

Ex Convict 981

Chapter 981

Therefore, even if she had a license to practice law, she would probably be out of business if she were to attempt being a lawyer again.

Lawyer Carter said, "It's great that you're taking it easy. I'll let you handle some small cases if there are any. You can build a reputation first. It'll be useful for your future."

"Thank you," said Grace.

After coming out of Lawyer Carter's office, the receptionist informed Grace that a Mr. Harto had been waiting for her.

Grace went to the reception room and saw Chase Harper.

Chase Harper was immediately at a loss at the sight of Grace. His face grew red as if he wanted to say something but did not know what exactly to say.

"What's the matter? You might as well just tell me whatever you want," said Grace.

"I... I came here today because I heard that there's hope for

Baldwin's case. It seems that Elise Dean is going to be added as the defendant! I heard from Baldwin's parents that Lawyer

Carter called and told them it's all because you found the clue, so I just wanted to come by today and thank you!" Chase Harper said quickly.

"I thought of the key point because you remembered that Elise Dean was also wearing the ruby ring that day. Speaking of which, I should thank you," Grace said with a smile.

Chase Harper gave a simple and honest smile. Then, as if hesitating, he said, "By the way, is the Master Reed who came to the police station yesterday... your brother from before?"

Grace stiffened a little, but she did not want to lie to Chase Harper. "Yeah,"

"He must be Jason, right? I heard Young Master Hart calling him Jason yesterday," said Chase Harper.

"Yes, he's Jason," answered Grace.

Chase Harper's face could not hide his shock. It was one thing to guess it and another to know the truth. He could not help being shocked.

"Are you and Jason siblings?" he asked curiously.

Grace hesitated, and there was a flicker of sadness and self-mockery in her eyes.

'Siblings?' The word that used to be so sweet to her now meant something else.

Chase Harper noticed this and said quickly, "Sorry, you don't have to answer me if it isn't convenient for you. I was just... shocked at the police station yesterday. Jason and Brian are..."

Chase Harper's voice became lower and lower as he spoke. "Come to think of it, I overestimated myself. You have such outstanding men around you, and I..."

Grace wanted to argue that this was not the reason she did not like Chase Harper, but on second thought, it would be a good thing if she let Chase Harper down.

'Chase Harper deserves a good woman who's suitable for him. I've suffered a lot in life, and my heart has suffered a lot of heartbreaks. I'm not suitable for him!'

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"Alright. That's all I have to say. I gotta go now," said Chase Harper. He was about to turn around to leave, but just before he left, he seemed to have thought of something and said, "By the way, I think Young Master Hart really loves you. Yesterday when he knew you were missing, he went to press Elise Dean about your whereabouts. He seemed to be willing to kill for you just to make sure you're safe! If Elise Dean hadn't said anything, maybe... He would have strangled her."

Chase Harper sighed. He had asked himself if he would do the same and knew he was not able to do that!

He would be anxious and miserable over her disappearance, but... He would not kill for her.

Chapter 982

That was because he had other things he cared about!

However, Brian was willing to do it!

He was willing to do such an extreme thing for Grace. It was as if all he cared about was Grace!

Chase Harper had left, but Grace was just dumbfoundedly standing where she was. What Chase Harper had just said echoed in her mind.

'Brian almost killed Elise Dean for me?

'How is that possible? He always cared about me because he thought I was the one he was looking for.

'Now that he has Stella by his side, why would he...!

The scene at the police station yesterday once again recurred to her. He said he loved her with a serious expression.

Just like how he said that he would find her and be good to her with the same serious expression when he was a child.

His serious look seemed to have never changed after so many

As Grace was leaving the building after work, Brian stopped her.

“Why don’t we have dinner together? After all, we had a lot going on yesterday,” he said.

Grace stared somewhat blankly at the person in front of her. Then, she recalled what Chase Harper told her. ‘Did this man almost kill someone for me yesterday?’

She could not even imagine what he looked like at that moment. After all, most of the time, he gave people a sense of estrangement.

It was as if he would not allow others to approach him easily.

“Or do you want to talk to me here?” Brian added.

Grace noticed that a lot of people were already looking their way. After all, Brian was an attractive man.

Among the onlookers were several of her colleagues from the firm.

Grace guessed that the gossip about her and Brian would be circulating in the firm again tomorrow.

“Let’s go somewhere else,” said Grace. After all, she did not want people to look at her like she was a panda.

