

Ex Convict 2631

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Brian came to Valda Theller's studio on the weekend.

The studio was not large, only about one hundred square meters in total. However, the furnishing was simple.

There were some comic posters on the walls. Judging by the style, she must have been the creator.

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The shelves against the wall were filled with comic books, including hers. However, most of them seemed to be short

comics. The one he had seen that day was a short comic book as well.

"You've been drawing comics since high school," he said.

At least that was what was written in her profile when he investigated her.

"Not exactly since high school. I enjoyed drawing comics

since I was young. I was a Year 3 senior in high school when I submitted my manuscript. I didn't expect my first submission

to be successful. I continued in this line of work until now."

"Year 3? You must've sat for your National College Entrance Examination at the time. You would've had a lot of homework," he said.

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"Yeah, I tried to draw in my spare time. Sometimes I drew into the wee hours. But there's no substitute for the satisfaction of seeing your comics in magazines," said Valda Theller.

"Don't you find it hard? And comics aren't a popular industry in China. You can't make much money from it," said Brian.

"Although I won't become very rich, at least I can earn a living. Besides, my life has been getting better over the years. I used to do it all by myself, but then I opened a studio and now I have two assistants. It's

still a small studio, and I'm not that famous, but I think it's good to be able to do what I love and still make a living. Contentment is bliss!"

When she spoke, she was smiling, and stars seemed to be shining in her eyes.

'Contentment is bliss?' Brian's eyes glimmered slightly. Not many people could fulfill those simple three words.

Most people wanted more and more and could never be satisfied.

"Aren't you going to draw me today? Are we going to start now?" Brian asked as he changed the subject.

"Ah, let's start now," Valda Theller said quickly before asking

Brian to sit on the couch while she set up the easel and

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drawing board. She then took out the pencil for sketching.

"Sit as you please. It'll take more than an hour. Is that okay?" Valda Theller asked after estimating the time.

"Yes," he said before sitting in what he thought was a comfortable sitting position.

Valda Theller stared at Brian and suddenly said, "Can you loosen your tie a little? It'll look better that way."

He was sitting a little languidly now, but his crisp suit and tie made him look slightly more serious.

His slender fingers tugged at the neat tie, and Valda Theller

instantly felt like she was watching a big-budget film.

It was too bad that this guy was not a celebrity. If he were in a commercial, he would be popular.

The tie was tugged a little looser, making him look slightly more casual. "Will this do?"

"Yes, yes!" She nodded immediately.

Brian's fingers unbuttoned the top button of his shirt. One instantly got a better view of his neckline, and one could see part of his collarbone.

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Valda Theller felt that her eyes seemed to be glued to the man in front of her. 'Is this considered a bonus?

The urge to draw him grew stronger.

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She picked up a pencil and began drawing carefully. From time to time, Brian would look at the woman holding a pencil and drawing him.

The expression on her face looked the same, or rather she was more focused than when she had drawn him in the comic cafe that day.

She said he gave people the urge to draw him.

It was the first time someone had said that to him.

He still found it a little impulsive every time he recalled asking her to pretend to be his girlfriend. After all, they did not know each other. They were only strangers.

However... he did not seem to regret it.

What she wanted' was more obvious than those women who had funny ideas against him.

Besides, spending time with her did not tire him.

Maybe they should get familiar with each other first. Then, he would wait for the right time to show up in front of Grace with

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Valda and tell Grace that he had gotten over his feelings for her. Grace would then feel at ease.

As long as Valda Theller could finish her mission, he could pay her well enough for her to live a comfortable life in the future when they ended their relationship.

Valda Theller had no idea how long she had been drawing.

The more she drew, the more she wanted to put some more details into it. Especially those phoenix eyes that seemed to contain a complex glimmer.

She wanted to include that complexity in her drawing.

When Valda Theller finished the last stroke, she realized that

her stomach was already growling. She looked at the time

and found that more than two hours had passed. She had taken a far longer time than she expected.

