

Ex Convict 501

Chapter 501

Everyone of the design firm thought it was true. After all, Taylor Carline was quite a catch while Lina Sweeney was just a nobody of the design firm. She came from an ordinary family background and had ordinary looks on well. It was quite normal for her to be interested in a man like Taylor

Carline

After what happened yesterday, many colleagues were on

Hallie Robson's side.

Many felt that even though Hattie Robson and Taylor Carline were keeping their relationship low-key without anyone knowing, Lina Sweeney should not try to steal him away.

However, who would have thought Lina Sweeney's boyfriend would be Hadwin Stephenson, the president of Stephenson

Group!

If they compared Hadwin Stephenson and Taylor Carline, were the results not obvious? Hadwin Stephenson won in

every way!

If Lina Sweeney had a boyfriend like Hadwin Stephenson and still seduced Taylor Carline.... That was impossible, no?

Immediately, many colleagues who had been partial to Hattie Robson and Taylor Carline changed the way they looked at

them and began to wonder if things were not necessarily as what Hattie Robson said.

Hattie Robson's mind was almost blank. She thought it was all so unimaginably queer. After a while, she finally regained her speaking abilities. "You mean... Lina Sweeney is your girlfriend?"

She asked what was on everyone's mind, though the answer was almost certain.

"That's right." Hadwin Stephenson smiled. Then, he stood up, and step by step, he walked toward Lina Sweeney under everyone's eyes. He stopped when he reached Lina Sweeney. "Lina, why don't you point out to me the colleague named Taylor Carline? The one who caused the argument between you and your colleague yesterday? I would like to see if that person is really better than me, so much so that even your colleagues have misunderstood you."

Hadwin Stephenson clearly said that from the standpoint that Lina Sweeney was wronged.

Lina Sweeney stared at him blankly. She never expected to have their relationship exposed in front of her colleagues like this. "Why are you here?"

"To invest in your project. Didn't you say you might have some funding problems with your recent project?" answered Hadwin Stephenson. His gentle tone was that of a most

considerate lover,

All of a sudden, many women in the meeting room looked at Lina Sweeney in envy. Having your boyfriend invest in the project you were involved in that was underfunded... How many women could have such things happen to them?

The director of the branch company looked at Lino Sweeney in surprise. He had just taken over the branch company not long ago. The former director was unexpectedly laid off, so he took over.

He originally thought that was all. Hattie Robson was probably the one with the greatest background, but who knew the one with a great background was Ling Sweeney who usually went unnoticed.

Lina Sweeney did not know what she was going to say right now. She did say that her project was underfunded and the project might be canceled, but she had just talked about it casually to Hadwin Stephenson and never expected him to

invest in it.

"By the way, who is this Taylor Carline people are saying you've fallen in love with?" Hadwin Stephenson asked again.

Hattie Robson and Taylor Carline's faces immediately paled,

Taylor Carline quickly stood up and said, "It's a misunderstanding. It's all just a misunderstanding! It has nothing to do with Lina Sweeney. My girlfriend misunderstood."

By saying so, Taylor Carline blamed it all on Hattie Robson. Hattie Robson felt wronged, but she could not throw a

tantrum in public.

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Hadwin Stephenson turned around and looked at Taylor Carline. A moment later, he chuckled and said, "It seems that there really is a misunderstanding."

He said it carelessly with a look of contempt, and Taylor Carline's face was immediately red.

He was implying that he was not someone Lina Sweeney would like as he could not even win against Hadwin Stephenson, but Taylor Carline could not argue.

Hadwin Stephenson once again turned to Lina Sweeney and said, "Tell me if there are any more misunderstandings next time. Don't let others think that you don't have a boyfriend."

Then, he lovingly touched Lina Sweeney's head. Lina Sweeney immediately felt like she had a spotlight on her, attracting

even more envious eyes.

However, the problem was... She was going to break up with Hadwin Stephenson! The more people envied her now, the more she would be ridiculed in the future.

Lina Sweeney looked miserable. She was suffering but could not let it show.

