

Real Man 10

Chapter 10

He felt a sense of relief after greeting them.

Maybe it was because of the cloudless blue sky that made him feel more refreshed.

“It’s so cool!”

Yoo-hyun shouted loudly with his chest open.

It was something that he would never have done before.

Maybe that was why his face looked much brighter than before.

He looked like he had put down a heavy burden.

Clang.

At that moment, Kang Jun Ki and Ha Jun Seok, who were next to him, wrapped their arms around his neck from both sides.

“Hey, we’re going to the police station now. How about one more drink?”

Yoo-hyun had to swallow the incredulous laugh that he spat out.

These guys were serious.

When he got home, he was scolded first.

“Oh my, you smell like alcohol. Good job, good job. You’re a grown-up, what are you doing until the sun rises?”

“I just hung out with them.”

“That’s right. Good job. You should have some fun with your friends.”

He thought his mother would be harsh on him, but she smiled and handed him a cup of honey tea.

She probably wouldn’t have let it go so easily if she knew he had gone to the police station.

Ignorance is bliss.

He cleared his mind as he drank the warm honey tea and suddenly remembered what Kim Hyun Soo had said yesterday.

“Mom, do you have any pain?”

“No, I don’t. How healthy do you think I am?”

“Haha.”

His mother looked fine as she lifted her arms like a bodybuilder.

He covered his mouth and laughed at her amusing appearance and his mother got up from her seat.

“Hey, don’t say weird things and come out and eat.”

A little later.

A small table was set in the living room with food.

The warm bean sprout soup and the salty soy sauce braised meat went well together.

Yoo-hyun gave his mother a thumbs up throughout the meal.

His mother smiled constantly at the sight of her son who had become more lively.

When he finished eating, he took out a white envelope from his back pocket and handed it to his mother.

“And this... please take it.”

“Huh? What is this?”

“It’s money for you, mom. I saved up quite a lot from the scholarship money and the part-time job.”

“Hey, I don’t need it. I make a lot of money too. Don’t worry and buy something for your friends.”

Yoo-hyun turned the conversation around as if he knew she would say that.

“Then use it to get a check-up and buy a suit with the rest.”

“A suit? Why? Is it because...”

“Yes. I have to interview for Hanseong Electronics. There’s not much time left.”

“Really? For real?”

Was it what she had been waiting for?

His mother barely covered her bursting laughter with her hand when he nodded his head.

She then slapped his thigh with her other hand.

“Oh my, my Hyun is amazing. Hoho. That’s right, this is not the time for this. Let’s go quickly.”

“Right now? What about the side dish shop?”

“It’s okay. The boss is taking care of it today. You know you’re lucky, right? This mom will make you look amazing in one outfit.”

His mother looked excited about shopping with her son.

The preparation was quick.

Yoo-hyun walked down the alley with his mother and took a bus with her.

He couldn’t remember when was the last time he took a bus with his mother.

It must have been a long time ago when he was very young.

He sat on the seat next to the back door of the bus, where two seats were connected, and had a lot of conversations with his mother.

“Mom, how’s the side dish shop...”

“Kid, how about your job...”

They talked about everything from his mother’s side dish shop to Yoo-hyun’s job prospects.

The conversation between the two lasted until the bus stopped.

There was an outlet building that had opened recently in front of Yoo-hyun when he got off the bus.

He carefully looked at the signboard in front of the entrance on the first floor.

Then his mother pulled him with a bright expression.

“Why are you looking at that? Men’s clothes are on the second floor.”

“Just curious. Mom, let’s go this way.”

He deliberately went around to the other side and moved to the elevator.

The elevator door opened and there were women’s clothing stores under bright lights.

He had to pass through many women’s clothing stores to get to the men’s clothing store.

He walked slowly and watched his mother’s expression.

She pretended not to care, but her eyes were moving fast.

‘Something that she can wear comfortably at work and still look stylish.’

He already had a goal in mind.

He hadn't lost his keen eye that he had honed for a long time while dealing with his company boss and major clients.

He believed that his mother would want the same thing.

"How about this?"

"Nah, not good."

As expected, his mother shook her head.

But she couldn't hide the lingering look in her eyes.

Even though she pretended not to care, he saw her blink faster than usual when he spoke.

He also felt the change in her heartbeat that was conveyed by her crossed arms and her wavering gaze.

The subtle movement of her hands and feet toward the direction he pointed out revealed his mother's hidden feelings.

"I'm just looking, okay? What about this?"

He picked up a color tee with a light tone at the hiking brand store, and his mother hesitated a bit.

"...That's not good either."

"Then what about this?"

“I don’t think so. What’s the use of wearing these clothes when I work at the side dish shop.”

It seemed that she didn’t like flashy clothes.

As he expected, his mother wanted practical clothes.

“What about this?”

“Hey, let’s go see yours, Hyun. Okay?”

His mother pulled him away from the continuous questions.

But he had already drawn a rough picture in his mind.

When they entered the men’s clothing store, his mother straightened her hunched shoulders and enjoyed the store to her heart’s content.

