

# **I Became a Villainous Character with a Limited Lifespan**

## **- Episode 131 - 140**

### ***Episode 131***

'I want to stay asleep like this.'

How long had it been? It was the first time Seung-hyun clearly thought of something.

He wanted to stay asleep like this. Too many things had happened. Now he just wanted to rest, no matter what.

He felt like he could open his eyes now, but Seung-hyun simply floated in his unconsciousness without moving a single finger. As he drifted for a long time, Seung-hyun flinched in surprise at the sensation of something touching his hand.

'What is it...?'

Seung-hyun slowly opened his eyes. Only he was floating in a space with nothing. It was clearly empty, so what touched him? Seung-hyun looked around to figure out what had touched his hand.

'...?'

Before long, Seung-hyun, who found the object that had touched his hand, blinked his eyes. What was this? A lump that was hard to define clearly was wriggling.

Should it be called slime that children play with? The way it rippled and slowly changed shape every moment felt a bit cute. When Seung-hyun carefully held out his palms together, the lump climbed onto his hands as if it had been waiting.

It was just a small lump without eyes, nose, or mouth, but why was his gaze drawn to it so much? Seung-hyun stared intently at the lump wriggling on his palm.

'Do you like me?'

As if understanding, the lump rippled greatly. Seung-hyun carefully placed the lump on one hand and stroked it with the other.

‘How did you end up here?’

The lump pressed strongly against his palm as if not wanting to be separated from Seung-hyun. Did I just expect an answer from it? Seung-hyun laughed, finding it absurd himself.

‘I don’t know what you are, but... you must be really bored too. Being left alone with me in a space with nothing.’

Seung-hyun said, stroking the lump. The lump snuggled into Seung-hyun’s arms as if it was okay, flapping.

‘You must feel stuffy. Don’t you want to go out?’

The lump fluttered, pretending to fly. Did this mean it wanted to go out? Seung-hyun looked around.

It was a space that seemed narrow and infinitely vast at the same time. However, it was certain that there was no exit.

‘It doesn’t matter to me, but it seems like it really wants to go out...’

Seung-hyun hugged the lump tightly, feeling a bit sorry for it. Although it couldn’t be possible, it sounded like it was laughing.

‘You poor thing. You too.’

Seung-hyun smiled bitterly, feeling somehow touched. The lump didn’t seem to care and just fluttered around Seung-hyun.

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“This is literally life-sustaining treatment. Rather than aiming for recovery... you should think of it as buying time to prepare yourself.”

“I know.”

Jae-young looked at Seung-hyun, who had entered the treatment capsule through the glass window. He clearly looked asleep, but he still couldn’t believe that those eyelids would never open again.

“I don’t know how much longer this treatment can keep the director going. Because right now there are many variables.”

“Is it that much of a mess?”

“It was originally like that, but now...”

Professor Kim, who was about to unconsciously talk about Seung-hyun’s condition, belatedly closed his mouth. There was nothing good that would come from saying it.

“...You’re hiding something from me.”

However, it was impossible to take back the words that had already slipped out. Professor Kim avoided his gaze, sweating profusely, but Jae-young didn’t seem to back down easily.

“It would be better not to know. This isn’t a problem that can be solved either...”

“Can it get any worse than the current situation?”

Jae-young spoke self-deprecatingly. Could it get any worse than now? Seung-hyun had already been declared unable to wake up, and he was barely breathing only due to Jae-young’s selfishness.

Even that faint breath would eventually cease around the time the seasons changed. So how could it get any worse than this?

“...Were you Director Han’s lover?”

Professor Kim asked after a brief deliberation. It would be strange if he wasn’t, but it wasn’t a light matter to talk about without confirming.

“...Was I? It would have been nice if I was.”

“...”

“We spent a lot of time together, but I never heard Seung-hyun call me his lover, so maybe we were nothing.”

It was an ambiguous answer, but Jae-young, who said those words, looked so miserable. Professor Kim looked at Jae-young, who was biting his lips with his gaze fixed on Seung-hyun, and said,

“...It might be better not to know. Do you really need to hear it?”

“I’m tired of doing meaningless things without knowing. Even if there’s nothing I can do... I don’t want to be frustrated not knowing about Seung-hyun until the end.”

Jae-young said firmly. It didn’t seem like it could get any worse than this, and even if it did, it didn’t matter. Professor Kim looked at Jae-young and sighed.

“I roughly told you, but Seung-hyun’s physical condition is not normal. That’s because of his broken pheromone gland and the organs that were affected in a complex way... but what’s hard to deal with.”

Professor Kim hesitated, wondering if it was right to talk about this fact. Even if it was expected, it couldn’t help but be a shock to the person involved.

He shouldn’t have made a slip of the tongue. Professor Kim made a troubled face. However, now that he was caught hiding something, there was no way to run away.

“An alpha’s pregnancy can have unknown side effects even on a healthy body, but in Director Han’s case, he couldn’t help but be affected more.”

“...?”

Jae-young frowned, not understanding those words. An alpha’s pregnancy, what was he talking about?

“What are you saying?”

“...There is a child in Director Han’s belly. You probably roughly know about alpha pregnancies... but it’s a strain even on a healthy person’s body. We couldn’t remove the child either because we didn’t know what variables it would cause, so we left it as it was.”

“What...”

Even after a long explanation, he couldn't understand what it meant. Was it a dream? No. Wasn't it too absurd? Jae-young listened to Professor Kim's words blankly, then remembered something and froze.

'...That time.'

The day it snowed a lot. He recalled following Seung-hyun's words, finding it difficult to maintain his sanity himself, when Seung-hyun said if he wasn't going to get pregnant anyway, was a condom really necessary?

"...How long has it been?"

"It's difficult to judge visually. We've never diagnosed the child, and even now the child has barely grown, so it's even more so..."

"No, never mind. When did you find out? At least tell me that. Was it this year?"

Jae-young asked urgently. He thought it would be fine. The possibility of an alpha pregnancy was so low that it was ridiculous to even mention it.

So he didn't think deeply about it and even forgot that such a thing had happened. Jae-young's face turned pale.

'The fact that I couldn't feel the pheromones strangely at that time, and that it felt different from usual...'

It wasn't simply because of the atmosphere, but because the pheromone gland was already broken. Jae-young recalled the pheromones that were so bizarre they couldn't be distinguished as an alpha's or omega's on the day Seung-hyun collapsed.

'There were already signs. I...'

"Yes. It's difficult to be certain of the weeks since we didn't properly diagnose it... but it definitely hasn't been over half a year."

It was that day. It couldn't be any other day. Jae-young staggered for a moment.

"Are you okay?"

"..."

Happy memories instantly turned into painful ones to recall. The enjoyable things that happened on the trip were stained with self-reproach that he shouldn't have done it.

"That's not the cause. From the first diagnosis, the director was told it would be difficult to last more than a year, and this..."

"At least it means I did shorten Seung-hyun's time."

Jae-young laughed hollowly. Professor Kim hesitated and said,

"We can't be certain. It was that one year was the maximum, so it wouldn't be strange for his condition to worsen at any time. Even if this hadn't happened, the variables..."

"I'll see you again tomorrow."

Jae-young turned around, staggering before Professor Kim finished speaking. If he didn't know, that was one thing, but knowing and hearing it was too painful.

"...Did Seung-hyun know?"

"It could have been more dangerous to give him a big shock, and even if he knew, there was no suitable method, so I didn't tell him."

That's fortunate, Jae-young thought and asked again.

"Is there anyone else who knows?"

"At the time, Secretary Lee was Director Han's guardian... so I told him. There's no one else. But if the family members ask for an accurate report on his condition, it will be difficult to hide it until the end."

"...I see. I'll get going for today."

It was hard to look at Seung-hyun. Jae-young staggered down the corridor and returned to his car.

"..."

The car with the engine off stayed in that spot for a long time. Only after the sky had turned completely dark and the street lights came on could Jae-young grab the steering wheel.

### ***Episode 132***

Seung-hyun's treatment was smoothly achieving its purpose. Although it was a path with only negatives to say it was progressing smoothly, this treatment was currently the best option.

Slowing down the rate of damage to the rapidly deteriorating body to delay the final breath as much as possible. That goal was clearly being achieved, but no one thought it was fortunate.

'Is it greed?'

Jae-young thought, ruffling his hair. After hearing about the child, it became even more painful to see Seung-hyun.

Professor Kim said it was just a difference in timing and this would have happened eventually, so he shouldn't blame himself too much, but if he knew, how could he not be concerned?

"Sigh..."

The only fortunate thing was that Seung-hyun didn't know about his physical condition. He felt that way even more so after learning why Seung-hyun had tried so hard to push him away.

The complex feelings stemming from the child were something he could bear alone. Jae-young thought so and smiled faintly.

A week after the treatment began, Professor Kim said the treatment was working well and Seung-hyun could last longer than expected, but Jae-young didn't know if that was fortunate.

When he lost consciousness and collapsed, Seung-hyun's life may have already ended. Prolonging that breath was ultimately just the greed of those left behind.

They said it was to buy time to prepare mentally, but no matter how long, there was never enough time to prepare for a farewell. If it were that easy, Seung-hyun wouldn't have shown that appearance until the end.

The words that he was sorry for not regretting it. He couldn't give a proper answer to those words, nor could he apologize for not being sincere, so what meaning did that measly time have?

"...It would have been better if he had at least told me."

It wasn't that he didn't understand why Seung-hyun couldn't easily say those words. However, his last words, his last conversation with Seung-hyun, kept coming to mind.

They were just words to vent his anger. Even though he thought he shouldn't say such things, he was frustrated not knowing what Seung-hyun was hiding, and he said them knowing it would hurt.

'No, maybe I said them to hurt him.'