At first, Grace just wanted to find a place to talk with Brian. However, he said he was hungry and wanted to find a place where they could have dinner. Therefore, Grace decided to go to a diner near her rental house.

She would come to this diner when she was too lazy to cook. The food here tasted good, and the price was also affordable.

“You don’t mind eating here, do you?” she asked. It was a place she could afford with her current income.

Of course, if it were up to Brian, she knew he would choose a fancy restaurant.

However, she did not want to owe him anything more, including the money for a meal.

“Why would I? I’m fine with anywhere you choose.” Brian graciously pulled out his chair and sat down.

Even if it was only a simple square table and dining chairs that one could find anywhere, Brian sat with an indescribable elegance.

It was as if the diner had become an elegant restaurant.

Chapter 983

At the diner, several women looked sideways at Brian. Grace now regretted bringing him there.

Maybe they should have gone to a restaurant with a private

room.

After ordering a few dishes, Grace looked at Brian. "I heard you helped search for me after I disappeared yesterday. Thank you."

"Well, I didn't help much, did I?" Brian smiled faintly.

"Thank you anyway. However..." Grace paused and looked at the person in front of her seriously.

"Yesterday, you said you would wait for my answer. I can give you an answer now. I don't love you, so you don't need to waste your time on me."

Brian raised his eyebrows slightly. Speaking of which, this was the first time he had been rejected by a woman!

Whether he had mistaken her for someone else in the past, or now when he had fallen in love with her.

"Are you rejecting me because of Jason?" he asked.

nonchalantly, looking as if her refusal had not affected him.

"No," she said as she shook her head.

Even if Jason had said nothing, she would still have rejected him.

After all, she was already emotionally drained. She was too drained to love again.

"Do you think I can't commit to a relationship because I've had too many girlfriends before?" he asked.

"Like you said, you've had a lot of girlfriends. All of them were pretty, talented, and special. Why me?" asked Grace.

Even Evelyn had good looks. Otherwise, she would not have been offered minor roles one after another over the years.

Brian laughed at himself. "Then you should know they were just substitutes for my longing. I wanted to find that person so much that I would let these women be my girlfriends as long

as they looked similar to her."

His dark phoenix eyes stared at her as he spoke. "However, maybe it's just like what you said. If I really missed the person, it doesn't matter how many substitutes I find. I've been looking for a replacement, but this only made the longing stronger."

The look in his eyes made her guilty suddenly. It was as if he had seen through something.

'No. No way!'

- He would not know that she was the little girl from his

childhood. Knowing Stella, she would never tell him. She would only wish she could keep it a secret forever.

She pursed her lips together. "Haven't you found the one you're looking for?"

He said, "Yes, I have. It's because I've found her that I'm even more sure that I love you."

When he found the one he had been persistently looking for, he realized that his obsession was only what he thought it was. He never felt any butterflies in his stomach when he looked at Stella.

He could think of her as his savior, but he would never fall in love with her.

Grace was the only one who could give him that feeling...

Over the years, no matter how many beautiful and talented women there were, no matter how many girlfriends he had over the years, and no matter how stunning the women were, they would not make him feel that way.

However, Grace's smile, no matter cold or indifferent, was always stuck in his mind.

Grace bit her lip uncomfortably for a moment before she said,

- "Could it be your imagination? Just like how you thought... I was the one you were looking for, and now you think you love

me."

He suddenly chuckled. "Grace, does the fact that I'm in love with you strike you as so inconceivable as to warrant suspicion?"

She choked.

Chapter 984

He stood up suddenly and leaned over the table before reaching out to take her hand.

"Ah!" She let out a cry and made a conscious attempt to pull her hand back.

However, his hand grabbed hers firmly, pulling it to his chest.

"Do you feel it? It's beating faster than usual," he muttered

as his thick black eyelashes fluttered. "Do you know how fast it was beating yesterday when I saw the man who wanted to hurt you following you out of shot from the surveillance footage?"

He chuckled softly, half-confiding and half-sighing. "It was so fast that my heart felt as if it would burst. It became difficult to even breathe. My hands were shaking so hard I could hardly hold a glass of water."

His words, along with that elegant voice, crept into her ears.

She watched him intently. Every word he said seemed like a heavy weight on her heart.

"Grace, do you still think I don't love you?" His phoenix eyes

stared at her while her surprised look was reflected in his

eyes.

She had never expected him to tell her such a thing.

Her hand that was against his heart seemed to be burning up.

