

## **Ex Convict 2691**

### Chapter 2691

Therefore, nothing would come out of it even if the lawyer tried to pull some strings.

Queenie Mack looked confused. 'I... I've never offended the Hart family. Even if I did instigate other actors to go on a strike with me, that's something that happened on the set. There's no conflict of interest with the Hart family.

'What the hell is going on? The assistant named Estelle Rowe rescued Valda Theller and called the police at the set. Now, the Hart family seems to be targeting me!'

Queenie Mack's head was full of doubts, and all that resentment was directed at Valda Theller.

'How could I have ended up like this if it weren't for that woman?

'I'll never let Valda Theller off!'

Valda Theller did not expect herself to... fall asleep as soon as she closed her eyes!

Besides that, she slept so... peacefully!

She remembered entering the ward around three o'clock, and

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now, it was dark.

'How long was I asleep?'

"You're up? Are you hungry?" The familiar elegant voice rang in the ward.

Valda Theller immediately sat up and could not help wailing. She sat up so fast that it tugged at a painful part of her body.

"You're hurt. Don't move so fast," the elegant voice said.

Valda Theller looked at the figure still in the ward. "You... didn't go home?"

"I stayed here since I was free. We were supposed to go on a date today. It's not a bad idea for us to have a date in the ward," said Brian.

Valda Theller blinked. It did not sound that bad if she thought about it that way.

Just then, her stomach grumbled. She looked at him rather sheepishly.

"I guess you should be hungry since you've slept for 10 hours," said Brian.

Valda Theller was instantly shocked to hear that. "10 hours? What time is it now?"

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"It's nearly four o'clock in the morning," he said.

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Her jaw dropped. She had slept for so long. "Have you been up the whole time?" There was a foldable sofa bed for escorts in the ward, but it now looked like a sofa instead of a bed.

Besides, his clothes were neat with few wrinkles. He did not look like he had slept.

"Yeah, I didn't sleep. What about you? What would you like to eat?" he asked.

"It's so late now that there aren't many places open, right?" she asked.

Even establishments selling supper usually closed at one to two in the morning.

Brian said calmly, "Since I asked you, you only have to tell me what you want to eat and you'll have it. But the doctor said you should eat less spicy and greasy food these days."

"Porridge, then," said Valda Theller.

Brian took out his phone, made a call, and said to Valda Theller,

"It'll be delivered in about 20 minutes."

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"Who did you call?" she asked curiously.

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"It's a restaurant owned by Hart Group. It's open 24 hours a day," he said.

Sure enough, someone delivered porridge and several side dishes to the ward 20 minutes later.

"Aren't you going to eat?" Valda Theller asked.

"I'm not hungry. Go ahead," said Brian.

Valda Theller hesitated no more. After all, she was very hungry.

She ate the porridge with the side dishes, which tasted extraordinarily delicious at four in the morning.

Brian looked at Valda Theller. It was only a simple bowl of porridge and some side dishes, but she enjoyed them.

He murmured, "Are you always so easily satisfied? You're even eating the porridge like you're having a feast."

"That's because everything tastes superb when you're hungry," said Valda Theller.

"What about life? Are you content with your current life?" he asked.

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"I'm quite content with it." She smiled. "I can do something I love and make money to support myself. I have extra money to set up my savings for retirement too. It's much better than what I had before."

"Better than what you had?" Brian chuckled.

"What about you? Are you content?" she asked curiously.

He was silent.

The ward instantly fell silent again.

Valda Theller awkwardly said, "Uhh... Did I ask the wrong question? I'm sorry."

Brian shook his head. "It's nothing. I just don't know what's contentment." He had everything he wanted since he was a child. He had no idea what it felt like to feel content or discontent.

Later, he kept looking for Grace but failed. He was not content at

the time.

He had failed to get what he wanted all these years. He felt like there was a hole in his heart he could never fill.

"If I can't get what I want, maybe I'll never feel content." He laughed at himself.

She looked blankly at him, and a voice in her head shouted, 'Don't

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ask. It's not your place to ask!'

However, she could not help asking, "What do you want?"

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His phoenix eyes gazed at her. Just when she thought he would not answer, his thin lips slowly said, "I don't want that someone to worry. I want her to be reassured. I'm willing to do anything to ensure that."