Jae-young let out a long sigh. No matter how much he regretted it now, there was nothing he could change.

However, he had no intention of stopping the treatment with his own hands either. Even if it was something that would happen, his own will and actions having an impact was a matter of different weight.

Just like how the child in Seung-hyun's belly weighed on his mind even though he knew Seung-hyun's collapse would happen someday. He had no intention of stopping the treatment, but every time he saw Seung-hyun's peaceful face, it felt like his insides were turning to ashes.

That peaceful face that looked like he was just asleep, as if he would open his eyes at any moment and ask why he was making such a fuss.

'...Could it be that because of me, he's having bad dreams?'

Because the last conversation they had was like that, could it be that even in his sleep, he wasn't having good dreams and was wandering in sadness? Jae-young bowed his head, blaming himself for who knows how many times.



Then Jae-young checked the time. The time for visitation was approaching soon.

“...I should go.”

Still, he wanted to take in that sight as much as possible during the time he could see his face. Even if it was painful to see, it was better to suffer now than to regret this moment when he could no longer see him.

What kind of dream was Seung-hyun having? Maybe it would be better if he wasn't dreaming at all. Jae-young thought so as he prepared to leave.

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“You really don't get tired.”

Seung-hyun shook his head, looking at the lump that kept sticking to him all day and then roaming around the wide space.

He tried to play with it moderately, but it was so hard to keep up with it moving here and there. It was like a real colt.

But it was cute how it would always stick close to him whenever it took short breaks. There were no eyes, nose, or mouth, and it was just a form, but it looked cute. Being in an empty space, it seemed he was becoming a bit strange too.

‘But why was I here again?’

While stroking the lump out of habit, Seung-hyun suddenly thought about why he was here. Somehow everything felt like a distant past, so he had forgotten.

“Am I... dead?”

Seung-hyun muttered softly. Once he became aware, the sensation he had felt last came to mind vividly. Just before becoming “Han Seung-hyun,” he had felt a heat similar to when he had an accident.

Ah, so that's what happened in the end. He couldn't even tell Jae-young properly. He should have told him just one day earlier. Seung-hyun bowed his head, feeling dejected.

The last conversation they had came to mind. He had felt various emotions while watching Jae-young get angry. He couldn't say it felt good, but rather than feeling hurt by Jae-young, he felt sorry.

He was someone who had an annoyingly lighthearted side. Someone who laughed things off even when a problem arose, and yet had a mature side.

It was Seung-hyun's fault that such a Jae-young had been swayed by his momentary emotions without any composure. He couldn't say what needed to be said, and yet he hurt him as much as he could.

'I should have either pushed him away properly or told him everything honestly. I should have done one of the two.'

Since he knew his life would end soon anyway, it wasn't that he had any lingering attachments to life. But if there was something he clearly regretted, it was all about Jae-young.

The last flowers he saw, the fireworks were nice too. He had certainly seen a beautiful scenery and felt that Jae-young liked that sight too, even though he was anxious.

While watching the fireworks, he had glanced at Jae-young from the corner of his eye, and he had a blank expression as if his mind was elsewhere. Both Jae-young and Seung-hyun were very tired, so their gazes must have lingered on even a mediocre fireworks display for a long time.

'The memory of that day will be a mess too. I wanted to make good memories for him. At this rate, it will only be remembered as the worst day.'

Seung-hyun let out a deep sigh, feeling bitter. Everything was a mess. Yes, maybe it would have been better not to meet at all. It would certainly be like that for Jae-young, but...

'Even if I went back, now that I've gotten to know this person, could I not approach Jae-young?'

Just as he couldn't leave even though he knew, even if he went back, he wasn't confident he wouldn't hover around Jae-young. He felt sorry for him, but now he couldn't even imagine a life without Jae-young.

'I'm not the one thinking of doing it. Really, I...'

When he himself had left his side. Although it wasn't done voluntarily, he had anticipated it, so he couldn't say he had no responsibility.

But if it was going to end up like this anyway, he should have treated him better. Rather than intentionally hurting him when he couldn't even push him away in the end, rather than making him feel guilty by delaying telling him and eventually making him say such harsh words, there must have been a better way.

At least he thought he had never harmed others while living, but it was upsetting that he had hurt the person most precious to him until the end. The longer he thought about it, the more his shoulders slumped, and his eyes welled up for no reason.

"Ah, it's cold."

The moment the tears that had welled up were about to fall, something cold approached Seung-hyun's face. Surprised, the tears disappeared, and Seung-hyun touched his face.

"It's you again."

The lump was tapping Seung-hyun's eyes as if trying to wipe away his tears. Was it doing it knowingly or unknowingly? He couldn't tell which, but it was certain that this small object had comforted Seung-hyun.

"If I'm dead... are you here because you're dead too?"

He didn't know what kind of place this was, but if he had to guess, it felt like a space where he was waiting to go to the next world after already dying. If so, this lump's situation probably wasn't that different from Seung-hyun's.

He didn't know why this lump and he were left together in an empty space, but thinking that way, he felt a bit sorry for the lump.

It liked to move around, and although he wasn't sure, it seemed to want to go out, but this space where Seung-hyun was the only thing that existed must have felt too suffocating for the lump.

"I don't know what you are or why you were left here with me... but I wish at least you could leave here."

He didn't care how much time he spent here, but he wanted to let this lump out at least. For the first time, the situation where he could do nothing felt frustrating.

He felt as if the eyeless lump was staring at him intently. The lump slid down from Seung-hyun's face and snuggled into his arms as if hugging him.

Its body was smaller than his palm, so it just looked like it was sticking to him, but Seung-hyun somehow felt that the lump wanted to comfort him.

"...You're better than me."

That tiny comfort felt so big, so Seung-hyun smiled faintly and embraced that small body.

YengLi's Corner

The free chaps stops here if you want more free chaps please visit the DISCORD below as this will be used for premium chapters.

### ***Episode 133***

How long had it been like that? Seung-hyun, who had been spending time playing with the lump all day, looked around with the thought that this space seemed to be getting smaller and smaller.

'I'm sure it was bigger than this at first.'

It was still a space where he couldn't tell where it started and where it ended, but he had a strangely stuffy feeling. It also seemed like the time it took for the lump that had energetically ran to the end to return had shortened.

Since becoming aware of that, he started to feel stuffy inside for some reason.

Since opening his eyes in this place, he had never felt that his physical condition was bad. Rather than being bad, he had felt light, and he had never felt that his physical condition was poor.

"Sigh..."

Somehow it felt like his body was getting hotter little by little. It didn't seem to be just a feeling, as the lump was sticking to his face to cool it down for longer and longer periods of time.

I guess I'm really heading towards the end now. Thinking that way, even though his body was getting worse, his mind was at ease. He thought all that was left was to fall asleep like that, but.

"...?"

The lump that had been sticking to Seung-hyun's side cooling his face ever since his physical condition started deteriorating was nowhere to be seen. Finding it strange that the familiar chill had disappeared, Seung-hyun lifted his heavy body.

Could it have disappeared somewhere? Seung-hyun became a bit anxious and went to look for the lump. It was hard to move his body, but it didn't take long to find the lump.

"...What's wrong with you?"

Seung-hyun asked, knowing there would be no answer. The lump was limply lying on the ground without moving. Was it sick? Seung-hyun placed the lump on his hand with an uneasy heart, and was startled by the heat hotter than his own hand, almost dropping it.

It was showing the same reaction as him. The lump that had been lying as if dead twitched as if sensing Seung-hyun's presence.

"You shouldn't be sick. Why..."

There were no doctors or medicine here. Had the fact that there was nothing ever felt this bleak? Seung-hyun tried to find something even slightly cool, but there was no way.

'If only my body temperature was lower.'

Then he could have cooled it down with his body temperature like the lump had done for him. Seung-hyun was discouraged for the first time that his physical condition was bad.

He didn't want to part with his dear person anymore, so why was he experiencing this situation again? Seung-hyun started to cry with the lump in his hand, feeling frustrated.

If he had been alone, he wouldn't have minded. Why did he end up being with this tiny thing? He couldn't do anything for it, and he couldn't even treat it kindly.

'It would have been better if it had been with someone other than me.'

Before he knew it, the lump had become so hot that it hurt his hand, but Seung-hyun didn't let go of the lump and just wrapped it more precious and carefully. While examining its condition like that, shedding tears, Seung-hyun discovered a strange scene and doubted his eyes.

'...Did I see wrong?'

Because of the tears that wouldn't stop falling, he couldn't see properly, so he might have seen something that wasn't there. Seung-hyun wiped his tears and looked at his palm again.

However, just like a moment ago, he saw the lump start to ripple and melt as if being absorbed into his body. As if returning to its original place. Seung-hyun stared at his palm for a long time, unable to take his eyes off that sight.

"...I see."

Perhaps because so many strange things had happened. Somehow it felt like his mind was being cleared up. What the identity of this tiny thing was. Why it ended up falling into an empty space with him, he thought he knew now.

It was an absurd possibility, but since such things had already happened several times, it wasn't surprising. But he did think that this child would have been better off going to someone other than him after all.

"You had to come to someone like me of all people, unable to even see the world, and I realized it too late to even say anything good to you..."

If he had known from the beginning, he would have said at least some nice things. He didn't know if it could hear or understand, but since he could share warmth, he would have hugged it more and doted on it.

He only realized when it no longer had the strength to endure and was disappearing into him. Even though he didn't do anything for it, how much comfort and joy did he receive thanks to this small life form?

“...Maybe it’s for the best. I wouldn’t be able to become someone who can take responsibility for a lovely child like you anyway.”

Seung-hyun said that and gave the lump a short kiss. If it felt like it was happy, he must have surely misunderstood as he pleased.