“Ah... Sorry. I took too much time.” She apologized quickly and said, “Are your hands and feet numb? Why don’t I massage them for you?”

She said and instinctively stepped forward to massage his

arm.

After all, maintaining a sitting posture for a long time would easily give the body poor blood circulation. There would be numbness in parts of his limbs.

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“You want to give me a massage?” he asked indifferently.

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“Don’t worry, I have good skills,” she said quickly. Sometimes, people who sat for long periods like them tended to get sore. Hence, she and her assistants would massage each other’s

arms and necks.

He raised his eyebrows slightly, and she instantly realized what she had just said sounded misleading!

“Well... I... I’m not trying to take advantage of you. I’m just scared that your hands and feet have gone numb, so I want to help you get rid of the numbness. When I’m at my studio, my assistants and I would massage each other’s arms, shoulders, necks, and so on...” Her face reddened as she explained.

He looked at her reddened face and could not help smiling slightly. “Alright, I didn’t misunderstand. My hands and feet

aren’t that numb. They’re back to normal now.”

“That... That’s good,” she stuttered.

He went up to her easel and looked at the portrait she had

drawn.

The portrait was much more delicate than the one she drew at the comic cafe, which showed that her drawing skills were quite good. It was a realistic sketch. One could say that it

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resembled him very much.

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Especially his eyes. There seemed to be so much going on in them.

Was that how she saw him?

Rumble! The sound of stomach rumbling rang in the air.

Brian turned to look at Valda Theller, whose face was full of embarrassment.

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"It's almost lunchtime now. Let's eat first," Brian said after looking at the time.

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"Let me treat you. You've been modeling for so long today that we almost missed lunch," she said.

"You're treating me?" His eyes glimmered.

"Of course. I can't afford anything too expensive though." She added after touching her nose. After all, the restaurant he brought her to before was out of the question as it cost tens of thousands of dollars for a meal.

"Anything will do. I'm not a fussy eater," he said.

She was relieved. The two walked out of the studio. Valda

Theller asked as they walked, "What would you like to eat?

Chinese food or Japanese food? Korean food or Thai food?"

"Anything works," he said, glancing suddenly at a nearby small restaurant. Her studio was close to the small restaurant where they met for the second time. "Do you often eat at that small restaurant?"

"Yes," said Valda Theller.

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"Let's have lunch there, then," said Brian,

"There?" Valda Theller froze. After all, the donburi in the

restaurant only cost 10 to 20 dollars each. It seemed a little shabby if she treated him that,

“What’s wrong?” he asked her as she looked stunned.

“Don’t you think it’s too cheap?” she asked.

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“The price doesn’t matter. Didn’t we eat in that restaurant last time?” Brian asked.

The two walked into the restaurant and ordered their meal separately. Valda Theller said, “By the way, why did you dine in this small restaurant the last time?”

“I happened to pass by and got a little nostalgic, so I came in,” he said.

“Nostalgic?”

“This restaurant used to be a small noodle shop. I had a friend who worked here, so I used to dine here too,” murmured Brian.

If he had recognized Grace back then, he would not have made the mistake he regretted for the rest of his life afterward.

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“You must be very close with that friend of yours,” Valda Theller speculated.

However, Brian only answered her with silence. He gently

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lowered his eyes as if to suppress the overwhelming emotions in them.

Valda Theller suddenly had a feeling that the person mentioned must be important to him!

They were so important that he would enter the small noodle shop where his friend no longer worked in even though a long time had passed.

Even though the small restaurant was noisy as there were many people talking, Valda Theller felt that their table was isolated and quiet.

Soon, the donburi they ordered arrived.

Compared to Brian's elegant table manners, Valda Theller

seemed to be wolfing down her food.

Just then, her phone rang. She looked at the caller ID and found that it was Camille Strickland. "Camille, what's the

matter?"

"Great news! Didn't I tell you that your comic 'Meeting You' is

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getting adapted into a film?" Camille Strickland said.