“You...” She opened her mouth to say something but did not know exactly what to say.

“Grace,” he called out her name. “You can doubt anything but the fact that I love you!”

At the simple square table, the handsome man leaned forward and pressed the woman’s right palm against his heart.

The woman stared at the man in shock, bewilderment, and something more complicated.

For a moment, the man and woman seemed to be stuck in their own world-separated from the world around them.

The people in the diner looked at the two people. A few girls who looked like students even picked up their phones to secretly take photos.

Unnoticed by the diner’s customers, several black cars had pulled up outside. A tall figure came to a halt when they

reached the entrance.

Their bright eyes stared at the two people who were looking at each other while the blood on their face seemed to fade instantly. At this moment, the person’s face was utterly pale. Then, the man touched his heart with his hand.

A surge of pain rose from his heart, and with each heartbeat, it traveled through his bones and limbs.

‘Ouch!

‘It hurts so much!’

Jason clenched his teeth and looked at the scene that was causing him pain.

‘Is this also the pain... she’s giving me?

‘It’s so swift and violent! The pain is almost unbearable!

‘I no longer love her, no? I only regard her as a sister now!

‘Why does it hurt so much just to see her with Brian? The pain

is even more unbearable than yesterday when I saw Brian

confessing his love for her at the police station.

A bodyguard immediately hurried forward and asked, “Master Reed, are you okay?”

“Make everyone else in this restaurant leave! Seal up the area

ten meters from the entrance!” Jason ordered with a slight

gasp.

“Yes!” answered the bodyguard.

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After that, one of Jason’s men started talking to the owner of the diner while another started driving out the customers, telling them all the food they had eaten today was free of charge.

Some were reluctant to leave, but after watching men in black suits walking in one by one, they left out of fear.

Naturally, Brian and Grace saw Jason who was standing near the diner’s entrance.

Grace looked a little surprised as if she did not expect Jason to be here, while Brian seemed to have expected him to come.

Brian looked at Jason and said, “Want to join us for dinner? We just ordered, so they haven’t served the food. If you want to join us, we probably need to add two more dishes.”

Jason pursed his thin lips and walked toward the small square table.

Grace subconsciously pulled her hand away from Brian.

This time, Brian let go as she had hoped.

“Is the food ready yet? Brian asked the owner of the diner
who was still in a daze.

The owner finally came to himself and answered, “Ah. Yes... Yes!” With that, he hurriedly served the dishes Brian ordered.

“We’d like to order two more dishes,” said Brian as he randomly ordered two dishes from the menu,
“Sure, sure!” the owner quickly replied before hurrying off to prepare the two dishes.

Brian, Grace, and Jason were the only customers left in the diner.

The three of them were gathered around a small square table, and the atmosphere was strange.

Grace only felt that the air around her seemed tense, and the expression on Jason’s face seemed ghastly.

Just when she thought Jason would reject Brian’s offer, he opened his mouth and said, “Sure.”

Then, he sat down,

Grace was immediately stunned and stared at Jason.

‘Is he really... going to have dinner with us?’

“What’s the matter? You don’t want to eat with me?” Jason

raised his eyes and looked at Grace who was still in a daze. “Or do you think I’m disturbing you?”

- Grace pursed her lips and said nothing.

She was afraid that her words might offend him.

Grace simply picked up the chopsticks and started eating the food. Jason turned his head to look at Brian. "You don't give up easily."

"Why should I give up? Grace doesn't have a boyfriend, and I don't have a girlfriend. I don't think there's anything wrong with me loving her and pursuing her," Brian said lightly.

"What about Stella? Haven't you been looking for her? Now

that you've found her, you're bored?" said Jason as he glanced out of the corner of his eye at Grace who was eating with her

head hung low.

Grace continued to eat as if she had no interest in whatever they were talking about.

Brian said frankly, "Before I found Lifang, I thought I would fall in love with her if I found her. However, it was because I found

her that I realized who I've fallen in love with!"

Jason felt more stung by his assured tone.

It was as if the man's connection with Grace was something he could never break.

Chapter 986

Earlier when he saw them staring into each other's eyes as he stood at the diner's entrance, he felt as if his world was falling apart.

It was as if they were in a world of their own where she could only see Brian! He could not get in no matter what and was left out!

Jason stared coldly at Brian and said, "What a pity. She won't love you back."

Brian smiled faintly and said, "She may not love me now, but what about the future? How can you be so sure that she won't fall for me? Jason, who are you to tell me this? You and Grace have broken up, haven't you?"