Seung-hyun embraced the lump slowly melting on his hand. He placed the lump closest to his heart that was beating fast due to the heat that had already risen as much as it could.

“Although I don’t deserve it... it would be nice if I could see what you look like at least once.”

Who would you take after? He hoped it wouldn’t take after him. No, seeing how affectionate it was, it would surely take after Jae-young rather than him.

“Next time, go find someone better than me, someone who can cherish a lovely child like you to their heart’s content. Be sure to...”

His heart that was already beating fast started to race as if it would burst. It was painful as if the lump melting into him was tearing at his heart, but it was okay.

“...I wish I could have been someone who could do that. I’m sorry.”

Now it really seemed like the end was approaching. The things he wouldn’t have minded if he didn’t know, the last moments full of regret and apology felt a bit sad.

‘...I want to see you.’

The face of the person he couldn’t even apologize to came to mind. In a life where incomprehensible things had been repeated several times, couldn’t a miracle come just one more time? Seung-hyun thought so and closed his eyes.

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“His condition has suddenly worsened. The pheromone levels are too unstable.”

“The levels are changing too rapidly, so we can’t administer neutralizers.”

It was at dawn, 15 days after starting the treatment, that Seung-hyun's physical condition began to deteriorate rapidly. The body that had been slowly falling asleep suddenly started to show big reactions.

The pheromone levels that were already a mess rose and fell in an instant, making it impossible to even choose the medicine to administer.

"His fever has risen too much. There are no beta doctors available right now...!"

"Even the recessive nurse who's almost like a beta can't go in."

When Jae-young arrived at the hospital after receiving the news and rushing over, the hospital room was in complete chaos. There were no beta doctors on duty, so no one could touch Seung-hyun until Professor Kim arrived.

Unable to even properly diagnose the situation, some of the nurses were kicked out of the room and were urgently making calls. Professor Kim, who arrived in a hurry, entered the room in a messy state.

"Is he okay?"

As soon as Professor Kim came out of the room, Jae-young grabbed him and asked. Professor Kim took a step back, startled by how strong the grip on his arm was.

"...I'm sorry."

"It's okay."

It must be a big deal. Professor Kim tried to ignore his aching arm and organized his thoughts. It was regrettable to say to Jae-young, who was in as much of a mess as he was, but as always, he had to fulfill his duty as a medical professional.

"...I don't think this treatment will be effective anymore either. The current fever... is oxidation fever."

"Oxidation fever?"

"It's a symptom that rarely appears in traits, where the pheromone levels become unstable along with a fever in the process of completely oxidizing all



the pheromones the pheromone gland has. Usually... it's the last symptom that appears before all bodily reactions stop."

It was a symptom that appeared only in people nearing the end, releasing everything they had and fading away like a fire going out.

"...Three days at most."

Not everyone who experienced oxidation fever died, but among the cases where someone with an underlying disease like Seung-hyun experienced oxidation fever, there hadn't been any other outcome.

'Since he's recessive, the time it takes to oxidize might be even shorter...'

It was a symptom that usually appeared only in dominant traits, so it was a bit surprising, but what was certain was that his life was completely fading away.

"...I will contact Executive Director Han."

He knew that Jae-young was essentially Seung-hyun's guardian, but legally, he had no relation to Seung-hyun. It meant that the role Jae-young could play was also over now.

"..."

Jae-young stood there as if nailed to the spot, unable to say anything. He had definitely heard everything he said, but nothing remained in his head.

It might be because he didn't want to hear it, because he didn't want to understand. He thought he had been preparing himself for 15 days, but when the situation actually came, he couldn't think of anything.

"You can't go in. The pheromones...!"

He just wanted to see Seung-hyun up close even a little bit. Jae-young approached the door of the hospital room as if possessed by something.

### ***Episode 134***

"The room is filled with pheromones. I know you're an alpha, so if you go in, you'll feel a strong repulsion."

Although he was recessive, he was strongly emitting pheromones as if to release all the pheromones in his body, so there would definitely be a strong repulsion between alphas. It was sure to be an unbearable level of rejection, so they tried to dissuade him, but Jae-young shook his head as if he couldn't hear those words.

"I have to see him."

Even if he felt repulsed, could it be worse than this feeling of going crazy? Jae-young pushed away the medical staff trying to stop him and said,

"If not now, you're saying I won't be able to see him anymore, right?"

I know my words won't reach Seung-hyun right now. So it may be meaningless, but even so, there were things I wanted to say if it was okay.

"The patient's condition could worsen. You can't barge in like this."

However, at the words that Seung-hyun's condition could worsen, he had no choice but to stop. I don't know how it could get worse than this current state, but they were words Jae-young absolutely couldn't ignore.

"I understand how you feel, but please calm down. Jae-young, you're dominant, and you could release pheromones without knowing it... We don't know how those pheromones will affect him."

"But even if we stay like this, the end result will be the same, won't it?"

Jae-young said with a sneer. Professor Kim closed his mouth tightly, unable to refute those words. He was right. Regardless of how his current condition was maintained, Seung-hyun would eventually die.

Even if Jae-young didn't open that door and go in, his breath could stop from a sudden shock, or Jae-young's pheromones could have no effect at all.

"...You're right. But from a medical professional's standpoint, I can't let you in."

"..."

"...I'll try to find a way. But if you act so recklessly, I can't let you in, so please go back for today."

If he stayed at the hospital like this, he would surely cause an accident properly. Professor Kim tried to calm Jae-young down.

“ ... ”

Jae-young hesitated, unable to move his feet easily. He knew there was nothing he could do, that he might cause a huge accident if he stayed like this, but his feet wouldn't move.

“I'll contact...and manage the number of people entering the room...”

In the end, until he was half-forced to leave by a nurse, Jae-young stared at Seung-hyun through the window in front of the hospital room for a long time. He couldn't believe he would never see that peaceful face again.

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“...So that's what happened.”

The person currently registered as Seung-hyun's guardian was Tae-sung. Naturally, Seung-hyun's condition was relayed to Tae-sung as well, so he came to see Seung-hyun, thinking it would be the last time.

“I won't be able to go inside.”

“Yes. Right now, it's difficult to let traits in due to his unstable state in many ways.”

“Isn't there a way to see him as closely as possible?”

It probably wouldn't have much meaning, but thinking it was the last time, he wanted to convey the words he hadn't been able to say until now. It would just be words to make himself feel better, which the other person couldn't even hear.

“...I think it will be okay around tomorrow.”

“Tomorrow?”

“If it follows this trend, around this time tomorrow... the pheromones he has will all be released, so it won't be a big problem even if traits go in then.”

Tae-sung laughed, thinking it was ironic that he could only meet him if his condition worsened. Maybe it would be better not to see him.

“I see. To former CEO Han...”

He probably won't care, but shouldn't we tell him now? Tae-sung pondered for a moment. Anyway, Seung-hyun was the child of those two people.

Of course, he had lived worse than others all his life, but if they were told their child was facing death, wouldn't they regret it a little?

He couldn't imagine them being sad, but the news would be known in a few days anyway, so he thought the parents should be told first.

Tae-sung fiddled with his phone, deep in thought. The contemplation didn't last long. However, there was something he had overlooked.

That there are people who never change no matter the situation. That there is no minimum standard for human nature. That there are people who accumulate sins to the point of not knowing what regret is, Tae-sung did not know.

“C-CEO.”

“I'm disappointed, Professor Kim. To think you didn't even tell me about this.”

The next day, Taehyeop, who received a call from Tae-sung, immediately came to see Professor Kim. Professor Kim, flustered, made excuses while sweating profusely.

“D-Director Han didn't want it to be known...”

“Did I have to hear this from that bastard?”

It wasn't anger at finding out about Seung-hyun's physical condition now, but anger at hearing the news from Tae-sung of all people.

He didn't like the attitude of reluctantly informing him. Of all people, it had to be from him. Glaring at Professor Kim, Taehyeop said,

“Does the chairman know?”

“He doesn't know the details, but he probably knows roughly...”

No matter how tight the hospital's security was, it was meaningless to Chairman Han, who was close with the hospital director. It was about his own grandson, not someone else, so information could have leaked from the hospital director's side.

"We're the only fools then."

Seung-hyun's mother laughed hollowly, feeling betrayed even though that was the very reason everyone at HJ had an attending physician at this hospital.

"So, according to that bastard, there's no point in continuing treatment."

"Now there's almost no pheromones left in his body. Once all the pheromones are released, his bodily functions will likely slowly stop."

But since they came all the way here because they were worried, maybe... Professor Kim looked at them, thinking hopefully. However, what showed on their faces was not sadness or regret, but clear anger.

"Something felt off. Ha, he was just..."

Knowing he was going to die and all he did was submit his resignation and go out to play? I thought he at least had ambition and tenacity, but it seems that was an overestimation too.

"At the very least, he should have gotten back at that bastard. Ha, when he exposed the thing with Assemblyman Park, I thought he at least had some spirit left in him, but that was also Secretary Lee's arbitrary action."

It didn't sit well with them. If there was one thing they had in common with Seung-hyun, it was their hatred for Tae-sung. At least in that regard, they thought of him as a comrade, but in the end, Seung-hyun was of no help to them.

'Even if that pathetic guy dies, we're the ones left behind, so he should have at least done something to benefit us.'

He could have at least blocked Han Tae-sung's path. She recalled Chairman Han's odd attitude at the last family dinner.

'That foul-tempered old man, I wondered why he was taking that kid's crazy actions so lightly, turns out he knew about this. I guess he felt some pity since he's his grandson after all...'

If they had used that, there must have been something they could have gained. She clicked her tongue, frowning. Taehyeop was having similar thoughts.

'There must have been something we could have used. Damn it. If I had known a bit earlier... What's the point of finding out now? No, the chairman probably already knows, so rather...'

