

## Ex Convict 5

### Chapter 5

“Because...”

Jason swallowed what was left of the steamed bun he was holding as he waited for her to finish her sentence.

Grace struggled to find her words. As an attorney, she'd thought out every argument and calculated conversation to be convincing and compelling. But she wasn't looking to sell him on something or to try and win him over. He either wanted her company or he didn't.

She took a bite of one of the steamed buns he'd brought. The taste was subpar. In the past, she probably would not have liked them, but now, the taste was secondary. The most important thing for her was to fill her stomach.

A dozen different arguments filled her head, for 'why' she should be his sister, but in the end, she went for an honest explanation.

“Jay, we are the same kind of people. We've both been abandoned by others and can only look for a living on the bottom-most rung of society. No one will want people like us, and no one will care about us, but at least we can keep each other warm. I can care about you, and you can also care about me, right?”

“Is that so?” he said. She felt her smile wobble. If he were to describe her expression, what would he see? Hope, loneliness, desire, and also some uncertainty.

She'd been so guarded the last three years. She understood what she was feeling now: vulnerability.

“It seems that we really are the same kind of people...” he muttered. His gaze was like that of a hunter watching a small animal fall into his trap.

“Sister.” He nodded as if coming to some agreement.

In the blink of an eye, her smile turned as bright as the starry sky.

After dinner, Grace took Jason with her and left for the night market to buy some clothes. He was bemused by her efforts, but apparently, she was taking this whole 'sister' thing seriously.

Perhaps the days were really becoming too boring for him. He could easily get whatever he wanted with a wave of his hands, but now this game was becoming somewhat interesting to him.

So he indulged her, following behind her like some lost puppy.

Now there was a thought, maybe he should just get her a dog and call it a day.

It wasn't his place to ease her loneliness.

A handful of his normal garments were worth more than the entirety of what was in this store, but he saw the way her eyes widened as the cash register tallied his clothes. She nodded resolutely and paid,

and it left him feeling...something he couldn't describe, to see her sacrifice her hard-earned money to buy some spare clothes for him.

"Here," she said. "Put this on."

The cotton jacket was thick, but not particularly attractive.

"Is it warmer now?" she asked.

"Yes," Jason answered indifferently. He lowered his eyes and looked at her. She was almost a head shorter than him. "Actually, you don't need to buy these clothes for me. I am used to the cold. I'd be fine even if I were to only wear my previous clothes."

"It doesn't mean that you should be cold just because you're used to it," she said. "I don't have much money and I can't buy a lot of clothes for you, but I can at least let you wear something warmer."

"Why are you so nice to me?" he asked quietly.

"Because I am your sister." She smiled and accidentally touched his hands. She found that his hands were freezing, so she held his hands with her own, lowered her head, and blew on his fingers before starting to rub them back and forth.

"Your hands are too cold. Rubbing them like this should make them a little warmer," she said.

His hands, no, his whole body stiffened for a minute. Never had a woman rubbed his hands like this before just to warm them.

He had never liked physical contact with other people, but it seemed that he did not reject her touch as much. Perhaps he was fine with her touch because, right now, she was an important part of this game for him.

Seeing that he had no reaction, she suddenly seemed to think of something and glanced at her hands, which were full of calluses. "Did I hurt you? My hands are quite rough..."

As she spoke, she quickly let go of him.

He frowned. "I don't think your hands are rough at all, but your hands actually felt quite cold as well. Sister, why don't you rub your hands on mine for a while longer?"

As he spoke, he offered his hands to her again.

She was slightly stunned, but then she held his hands in hers again. Compared with his big hands, hers were much smaller.

She lowered her head and breathed warm air over his hands from time to time. Her nose had gone slightly red due to the cold. In his opinion, she looked adorable like this.

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Two days later, Grace received a phone call from Evelyn. "Grace, father said that he was going to throw the album away today. It was not easy for me to ask him to leave the photo album alone. I want to give it to you. Can you come to get it?"

Grace was shocked as she knew what Evelyn was referring to. It was the album that contained photos of her and her mother before her mom died.

"If you don't come, then I might accidentally lose the album," Evelyn said in a gentle voice. She then added the specific address and ended the call without waiting for Grace's reply.

Grace stared at the phone in her hand. She naturally knew that Evelyn would never hand the album to her for no reason. She had to be plotting something.

However, that album contained almost all her memories of her mother.

"Sis?" a deep male voice rang in her ears.

She came back to her senses, took a deep breath, and said, "Jay, I have to go out for a bit. You should get to bed."

As she said that, she hurriedly stood up, put on her coat, and went out. She didn't realize that a pair of eyes remained fixed on her, staring at her back thoughtfully.

When Grace got to the address Evelyn had provided, she found out that it was a country club. When she walked into the private room Evelyn had mentioned, she found that Evelyn wasn't the only person inside. There was also an overweight, middle-aged man who looked to be in his fifties in the room.

"Evelyn, is this your sister? She was the girlfriend of Sean Stevens back in the days?" the man looked at Grace and asked.

"Yes, Assistant Director Curtis." Grace didn't miss the way her sister used his proper title. She was really looking to score points, it seemed. "This is my sister, Grace. And Grace, this is the assistant director of my film crew. He has always said that he wanted to see you after learning that you were Sean's girlfriend," Evelyn said with a smile.

"Where is the album?" Grace asked coldly.

"I'm first going to have to ask you to put in a good word for me with Assistant Director Curtis."

A 'good word'. Is that what they were calling it, these days?

Grace imagined anything this heinous man wanted would have little to do with talking.

"If Assistant Director Curtis is happy and is willing to give me more screen time," Evelyn went on, "I will naturally give you the photo album."

That last part was said in a low voice and the words sounded like a threat.

"Well, since you are already here, let's have a drink." Director Curtis directly poured Grace a glass of red wine, indicating that she should start drinking.

Grace was still staring at Evelyn with pursed lips. It seemed that this 'kind' sister of hers was going to sell her off in exchange for increased screen time in a film.

Evelyn picked up the wine glass and handed it to Grace. "Grace, since you destroyed my opportunity to stardom in the past, it's not too much for me to ask you to compensate me now. What's more, if you

win Director Curtis's favor, you might be able to live a better life in the future. I'm doing this for your own good."

"It's the first time I've heard someone say such things in such a clean and righteous-sounding way." Grace directly swatted the wine glass away, causing the red wine inside to spill all over the ground.

"Don't you want the album anymore?" Evelyn asked through gritted teeth.

"I never thought I'd have to be selling my body in exchange for it," Grace replied. Her mother would not have been happy to see her do such a thing.

However, when she turned around and was about to leave, the Director suddenly said, "Well, you don't care about giving me any respect, do you? Do you really think that you are still the girlfriend of Steven's family heir? I heard from Evelyn that you are now a street cleaner. You should consider it a compliment that I even offered you a drink!"