Valda Theller instantly could not take her eyes off Brian's face.

'Is he talking about the woman he loves?

'He loves her so deeply. How many people in this world are able to love someone that deeply?'

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Valda Theller recuperated at home after getting discharged from the hospital the next day. After all, she dared not meet people with those bruises on her face!

Camille Strickland would drop by from time to time to update her on the situation with the film crew.

The actors involved in the strike could not even enter the film studio. Hart Group had sent the actors' information to the security guards at the film studio's entrance. Therefore, the security guards would stop them outside as soon as they saw them.

Events of that day did not make the news, but the film crew was struggling. They had stopped filming to discuss whether to change locations or actors.

The discussion had been going on for a few days without any conclusion. However, Camille Strickland thought they should have reached a conclusion within one or two days. After all, a day off from filming meant a day's loss of money. The actors had their

own schedules too. It would be problematic if this went on for a

long time and conflicted with their schedules.

“Oh, I’m still in shock that the crown prince is your boyfriend,” Camille Strickland said emotionally as she ate fruit in front of the

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“I was shocked too,” said Valda Theller. Although she could tell that Brian was quite rich before finding out his identity, she did not expect him to be rich to that extent.

“Tell me, is there any future between you and him?” Camille Strickland joked.

Valda Theller shook her head. “You know we’re only pretending to be dating. Besides, he already has someone he loves.”

She could not help going online to find some information while she was at home these days. She found out that the woman Brian loved, Grace, was the wife of Emerald City’s Young master Reed Jason. They had three children together.

She even fell into a trance as she looked at Grace’s photo online.

She did not have a good look at her when they met in the shopping mall that day because they only had a quick chat and she was nervous. She only saw her clearly now after seeing her photo.

She was the woman Brian loved deeply!

“I know. The netizens are saying that Brian loves Grace, but she has already married Jason. You’re dating Brian now. Didn’t he also

say he gave you the right to break up with him? Just never break up with him,” said Camille Strickland.

Valda Theller said, “How is that possible? I’ll probably break up with him after we accomplish the goal of our relationship.” After

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all, there was no guarantee she would not fall in love with him if they stayed together.

“What is his goal of dating you?” Camille Strickland asked curiously.

“I don’t know. Maybe he’ll tell me in the future.” She only

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speculated that he was dating another woman to reassure Grace that the man who admired her had moved on.

“Well, wouldn’t it be a pity if you broke up with him?” Camille Strickland mumbled.

Valda Theller confessed, “I’ll probably think it’s a pity. But what isn’t mine won’t be mine. I don’t want to be greedy. It’s a special experience to date him like this. I’ll probably shock my grandchildren when I tell them about it when I’m old.”

“You’re not even fighting for yourself. Other people will try their best to make it real if they have the chance you have,” said

Camille Strickland.

Valda Theller smiled slightly. “It’s probably because I’m already too old to dream like that, so I don’t fantasize myself being Cinderella who’ll meet her Prince Charming.”

Even if she occasionally felt touched, she told herself to control her heart.

He was probably gentle to her because he was her boyfriend in name. Without the label, that gentleness would not exist.

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\*The arrest of the extras and Queenie Mack were kept under wraps for the time being. The production team was going to replace 17 actors. The news of it received attention as the list included important roles such as the second female lead, the fourth female lead, the fifth female lead, the third male lead, the fifth male lead, and the sixth male lead...

However, before the paparazzi heard about the drama’s massive cast change and could figure out why, word came that the director would also be replaced. The one taking over his place

was a big shot in the industry who had filmed many popular films.

It set off waves in the media. The reporters gathered at the set, trying to get the latest news.

The film crew naturally replied formally that it was due to some personal reasons and scheduling conflicts. They also felt that

some actors were too different from the characters, so they changed the actors and directors to produce a better show.

Compared to the film crew swarmed by reporters, Valda Theller's side was peaceful.

The bruises on her face and body had faded, and her body had stopped hurting. After more than a week at home, she was finally able to go out and see people.

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Brian said on the phone that he would take her to a party today. He spoke nonchalantly that it was only a small party with him and several friends. He wanted to bring her so he could introduce her to his friends.