Despite having not an ounce of affection for family, he loved keeping up appearances, so if it had been revealed that Seung-hyun was terminally ill, he would have done something.

"Why wasn't I the first to be informed of this?"

They already knew that Seung-hyun's health was not good. No, that it was quite serious, so what would change so much by knowing he was terminally ill? Professor Kim, recalling Seung-hyun who said not to inform others about his condition, almost sighed with a heavy heart but barely held it back.

"...Executive Director Han was the only one who came to see him knowing his condition was not good. It wasn't that I only informed the executive director. You saw firsthand that he was unconscious and receiving intensive treatment, so you naturally found out."

In the end, it was a passive protest, saying it was the fault of you who didn't even show your face despite knowing Seung-hyun was sick.

"So, are you saying this is my fault now?"

Taehyeop couldn't possibly not understand that passive but clear protest. With a hardened expression, he said to Professor Kim,

"At least when Han Tae-sung found out about that kid's condition, you should have contacted me."

"Enough. Sigh, this is rather fortunate."

Seung-hyun's mother stopped him with a big sigh. She was angry and found it pathetic, but she thought it was rather fortunate.

"He was going to die like this anyway, it's better he dies early. Having an ambiguous life and death is just like him."

The reason she had continued this damn marriage was ultimately because of Seung-hyun. His ambiguous trait, ambiguous abilities. Although everything about Seung-hyun was ambiguous, she had continued this marriage because there was a sliver of hope to give up on.

"Let's get a divorce. Ah, should I say I'm thankful that this kid is helping my life even like this?"

It wasn't a conversation to have in front of a dying person. Professor Kim stood awkwardly between the two, gauging their reactions.

"So, you're saying he's definitely dying, right? Don't change your words later and tell me clearly."

It was a voice so nonchalant that it was hard to believe it belonged to someone who had just heard their child was dying. As Professor Kim hesitated, unable to answer, someone who had been listening to the conversation between the three from the middle couldn't hold back and intervened between them.

### ***Episode 135***

'The pheromone levels have nearly bottomed out. He'll soon be in a state no different from a beta.'

So this was the last chance to see Seung-hyun up close, and the road to the hospital after receiving Professor Kim's kind yet cruel contact was a mess of various emotions.

Relief from being able to see the face he already missed after only a few days of not seeing him, and anxiety that today could be the last day he sees that face.

He sometimes thought he didn't deserve to see his face due to the helplessness of not being able to do anything, but the end of this agonizing

was always the same. It was right to do what he could now. With that thought, Jae-young walked along the familiar path.

When he arrived in front of the hospital room, someone was there. Waiting for a moment as they were talking with Professor Kim, the content of the conversation was unusual.

At first, he didn't even know if they were Seung-hyun's parents. It wasn't simply because there was no mention of parents. It was because their attitude when talking about Seung-hyun was close to that of talking about a stranger, or a stranger with a very bad relationship, let alone family.

He knew they didn't have a good relationship. In the first place, if they had a good relationship, Seung-hyun would have relied on his family at the point when he found out his life was ending, but he never once sought out his family.

It wasn't that he didn't know the atmosphere at HJ or what kind of people Seung-hyun's parents were, so he had guessed, but directly facing that malice was shocking.

"So, you're saying he's definitely dying, right? Don't change your words later and tell me clearly."

What moved Jae-young, who had been listening to the three people's conversation in shock without being able to say anything, was the cold voice casually mentioning his death.

He knew these were words Seung-hyun couldn't hear. Even if he was awake, the closed door of the hospital room would block out that cruel voice, but wasn't saying such things in front of where he was lying throwing away even human decency?

"A person is dying, and those are the only words you can say in front of him that don't even sound like words?"

"Ha. What's this now? No..."

She looked familiar. Seung-hyun's mother, who had been looking at Jae-young's face for a moment, remembered who he was and was startled. The youngest son of the Y Group. She heard he was just playing the role of a face since he had no interest in management.



They had run into each other a few times at events, but he wasn't someone she expected to meet in a situation like this.

"It doesn't seem like something you should meddle in."

Unlike her, Taehyeop, who had roughly guessed the relationship between Jae-young and Seung-hyun, said. He had consistently received reports about Seung-hyun for a while.

'It's probably just a light relationship anyway. No matter how uninterested in management he is, in the end he's the child of a wealthy family. Even if the Y Group is said to have a quite liberal atmosphere, they wouldn't just watch their son follow around another alpha's tail.'

So he didn't think of it seriously. Although they acted like lovers, he thought it was just a momentary whim. But to think they were still sticking together.

"Haven't you had enough of this childish play? I think it would be good for you to stop caring and return to your place."

It was annoying, but there was nothing good about showing a bad side to an outsider. Taehyeop spoke in the most dignified tone possible.

"I understand you're attached after hanging out together for a while, but you don't need to care this much for someone who will be a stranger once you turn around, do you?"

"..."

"We'll handle the rest, so I think it's best you leave now."

In the end, it meant that you are a stranger and we are Seung-hyun's family, so don't do anything out of line. Jae-young gritted his teeth slightly at Taehyeop's words.

He was right. No matter what happened between the two, what emotions settled, in the end the two were strangers.

Someone who wouldn't be remembered by anyone once Seung-hyun left. If his funeral was held, the chief mourners would be those inhuman parents, and there would be no place for Jae-young to stand.

However, he didn't want to back down like this. A relationship that becomes strangers once you turn around. He wanted to deny those words.

"If you can't do that..."

"...I didn't think you weren't involved in management because you lacked the ability. Was I mistaken?"

Taehyeop said with a frown, annoyed by his attitude of not understanding his words even though he spoke nicely. He clicked his tongue after indirectly telling him not to act stupid.

"It's a meaningless story now, but even if there were no problems, you and Han Seung-hyun couldn't have lasted. Aren't you both alphas? You weren't close enough to overcome that issue and date, were you?"

"..."

"CEO Ju would probably be quite shocked if he found out. If you back down here, I won't make an issue of it, so how about you leave now?"

It was the final warning. It was quite a formal statement since he was at least an outsider to HJ. If he backed down here, he would feel bad but could overlook it as youthful impulsiveness.

However, Jae-young didn't move even after hearing his warning. He didn't want to acknowledge that they were just a relationship that ends once you turn around. Even more so in front of these people who were worse than strangers, only sharing blood.

"Then if we become close enough, will I gain the right to intervene then?"

"I don't know how you could become close enough. Unless a child is born between you two, what meaning does a relationship between alphas have?"

Taehyeop said irritably, not hiding his annoyance. A relationship between alphas was something he didn't want to understand and was meaningless even if he tried to understand.

He didn't know what joy there was in it, but no matter what great conversations they had between themselves, in the end there was nothing

that could be left behind. When even a child is left behind in his own marriage with his wife, where there was no love, let alone affection for each other.

'To think he would rush into something he'll be embarrassed about in a few years, no, a few months. It'll be a boon for the Y Group that the youngest doesn't get involved in management.'

He spoke precisely, thinking he wouldn't understand unless he spoke directly, but somehow Professor Kim's reaction was strange.

He had been fidgeting the whole time, unable to leave the spot after getting caught in the middle of an argument, but his current reaction was unusual.

The person who had been trying not to pay attention to the conversation as much as possible while standing back noticeably flinched at those words and gave Jae-young a look.

As if telling him not to say something. An inexplicable sense of unease came over him at that strange reaction.

"...Professor Kim."

"Yes, yes?"

"Is there something else I don't know?"

It couldn't be, it was absurd, but somehow he couldn't feel assured. At Taehyeop's question, Professor Kim, who was already anxious, was startled and looked at him.

"..."

"I asked, is there something else I don't know?"

Taehyeop unusually urged Professor Kim. It couldn't be, but Professor Kim's reaction and the expression of Jae-young standing in front of him were strange.

Professor Kim couldn't easily answer and looked back and forth between the two, sighing. It would have been better to hide it until the end. He couldn't lie either.

In the end, Taehyeop and his wife were Seung-hyun's family, and now that there was no chance of recovery, it was right to tell the patient's closest family about his condition without filtering.

"...I don't think this is something to discuss here. To my office..."

"Ha."

There was no way Taehyeop didn't know what Professor Kim was asking, but Professor Kim avoided the topic with a troubled face. It was a sufficient answer even without hearing a confirmation, so Taehyeop turned around without saying anything more.

"He keeps disgracing me until the end."

"...What are you talking about? Then, that child..."

Taehyeop walked away, leaving his wife behind. Seung-hyun's mother, who was also left alone, grasped the situation and looked back and forth between Jae-young and Seung-hyun's hospital room with a pale face. It would have been better not to know.

'Not only is that kind of relationship between alphas embarrassing, but there's even a child.'

"...I don't know if I should say this is fortunate since we can attribute the cause of death to something else."

"He's the child you gave birth to in pain, do you not feel even a bit of sadness?"

Jae-young asked Seung-hyun's mother. She laughed hollowly and said,

"I've lived my whole life wishing that child wasn't mine. You, who was born a proper alpha and grew up well, probably won't understand. My life became a mess from the moment that child was born, and I did everything I could just by not killing him and raising him."

The child's father was probably Jae-young. Thinking that, she couldn't hold back the rising anger. Forget the outward image, she didn't want to care about that anymore anyway after deciding to divorce Taehyeop.

Slap-

With a loud sound, Jae-young's head turned. He could have stopped it if he wanted to, but he didn't even feel it was worth it. Jae-young slowly turned his head back and said,

### ***Episode 136***

"...Do you feel refreshed?"

"As if."

She grumbled and raised her hand again. However, this time she didn't strike and just stood there for a while, then took a deep breath and slowly lowered her hand.

"I don't even want to be involved. Do whatever you want now. I don't want to be involved with you or that child anymore."

