow family, call me as soon as possible. I'm not sure how long I'll be staying in Emerald City." With that said, he patted his son's little head and left the room.

William froze but followed him out of the room too.

The two figures came out one after the other, and another figure was secretly hiding not far away. It was Jasper Reed, who had sneaked out of the classroom.

Jasper had not fallen asleep during nap time. She happened to see a teacher leading William out of the nap room. She found it strange and sneaked out while the other teachers were not paying attention. Then, she saw William enter a room.

She waited outside for a long time before seeing William come out. However, he came out with another uncle.

'Who is this uncle? Does William know him?' Jasper Reed's little head was full of all sorts of speculation.

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Just then, she was suddenly tapped on the shoulder. She was shocked. She turned around only to realize that the person who tapped her shoulder was her brother, Mick Reed.

"Why did you-"

"I saw you going out, so I followed you."

"Brother, do you know who that uncle William came out with is? What does he have to do with William?" Jasper asked humbly. Every time she had questions, she would call him 'Brother'. Usually, she would only call him 'Mo Mo'.

Although Mick Reed thought 'Mo Mo' sounded like a girl's name, he let it slide when his sister called him that.

"It's William's daddy," Mick Reed replied calmly.

"Daddy?" Jasper almost choked. Her face was full of shock. It was different from Mick Reed's expression.

"His name is Philip Barlow. Daddy was looking into the Barlow family. I hacked Daddy's computer once and found the information on it," said Mick Reed. However, not long after he hacked the computer, his father found out and... he got a good scolding from his father and was banned from touching the computer for a week.

"Who... is this Uncle Barlow?" asked Jasper Reed.

Mick Reed said, "He's from Deer City. The Barlow Group in Deer City is his. He seems to have come here for William."

Jasper Reed's pretty little eyebrows furrowed.

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'Is William's daddy... here to pick up William?' Although she was mad at William for lying and refusing to apologize to Nelson, she still could not help missing him. As long as he apologized and promised not to do it again, she would still make up with him!

She wanted to play the piano with him.

After seeing him get beaten up like that, he still wanted to play the piano with her. She got inexplicably angry when that happened. She was angry at how he still wanted to play the piano when he was already injured!

Later, when she went to get him some medicine to tend to his wounds, she found that her mother was already doing it.

In the evening, she thought of talking with him and asking whether he was in pain. However, she hesitated when she reached his room door and ultimately did not go in.

Her mother had always taught her to be an honest child, so she wanted William to be one too.

When Jasper and Mick Reed returned to the classroom, William was already there. The teachers had also realized that the two

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3/3 children were missing. They were scrambling to find them when they realized that they were back. They were relieved.

Mick Reed made an excuse and said he had sneaked out with his sister. The teachers only told them not to sneak out again, so the incident was over.

Jasper looked at William, who was standing silently nearby. She wanted to go up to him and ask him why his father had come to visit him. He had never told her about him.

However, she stopped again after taking only one step.

'Did he not tell me because he didn't think of me as his best friend?' The speculation flashed across Jasper Reed's mind, and she did not take another step.

In the evening, Jason called William into his study. "I know your father stopped by the kindergarten to see you today."

Chapter 2169

William's eyes widened instantly, and panic flashed across his face. At his age, he was not good at hiding his emotions even though he was sensitive.

"What about you? What do you think? Do you want to go back? Or are you going to stay with the Reed family?" Jason asked with a smile.

William was a little scared. Even though Uncle Reed was smiling at him, he still felt breathless.

"I... I..." The words 'I want to stay with the Reed family' seemed to be stuck in his throat all of a sudden, and he could not say

them out.

"I won't stop you if you want to leave, but you'd better not do anything bad if you want to stay with the Reed family. If you have any bad ideas, I won't let you off the hook, even if you're just a child. I don't care who your father is," said Jason.

William flinched a little. "I... I won't have any bad ideas. I... I didn't mean to push Nelson Corbyn down the stairs either," he said after summoning the courage.