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"Yeah. What's the matter?" Valda Theller asked in confusion.

A film company picked up on the comic Meeting You due to its good sales and decided to adapt it into a film. However, she was not a well-known comic artist, after all. Therefore, it would only be a low-budget online series even if it was adapted.

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However, even so, it was still a matter of great joy to her. There was something very satisfying about seeing her comics being adapted into a show and played by real people.

"A company is interested in the adaptation and has decided to invest more money in it. There's a good chance that it'll be broadcasted through satellite and on TV. Besides that, I think I heard they're getting Gloria to play the male lead," Camille Strickland said excitedly.

Valda Theller froze on the spot. Gloria was a popular celebrity. His acting skills were favored by many people.

There was no TV series that Gloria starred in that did not get broadcasted through satellite! If he was indeed the male lead, there was a real chance the show would be broadcasted through satellite.

"Really?" Valda Theller muttered after some time.

Camille Strickland said, "Nonsense. Would I tell you fake news? The producer called me. If this series is a hit, then maybe you'll be a hit too!"

Camille Strickland was happy for her best friend. In her

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opinion, her best friend's work was as good as other popular comic artists. She just needed a little luck.

Her best friend had been drawing with all her heart over the year. Even though she did not make much money, she was not impatient.

There were not many people who would strive in the comic industry. Many people would be defeated by reality and think that they could only earn this much money in a month after working so hard. In other industries, they could earn the same amount of money without so much hard work.

She even knew several comic artists who gave up and ended up holding classes on how to draw comics. The money they made from there was much more than drawing comics.

Sometimes, she admired her best friend's persistence.

If the TV series could be a hit, it would be a great boost to her best friend's career.

"It doesn't matter whether it's a hit, but it would be nice if

Gloria stars in it," said Valda Theller.

Camille Strickland said, "The producer said they're now in talks with his manager. It's a 50-50 chance. Alright, wait for my updates. We'll probably get the result in these couple of days!"

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"Okay," answered Valda Theller.

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After ending the phone call, an elegant voice suddenly rang in her ears. "What do you hope Gloria would star in?"

Valda Theller looked up to meet Brian's eyes.

"One of my comics is being adapted. I thought it was just going to be a low-budget online drama at first, but some

company has invested more money into it. The producer is talking with Gloria's manager, hoping he'll play the male lead."

With that said, Valda Theller could not help smiling. "How lucky I'd be if Gloria really does take the role. Gosh, I'm getting kinda excited just thinking about it!"

"Are you a fan?" Brian asked.

Valda Theller touched her nose. "I guess I'm just an ordinary fan, not a die-hard one. But I've watched every one of his works. He's still young, only 28. But I think he has a bright future ahead of him."

She looked uncertain again as she spoke of it. "But the films Gloria have starred in are all big productions. Even if I get

more investment in mine, the show might not be as good as his previous ones. Moreover, I'm not a famous comic artist."

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"He'll take the role," Brian said suddenly

"Huh?" Valda Theller looked at him in surprise. Even Camille said the procuror was still discussing with Gloria, and they would only get the results two days later. However, Brian seemed like he already knew how things would turn out

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'He must be trying to reassure me not to worry!'

Valda Theller thought to herself. Then, she smiled and said, "Thank you for the kind words. I hope he'll take the role. But it doesn't matter even if he doesn't. I'm content enough that my creation can be adapted and is given additional investment because they have high hopes for it."

His eyes glimmered slightly. Her smile was still full of contentment. 'Contentment is bliss?'

What would become of a woman like her if she became greedy?

However, if he found her to be greedy one day, maybe it was time to end their relationship.

When the date was over, Brian returned to his car alone and called his secretary. "Get someone to contact Gloria and tell him to accept the comic adaptation role he was recently offered."

The secretary could not help pausing. 'Get... Gloria to accept a comic adaptation? President Hart shouldn't have to personally give orders on such a small matter, right?'

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After getting an affirmative reply, the secretary hurriedly replied in acknowledgment. They were still a little stunned after the call ended.