They said his breath would stop within a few days. She was going to book the flight that took the longest right away and go anywhere. So she could stay at the funeral for the shortest time possible. She glared at Jae-young and said,

"I should have cut ties long ago."

If she had known it would turn out like this, she wouldn't have continued this undesirable married life until the end. After taking another deep breath, she said,

"I don't know what's so great about family and all that, but if you want that position so badly, you can have it. I just have one request. I can't hold my head up out of embarrassment, so make it that only that child died."

"..."

"No, if you really want to say it, wait at least a few months before doing so. I'm sick of this country now too. I don't care what you say after that, just do whatever you want until I don't care anymore."

After quickly finishing what she wanted to say, she patted Jae-young's shoulder and followed the path her husband had taken. The path they had gone, completely severing ties with Seung-hyun, was left with only a cold air.

Even if it was a relationship that would soon end if left alone, just imagining the two of them sitting at Seung-hyun's funeral pretending to be sad as his family made him feel repulsed.

'...It would be nice if I could become his family.'

Should I have tried to force it? It was frustrating that there was nothing he could do as someone who wasn't family. Jae-young let out a long sigh.

"...Will you be okay?"

Professor Kim asked in a worried voice. No matter how much Taehyeop had withdrawn from management, he was still a person with great influence in the business world.

He wasn't someone who would stay crouched forever either. There was nothing good about turning him into an enemy. In response to Professor Kim's question, Jae-young shrugged his shoulders and answered,

"Who knows? I might regret this situation someday... but if I hadn't said those words, I definitely would have regretted it."

If he had let him go without saying anything, he definitely would have regretted it. He didn't know what would happen in the future, but for now, he thought he did well.

"...I don't know either."

Professor Kim let out a short sigh and said. But he too was secretly thinking it was refreshing. He might face disadvantages too, but at most he would just be kicked out to a branch hospital.

'Dealing with VIPs was only exciting at first. I was thinking it didn't suit me anyway...'

"The pheromone levels have completely bottomed out."

While thinking that, Professor Kim turned his gaze to the hospital room and discovered something. The pheromone levels that had been endlessly falling had finally reached 0.

"You can go in now."

He had closely researched the cases of patients who had experienced oxidation fever for several days. Most of them reached death as their bodily functions slowly stopped one by one after their pheromone levels dropped to 0.

It felt unfamiliar because cases were rare, but for traits, pheromones were also a type of biological response, so it was natural that the pheromone gland showed the most prominent changes first.

Still, it was fortunate that pheromones were the first to stop, so there was time to say farewell like this. Professor Kim said a few words to the medical staff, returned, and told Jae-young,

“It’ll be two to three days at most. Now that the period is definitely set, you might feel more at ease.”

He had been anxious the whole time, worrying about what might happen while going back and forth to the hospital, so he was glad he could tell him accurately.

“I’ll get going then.”

If Seung-hyun’s breath completely stopped and they began the funeral procedures, there would be nothing more Jae-young, who had no existence on paper, could do.

If only there was no family, but Seung-hyun’s funeral, where many relatives who had no affection but had to maintain their outward image existed, would definitely be a bleak occasion attended by many people.

‘It would have been nice if the two of them could have had more time together.’

Professor Kim thought as he turned around. He considered comforting Jae-young a bit, but he couldn’t think of any words that would actually be comforting. In the end, thinking it would be pointless meddling, he left the front of the hospital room without looking back.

“ ... ”

At most a few days, at the shortest a few hours later, everything would truly end. Somehow his mind felt calm. Jae-young stood in the hallway alone for a long time, then slowly walked towards the door.

The door that opened so easily it was ridiculous, Jae-young entered the hospital room without anyone stopping him and slowly approached Seung-hyun.

Should he say it was fortunate? Compared to before when he couldn't eat well because he had no appetite, his complexion looked better now that he was receiving nutrients through injections. That made it even more unbelievable.

As if he would wake up like this and ask why he was being so sentimental. Jae-young looked down at Seung-hyun for a long time and smiled.

'Knowing it can't be, even though I know.'

A face peaceful as if asleep. Looking at that face, he had thought each time that it seemed like he would wake up soon, but this was the conclusion. Seung-hyun would cross the path he couldn't return from like this, and Jae-young would be left alone.

Everyone said it was foolish, asking if they weren't both alphas anyway and saying it was rather fortunate, but Jae-young felt like he wouldn't be able to forget this moment for a long time.

It would have been nice if the given time was a bit longer. Jae-young slowly raised his hand. The hand reaching for Seung-hyun's cheek wandered above it and eventually failed to settle, returning to where it originally was.

"You said you were sorry for not regretting meeting me."

Although he knew he couldn't hear, Jae-young slowly opened his mouth. There were words he had to say even if they couldn't reach Seung-hyun.

"I feel the same way, so you don't need to be sorry."

He regretted the hurtful words he had said to Seung-hyun, regretted casually talking about the future as if it was a given, but he didn't regret meeting Seung-hyun.



If he could turn back time, he would do everything he could for him during that given time. It would be endless no matter how much he did, but at least within that time, he would pour his everything.

“I’m sorry for getting angry. Actually... I wasn’t angry at you, I was angry at myself. I was also happy to see those fireworks, no. I was so happy to see you watching those fireworks that I couldn’t think of anything else.”

It would have been nice if these were the last words Seung-hyun heard. Jae-young slowly continued,

“I was angry at myself for not being able to take care of you properly until you caught a cold, but if I acknowledged that, it felt like everything was really my fault, so...”

Thinking about it again, it was a foolish thing to do. Jae-young bit his lip, unable to finish his words.

“I’m sorry. And I’m sorry for saying this so late. I had a lot I wanted to say... but now this is all that comes to mind.”

There were definitely many good moments, but the fact that all that came to mind now was himself saying hurtful words made him sad. After being unable to continue for a long time, Jae-young spoke again.

“And, thank you... for saying you like me. You mustered up that courage, but I just said stupid things like that.”

How much agonizing must there have been to say those words? Jae-young thought of Seung-hyun, who must have agonized alone, and washed his face. He didn’t cry well even when he was young, but these days it felt like he was shedding all the tears of his life.

“...”

He felt sorry for the child, but he was grateful Seung-hyun didn’t know of the child’s existence. Even though he knew Seung-hyun couldn’t hear, Jae-young had no intention of ever mentioning the child.

He would bear the guilt alone, so he hoped Seung-hyun, who had been deeply troubled, could leave a bit more peacefully at least.

“I’ll live well. Because I was happy during the time we spent together. I’m grateful you made these memories for me, and that’s enough... so don’t think about being sorry or anything like that.”

He regretted easily talking about tomorrow and the future without knowing anything while by his side. But he understood why Seung-hyun couldn’t say anything.

It must have been because he didn’t want to make him worry and didn’t want to plant needless guilt. And that was the same for Jae-young now.

If he could, he wanted to cling to him saying he didn’t want it to end like this. However, even jokingly, he couldn’t say such things in front of Seung-hyun, who was in a deep sleep.

“Sleep well. Don’t dream about me, just... I think it’s enough if it’s just a happy dream.”

Jae-young sincerely wished and gently placed his hand on top of Seung-hyun’s. The warm hand was so soft he didn’t want to let go.

With all his attention focused on that hand, Jae-young failed to notice the numbers on the machine beside him that began to move and remained still for a long time.

### ***Episode 137***

He felt that something was strange only after the air in the room became so stuffy that he could instinctively sense the change.

If it had been anything else, he would have called the medical staff right away, as he had been told that nothing would be strange no matter what happened. However, this situation was so absurd that it made him doubt his own senses.

He had been told that he was preparing to fall asleep after releasing all the pheromones he had, but what he felt now was definitely pheromones. He had clearly confirmed that the electronic display showing the pheromone levels was at 0, but now there were numbers above it as well.

However, what was strange wasn’t simply the fact that pheromones were felt. If the faintly felt pheromones now were an alpha’s, he would have rather thought it was a temporary symptom.

But that couldn't be, because what was clearly touching his skin was an omega's. At first he thought it was just his feeling, but as time passed, he became convinced that it was an omega's.

"...Professor Kim."

Jae-young searched for Professor Kim a beat late. As soon as he came out of the hospital room, he urgently told the nurse he ran into that the pheromones were strange. The nurse who looked into the room at those words and saw the rising pheromone levels started moving quickly.

"The pheromone levels have started to rise. But it's omega pheromones, not alpha."

"What does that mean?"

"I don't understand it in my head either, but it's true. We need to call the professor quickly..."

The quiet hallway suddenly became noisy. Jae-young, who was naturally pushed to a corner of the hallway, stood still, unable to grasp the situation, and was pushed out by the medical staff saying they would contact him again.

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"This is the first case like this, so it's difficult to say anything yet. The situation is too confusing to be certain of anything..."

Professor Kim, who had been urgently called not long after going down, said while wiping the sweat beading his forehead. It was the first case he had encountered, so he hadn't even fully grasped the situation yet.

"I'll tell you again when it becomes more certain, but..."

"You said the disappearance of pheromones is the process of the body's functions stopping."

Jae-young interrupted Professor Kim and said. He thought it might be too optimistic, but he wanted confirmation that there was even a slight possibility.

"Then, if the pheromones have started moving again... can I think that the body's condition has recovered?"

“...I’m not sure yet. Theoretically that would be the case, but pheromones different from the original are appearing, and above all, the current physical condition...”

While focusing on life support treatment for a while, he had never done a proper examination except for measuring basic values. So the priority was to properly check from the beginning first.

“Even a small possibility is fine.”

Professor Kim tried to say indirectly that it was difficult to talk about, but Jae-young didn’t back down easily. He wanted to hear that it could be possible, even if it was a slight possibility.