The meeting ended in such envy and embarrassment for Hattie Robson and Taylor Carline that they left the room.

almost immediately. Their colleagues, who had mocked Lina Sweeney earlier, also left looking sour.

The director looked at Lina Sweeney with a look of relief and did not forget to praise Lina Sweeney in front of Hadwin Stephenson. "Lina has always performed well in our firm. What happened yesterday was a misunderstanding. I think that's now clear to everyone at the meeting."

"I don't want such misunderstandings to happen again in the future," said Hadwin Stephenson.

"That's for sure," replied the director. Then, he said to Lina Sweeney, "Lina, tell Chairman Stephenson about the project you're working on now. You'll be in charge of the project."

Lina Sweeney was surprised that she... got a promotion?!

However, before she could answer, the director had already left the meeting room. There were only Hadwin Stephenson and Lina Sweeney left.

Lina Sweeney looked at Hadwin Stephenson and bit her lip. slightly before saying, "You don't have to invest in my project."

"I don't want to see your hard work go to waste. Didn't you spend a lot of time and effort on this project?" he said.

Lina Sweeney could only feel her heart being gently touched by his words. If it were not for the knowledge that their relationship was fake, she would probably have allowed herself to immerse in this man's gentleness.

After all, no woman would not like their boyfriends to be considerate.

However, she must not be caught up in it. If she did, perhaps when they finally broke up, she would be beyond redemption.

After a moment's hesitation, she asked, "Did you do it on purpose?" If he just wanted to invest in the project, he did not have to come to the company in person. He even asked the director to hold a meeting and talked so deliberately during the meeting.

"Yes, I did it on purpose." Hadwin Stephenson admitted calmly. "This will save you any unnecessary trouble later on. I'll be humiliated if people think my girlfriend is interested in someone else's boyfriend."

Humiliated... Lina Sweeney inexplicably felt a faint

disappointment. Yes, he only came here today to save himself from humiliation.

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She was dating him now, so to speak. Therefore, if she was involved in any scandal with other men, it would be humiliating for him.

However, he did not think of the trouble he was causing her by

making their relationship public today. When the time came for them to break up, perhaps the only thing she could do is to change her job.

Lina Sweeney immediately laughed at herself. In the end, he was still 'getting even' with her. The more miserable she was, the happier he would be.

"All right, I see. I don't think anyone else will think that I'm after their boyfriends anymore," said Lina Sweeney.

Hadwin Stephenson frowned a little. The way she was speaking somehow made him feel uncomfortable. It was as if she was emitting an invisible sense of alienation from her body, stretching the distance between them.

"You don't like it?" asked Hadwin Stephenson, squinting his eyes,

"No, you're my boyfriend, and it's the right thing to do," Lina

Sweeney replied with a smile. "What you did today embarrassed Hattie Robson and Taylor Carline in front of everyone, which is a relief to me, so that's quite nice."

However, why did he feel as if she did not mean what she said? Did she know that he did that today just to claim her under his wings in front of outsiders? It was so that she would not be easily bullied in his absence.

Suddenly, Hadwin Stephenson took Lina Sweeney into his arms. His face came close to hers, and his voice whispered in her ear, "When will you fall in love with me, Lina Sweeney?"

Lina Sweeney's body stiffened a little. Falling in love with him meant the end of their current relationship.

'Soon,' she said to herself. Soon, she would act as if she had fallen in love with him, and then... She would pretend she was falling a little more in love with him each day until he 'dumped' her.

Grace later called Lina Sweeney to ask how the police were handling the situation and whether she needed help. Lina Sweeney said, "It's all right, it has been settled. Plus, my two colleagues have both apologized to me."

“They apologized?” Grace was a little surprised. The woman.

she saw the other day, Hattie Robson, seemed determined not to give up until Lina was found guilty. She apologized so soon?

“Hadwin Stephenson came to my office,” Lina Sweeney said succinctly.

Grace understood what had happened after hearing about Hadwin Stephenson’s involvement in the matter.