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'Why does Mr. Gregory suddenly care what projects Gloria is accepting? Gloria is just an actor in one of the company's subsidiaries. Though he's doing well lately, it's not enough to attract President Hart's attention!'

Several speculations flashed across the secretary's mind, but there was no conclusion.

On the other hand, Chang Mingyu looked at Raymond Bowman. "I heard you've invested in a comic adaptation by Valda Theller."

Raymond Bowman looked at his best friend. "You're well informed."

"How generous of you. Didn't you want to meet Valda Theller? Have you met her?" Chang Mingyu asked.

"Yes," Raymond Bowman said indifferently.

"What's the matter? What's with that look on your face? She didn't use your guilt to get you to invest in her adaptation, did she?" Chang Mingyu said.

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"She didn't want to use me for anything." He might have felt better if she wanted to use him. "She said she doesn't hate me, but she won't forgive me either. She now has a boyfriend she loves very much and wants me to be strangers with her."

Chang Mingyu was startled. "She has a boyfriend?"

Raymond Bowman did not answer the question but said, "Mingyu, do you think I've unconsciously grown feelings for Valda Theller?"

"You should ask yourself that question. What feelings do you have for her?" Chang Mingyu said.

Raymond Bowman was silent. He wanted to know what feelings he had for Valda Theller too. He could not get her out of his mind even after all these years!

The memories of them together and when she was bullied and laughed at school seemed deeply engraved in his head.

He could not erase or forget them.

When Valda Theller said that she loved her boyfriend deeply, he felt heartbroken.

'Is it possible? Is it possible that I've fallen in love with Valda Theller after all these years? But if I don't love her, why does it

hurt?’

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“No matter what feelings they are, I’ll find out in time!” he said.

She did not want to meet him, but now that he had invested in her adaptation, she could not avoid him.

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‘I’ll find out the answer!’

Grace video-called Kyla, asking how her ankle injury was.

“I’ve almost recovered,” said Kyla.

“What about you and Martin Weiss?” Grace asked again.

“We’re still the same. He doesn’t want to accept me, so maybe we’ll end up getting divorced,” muttered Kyla.

Grace suggested, “Why don’t we try and see how we can dehypnotize him? We could find a good hypnotist to do

reverse hypnosis. I’ve looked into some cases, and there have been some successful cases.”

Kyla shook her head. “No thanks. He’s the one who doesn’t want to get rid of the hypnosis. He knows the secret password and can get rid of the hypnosis himself at any time. He’s

unwilling to do it because he doesn’t want to love me anymore. In that case, there’s no need to force him.”

“But you...” Grace said with concern.

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“I’m mentally prepared. We’ve missed out on so many things. If he really doesn’t have feelings for me by the time we’ve agreed on, I’ll sign the divorce papers. I’m willing to respect his choice,” said Kyla.

Grace did not know how to comfort her for a moment.

After all, it was hard for outsiders to get involved in relationships.

“What about you? How’s your pregnancy going?” Kyla asked.

“Everything’s fine. I’m doing alright for every pregnancy check-up,” said Grace.

“That’s good. I haven’t been in Emerald City recently. I heard from my mom that you, Lina, and Amber Mitchell often visit her and my two children. You even provided a lot of help.

Thank you.””

“We’re the children’s godmother. Their mother isn’t around, so of course, we’re going to visit them more often,” said Grace.

Kyla smiled gratefully.

Unable to sleep after the call, Kyla walked out of the room.

It was already quite late, and there was no servant around.

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She walked over to the kitchen, wanting to look for something to eat.

She did not eat much at dinner today, so she was slightly hungry.

The fridge was well stocked. Kyla planned to make tomato and egg noodles.

However, when she turned around, she saw a tall figure standing in the kitchen doorway staring at her after she took out the ingredients.

“Ah!” She was so startled that she almost dropped the ingredient in her hands.

Kyla asked after calming herself down, “What are you doing here?”