Jason's eyes darkened.

"Jason, I gave you a chance. I gave up more than once. Besides, you're the one who chose to break up with Grace. I won't give up again this time," said Brian.

Jason suddenly burst into anger and laughed. "You won't give up again? Haha... Are you going to risk the Hart family then?"

Brian raised his eyebrows slightly. "Are you going to risk the Reed family?"

The two men stared at each other, and the air felt tense again.

With a shudder, the owner served the two dishes Brian ordered.

Although he did not know who the three of them were, it was clear from the fact that they had blocked the diner's door that they were no ordinary people.

"Boss, get us a bottle of your best liquor here," Brian said suddenly.

"Okay. Coming right up," replied the owner. After a while, he came back with a bottle of liquor.

Although it was only a diner, he would occasionally get customers who liked to order pricier liquor, so he kept some decent liquor in stock.

However, the liquor they had was far from what Brian and Jason usually drank.

Brian poured the liquor into his glass anyway and looked at Jason. "Want some? Speaking of which, I haven't had a good drink with you in a long time."

Jason seemed to be smiling as the corners of his lips were raised slightly, but there was no joy in his eyes. "Indeed, it's been a long time since we had a good drink together, so let's do it today." He took the bottle from Brian's hand and poured the liquor into his glass.

The two men drank at the small dining table, looking like they were enjoying themselves. However, the look in their eyes told a different story.

On the other hand, the woman kept eating with her head

down until she finished her bowl of rice. Then, she raised

her head to look at the two men in front of her and said,

"I've finished eating, so I gotta go now. You guys can go on.

Dinner's on me."

Grace stood up and went straight to the owner. "How much is it?"

"Ah? 378 dollars," said the owner, then as if fearing Grace would doubt him, he quickly added, "That bottle of liquor

costs 230 dollars."

Chapter 987

Grace paid 378 dollars with her phone and walked out of the diner.

Several people were on guard outside, keeping other

customers from entering. Passersby were glancing sideways at the diner as it wondering what was going on inside.

Grace could not help but laugh. The temporary closure of a shop might seem like a big deal to most people, but not to Jason and Brian.

The way they valued things and the way they were brought up was different.

Earlier at the dinner table, she thought she had been chewing on wax. She never expected to treat them to dinner tonight.

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Grace closed her eyes and allowed herself to empty her thoughts. She was already asleep when she was awakened by a knock on the door.

It sounded urgent. Grace opened her eyes sleepily and walked

to the door, shouting, "Who's there?" She looked at the time. It was already past 10 p.m.

"Miss Cummins, it's me, Terrence!" From outside came Terrence's voice.

Grace was surprised. She hesitated a little but opened the door anyway.

To her surprise, there was not only Terrence at the door but Jason too. He was obviously drunk and half-leaning on Terrence. He was clearly intoxicated.

Grace was shocked. Speaking of which, it seemed to be the first time she had seen such a drunk Jason.

"He's drunk. You should take him back to Reed Residence," said Grace.

Terrence gave a wry smile. 'I know that, but the problem is that Master Reed insists on coming here. He also gave direct orders that if he's not in the rental house when he wakes up the next morning, I can just submit my resignation right away!

"Master Reed insisted on coming here. Well... Miss Cummins, if it's convenient-"

However, before Terrence could finish, Grace immediately said, "No."

Terrence was rendered speechless, and he felt the urge to vomit blood. 'It's not easy to be an assistant these days!'

"It's late. He's drunk, so it's not convenient for me. You'd better

take him back to Reed Residence where there are more

servants and he can be taken good care of," said Grace as she proceeded to close the door.

Just then, Jason suddenly opened his eyes a little. When he saw Grace, a smile appeared on his face.

This smile was so beautiful and bright.

Then, he suddenly raised his hand and grabbed Grace's waist.

"Ah!" Grace let out a low cry, and the next moment, most of his weight was on her.

Chapter 988

Grace glared at Terrence, expecting him to help her carry Jason in.

However, Terrence only looked back at Grace with a dry smile.

"Well... Please take care of Master Reed tonight. I'll pick him up tomorrow morning. You can call me at any time if you need

anything tonight."

With that, Terrence thoughtfully took one of his business cards and put it on the small cabinet beside the rental house's door. Then, he helped Grace close the door.

Grace suddenly felt speechless. It seemed that Terrence was determined to leave Jason here today.