Grace was relieved that her best friend was all right. After she ended the call, she went online and was shocked when she saw the news.

The news reported the demolition of a shopping mall, and it was expected to take a month. However, the problem was that the mall was only ten years old. It was rare for a mall that had only been built a couple of years to be demolished. Besides, the mall usually had a lot of customers, so the reason it was getting demolished was a mystery. The news of this prompted much speculation.

The official answer from the mall was simply that there were other purposes for the site.

What surprised Grace was that it was the same mall from which Lily’s parents had kicked her out.

What the hell was going on? Could it be a coincidence, or...

Chapter 504

She had a vague conjecture in her mind, but it was so crazy that she could not believe it herself.

Just then, her phone rang. Grace looked at the caller ID. It was Kyla Corbyn’s number, so she answered the call.

“Nelson will be discharged tomorrow, Grace. Can you come to work the day after tomorrow? I’d like to tidy up the restaurant and reopen it the next day,” said Kyla Corbyn.

“Sure, no problem,” replied Grace. Speaking of which, it had been a rare break for her after she got out of prison.

“Great. By the way, Nelson wants to talk to you too. Why don’t you say something to Nelson?” said Kyla Corbyn,

Grace was slightly stunned for a moment, then she said. into the phone, “Nelson? I’m Aunt Grace, can you hear me? I’ll see you the day after tomorrow, Nelson. When you can understand and speak, how about I tell you lots of stories?”

Even though she knew that he might not understand what she was saying, she still hoped so.

As she spoke, a young but hoarse voice came from the other end of the phone, "Aunt... Grace..."

Grace could hardly believe her ears. What did she just hear? Was that Nelson calling her? Even if Nelson could make a sound before this, they were all just meaningless 'ah' sounds. Now, he was actually making meaningful sounds, like calling out her name.

"Grace," Kyla Corbyn's voice came over the phone again.

"Was it really... Nelson talking, Kyla? Can he talk now?" Grace asked in surprise.

"Yes, but only a few words. He still needs more time and practice," answered Kyla Corbyn, but her voice was clearly happy and proud. "The doctor said Nelson should be able to speak soon."

Yes, how could she not be proud? Her son had made rapid progress since getting the cochlear implant. Even the doctor said that he had a good IQ and was obviously talented in picking up languages. Had it not been for his inability to hear, his language skills now would far exceed those of other children his age.

"That's great." Grace was also happy for Kyla Corbyn and Nelson.

When the call was over, Grace thought about buying Nelson a gift when she returned to the restaurant to celebrate Nelson's ability to hear now.

When Jason got home in the evening, Grace asked about the news she had seen during the day. "What happened to that shopping mall? Do you have anything to do with the sudden demolition of the mall?"

Grace asked directly, so Jason answered her directly as well,

"Yes."

Her eyes widened in surprise. Though she had only speculated about it, she was surprised when she got the real answer.

"What's the matter? You should have already guessed something since you're asking me now. Why are you so surprised?" asked Jason as he raised his eyebrows strangely.

"Was it you who asked the Atkinson family to demolish the shopping mall?" Grace asked breathlessly, taking a moment to swallow the sudden secretion of saliva in her throat.

"Yes," he answered lightly.

"Is it because..." There was a slight quiver in her voice before she continued, "Is it because the Atkinson family kicked me out of the mall the other day?"

"Yes," he answered, but in a flat voice as if it was a perfectly

normal thing to do.

Chapter 505

Grace stared at the man in front of her. If her idea of Jason's influence in Emerald City had only been a rumor before, it

seemed to be a more concrete impression now.

However, it was the demolition of a big shopping mall after

all. Even if he had something to do with it, he probably went through a lot to do it. Otherwise, how could the Atkinson family be so willing to demolish it?

He did all of this just because she was humiliated by the Atkinson family in the mall that day.

She thought that he had stood up for her by slapping Camelia Meyer when the Atkinson family came to apologize. She did not expect him to do more.

"Why?" she asked breathlessly, her nose feeling a little sore somehow.

