

Ex Convict 76

Chapter 76

Grace took the check and left the store with Lina.

There was cursing and muttering and she could only imagine how the store personnel would gossip-and she didn't care.

She'd meant to get under their skin. It was petty and unnecessary and she'd only wanted Sean to feel shameful for a few brief seconds.

But he'd called her bluff and carried through with it.

And Sean wasn't a wealthy man by accident. He was very stingy-when he wasn't trying to outdo himself for

appearances.

"Grace, don't you think it's a little weird?" As soon as they walked out of the store, Lina said, "Sean wrote you a huge check and gave it to you without hesitation. Lily was present too! Isn't he afraid his 'fiancee' will lose her shit?"

"It is quite strange," Grace said neutrally.

"Uh, does Sean still like you?" Lina ventured.

Grace shrugged. "No, I don't think that's it."

"Grace, he just spent an obscene amount of money on you."

"True. But I don't think it's affection that prompted it. I don't even think it's ego. Sean's too cheap for that. I think it's fear.

It seems that he is afraid that I will get mad at Zoe and then do harm to the Stevens Family," Grace voiced her intuitive speculations.

Hearing this, Lina thought it was a bit ridiculous. "Isn't he thinking too much into it?"

"Who knows?" Grace shrugged and raised her hand to look at the check she was holding.

"What are you going to do with that anyway? Are you going to tear it up?" she asked. "Don't get me wrong, I'd love to see you spend it on yourself. It's the least that piece of shit can do, after how he and that trash Lily treated you. But something

tells me you won't be taking that to the bank."

"No. I won't."

Lina shook her head. "You're just going to tear it up?" She was incredulous.

"No. Why tear it up? I'll just donate it to someone who needs it," Grace answered and carefully put the check into her bag.

Lina beamed. "That's more like it!" Then she sighed. "That prick will probably use it as a tax write-off."

Both women laughed, and just like that, the painfulness of that encounter was forgotten.

They had a meal after walking around for a while, and shared several small dishes in the mall food court. It was so much like old times! Grace could almost imagine that the last few years hadn't happened, and it was just the two of them catching up after a long week of corporate work.

But there was no undoing the past.

And seeing how she wouldn't be who she was now, stronger and more self-aware, she didn't resent it. If not for everything in the past, she wouldn't have come to know Jay. Today.

"Let's head back," Grace said.

She had saved half her food and the full baklava dessert for Jay. She was eager to take it home to him.

When they were about to enter the escalator to the underground parking lot, they saw Sean, Zoe, and Lily again.

Ugh, these people were like a bad rash that just wouldn't go away!

The trio looked miserable-various expressions of anger, disbelief and good old-fashioned hatred. They all stopped talking when they saw Grace and Lina approaching the escalator.

Grace had a moment's pause where she almost held Lina back and suggested that they walk around the long way, but she didn't want to appear weak.

She followed Lina's lead, lifting her head and keeping her eyes straight ahead.

Zoe glared and shook her head.

"Don't even think about it, sister," Sean warned. "If you so much as say another word to her again, I'll have you sent abroad."

Zoe couldn't believe it. "You'd punish me!? For this murderous bitch!?"

As Grace walked quicker toward the escalator and was about to pass by them, Zoe suddenly stretched out her foot right in Grace's path.

Grace was caught off guard and tripped. She pitched forward, and the moving steps caused her to tumble and fall.

Lina screamed in shock and quickly ran to the side of the escalator to press the emergency stop button.

Even so, it was already too late. Grace had rolled down a lot of steps.

Lina raced down the stairs. "Are you okay? Can you move?

Tell me what hurts?" Before Grace could reply, Lina was screaming up to the top floor at Zoe. "Do you know that you

could've killed her?"

Zoe put a hand to her chest as if she couldn't believe that someone would say such a thing. "She walked without looking where she was going and insisted on hitting my foot. It's all

her fault that she fell!"

"Don't bullshit me," Lina screamed. "We'll find out the moment

we take a look at the security camera recording!" Lina said angrily. "And I swear to God if she's hurt, I'm pressing

charges!"

She then looked nervously at Grace and said, "Grace, are you

okay?"

"It hurts..." Grace gasped from the pain. She was in shock and her heart was pounding. Every bone seemed to ache and she worried that she might have broken something.

"I'll take you to the hospital right now," Lina said hurriedly.

"You just fell down some steps and you are going to go to the hospital!? You're really making a big deal out of nothing. Are you going to ask me for medical reimbursement next?" Zoe said sarcastically.

But no one had expected that in the next moment Zoe's face would be slapped so viciously that she would almost fall from the escalator step herself.

"Brother!" Zoe held her face with her hands and looked at

Sean in disbelief.

Sean's face was merciless. "Apologize! Apologize to Grace right now!"