“Such a possibility shouldn’t be spoken of lightly, so it’s hard to say...”

“It’s not 0, you mean.”

It was a cautious answer, but it wasn’t a denial. Even a sliver of possibility made Jae-young able to endure.

Even if it was a hope that would shatter tomorrow, being able to imagine Seung-hyun opening his eyes made a big difference. Jae-young thought as he looked at Seung-hyun through the window.

‘Please, even if it’s just for a moment, if only I could see you open your eyes...’

“For now, go back. I’ll contact you again.”

He thought everything was over, but somehow it started again from the beginning. Professor Kim sent Jae-young back and began rearranging the schedule for tomorrow from scratch.

And so, he conducted every possible test one by one. And Professor Kim and the medical staff came to doubt their eyes whenever the results came out.

“Are these values possible?”

“Where did the change start...”

The most noticeable change was the pheromones. He had clearly confirmed that the levels had reached 0, and the pheromone gland's function was stopping, but now new pheromones were circulating in Seung-hyun's body.

It wasn't the recessive alpha's he originally had, but an unfamiliar omega's.

"This is the first case like this. An alpha turning into an omega. It's thesis-worthy."

"There are cases of betas manifesting late, but..."

In the confusion, everyone wandered around for a moment, unable to find what to do, but with the following test results, they discovered the source of the omega pheromones.

He understood it in theory, but it wasn't something that could happen to just anyone. It was close to a miracle.

"The fetus created a membrane to wrap itself. Usually alpha pregnancies are dangerous because there's no uterus... but this can be seen as a disposable uterus."

"It seems the child's pheromones stimulated the pheromone gland after the patient's pheromones were all exhausted."

Usually, even if they were traits, pheromones didn't come out until they manifested, but sometimes the body reacted instinctively when faced with a life-threatening situation. The fetus, sensing the instability of the mother's body, released its own pheromones, and those pheromones made the pheromone gland that had released everything it had start moving again.

As one part of the body started functioning properly, it affected every part of the body. The body was still a mess, but at least it wasn't to the point of worrying about what would happen tomorrow.

"Then what's the reason for not regaining consciousness?"

"The body is weakened, and proper pheromones have only just started circulating, so we'll have to observe a bit more."

He still couldn't be certain, but if it continued like this, there was a high possibility that Seung-hyun would open his eyes again.

He had thought the child settling in was consuming Seung-hyun's life faster, but on the contrary, that child had saved Seung-hyun.

"I should write a thesis. This is the first case like this, so it could be the foundation for a new treatment method..."

"The possibility of alpha pregnancy itself is low, and moreover, the variables manifest differently for each patient, so intentionally creating a situation like this is nearly impossible."

So this was truly a miracle itself. A child who came through countless possibilities, a child who found a way to protect itself as the mother's condition rapidly deteriorated.

And it was fortunate that the child was an omega. If it had been an alpha, there wouldn't have been much change, but a completely different pheromone filling the body ended up having a good effect.

'It's unknown if this pheromone will be maintained after the child is born, but it'll definitely be a shock for someone who was an alpha to remanifest as an omega. But... whatever it is, it's better than dying.'

Professor Kim thought so and was relieved. It was fortunate that there was someone who would be happy that the possibility of Seung-hyun waking up and being able to continue living had increased.

After a long meeting, Professor Kim found his phone and called Jae-young. Jae-young, who had been unable to leave the vicinity of the hospital, returned to Seung-hyun's hospital room.

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The hospital room that had been filled with various devices was neatly organized. Jae-young couldn't leave that place, as if Seung-hyun's hospital room had become his own home, upon hearing that his body hadn't fully recovered yet and that he would naturally open his eyes once the pheromones adapted and his tired body recovered.

The news about Seung-hyun was relayed to his family as well, but no one was happy. At best, Tae-sung said it was fortunate, and Seon-hu came for a short hospital visit and left.

'We weren't that close, but still, I'm really glad. When he wakes up, let's really become close this time.'

Strangely, he had no thoughts even when seeing Seon-hu now. Jae-young, who had only seen him off to the front of the hospital room door, returned to his familiar place again.

"...I thought it would be fine as long as he woke up anytime, but now that there's hope he'll wake up, each day feels so long."

The saying that human greed has no end was spot on. He was clearly grateful just for the possibility that Seung-hyun could open his eyes, but now he was feeling frustrated, wishing he would open his eyes even a little faster.

'It would be better to give birth to the child. No, should I say you must give birth to it...? We need time to prepare in case something happens again once the child's pheromones drop, and right now, the child's existence...'

He told them to tell Seung-hyun directly once he woke up since giving birth to the child was Seung-hyun's choice, but if he could choose, he would have naturally nodded.

In fact, there was only one option, so the same answer would come back, but he also wanted to hear Seung-hyun say it was okay. For that, he had to wake up quickly first.

"...Actually, I still can't believe it."

When he heard that there was a high possibility Seung-hyun would live, he heard some long and great explanation, but in the end, few words remained in his head. He just thought it might be a dream, and if it was a dream, he didn't want to wake up.

"If he opens his eyes and I hear his voice, I think it'll feel a bit more real then."

So I hope you open your eyes and look at me soon, Jae-young thought as he held Seung-hyun's hand.

### ***Episode 138***

Only the sound of the humidifier running tickled his ears in the quiet room. Even while hearing that sound, Seung-hyun couldn't feel that he was alive.

He did think his ears felt a bit blocked, but perhaps because he was used to resting his body without doing anything, he didn't feel a sense of discomfort.

The moment Seung-hyun thought something was strange was when the sound of a car horn blared loudly from outside. Because the window was closed, it wasn't very loud, but it was enough to grate on Seung-hyun's nerves that had only been monotonous.

"..."

Are there cars in the afterlife too? That's a bit tiring. While having that strange thought, his hand that had twitched without him knowing felt stuffy.

Seung-hyun slowly opened his eyes. Instead of an empty white space, the slightly familiar hospital room ceiling came into view.

'Am I not dead?'

Was this a miracle, or was it an illusion? If it was an illusion, it felt like the world was being too cruel to him.

But for a dream, the warmth of the hand grasping his own felt too warm. When he lowered his gaze to check the identity of the warmth, he saw a familiar hand.

It was a face he wouldn't mind even if it was an illusion. The warmth that preciousely held his hand as if sitting uncomfortably asleep felt so good that Seung-hyun unconsciously grasped that hand.

"...!"

Jae-young's shoulders twitched at that small movement. Was it his imagination? Jae-young, who slowly opened his eyes and raised his head, froze the moment his eyes met Seung-hyun's.

"..."

He had many things he definitely wanted to say, and he had talked to the sleeping Seung-hyun to the point of being bothersome, but now that their gazes met, his mind went blank.

Was it a dream, was it a misunderstanding? The hand holding Seung-hyun's hand tightened strongly.



“Ah.”

“...!”

As soon as Seung-hyun groaned in pain, Jae-young, startled, let go of his hand and pulled it back. He was alive. He was looking at him and reacting to his movements.

“It’s not a dream, right?”

Jae-young asked Seung-hyun. He wanted to hear the answer directly from him. With his voice, he wanted to hear a definite answer that he was alive.

“...Cough.”

Seung-hyun, who tried to answer, coughed dryly, unable to make a sound right away with his blocked throat. His throat that hadn’t been used for a long time was completely dried up.

Jae-young fumbled a bit and found water on the table to pour for him. Wondering if he lacked strength in his hands, he held the glass to his mouth like to a child and focused on Seung-hyun swallowing the water.

“Haa...”

Seung-hyun, who had moistened his throat, let out a long sigh. How much time had passed? Jae-young’s clothes were definitely lighter.

But there was something more important than that. After looking at Jae-young’s face for a moment, Seung-hyun reached out his hand to him, who seemed so tense that even breathing was difficult.

“...!”

The surprised Jae-young froze, unable to even hug Seung-hyun back. The body that filled his arms was definitely warm.

“I thought if it was an illusion, it would be too mean of a trick.”

The moment he saw Jae-young’s face, he was happy as if he had never had such a thought. What did it matter if it was an illusion or a dream? Just seeing this face again made him this happy.

“I guess it’s not that either. Just... if it’s a dream, a little longer...”

Before Seung-hyun finished speaking, Jae-young hugged him back. Now it hit him.

When he heard that there was a high possibility of Seung-hyun waking up, he was surprised but just stayed in a daze for a while, showing a somewhat calm reaction, but now it felt like all the emotions he had postponed were rushing in.

Jae-young, who was much bigger than Seung-hyun, embraced him. Seung-hyun felt his shoulder getting soaked where Jae-young had buried his head.

‘He must have missed me as much as I missed him.’

“I was scared it would be the last time.”

While patting Jae-young’s back, Seung-hyun stopped his hand at the mumbled voice. What was the last time like again? Before his mind could find the answer, it came back.

“I wasn’t angry at you. I hated myself for not being able to take better care of you even though I knew you were sick.”

“...”

“That day, I was really happy. Everything we saw together was beautiful. Enough that I wanted to see it again anytime.”

Jae-young poured out his words as if forgetting to breathe. He was glad that moment didn’t become their last. It felt like a dream to be able to say those words weren’t sincere.

“...Now I understand why I insisted on going out.”

Seung-hyun asked in a calm voice. Jae-young nodded, his head still buried in Seung-hyun’s embrace.

“How could I not know that?”

It was a fact he knew too well to the point of regretting not realizing it sooner. At that answer, Seung-hyun patted Jae-young’s back again and said,

“Of course I know too. Why you said those words, how much it must have bothered you.”

That had been on his mind. Seung-hyun detached Jae-young’s face that was clinging to him and held that face with both hands, meeting his gaze.

“Just as you know why I did that, I know everything too... So stop being sorry now.”