"Just relax and be natural. I only want them to know that I have a girlfriend," he said.

Valda Theller understood that Brian wanted to give others the illusion that he was in a relationship so that the person he loved would believe that he was truly dating someone.

Valda Theller chose her outfit from her wardrobe and wore light makeup. Even if she was only a fake girlfriend, she did not want to

embarrass Brian.

Valda Theller went downstairs when it was time, only to see Brian's car parked at the apartment's entrance.

Tonight, Brian was not wearing his usual suit. Instead, he wore a casual beige shirt and light gray trousers, making him look elegant and relaxed.

Valda Theller could not help lamenting when she saw Brian like this. 'No wonder many female celebrities in the entertainment industry are after the crown prince.

Even without the Hart family, his charm was enough to attract many women.

Valda Theller got into the car, and Brian said while driving, "If you

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feel uncomfortable later, tell me. I'll get you out of there."

She replied, "Oh. What are your friends like?"

"You'll find out after meeting them. And stay calm. They're

probably more curious about you since they know I'm bringing my girlfriend over today. Anyway, ignore them if they ask questions you don't want to answer," said Brian.

"Are you good friends with them?" she asked in confusion.

"We're okay, I guess. We're from the same circle. I've known them since I was a child," he said.

'The same circle...' It made Valda Theller realize that she and Brian were from different worlds.

It was a strange experience to have him bring her into her circle. When it was all over, she would return to her own world.

The car drove to the entrance of a private club, and Brian took Valda Theller inside.

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People in the club knew Brian. They all respectfully called him Mr. Hart when they saw him.

One of the managers led the way to the entrance of a private room in the club.

When the door was pushed open, Valda Theller found that the private room was much bigger than she had imagined. It was about 200 square meters at first glance.

It had a karaoke machine, pool tables, poker tables, and so on...

The men and women inside were fashionably and lavishly dressed. By comparison, Valda Theller was a little embarrassed. She felt like an ugly duckling among swans.

At the sight of Brian and Valda Theller's entrance, someone immediately whistled and said with a playful smile, "It's rare that you finally brought someone to our party after all these years."

After all, Brian had not had a woman around him for seven to eight years. Who could believe that this was the Hart family's heir, who had always been surrounded by girlfriends in the past?

However, everyone knew that Brian used to have feelings for Jason's wife, Grace. It was not a secret. Even the netizens regarded it as gossip.

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"Aren't you going to introduce her to us?" Patrick asked as he



walked to Brian's side.

He was the closest to Brian among these people. He had witnessed how Brian and Jason fought over Grace.

He knew better than anyone how much Brian loved Grace. It was also why he was so shocked to learn that Brian was bringing his girlfriend to the party today.

"My girlfriend, Valda Theller." Brian introduced and said to Valda Theller, "His name is Patrick. He's considered my childhood friend."

"Considered? We are childhood friends." Patrick smiled before stretching his hand to Valda Theller and saying, "Hello, I'm Patrick. If you want to know any humiliating stories about Brian when he was little, come look for me."

Influenced by his relaxed tone, Valda Theller was not as nervous as when she first came in. "Hello, I'm Valda Theller." She reached out her hand and shook his politely.

Then, Brian introduced Valda Theller to some other people. Brian did not introduce her to the women there. Valda Theller knew that they must be plus ones that Brian's friends had brought.

Brian only introduced one woman-Phoebe Cross, the heiress of Song Yuan Group.

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"Hello, I'm Phoebe Cross." She wore elaborate makeup. Though she was already 35 years old, she looked not more than 30 years old. She was wearing a delicate red dress that fit her figure perfectly.

Even a woman like Valda Theller admired Phoebe Cross's figure.

A woman like that easily became the center of attention.

"Hello, I'm Valda Theller," Valda Theller replied politely.

Phoebe Cross stared at Valda Theller with her beautiful eyes and suddenly said, "I saw a viral post some time ago. It was about a comic artist with the same name as you, Miss Theller. She seems to have been involved in bullying and was later bullied by others during university. I wonder if it's true."

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The atmosphere instantly turned weird as soon as Phoebe Cross said that. The crowd that had been laughing and talking fell silent as everyone looked this way.

