

Ex Convict 2

Chapter 2

Terrence Klein shifted in the front seat of the car and considered his options.

His boss, Jason Reed, had approached the group near the sports car. The headlights showed the woman on the ground and the three men.

He better not go crazy...

Terrence had seen his boss Jason lose it before.

It was terrifying.

He glanced around, gauging if there were any traffic cameras on this deserted stretch of road or if there were any other bystanders who might witness Jason killing somebody.

He prayed it wouldn't go that far.

But he knew Jason and what he was capable of.

This was going to be bloody, and brutal.

Tonight, the road had already been closed, so who would have expected that five people and a Ferrari would break in here?

They'd disturbed Jason, who wanted to be alone.

Every year on this day, Jason always closed this whole road and stayed on it alone, wearing old clothes.

No one dared to ask the reason as if it were taboo.

Terrence who had worked for Jason all these years didn't know the reason either.

At this moment, as he watched his boss lift a heavysset man with ease and slam his head against the wall over and over, he did not know whether he should stop him.

He got out of the car.

Beating up some would-be rapists was one thing. Killing them... wouldn't be so easy to overlook. Or clean up.

And the men on this road were driving a Ferrari not a Ford.

Which meant, like Jason, they had money.

He started toward Jason and then paused when just as suddenly, his boss stopped fighting the man.

“Stop. Please.” Grace touched the stranger’s arm. “If you punch him again, he’ll die.”

“So what?” the man said. He balled his fist as Christopher slid down the wall.

Grace was stunned. It wasn’t until this moment that she really was able to see the man clearly.

He was handsome. With dark eyes and a strong jaw. Full lips and a strong body.

His hair was longer on top and stylishly messy.

When Christopher shuffled back and got to his feet, the man took a menacing step toward him.

“Don’t,” Grace said. “He isn’t worth it.”

The man’s dark eyes cut into her. He looked deadly and still as if people’s lives meant nothing to him at all.

Grace took a deep breath and said, “It is not worth being imprisoned for a lowlife like him.”

The man didn’t nod nor move, but she sensed him relaxing.

Christopher took advantage of the pause to grab his friends and get back into his car. “You’ll pay for this!” he screamed.

Grace didn’t know if he was addressing her, the stranger, or maybe both.

Whatever there wasn’t much Christopher could do that she hadn’t already experienced in prison.

The woman who’d been with these bastards stuck her head out of the car. “Holy sh*t! Is that Jason Reed!?”

The other three men looked at her with shock as they climbed into the car and one asked, “Jason Reed, the richest man in the city? No fucking way.”

Grace understood their confusion.

The man—her savior—wore old clothes. He looked... as broken as she did.

This was no billionaire. His jacket was threadbare, and his face was haunted.

Christopher peeled out with his asshole buddies.

Grace watched the car tear up the street. When the road was once again quiet, she looked back at the man.

Grace hesitantly said, "Thank you... for saving me back there."

He grunted, but beyond that, didn't say anything.

When he walked across to the other side of the road, he sat down with his back against the wall.

It was cold and windy. And the temperature was due to drop even lower. If he were to sleep on the road for the night, would he be alive tomorrow morning?

After considering that the man had saved her, Grace started walking over to him.

"Hey, it's been a rough night. Aren't you going home now? Where is your family? Do you have their phone number? I can help you call them and ask them to pick you up."

He slowly raised his head and Grace saw... death.

It was the same darkness she'd seen in her own eyes too many times when she'd been in prison.

The kind of darkness that spoke of nothing to live for. No hope.

"If you have nowhere to stay, you can stay with me," she said.

Grace did not expect to bring a stranger back to her apartment. She wasn't impulsive by nature, and she certainly hadn't dated anyone or even considered hooking up with a man since her experience with Sean.

But this man had saved her from rape, maybe even death.

She shuddered at the thought.

Those men, the three of them were soulless... and how could that woman watch on while she was beaten up? As an attorney, she would've fought hard to see all of them in prison for their crimes or complacency in it. But life had taught her that the innocent rarely prevailed.

And life was never fair.

So why did she bring this man home?

Hmm. Perhaps she wasn't ready to concede just yet.

Her apartment wasn't large. It was just one room with a small kitchen and bathroom. She grabbed a blanket from the closet and laid it on the floor. She took her pillow from the bed and placed it on the ground.

"The bathroom is just through there," she said.

He crossed to it and closed the door behind him. The water kicked on a moment later.

When the man came out of the bathroom, his hair was wet. He had washed his hair and face. His sleeves were rolled up.

Looking at the man's wet hair, Grace fetched a towel and said, "Bend over, please."

The man fixed his eyes on her.

"I just want to help you dry your hair with a towel. I have no bad intentions," she said. "If you don't dry your wet hair, you could easily catch a cold."

He still gazed at her but slowly complied. After a few minutes, he asked in a deep voice, "Are you concerned about me?"

"Yes." Grace did not avoid eye contact with him. "After bringing you to my home, I don't want you to get sick."

With his eyes taking her in like she was some oddity, he slowly bent over.

Toweling his wet hair, Grace asked, "What's your name?"

He remained silent for a long time, but finally answered, "Jay."

“Jay,” Grace repeated his name. It was a very common name, so Grace didn’t think much about it.

“My name is Grace. Where do you live? What about your family?”

“I don’t have any family,” he responded.

She suddenly stopped.

How sad. No one should be alone.

She had people before—but they’d turned their backs on her.

“Looks like we’re in the same boat,” she said with a bitter smile on her face as she continued to towel his hair dry.

She rose and got a comb and came back to him. These were small gestures—intimate ones—to touch his hair and smooth it away from his face. But this stranger—Jay—had risked his life for her. It was the least she could do.

As she pushed his hair back, the true features of his face were revealed. He was a devastatingly attractive man. Strong jaw. Full mouth. Dark eyes.

Eyes that were inches from hers and searing her in the place where she stood.