'Do I have to stay with him all night?' She gritted her teeth and could only help him walk toward the bed...

Terrence got in the car, took one more look at the building's entrance, and sighed deeply.

Speaking of which, he had not seen Master Reed this drunk in years. Master Reed had always been a calm and restrained man. He was always rational

now he was able to endure Old Master Reed's strict

training methods and eventually took over the Reed family from him.

However, a man like Master Reed had drunk himself into a

stupor with Young Master Hart today. The young men were drinking in anger.

The paparazzi would drop their jaws if they found out.

Terrence sighed again when he recalled that Young Master Hart was no better than Master Reed when they left.

Who would have thought that the famous crown prince of the entertainment industry would fall in love with Grace? However, Master Reed refused to let Grace go when he had clearly broken up with her.

‘God knows what sort of charms Grace has to make these two men get drunk for her!’

Terrence would not be surprised if Emerald City was in trouble one day because of Grace.

‘But I wonder what Grace really thinks of the crown prince.

‘If Grace falls for Brian...! Terrence could not help but shudder at the thought of this. If that happened, then Emerald City would really be in trouble.

‘I better not even think about that possibility!!

Under the yellow light, Grace looked at Jason who was lying on her simple wooden bed.

His eyes were closed. His hair was a little disheveled while his fair skin flushed with intoxication.

His long eyelashes would flutter from time to time. The light fell on his face, softening his features.

Speaking of which, he had such beautiful features. He looked less unfathomable and temperamental than when he was awake. He looked as pure as an angel at this moment.

‘Angel... This word has nothing to do with him at all.

‘A man like him could never be an angel!

However, Grace could not help but stare at Jason. Maybe he seemed so harmless now that it reminded her of when she had no idea of his identity.

Back then, he looked so innocent and pure to her. He was the one who would give her warmth when she was lonely.

She wanted to do her best to protect this innocence. She even wanted to protect him forever.

After falling in love with him, the urge to protect him grew even stronger.

Chapter 989

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Chapter 990

"You... You don't want me anymore?" His thin lips parted and closed as if he had uttered the words with great difficulty.

'Don't want him?' The words immediately made Grace feel like laughing.

'Does he know who he is? How could I possibly afford such a man?'

"You're drunk. Let me get up. It's late..."

Before she could finish, his face suddenly sank even lower. The tip of his nose almost touched hers. He was half-smiling and half-crying. "Drunk... Grace, I'm not drunk. I'm sober..."

She was enveloped in his scent. He kept repeating that he was not drunk. However, if he was not drunk, he would not be

saying so.

"You won't refuse me, right?" he whispered. His voice was so hoarse, and something in his dark eyes that were full of pain seemed to be imploring her.

It was as if her answer meant so much to him.

She knew he was drunk and would not remember this the next

morning. However, Grace could not help saying, "Jason, why are you telling me this now? You want me to want you, but it was you who didn't want me first!"

A look of repression came over his face.

However, her voice continued saying, "I said I wanted you because I considered you my family and also because I loved you, but I don't love you anymore. Therefore, I don't want you."

'Yes, I don't love him, and I don't want him!' She was not only telling him this but also herself.

His eyes turned red. Her words continued to irritate his eardrums, making it a living hell.

'She doesn't love me, so she doesn't want me...'

An endless panic swept through his body. It was as though he could not keep the person underneath him with him even though he was already trying his best.

He suddenly lowered his head and kissed her hard on the lips.

'No! I don't want this!'

'How could she?'

"Mhm..." Caught off guard by the kiss, Grace raised her hand and tried to push him away, but his hands pressed hers to her side.

She was almost breathless by the kiss. When the kiss was over, the hands that held her loosened slightly. She immediately

raised her hand and slapped him in the face.

Slap!

The sound of the slap rang in the tiny rental house.

Jason's cheek was turned to one side, and finger marks soon appeared on his face.

Grace gasped. The pain in the palm of her hand was burning.

One could tell how hard she had hit him.

He seemed stunned for a good while. He turned his face over, and those misty peach blossom eyes fell on her face again. Then, he took the hand that had just slapped him.

Grace trembled slightly.

She would not be surprised if he wanted to break her hand for the slap she had just given him.

After all, few people dared to slap a man like him!

'There's nothing to be afraid of!' she closed her eyes and said to herself.

She had suffered far worse in prison with injuries so painful that it made her wish she had a knife with her to kill herself.