Valda Theller felt embarrassed. She did not expect to be asked about this on this occasion. She could feel that the woman in front

of her was looking at her without any kindness.

She did not want to embarrass Brian. At the very least, she was now his nominal girlfriend.

Taking a deep breath, Valda Theller met her eyes. "I'm the one involved in the viral post you mentioned. I'm the comic artist. But what the viral post wrote isn't true."

"Oh? So the whistleblower created a rumor? Miss Theller, why don't you tell me what isn't true and save me from being misled?" Phoebe Cross said with a faint smile. She was only waiting for

Valda Theller to take the Stephensont so she could embarrass her more.

"If you can be misled by such a stupid article, I'll have to reconsider the project that Song Yuan Group is going to cooperate with Hart Group on." Brian's voice rang suddenly.

Phoebe Cross's expression changed slightly. Brian's phoenix eyes glanced at her coldly before he turned to Valda Theller and said,

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"You must be thirsty. What do you want to drink? I'll pour it for you," he said as he led her to the bar.

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Their group disliked having staff in the private room, so no one was working at the bar. However, drinks and liquor were available, and they could pour them themselves.

"Just... Coke will be fine." Valda Theller saw the vintage bottled Coke at the bar and could not help feeling nostalgic. Her parents used to buy her Coke in these glass bottles when she was a child. However, one could not find Coke bottles like this on the market anymore.

Brian raised his eyebrows slightly and said, "Okay."

He grabbed a bottle opener and skillfully opened the cap. Then, he put a straw in the Coke bottle before handing it to Valda Theller.

The sight of it carried a lot of meaning to the others.

Phoebe Cross's expression turned more ghastly. Patrick dragged

Phoebe Cross to the corner and whispered, "What are you doing?"

Brian finally brought his girlfriend here today. Do you have to embarrass her like that?"

"That woman is only a comic artist. Who is she to be Brian's girlfriend? Is she good enough for him?" Phoebe Cross snapped.

Patrick said earnestly, "It's Brian's business whether she's good enough. Is Grace, whom Brian used to love, someone great? But

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Grace could make Brian and Jason fall for her. Relationships are never about whether someone is good enough for the other!"

However, Phoebe Cross's expression looked even more hateful.

Patrick patted her on the shoulder. "I thought you had put it behind you. It's been years. Brian would've been with you if he wanted you."

"What's wrong with me? Why would he rather get a woman like Valda Theller to be his girlfriend than me?" Phoebe Cross snapped.

She knew about the time Brian loved Grace. Grace was the one he had been looking for for years, and she had nothing to say about

Even though Grace got together with Jason afterward, Brian was still obsessed with Grace and never kept other women around.

She could only stay with him as a friend and business partner. However, as long as he did not date other women, she would eventually be the only woman for him!

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However, she did not expect this to happen.

Patrick said, "Alright, stop obsessing about it. Stop causing

trouble like what you did just now. You and your family aren't going to get away with it if you offend Brian."

Patrick was also telling Phoebe Cross not to act recklessly and pick on Valda Theller.

Phoebe Cross pressed her red lips together tightly and said nothing else.

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Just then, someone suggested, "Everyone, Brian brought his girlfriend today. Why don't we play truth or dare? Anyone who refuses to speak the truth must do whatever the winner says. No tricks allowed!"

The crowd agreed immediately. "Alright, come on. Let's consider it our congratulations to Brian for finding a girlfriend."

Valda Theller was a little hesitant. She was afraid that she would be asked to complete strange tasks that she could not do.

As if noticing her concern, Brian said, "Don't worry. If they ask a question you don't want to answer, you don't have to. I'll take care of the task you have to do after losing."

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He not only said that to Valda Theller but also to the others.

Someone instantly whistled when they heard that.

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"You're so worried about your girlfriend. Are you that reluctant to have your girlfriend do the task after losing?"

"Yes, I am," said Brian.

The private room instantly fell silent again. The crowd was not used to Brian being so frank. Patrick said, "Alright, alright, let's start playing. If the loser doesn't want to do the task, they can ask for help. But you have to complete the punishment task yourself if no one is willing to help."

They gathered around and sat. Valda Theller's face was red. Even

though she knew Brian was only acting when he admitted being reluctant to have her be punished in the game, her heart still skipped a beat when she heard that. She could only tell herself repeatedly that they were only a nominal couple and nothing more.