Jason said with a half-smile, "I don't care what the truth is. It doesn't matter to me whether you pushed him or not." He did not care whether Nelson Corbyn lived or died.

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All he cared about was Grace and their children. Nothing else.

"I just don't like people harming my family, do you understand?" Jason warned him.

William's tiny face turned ghastly pale as he stammered, unable to speak a word.

"Alright, go out if you understand," said Jason.

William hung his head low as he walked out of the study. However, he saw Jasper sitting inside when he returned to his

room.

William's eyes lit up as he said with excitement, "Lil... Jasper, you..... you came. Are you staying here tonight? Why... Why don't I read you a story? I've memorized several stories. I can tell you the stories!"

Jasper Reed's distinct almond-shaped eyes stared at William as she bit her lip with her pearly whites.

William suddenly felt uneasy, and his excitement died down. "What... is it?"

"Let me ask you something. Your daddy came to see you today. Is he taking you home?" she asked. The question had been in her head for a long time. Finally, she could not help coming here to seek the answer.

William's expression changed. He seemed to have paled. "You... You know about it?"

"Are you really going back?" Her eyes widened as she instantly

felt betrayed. It turned out he was already preparing to leave. She had even talked about how they would be good friends for life and how he would stay in the Reed family forever.

'He must have been laughing at me when I said that!' Jasper Reed's eyes turned red instantly.

"My... My daddy wants me to go back, but I-" He wanted to say that he wanted to stay with the Reed family, but her words cut him off.

"Then go back! Why are you staying here? Go! You lied and pushed Nelson down the stairs. I don't want someone like you to be my friend anyway. I don't care. William, I hate you!" Jasper snapped as she rushed out of William's room and ran away.

William stared blankly at the open door of his room, his little body becoming extremely stiff.

A string in his heart seemed to have broken all of a sudden.

He was only staying here because he could not bear to part with her, but she did not care about him at all. She did not want to be his friend at all!

It was the second time she had said she hated him!

There was no point in him staying here any longer!

Chapter 2170

It was a long time before his little body moved. He opened the drawer and took out the piece of paper with his father's phone number on it.

'Maybe it's like what Daddy said. I'll never get what I want if I stay with the Reed family!

'Besides Jasper's smile, I also want...'

It was late at night when William walked to the living room on the first floor. He picked up the phone and dialed the phone number on the paper.

Moments later, the call was connected.

"I'm William," he said.

"Have you made up your mind?" Philip Barlow's voice sounded from the phone.

"Yeah," he responded gently in acknowledgment. "I want to return to the Barlow family."

However, his voice broke as he spoke. Even his eyes seemed to be brimming with tears.

"Alright, my car will be at the entrance of the Reed family's house in half an hour." With that said, Philip Barlow ended the

call.

William hung up the phone. 'Half an hour. I only have half an hour left?'

William went back to his room and looked at the things in the room. None of them belonged to him!

He did not bring anything when he came here, so if he was leaving... He hesitated momentarily before taking a doll that Jasper had given him.

Then, he walked quietly to Jasper Reed's room door. He pushed it open and crept in.

Jasper was lying on the bed, already asleep. However, there seemed to be tear stains on her face.

'Did she... cry? Why did she cry?'

He looked at her quietly. Then, he raised his hand and gently wiped the tears on her face as he said very softly, "Jasper, I'm leaving. I have to leave if I want to get what I want. Once no one will look down on me anymore, I'll..."

The rest of his words were muffled.

With only one doll, the little one walked out of the mansion and came to Reed Residence's main entrance.

He went up to the gate to push it open. Strangely enough, it was not locked, so he did so easily.

William did not overthink it because he saw a silver-gray car coming in his direction.

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The car stopped in front of him, and William saw Philip Barlow getting out of the car to come up to him. "You can't come back again once you've made up your mind. From now on, you're no longer William of the Reed family but William of the Barlow family."

William... No, William nodded his little head.

Philip Barlow looked at the doll in his son's hand and instantly knew it was a girl's belonging. "Are you going to bring this doll with you?"

He nodded his little head again.