Martin Weiss looked at the woman in front of him. “I should be the one to ask you that. What are you doing in the kitchen?” he said and glanced at the ingredients in her hand. “You didn’t eat enough for dinner?”

“I’m a little hungry, so I wanted something to eat,” she said.

“If you’re hungry, just dial the internal phone and ask the cook to come and make you something to eat,” he said.

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"They must have gone to rest. It's too much trouble to ask them to come again in the middle of the night. It won't take

much time for me to cook some noodles," she said as she went

to the kitchen countertop to wash the vegetables. Then, she

boiled the water to cook the noodles. At the same time, she

took the kitchen knife and quickly cut the tomatoes before breaking the eggs...

She could feel his eyes on her even though she had her back

to him.

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"Are you hungry? Why don't... I make a bowl for you too?" She turned to look at him and spoke.

He stared at her with his thin lips pressed together but said nothing.

"Forget... I said anything, then," she said awkwardly. Come to think of it, the chef at the mansion cooked much better food than her simple tomato and egg noodles. Besides, he did not say he was hungry.

"Since you asked, how can I forget? Kyla, do you like going back on your word?" With that said, he ignored her, left the kitchen, and sat down at the dining table.

Kyla froze. 'Does he... want me to make a bowl for him too?'

Therefore, she began to prepare another bowl of noodles.

Soon, two bowls of tomato and egg noodles were ready. Kyla brought them to the dining table, a bowl for each of them.

"Okay, go ahead. But the noodles just got out of the pot. Be careful not to burn yourself," she reminded and lowered her head to eat the noodles in the bowl.

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Martin Weiss looked blankly at Kyla as she ate her noodles with her head down in front of him.

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He was not hungry at all, but he recalled the time they were dating each other and she had asked him if he wanted to cook. a bowl of noodles for him. She said she would learn to cook and cook for him often.

These were only memories, but his feelings for her were already gone.

However, when the memory recurred to him, he suddenly wanted to eat her cooking.

"What's the matter? Aren't you going to eat?" She looked up at him. "Noodles get mushy easily. They won't taste good once they get lumpy."

"What on earth do you want?" he asked suddenly.

She paused slightly. Moments later, she spoke earnestly, "I want to be a real married couple with you and have a sweet family with you and the kids."

"Are you afraid it's gonna look bad for the kids to have divorced parents after we divorce?" he asked.

'It has nothing to do with the kids. It's me. I want to remain

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your wife and not divorce you!' she explained.

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"Because you love me?" he asked back with a note of sarcasm.

in his voice.

His tone made her smile bitterly. "Yes, because I love you."

"But I don't want to love you. Loving you is too tiring and exhausting. I don't want to experience having my pride shattered again. I only hope that you'll keep your word and sign the divorce papers obediently when the three months are up," said Martin Weiss

With that said, he got up to leave.

She grabbed his hand almost subconsciously.

"What's the matter? Have I not made myself clear?" he asked.

"You've made yourself clear, and I heard you clearly." She bit

her lip and took a deep breath, trying hard to hold back the

tears that threatened to pour out of her eyes. "I just wanted to ask... Aren't you going to eat the noodles?"

"Yes, I'm not. You can throw them out later. You can also leave

them here if you're lazy to throw them out. The servants will

clear the mess tomorrow," he answered before withdrawing his hand from her fingertips.

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Kyla looked blankly at the untouched bowl of noodles on the table and smiled bitterly while tears rolled down her eyes.

He did not believe that she loved him!

Besides, he did not want to love her anymore! He considered

that love humiliation.

“Martin, I don’t want to lose you...” she murmured. What did she have to do to convince him that she loved him and that her feelings were sincere, not just a lie she was telling for their kids?

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She was the one who did not believe him.

Now, he did not believe her!

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It turned out that two people believing in each other was such a difficult thing!

Valda Theller was stunned to learn from Camille Strickland that Gloria had agreed to play the male lead in the adaptation.

“Really?”