“What is it? What’s on your mind?” His voice rang in her ears. She looked up to see his face so close to her that she could even see his thick lashes.

“Ah!” Her face immediately turned redder. She subconsciously leaned back and fell backward because she lost balance.

Then, she saw his expression change. The next moment, he threw himself at her while his big hand protected the back of her head

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firmly. However, the inertia of her falling backward brought him with her.

3/3

Thump!

They fell to the floor together, but he had put one hand on the back of her head and the other on her waist. Their bodies pressed together, and the tip of her nose was full of his scent. It enveloped her like a dense web.

“Are you okay? Does it hurt?” His voice rang in her ear.

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She looked blankly at him. He had just saved her again. “It doesn’t hurt,” she muttered.

Someone nearby said, “Brian, are you saving the damsel in distress to show your affection in public?”

“The place is covered with carpet. It won’t hurt much even if you fall.”

Someone joked to Valda Theller, “You must be somebody to

have Brian save you like that. After all, Brian would just look on calmly and do nothing even if someone was trying to jump off the building!”

Brian helped Valda Theller sit down and glanced at the carpet under them out of the corner of his eye.

Indeed, with the thickness of the carpet, Valda Theller would not have felt much pain even if she did fall to the floor. However, he acted without thinking much when he saw her falling backward.

‘Was I... scared that Valda Theller would get hurt?’ Brian’s eyes flash with thought.

Moments later, the game officially began. There were rounds and rounds of drawing. Some people chose truth, while some chose dare. Besides the usual punishment tasks like drinking alcohol

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and doing push-ups, it also included mimicking celebrities.

Someone was even punished to kiss the person next to them.

Therefore, Valda Theller saw two men kissing. Valda Theller gaped and turned to look at Brian, “Are you guys that wild?”

“You mean the kiss?” he asked.

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She nodded her head.

“Think about it the other way. A kiss is only two people’s skin touching. It’s just like a handshake. Kissing is only kissing when it’s with someone you love,” said Brian.

Valda Theller dared not ask Brian if he would kiss someone so easily when playing such a game with his friends.

Another round began. They drew Brian this time, and the one asking the question was... Phoebe Cross.

“I’ll choose truth,” Brian said indifferently.

Phoebe Cross was upset. She would rather he chose dare so that she could ask him to hold her or even do something more

intimate.

“Okay, I’d like to ask if you really love Valda Theller.” Phoebe Cross asked as her eyes became fixed on Brian.

Suddenly, everyone focused on Brian. Valda Theller, who was sitting beside Brian, could not help stiffening.

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‘How... is Brian going to answer this question?’

“Yes.” Brian’s thin lips gently uttered the simple word. That handsome face seemed to be covered with the perfect mask, and no one knew whether he was telling the truth.

As if in disbelief, Phoebe Cross blurted out, “Kiss her if you love her. Kiss her in front of us!”

Brian gazed at Phoebe Cross coldly.

Someone nearby also said, “Phoebe, what are you doing? Brian has answered your question. He didn’t choose dare.”

However, Phoebe Cross ignored them. She just stared at Brian and asked, “Will you do it? Will you prove it?”

The atmosphere instantly became depressive. Valda Theller could not help feeling nervous again.

“I love her. Why wouldn’t I prove it?” replied Brian before turning sideways. His phoenix eyes looked at Valda Theller beside him.

Valda Theller bit her lip nervously. Watching Brian’s face getting closer and closer, her heart beat faster and faster as if it would jump out of her throat at any time.

‘Should I refuse him? Or let him... kiss me?’

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In the beginning, he said they would only hug and hold hands!

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However... her mind flashed back to how he had sent someone to save her when she was desperate.

If it had not been for him, there was no telling how much more miserable she would be right now.

Therefore, she should repay him.

Besides, he also said kissing was only two people's skin touching if they had no feelings for each other. It was just like a handshake.

Valda Theller took a deep breath and closed her eyes. Then, she raised her chin slightly and gestured as if she would accept

1. However, she kept telling herself in her head, 'It's just a handshake. It's just a handshake!'

It was as if she was trying to hypnotize herself into thinking it was just a handshake.