Right now, he just wanted to see his face. The reddened eyes trembled and started shedding tears again.

“Right now, I just want to see your face. Haven’t I not seen it for a long time?”

He didn’t know exactly how much time had passed. However, judging by the lighter clothes and the flowers he had seen until he fell asleep not being visible through the window, it must not have been a very short time.

So now he just wanted to look at each other’s faces without thinking about anything. Jae-young nodded at his words and met Seung-hyun’s gaze.

May we never lose this gaze again. With that thought, Jae-young captured Seung-hyun in his blurred vision.

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“...You don’t seem very surprised. You’re not even doubting it.”

“Maybe it’s because there have been so many surprising things, but this level doesn’t make me think much now.”

After staying like that for a while and getting scolded by a nurse doing rounds for not telling them right away when the patient woke up, Seung-hyun underwent several tests again.

Fortunately, most were problems that simple drug treatment and time would solve. However, Professor Kim, who said it would be good to observe the progress while hospitalized for about a week, brought up the topic with difficulty.

‘Will he be able to accept this easily? He’s lived his whole life as an alpha.’

However, Seung-hyun accepted the situation so easily that it made his worries seem pointless. Perhaps because everything that had happened so far was surprising, this incident felt rather logical.

‘And...’

There was a story that Professor Kim might not believe if he told him. Because he had a vague idea of the identity of that child who had melted into him, Seung-hyun could accept the situation without much shock.

‘The child...’

It was something he had never even thought about in his life, but perhaps because that small lump came to mind, rather than fear, the thought of wanting to meet the child healthy came first.

“The child is much smaller than the expected weeks. Alpha pregnancies itself have many variables, and it could also be that the child exhausted its energy trying to protect itself.”

Seung-hyun was only able to leave Professor Kim’s office after a long time after hearing various information, such as the fact that what surrounded the child was literally disposable and the possibility of having a child again was low, that the child would be an omega but it was still unknown whether omega pheromones would remain in Seung-hyun’s body after giving birth.

“...You don’t dislike it?”

Jae-young, who had been waiting in front, asked as he took Seung-hyun to the hospital room. Jae-young thought it was fortunate, but Seung-hyun might not.

What should he do if that was the case? Jae-young asked with a slightly complicated feeling. Before Seung-hyun woke up, he only prayed for him to wake up, but now there were many things to think about.

More realistic and less than ideal things. Jae-young took a small deep breath. What if Seung-hyun doesn’t feel welcome about the child? He’ll probably give birth since his condition could become even more dangerous if he doesn’t, but what he thinks is a separate issue.

It wouldn't be strange if he was flustered or disliked it since it was something he had never thought about in his life, but to Jae-young, the child was the only existence that proved what happened between the two of them.

If such an existence was denied by his most precious person, it definitely wouldn't feel good.

'But Seung-hyun's intention is most important. I can't force him to think positively. Whatever reaction comes back, I won't show that I'm upset.'

While having various thoughts with a complicated mind, Seung-hyun tapped Jae-young who had a serious expression. He looked so pitifully obvious about what he was thinking.

'That's the usual way of thinking though...'

"I'm okay with it. No... I want to meet the child soon."

At the unexpected answer, the hand pushing the wheelchair stopped. He had the look of wondering if he had heard what he wanted to hear.

"I hope the child takes after you. Then it would be very cute."

When he added a word casually, Jae-young's face turned red. It was unclear whether it was because of joy or surprise, but one thing was certain.

He would never again have useless thoughts about Seung-hyun disliking the child. Seung-hyun smiled slightly and tapped the hand holding the wheelchair as if telling him to move again.

### ***Episode 139***

It didn't take long for the news that Seung-hyun had woken up to spread. Although not many people were genuinely happy about the news, Seung-hyun didn't really care.

They weren't his family anyway, and he had no desire to look good to them. If they would cut ties with him forever, he would be grateful. Thinking that way, Seung-hyun peacefully prepared to be discharged from the hospital.

However, the day before his discharge, an uninvited guest finally came to see Seung-hyun. It was Seung-hyun's mother.

With only a few hours left until her flight, upon hearing the news that Seung-hyun might wake up, she canceled her flight and stayed in Korea. Since the reason for urgently leaving the country had disappeared, she planned to finalize the divorce proceedings and completely leave Korea.

Taehyeop also had no lingering attachment to their married life, so the divorce process would proceed without difficulty. While spending peaceful time finding a place to stay until then after leaving the house she had lived in for a long time, she suddenly thought of Seung-hyun.

It wasn't that she was worried or felt fortunate. However, before completely leaving this country, she thought it might be better to see him at least once.

It was just a whim. With the thought of completely settling things since it was the last time, Seung-hyun's mother visited his hospital room.

“ ... ”

Although it was still unreasonable to say he looked healthy, she definitely saw Seung-hyun with his eyes open and conscious. At that moment, the first thought that came to her was that it was tiring.

From the moment he was born until now, she had seen him all her life, but except for when she found out the child in her womb was an alpha, she had never felt particularly attached to him. Even that was closer to relief.

She had been told it would be difficult to get pregnant again, but since this child was an alpha, it was okay. She had endured thinking that way and feeling fortunate. But when she heard there was a high possibility of him manifesting as recessive, it felt like her world was collapsing.

After that, she had never looked at Seung-hyun positively. He only seemed like an obstacle meant to ruin her life.

She knew Seung-hyun was trying in his own way. However, that was something too obvious. If he was born lacking, shouldn't he at least do that much?

So she didn't feel sympathetic or pitiful towards him.

'I don't even understand myself why I came here.'

But for some unknown reason, she had come to see Seung-hyun of her own will. Except for when she came to express her anger, it was the first time this had happened.

“You finally woke up.”

At the first words uttered in a cold voice, Seung-hyun didn't even blink an eye. Rather, he just looked at her with indifferent eyes as if seeing a stranger.

Had Seung-hyun ever looked at her with such eyes? Although Seung-hyun also didn't think of her as a precious family, his current face was unfamiliar.

Eyes looking at a completely unrelated stranger. It was a gaze similar to how she had looked at Seung-hyun.

“Now are you feeling refreshed?”

“Why do you think that would be the case?”

A question was answered with a question. She paused for a moment and thought. Why did she think he would feel refreshed?

“Because now you can do as you please. As if living as a failed alpha was too boring, you even dated an alpha. And on top of that... Ha...”

Pregnancy. Not wanting to say the words herself, she sighed, holding her forehead.

“If your father, if you had only known that the chairman was aware of your condition...”

“Why should I care about that?”

Seung-hyun spoke as if it was pathetic. He had thought there would be some reason for her to come all the way here, but even after coming this far, her words were the same.

‘I should say it's fortunate that she's consistent.’

He was grateful that he could cut off Seung-hyun's family without a shred of lingering attachment. Seung-hyun took a step closer to her and said,

“If that's all you have to say, it's best you leave now.”

“...What?”

“You also find me so embarrassing and disgusting, and I also have no lingering attachment to family, so it worked out well. Isn't it fine to go back and live as strangers?”

“Han Seung-hyun” definitely had a desire to be acknowledged by his family. It stemmed more from a sense of duty rather than love for family, but it was the only thing he cared about for the sake of his goal, so he felt a little sorry for cutting it off on his own, but now he didn't feel sorry at all.

“You know better than me how meaningless and cumbersome family is, don't you?”

“...”

He thought she would rush at him in anger, but unexpectedly, she didn't get angry. She just had a pensive look on her face and quietly looked down at the floor.

‘He said he's getting a divorce. Well, now this person can be free too.’

Seung-hyun looked at her and opened his mouth. He could intuitively feel that this would be the last moment he saw her.

“Now let's just live as strangers. You can think you never had a son from the beginning and live as you wish.”

“...”

“Even if you leave that house and live on your own, and someday feel the urge to come back on a whim, don't come back. That would be the best path for us.”

He thought he would be angry as soon as he saw her, but strangely, he felt calm. It must be because she was no longer Taehyeop's wife and knew there was no possibility of Seung-hyun returning to the company. Because Seung-hyun's success was no longer related to her well-being.

But there seemed to be another reason besides that. However, she nodded her head without ever knowing the identity of that emotion until the end.

“...Okay.”



She quietly left the hospital room without saying anything more. Jae-young, who had been worried there might be a commotion, approached Seung-hyun.

“...Are you okay?”

“What is there to not be okay about? I actually feel refreshed.”

Seung-hyun said, shrugging his shoulders. He definitely felt refreshed. He felt he would never see her again.

“My mother won’t come looking for me again. If it ended with this level of conversation, it’s quite peaceful.”

It was surprising that she had decided to leave on her own from the beginning. He thought she would never be able to let go of the HJ name out of greed, but although the reason wasn’t very pleasant, what mattered was that she was leaving that house of her own will.

‘No one in that house can be sane.’

Although she didn’t seem to be aware of it herself, Seung-hyun felt a bit of relief on her face. He had wished for her to die, but when he actually saw her face, he felt strange.

Maybe it was because she had already left that house and felt at ease, so her thoughts had changed a bit. But even so, he didn’t want to get involved with her again.

The ties of family had already ended, and there was no one to apologize to anymore. Only the current Seung-hyun, who had a little of his body and memories, existed.

‘So we’ll never meet again. We shouldn’t.’

Someday, when she could look back on the situation more leisurely, she might feel sorry for Seung-hyun, but even so, he had no intention of accepting it.

There was no one for her to apologize to now, and Seung-hyun’s parents had thrown away even their last chance. Unless it was in the past, the real Seung-hyun was already as good as dead, so from now on, he planned to live a life completely of his own.

Maybe she was a little better than Taehyeop, who didn't even come to see him. Seung-hyun thought so and checked the time. It was almost dinner time.

"Aren't you hungry?"