"Because of you," he replied. Those four simple words seemed to contain thousands of words.

She was the reason he had done it.

It was because she was the one he guarded with great care.

He could not bear to hurt her himself. How could he allow others to hurt her?

"Besides, this way, the Atkinson family will know better than to offend you again," said Jason,

Grace gave a wry smile. "Maybe only when I reverse the case. will they believe that the car accident was not my fault, and it was someone else who hurt their daughter."

Yes, she could sense that someone was behind the accident, At first, she thought it was because of Jennifer Atkinson's improper driving that the accident happened, but with all those testimonies and material evidence against her, she felt that someone was manipulating all this behind the scenes.

Of course, there was another kind of possibility. Maybe the Atkinson family thought she killed their daughter, but the evidence was not enough to declare her guilty, so they bribed the witnesses and planted evidence.

However, all of these were only her speculations. There was no evidence to prove it. The only witness they found so far had. not provided any good leads.

"I'll clear your name," whispered Jason with his eyes lowered.

Grace smiled, and her expression looked relaxed. Yes, she was not alone. He and Lina were helping her. Lina had even asked.

Hadwin Stephenson to help her.

She must reverse the case!

“By the way, accompany me to a banquet tomorrow,” Jason said suddenly.

Grace was stunned. “Me?!”

“Who else if not you? Aren’t you my girlfriend? Isn’t it normal to accompany me to a banquet?”

That was true, but she... Grace somehow felt uneasy.

The banquets he attended probably had a lot of well-known socialites, and she... had accompanied Sean Stevens to some banquets back then. She had met quite a few of Emerald City’s socialites.

If she were to accompany Jason now, many would recognize her and know that she had been to prison as well as her past.

There would be a lot of criticism when they saw him with her.

Chapter 506

She had been through a lot of criticism. Although she might be okay with it, what about him? Grace was a bit uncertain.

“What’s the matter? You don’t want to go?” asked Jason, frowning slightly.

“Am I fit to go?” Grace took a deep breath, looked up, and asked, “Jason, if I accompany you to the banquet, a lot of people might recognize me. I’ve met a lot of people when I was with Sean Stevens... Besides, I’ve been to prison...”

“So what?” said Jason, shrugging it off. “You’re the one for me. So what if you’ve been to prison? So what if you’re recognized?”

As he spoke, he took her hand, drew it to his lips, and kissed it softly. “Didn’t you bring me home when I was like a vagrant on the streets, Sis? Did you ever think if I was someone fit for you to bring home? Whether you’re a princess or a beggar, I want you to stand by my side.”

His kiss fell on her hand. Her fingers felt a tingling sensation. that went all the way to her heart.

Slowly, he raised his gaze and stared at her with his dark,

deep eyes. “Besides, you’re going to stand by me for the rest of your life. If you worry now, what about the future? When

are you going to be able to stand by my side with ease? Do you really want to wait until the day you reverse the case?”

Grace felt suffocated.

“I don’t care whether your case is reversed, Sis. I only care about you. You are the one I’m in love with, so you’re the best person to stand by me,” said Jason.

Grace pressed her lips together and finally said, “All right, I’ll go with you.”

No matter what she had to face at the banquet, she was willing to accompany him because she loved him too. Since he had no fear of gossip, she had nothing to fear.

"Then it's settled." His fingers slightly grabbed her chin as his face slowly drew close to hers.

She immediately knew what he was going to do. She lifted her chin submissively, feeling his lips fall on hers.

His kiss was so tender and reassuring...

At the Stevens mansion.

3/3

Sean Stevens asked his wife with a puzzled look, "Why is your family's mall suddenly getting demolished? Didn't they invest a lot of money in the mall? It's also operating just fine. Why are they demolishing it? No matter what they're going to build, it won't make as much money as this mall!"

At the mention of the mall, Lily's face paled a little. Of course, she knew that the mall was making money. The demolition was a big blow to the Atkinson family, but they had to do it to save themselves.