Camille Strickland said excitedly, “Could it be fake? The producer told me! I heard Gloria had turned down the role at first, but for some reason, he agreed in the end. You’re so lucky.”

Valda Theller thought she was lucky too. After all, Gloria was said to be picky about the projects he chose to star in.

“Alright, now that Gloria is playing the male lead, the drama’s success is almost guaranteed. By the way, what’s going on

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with you and your boyfriend?” said Camille Strickland,

“I guess we’re familiarizing ourselves with each other,” said Valda Theller.

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“Is he looking for a fake girlfriend because his family’s forcing

him to marry or something?" After all, there was a lot of such news. Renting boyfriends and girlfriends was popular nowadays.

"Probably not, but he never told me the exact reason," said

Valda Theller.

"Aren't you going to ask him?" Camille Strickland panicked. She was worried that her best friend would get fooled.

"Everyone has their secrets. At least he's not a bad person. Besides, he made it pretty clear to me at the beginning of our relationship. We're just like ordinary friends every time we go

on a date. He doesn't touch me," said Valda Theller. On the

contrary, she was the one who almost touched him.

"But then again, do you feel nothing when going on a date

with a man with a face like that?" Camille Strickland asked.

The man was mature and elegant. His delicate facial features

were as good as those of movie stars, especially those phoenix eyes. Even though Camille Strickland had only seen them once, she was impressed by them.

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After all, she had rarely seen such beautiful phoenix eyes on men.

Valda Theller said, "No, I have the impulse to draw him, but I won't have feelings for him. He warned me that he won't fall for me from the beginning, so he asked me not to fall for him."

"Huh? He did that?" Camille Strickland looked surprised. "Did he... say such a thing because he's romantically wounded?"

'Romantically wounded?' Valda Theller recalled Brian mentioning a friend who used to work at the small noodle shop before it became the small restaurant they dined in that day.

She would not have met Brian again at the small restaurant if he had not missed that friend.

Could he be romantically wounded... by the 'friend' he talked about?

"Hey, what's come over you? Did you recall something?" Camille Strickland's voice rang in Valda Theller's ear.

"Nothing. I'm just wondering what kind of woman could wound him romantically," she mumbled.

Camille Strickland speculated aloud, "She must be a beautiful woman, a city socialite, a celebrity, or something like that.

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Didn't you say he introduced himself as a company's project leader? Besides, I saw that the clothes he wore that day weren't cheap. He would probably be rich if he isn't a fraud."

'But I'll probably never get the chance to meet the woman.

who hurt Brian romantically,' thought Valda Theller.

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After chatting for a while, Camille Strickland said, "By the way, remember to attend the booting ceremony in three days."

"Okay, got it," answered Valda Theller.

"Remember to buy a nice outfit and dress up for that day. Don't come without dressing up. There'll be a lot of reporters at the booting ceremony. They'll probably include you in their shots."

"Okay, okay, got it. I'll dress up for the booting ceremony!" replied Valda Theller.

When she was on a date with Brian the next day, Valda Theller said, "Can you go shopping with me? I want to buy a new outfit for the booting ceremony."

"Which shopping mall do you want to go to?" he asked.

"Maybe we should go to Harbour Building downtown. There are more boutiques there," said Valda Theller.

"Sure." Brian started the car and drove toward Harbour Building. On the way, he asked, "Is the drama starting so soon?"

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"Not really. We've been preparing this for some time. We just hadn't decided on the male lead, but Gloria has agreed to take the role this time. He happens to be free right now, so we hurriedly started filming." Valda Theller could not help but sigh again as she mentioned this. "It's just like what you said the other day. He's starring in the adaptation. According to Camille, he almost rejected but agreed afterward."

"Camille? Your friend?" he asked.

She said, "Yes, Camille Strickland. She's the editor for my comics as well as my friend. She was the friend on a blind date you met at the restaurant that day. Camille's very kind to me. She's the only one who believed in me, stood by me, and helped me when I was alone and bullied. Without Camille's help, I probably wouldn't be where I am now.""