It didn't matter to him since he would get hospital food, but Jae-young had to have his meals separately. Since he had stayed in the hospital room at lunchtime saying he wasn't hungry, it must be a time when he was really hungry now.

"...Ah, yes."

Jae-young, who had been lost in thought, answered a beat late. Was it because he was worried? Seung-hyun spoke to reassure Jae-young.

"I'm really fine. We weren't on good terms originally. I think it's fortunate that we can completely cut ties like this."

Seung-hyun spoke as if it was no big deal. However, Jae-young still seemed uneasy, with an ambiguous expression.

"...Don't you think you need family?"

"There are families in this world that are better off not existing. You said you saw it too, so don't you know?"

"..."

"So don't worry about it. I'm not foolish enough to do stupid things blinded by familial affection."

Seung-hyun spoke with relief. Although it was about his parents, it resonated with Jae-young in a slightly different way.

'...It seems he doesn't have good memories of family, so with me and the child too...'

Would he feel burdened by being tied together under the name of family? A shadow fell over Jae-young's face as he felt anxious.

"Aren't you tired of eating near the hospital? I'm not a child, and I can stay alone, so why don't you go somewhere far today? You can even go home. It's like the hospital has become your home."

Seung-hyun, who didn't notice that change, just suggested to Jae-young that he must be tired of the restaurants near the hospital by now and asked how about going somewhere else today.

### ***Episode 140***

“You shouldn't think you've completely recovered yet. Take your medication consistently, and for follow-up visits...”

“I don't even remember how many times I've heard that.”

As the discharge day that didn't seem like it would come approached, Seung-hyun shook his head with a slightly annoyed face. Jae-young's overprotectiveness alone was enough nagging.

“Since this is an unprecedented case, it wouldn't be strange for something to happen. So don't think it's unnecessary and contact us immediately even for minor changes.”

“I understand.”

While Seung-hyun was calm, today was a very meaningful day for Jae-young. Because Seung-hyun was able to walk out of the hospital with his own feet, a place he thought he would never leave.

Although he didn't have the stamina to walk for a long time yet, just being able to walk from the hospital lobby to the car was a moving thing for Jae-young.

“Jae-young, do you not need to go to your own house?”

“...Do you want me to go somewhere else?”

“No, I'm not telling you to go... It's just that you've only been at the hospital. You used to stop by your family home occasionally. But recently you've only been here...”

It was a tone of concern for Jae-young, but it sounded a bit different to him. Was he drawing a line after all? Since he had bad memories of family, he might be making the line clear from the start.

Not knowing at all that Jae-young had taken his words that way, Seung-hyun added one more thing.

“After you take me home, it would be good for you to stop by your house too. You’ve been through a lot. Rest for about a day.”

“I’m fine. And it’s only the first day of discharge. For about a day, someone needs to watch over...”

“Don’t worry about that.”

Seung-hyun said in a calm voice. Don’t worry, he said. Did he have some faith in something?

“Someone promised to come.”

“...Do you have a friend?”

It was a bit rude, but it was true. Since he had never seen Seung-hyun meet anyone else, it was hard to believe that there was someone who would visit. Did he call a caregiver separately?

“Not a friend, but... Lee Seon-hu said he would visit.”

“What?”

At the unexpected name, Jae-young was surprised and stopped the car. Seon-hu, was he talking about the Seon-hu he knew?

“Are you talking about... the person I know?”

“If there’s only one Lee Seon-hu you know, it must be him.”

He had never even seen them contacting each other, but suddenly he was coming to his house. As Jae-young had a dumbfounded expression, Seung-hyun gave a brief explanation.

“I think it was when you went out to eat... I got a call once. When I asked how he knew my number, he said he peeked at Han Tae-sung’s phone.”

“Why would he...”

“Who knows? I don’t know well either, but when he said he wanted to meet, I agreed. You need time to rest too, and I knew you wouldn’t rest at all if you left me alone.”

“I’m fine. Just...”

“I already made the promise, so go in and rest today. It would be good to go to your family home too. It’s close by.”

Seung-hyun cut off Jae-young’s stubbornness decisively. Going to the family home, he said. He wasn’t mentally prepared yet.

Jaeseong kept his promise and didn’t talk about Seung-hyun, but the fact that Jae-young was practically living at the hospital had reached Madam Ju through someone else’s mouth.

‘It seems I’ll have to explain things when I go home. Isn’t it better to do it sooner?’

He had already ignored the threat disguised as a suggestion several times, so he was afraid of what would happen if he went back. He couldn’t avoid it forever, but he had planned to introduce Seung-hyun to his family only after finishing their conversation.

‘At this rate, I might not have the right or anything to introduce him...’

For that, he needed to at least get a definite answer that they would become a family, but he wasn’t confident. He had no good memories of family, and he even heard an answer that he didn’t place much importance on family, so his anxiety grew.

He could just not go to the family home, but this anxiety didn’t seem like it would be easily resolved. Jae-young let out a long sigh and said,

“...What time did you agree to meet?”

“Around three o’clock... It’s around 1:30 now, so it’ll be a good time when we arrive.”

“You’re not close, and there’s not much to talk about for long, so I’ll probably go in the evening. Executive Director Han isn’t the type to leave Seon-hu out for long.”

“I didn’t talk about when to part ways, so I’m not sure...”

“It’ll probably be like that. Then I’ll go again in the evening.”

This was the most Jae-young could concede. Was he that worried? This time, Seung-hyun nodded.

“Okay. Do as you please.”

Although his condition wasn't great yet, it wasn't serious enough for him to stick by his side all the time. If it was, the hospital wouldn't have discharged him.

‘Anyway, it's overprotection.’

However, that excessive concern didn't feel bad. It weighed on his mind that Jae-young couldn't rest and kept struggling, but forcing him to rest probably wasn't a good thing either.

“I'll contact you after Lee Seon-hu leaves.”

Only after receiving a promise to contact him right away several times did Jae-young let Seung-hyun get out of the car. After dropping off Seung-hyun, Jae-young circled the neighborhood a few times for no reason and parked the car nearby.

‘I have nothing to pack anyway, and I'm not hungry...’

I had nothing to do, so should I just wait here for Seon-hu to leave and go back as soon as he's alone? It would be a few hours at most. Thinking that, Jae-young turned off the engine and reclined the seat.

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“It's been a while.”

Seon-hu, who came with snacks in his hand as if visiting for a housewarming, greeted him. Seung-hyun, who awkwardly accepted the greeting, guided Seon-hu to a seat.

“...We weren't that close. I was surprised you contacted me first.”

Although he accepted the meeting out of curiosity about what he wanted to talk about, he still couldn't guess why Seon-hu wanted to meet him.

“I wanted to meet again at least once. We parted without properly talking that time.”

“Don’t we have nothing to talk about?”

“I heard a lot about you from Tae-sung. I don’t know you well, but whenever I heard about you, I always thought it was strange.”

“ ... ”

“Although I only saw you briefly, you didn’t seem like that kind of person, so I wondered why he spoke so badly of you.”

Seung-hyun, who thought it was because Seon-hu was too kind, swallowed his words without answering. He now knew what kind of life “Han Seung-hyun” had lived and why he acted that way, but he also knew that he couldn’t justify all his past actions.

So even if it felt bad that Tae-sung pretended to know Seung-hyun well, he didn’t think Tae-sung was wrong.

‘...But if it was Seon-hu, he would have tried not to see him badly even if I hadn’t become “Han Seung-hyun.”’

In the original work, Seon-hu was repeatedly fooled by Seung-hyun, but he didn’t fear or avoid him. Rather, he wanted to meet him in person and talk.

‘If you have a problem with me, you should tell me directly. So tell me. I’ll make time anytime.’

He was so frustratingly kind and believed in the goodness of human nature that it made him sigh at times, but the Seon-hu he directly interacted with was just a good person. If such a person had been by “Han Seung-hyun’s” side from the beginning, would his personality have changed a bit?

“At least the Han Seung-hyun I saw was like that. He did change a bit after finding out I was Tae-sung’s spouse... but the more I felt him being cautious, the more I thought he wasn’t such a bad person.”

It was a line-drawing close to ignoring, but wouldn’t his behavior when he thought he was an ordinary person be closer to his true feelings? So I wanted to talk again. And when I found out the reason for pushing people away, I felt a bit of regret.

I should have tried to approach him more. It's not like I would have lost anything by doing that. The image of him pushing people away as if he didn't want anyone by his side alternated with him calmly saying his health wasn't good.

At first, Seung-hyun definitely didn't seem to dislike human warmth. No, he rather seemed to enjoy the conversation.

So now that there was no reason to push him away, I thought maybe this time we could really become good friends.

"I'm no longer part of that family. I don't want to be involved with them either. I submitted my resignation, I said I would cut ties with my parents and they accepted. I'll settle my shares too, so I have nothing to do with HJ..."

"Then we can become even better friends. I don't really like that family either."

Seon-hu said with a grin. To the point of understanding why Tae-sung, who was on his honeymoon, was such a frustrating person, the HJ family was unpleasant even to the kind-hearted Seon-hu.

"We can meet sometimes, complain together, and hear about each other's lives to avoid them. That would be perfect."

Seung-hyun looked at him and unknowingly chuckled. Was it because he was the protagonist, or was he just a good person? He really was someone he couldn't hate.

"...I'm not the type to be all friendly. Rather, it would be frustrating. I probably wouldn't be a fun person to talk to either."

"Still, you're not refusing."

Seung-hyun shrugged at Seon-hu's words. Yeah, it was still awkward, but he definitely didn't dislike it.

'Now that I've completely escaped the story, maybe this time we can really become friends.'

Seung-hyun thought so and smiled. Now that the rest of his life was solely his own, making new connections was awkward but welcome.