Otherwise, they would lose much more than a mere mall.

"Jason wanted it demolished. Can the Atkinson family stop him?" asked Lily.

Sean Stevens was flabbergasted. "What's going on? Why would Jason want to demolish your family's mall?"

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Chapter 508

However, no one expected his self-righteous insistence to collapse so quickly.

When the accident happened, he panicked and was frightened. His parents told him to get rid of Grace right away and he did so without even hesitating.

It was at that moment that he realized that the love he expected was not worth his future. He was not willing to sacrifice his future for Grace.

He loved Grace because he could be the grand young master of the Stevens family. Once this was gone, the so-called love was also gone.

Over the years, he would feel guilty sometimes, but whenever he felt guilty, he would tell himself that it was all Grace's fault.

Things would not have come to this if she had not driven. under the influence and hit Jennifer Atkinson, so it was all

Grace's fault.

It seemed that only by thinking this way could he feel at ease. again.

He thought that this was the end for him and Grace. Like

two horizons, they would no longer intersect. However, now

it seemed as if his life would gradually be filled with her influence.

Like with Zoe's legs and now his wife's family's shopping mall.

It was all because of Jason. The person behind Grace was now Jason.

"Sean?!" Lily's voice interrupted his trance.

He came back to his senses and looked at the gorgeous face in front of him, which was completely different from Grace's face. This woman was a movie star, a famous socialite in the city. She was a goddess in the hearts of many men. In the future, she would inherit all of the Atkinson family's fortune.

Such a woman could not be more suitable to be his wife.

"Of course it's you I love! Even without the accident, she and I wouldn't have made it to the end. We weren't meant for each other after all," said Sean Stevens.

"Shall we... get married then?" Lily asked suddenly. Ever since their engagement, they had been addressing each other as husband and wife.

In high society like theirs, betrothal was similar to marriage. The difference was only the lack of a marriage certificate. This

made her feel a little uneasy.

Sean Stevens was stunned. "Why the sudden mention of marriage? Didn't you say that you're now popular and getting married would be bad for your career? Besides, if we want to get married, we have to deal with our family's companies first."

After all, a marriage between people like them not only involved each other but also their family's companies and the interests of their two families.

"You're right," said Lily as she seemed to sober up a little. "I was too impatient. Let our marriage go as planned then, but

Sean..."

Lily paused and stared at him. "You must promise me that you'll treat me with all your heart. Whatever I do, it's all for you, so you must never let me down."

Sean Stevens could not help feeling breathless under her gaze. It was as if she was implying something. However, he immediately laughed at himself for thinking too much.

Did women not always like to say things like that? They always loved their men making promises to them.

"Of course, I'll never do you wrong. You're my wife, the future mistress of the Stevens family!" said Sean Stevens.

With a satisfied smile, Lily snuggled into Sean Stevens's arms.

Her gorgeous face turned cold the moment she buried into his arms. Grace... The name was like a thorn, piercing her heart.

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That was back then, and it was still the same now.

So what if Jason treated Grace like a delicate treasure now? Grace might not be able to stay by Jason's side in the future. After all, there were things enough to destroy everything Grace knew.

Grace was no stranger to banquets, having previously accompanied Sean Stevens to a few. It was just that she was a little different now than she was then.

Having spent more than three years in prison, she had not taken much care of her skin. Her skin was rougher than before, and her hands were full of calluses. Her hair was not as silky smooth as before either.

However, as if to erase this layer of worry in her, a professional stylist and a makeup artist came to Reed Residence in the afternoon to give Grace a makeover for the banquet.

The lilac-colored evening gown looked elegant. The crystals and crushed diamonds on the gown made it more eye-catching.

A dress like this was probably worth a lot of money.

The stylist only said to Grace, "This is the dress Mr. Reed has prepared for Miss Cummins. Mr. Reed said it's your size."

Grace could not help but blush at that.

He knew her size perfectly well.

When Grace changed into the gown, she was impressed with Jason's ability to choose the gown and its size. It was not too tight or loose on her body, and the color complemented her skin tone.