Even if she couldn’t buy herself anything, she wanted to buy something nice for her son.

She could tell how much she liked it when he came out wearing the clothes he chose.

She didn’t have to say it, he could tell how much she liked it.

“Wow, you look really cool. Hyun, you suit suits so well.”

“Thank you. I like it too.”

His mother had a good sense of style.

She chose the slightly low-saturated navy blue that he wore most often until he became a boss.

The style was a little different, but the fit of the jacket and the width of the pants were similar.

His mother picked it out exactly.

It was when they finished paying and his mother was talking to the clerk about the length of the pants.

“I’ll be right back from the bathroom.”

“Come back quickly.”

His mother answered casually.

He immediately went to the women’s clothing store.

He entered the hiking brand store where his mother had looked at for the longest time and quickly chose some clothes.

A purple color tee with a small logo on the chest and beige hiking pants that were stretchy and didn’t stain easily.

‘The size should be about this.’

It was easy to choose because the clerk and his mother had similar body types.

It was also quite discounted, so he didn’t feel much burden.

Even if it was expensive, he had enough ability to pay for it.

It wasn't much money, thanks to his frugal savings.

What are you saving money for?

This is when you should use it.

"Please give me this."

The clerk was surprised when he chose right away.

He hid the shopping bag behind him and walked with his back bent.

His mother waved her hand at him from outside the store.

She looked very dear to him.

What expression would she make?

He was looking forward to his first surprise gift ever.

"Hyun, why did you take so long? Are you feeling sick?"

"Hey, why are you like this, mom? Let's go now."

"That's right. You worked hard today, so you're going to buy me dinner, right?"

"Of course. Is that all? Here."

When he handed over the shopping bag he had hidden, his mother's eyes widened.

It was because of the name of the store on the shopping bag.

"What is this..."

"Just... I thought it looked pretty, so I bought it."

"Why did you buy this? Let's go quickly. We have to get a refund."

He nailed it down to his mother's words.

"I already took off the tags, so I can't refund it. If you don't like it, you can just throw it away."

"Why did you do that?"

"I thought it would suit you well."

Actually, he had kept the clothing label in his pocket.

Just in case his mother really wanted a different product.

But his mother liked the clothes he chose.

She looked nervous but kept glancing at the shopping bag.

She also sighed in relief when she saw that the size fit well.

She even had wrinkles around her eyes.

He still felt sorry, though, and couldn't move his feet.

He smiled at the sight of his mother.

He realized why people say that giving gifts is a joy.

"Think of it as an early gift for getting a job."

"Huh? Is this it?"

His mother, who had a smile on her face by now, retorted.

As expected, his mother.

She had a sense of humor until the end.

"Hey, this is just the first one. Let's go eat something delicious."

It was a very pleasant day for him too.

...

That evening.

He was lingering at the corner of the alley on his way home.

There was something he had to do now.

It was to reconcile with his father.

'What should I say when I see my father?'

He thought of various things, but nothing came to mind.

His father was still a difficult person for him.

But he didn't want to waste this time together.

He wanted to improve their relationship somehow.

What he needed at this time was alcohol.

He remembered the power of alcohol that made him let go of his mind and enjoy the moment with his friends, and waited for his father.

How much time had passed?

His father was walking home with his tired body.

"Dad."

"Huh? What's up?"

"Just... I was waiting for you."

Was his words unexpected?

His father frowned and looked at him closely.

He was checking if he was drunk or not.

He noticed it and opened his mouth as softly as possible.

“Let’s have a drink for the first time in a long time.”

“No thanks.”

As expected, it was the response he anticipated.

He couldn’t back down at this point.

He tried to change the mood and spoke earnestly.

“I passed the Hanseong Group’s document screening. I want to hear some advice from you.”

“Advice? What advice?”

He turned his head away and mumbled, but he could guess how he felt.

He could tell that he wasn’t feeling too bad by the slight trembling of his facial muscles.

He had to go a little further from here.

He awkwardly hooked his arm around him.

“Hey, don’t be like that and have a drink. I forgot how to drink because you taught me so well. I don’t think I can do well in society.”

“You rascal.”

Did he like this?

It was surprising that a smile appeared on his father’s stern face.

He felt happy too.

“Let’s go, dad. I told mom already.”

“Geez.”

His father finally gave in and followed him.

It was a good start, but he didn’t know what to say when it came down to it.

He tried to come up with words in his head, but hesitated.

He saw his father’s face stiffen and closed his mouth.

Thud thud.

Their steps were very awkward.

It felt like being with a difficult boss.

It was the highest level of difficulty.

As he walked and organized his thoughts, he saw the lined-up food carts.

His father's eyes lingered on them, so it seemed that he liked this place.

"How about here? It's cool outside, so it would be nice to sit at an outdoor table."

"Let's do that."

He read his father's eyes as he looked at the menu and spoke first.

His father would probably ask him back if he asked him, so he did that.

"How about chicken feet?"

"That's fine."

That's how they got a plate of chicken feet and two bottles of soju on their table.

Glug glug.

They poured each other drinks and remained silent.