"You have a good friend," said Brian.

"Yes, Camille's really good!" She was lucky to have a friend like Camille.

The car drove to the mall, and the two got out. They went up to the second floor and shopped for women's clothes.

"Does it bore you to look at women's clothes with me like this?" Valda Theller asked. After all, men generally did not seem to like shopping.

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"It's not boring. At least I get to learn some of your preferences through shopping," he said.

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Valda Theller pressed her lips together. 'Does he want to learn my preferences so we'll look more like... a couple to others?'

He chose me as his girlfriend because she once said she could withdraw her feelings for someone even if she fell for them.

Somehow, Valda Theller's heart filled with bitterness that even she could not explain.

The two shopped around. Valda Theller took a fancy to a dress in a women's boutique. The same dress came in two colors-pastel purple and mint green.

Valda Theller said to the shop assistant, "Do you have it in purple and size M? I'd like to try it on."

"Okay," the shop assistant responded. She was about to look for the purple dress in size M when Brian's voice suddenly rang out. "Let's go with mint green."

Valda Theller looked at Brian in confusion. Brian looked away uneasily.

"Okay, I'll take mint green, then," Valda Theller said to the shop assistant.

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"Okay, mint green is in trend this year, and the color sells very well here," the shop assistant said as she brought over a mint green dress in size M.

Valda Theller took the dress into the fitting room to try it on, while Brian stood in the boutique's open space and glanced at the pastel purple dress hanging on a shelf not far away.

Purple was Grace's favorite color. He once told her that he would buy her a beautiful purple dress.

Later, he bought a lot of purple dresses, but none of them were delivered to her.

Those dresses were proof of his longing that was hidden with pain. These dresses were still in his mansion's wardrobe, and no one was allowed to touch them.

When Valda Theller wanted to try the purple dress, he subconsciously asked her to change it to a mint green one. It meant he had not let go of his feelings for Grace.

With that in mind, Brian looked away from the dress and looked somewhere else.

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However, his pupils shrank immediately as he caught sight of a familiar figure.

It was... Grace!

Brian did not expect to see Grace here.

Moments later, Grace seemed to also feel the gaze and looked up in Brian's direction. Their eyes immediately met.

Grace slowly walked up to Brian. "What a coincidence to see you here. Are you... here to help someone buy something?" After all, he was standing at a women's boutique.

"I'm accompanying someone shopping," said Brian as he looked down at Grace's baby bump.

One could easily tell that she was pregnant now. Her face was rosy, and she seemed to be in good health. However... he knew the baby in her belly was a ticking time bomb.

"I asked Lina to accompany me to buy some maternity clothes." Grace smiled. "Lina and I gotta go first."

"Wait!" Brian could not help shouting. It was not easy for him to run into her, and he did not want her to leave his sight so soon.

"Is there anything else?" Grace asked.

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"How are you... these days? Are you physically..." Brian asked,

"Everything's fine," said Grace.

The nearby Lina also said, "Would Jason let her go shopping with me if there's something wrong with Grace's body?"

Brian pressed his thin lips together tightly. Just then, the fitting room door opened, and Valda Theller walked out. She was

about to ask Brian whether the dress was suitable for her

when she saw two women standing in front of Brian. One of them had a slightly bulging belly. She must be pregnant.

The three obviously knew each other.

Valda Theller froze, not knowing whether she should walk up to them or pretend she did not know Brian.

The shop assistant said to Brian, "Sir, your friend is out."

Brian turned his head and looked at Valda Theller. Valda

Theller smiled drily. Before she could say anything, Brian

walked forward and took her hand naturally, "Here, Valda. Let me introduce you to my friends."

"Oh, okay," replied Valda Theller as she followed Brian to Grace and Lina.

"

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"This is Valda Theller, my girlfriend. And this is Grace, my... friend, while this is Lina, a friend of Grace," Brian said as he introduced.

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"Hello, I'm Valda Theller," Valda Theller said to the two with a smile.