Even if she had not put on any makeup, her whole complexion seemed enhanced by her just wearing the gown.

Then, the stylist styled Grace's hair. With the stylist's skillful hands, her hair was braided into a half-up hairstyle. The hair on her sides was braided and pinned up while the rest of her hair was let down and styled into wavy curls, making her look ladylike and also a little lively.

When the makeup artist was done, Grace stared at herself in the mirror.

The makeup artist did not put on too much makeup on her. The makeup was pretty light and was focused on her eyes and

lips, accentuating her features.

It made her feel like she was back in her prime days. This was how she had looked before.

No, she was more beautiful now than before.

"You look so beautiful..." A mutter rang in Grace's ear.

Grace suddenly came back to her senses and saw Jason in

the mirror. No one knew when he had come up behind her. His hand was now lightly pressed against her shoulders, and his bright eyes were looking at her reflection in the mirror.

That was when Grace found out that the makeup artist and stylist were no longer in the room.

"Where did they go?" she asked in surprise.

"I asked them to leave," said Jason, slowly leaning down as his face inched closer to hers. "Do you like the gown? I thought it'd suit you as soon as I saw it."

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“Yes,” she muttered. Women always liked pretty things. How could she not like such a pretty gown? However... “It’s probably expensive. It’ll be a waste to wear this only once.””

What she meant was that there were cheaper options.

When he heard this, he said, “If you think it’s a waste, just accompany me to more banquets so that it won’t be.”

“...” Grace was so stunned that she had nothing to retort.

Jason took Grace’s hand and said, “All right, let’s go.”

The temperature of his hand passed to her palm. She gently responded to him before standing up. Then, she followed him. out of the room and came downstairs.

Outside the main house, the car was already prepared. Jason held Grace’s hand as he got into the car.

On their way there, Grace could not help looking at Jason who was wearing a formal black suit, white shirt, and dark purple. tie. He looked smart and fresh, and it suited him very well.

He had a sharp jawline that was rare among Asians and delicate features. His black hair was styled neatly while his bangs were combed back to reveal his beautiful forehead.

The curve of his neck was lost in the neckline of his shirt.

If the collar of his shirt was loosened a little, she might see his collarbone. As Grace thought about it, the shape of his

collarbone flashed in her mind.

Speaking of which, his collarbone was beautiful. She had never thought that one day she would use the word ‘beautiful’ on a man’s collarbone, but it seemed so natural and fitting for her to describe his collarbone as beautiful.

Below his collarbone... Grace’s mind went back to that night when she saw every inch of his body. She had felt his temperature and presence. It was so crazy... It was something she had never imagined before.

The blood flow in her body seemed to be accelerating, and her cheeks were getting hotter and hotter.

‘Oh my God! Stop thinking about it!’

Grace said to herself. Suddenly, she heard an elegant voice in her ears. “What’s on your mind, Sis?”

The mutter, as if with endless temptation, caused Grace to stiffen.

What was on her mind... How could she tell him that? Should she tell him that she was thinking of his body?!

Suddenly, Grace's face turned even redder.

"Your face is so red." With a slight chill, his fingers touched her cheek. The temperature difference made it even more obvious. how hot her face was now.

"Maybe... it's just too hot in the car." Grace made up a random.

excuse and turned away, trying to avoid his gaze.

However, his fingers gently grabbed her jaw, half-forcing her to keep her face straight at him.

"Why won't you look at me?" he asked.

"No... No," she said guiltily, even more so when she looked into his amorous eyes.

"No?" His face was close to hers, and his breath was like. a fragrant orchid, "You know what? You look like you're embarrassed to look at me. Why? Are you thinking about me?"

Exactly! Grace bit her lip slightly, not knowing how to rebut him. His eyes seemed to be able to read people easily.

"Don't bite your lip. It'll ruin your makeup," he muttered as his lips gently got closer to the corner of her mouth. "What are

you thinking of? Let me guess... Are you blushing like this because you were reminded of our intimate moments?"