Watching the woman close her eyes, Brian knew she was accepting the kiss. Their faces got closer, and he saw a thin layer of sweat on her forehead.

She was nervous. Her beautiful eyebrows furrowed slightly as her lips trembled gently.

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The trembling even spread to her body.

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Perhaps she was not only nervous, but she was also scared. Even so, was she letting him kiss her in front of the crowd just to prove something in a game?

With his eyelashes trembling slightly, Brian's arms gently wrapped around Valda Theller's shoulder.

Her trembling also reached his arms.

His lips slowly approached her face. With his eyes glimmering slightly, his lips finally settled on her forehead.

Valda Theller froze before suddenly opening her eyes. They were full of surprise.

However, Brian looked away and said, "Alright, let's proceed." The indifferent statement seemed to be telling them that the episode



was over.

Phoebe Cross pressed her red lips tightly as she glared at Brian.

She said nothing in the end.

Valda Theller looked down, feeling her heart still beating violently. The spot on her forehead where he had kissed her was burning.

She thought Brian would kiss her on the lips, but... he only kissed her on the forehead. She had no idea whether she was glad or

disappointed.

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'Gosh, why am I disappointed?'

Valda Theller scolded herself in her head.

"Huh? It's your turn, Valda. Do you want to choose truth or dare?"

A voice rang.

Valda Theller froze. She just realized that she was drawn this time, and the one speaking earlier was Patrick.

"I... I'll choose dare," she said, afraid of being asked weird questions if she chose truth.

Patrick was the one to give the punishment task. He looked back and forth at Valda Theller and Brian before saying, "Why don't you do five push-ups?"

'Only five push-ups?' Valda Theller was instantly relieved to hear that. However, what Patrick said next made her scalp go numb.

"But Brian has to lie underneath you when you do the push-ups!" Patrick said with a playful smile.

Valda Theller widened her eyes. 'Having Brian lie underneath with me on top? Won't I... touch his body if I'm careless?'

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'This...'

"Brian, you won't refuse to cooperate, will you?" Patrick asked.

Brian looked at the flustered Valda Theller, hesitated for a moment, and said, "Why don't we change it to her lying underneath while I do the push-ups? We said we could take the punishment for others, didn't we?"

"Okay," Patrick said readily. They just wanted to see the scene anyway.

Valda Theller was dumbfounded. Although they had switched some things, they were still the same. She just went from being on top to being on the bottom.

“Just close your eyes. It’ll be quick,” said Brian.

“Okay,” replied Valda Theller. ‘Yeah, it’s just five push-ups. I’ll close my eyes and it’ll soon be over.’

Therefore, she lay on the floor while Brian rested his palms on both sides of her shoulders. They were already so close before doing the push-ups. Now, their faces would touch at any time, when he lowered his body later.

It was a huge test!

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Valda Theller’s heart was now beating faster than when Brian kissed her before this!

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“Here we go. Close your eyes.” His voice rang softly in her ear.

Valda Theller quickly closed her eyes. She heard the people around them shouting, “One... Two...”

As she listened to the countdown, she could feel Brian’s face approaching even with her eyes closed.

Phoebe Cross looked at the scene in front of her with envy. “Brian never did this to his previous girlfriends! He would never have done so! Does Brian really love Valda Theller that much?”

Just as the crowd was about to shout ‘five’, the private room door was suddenly pushed open. Then there was the sound of arguing.

“Miss Mack, this private room doesn’t allow outsiders in. You can’t go in.”

“Outsiders? Am I an outsider? I’m here to see Patrick!”

‘This voice...’ Shocked, Valda Theller leaned her body forward to look at where the sound was coming from. However, Brian happened to lower his body at this moment, hence her lips

instantly brushed across his.

Valda Theller froze. It was a brief kiss, but it happened.

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'I just kissed... him. We didn't kiss in the game, but it happened in such a situation!'

However, Queenie Mack's voice then pulled her back from her trance.

"Patrick, will you help me? You're the only one who can help me now!" Queenie Mack threw herself into Patrick's arms, looking pitiful.

"Mr. Weiss, this..." The staff member who had stopped Queenie Mack now looked at Patrick for instructions.

"Go out first," Patrick said to the club's staff member.