

# **Yes, It's Me. The Obsessive Side Top**

## **##051 - Read Yes, It's Me. The Obsessive Side Top #051**

#051

While receiving greetings from many people, I pondered what the meaning of this charity event was. They said everyone would offer their own art pieces for auction. With the profits being donated. Well, as long as a lot of money is donated, that's good. Thinking good is good, I was looking around at the artwork presented at the charity event when people kept trying to talk to me. I wish they'd stop... Right now, I'm in a state where articles have come out about a shooting incident involving me. I had neither the desire nor the face to attract attention.

Looking around to avoid somewhere, I saw people with similar outfits to me gathered in one place and thought I could avoid attention if I blended in there, so I quietly moved my steps in that direction. Three men were standing in a circle and conversing.

"Wow, nice. This kind of charity event. We have to bail out of something tomorrow and work."

"Ah, this place with air conditioning is heaven."

"Siri. What's tomorrow's high temperature?"

— Tomorrow's expected high temperature is 37 degrees Celsius.

A mechanical voice was informing the temperature.

"Oh hallelujah."

"Secretary Park, didn't you do volunteer work last year?"

"Yeah."

"But why are you doing it again? I know you just need to fill the required hours after joining the company to have no issues with promotion?"

"That's right. Didn't you know, Secretary Park?"

"I know. But my second kid was born recently. I need to get promoted to Secretary. To raise my HR evaluation score, I have to do this and that."

"Wow. I respect that."

“Ugh. It makes me want to throw up how they hold donation events in air-conditioned places while grinding employees to build a pro-common people image.”

Quietly listening to their conversation, I was reminded that corporate volunteer activities are also recognized as school volunteer hours. Since I have to do it anyway to graduate, I thought it would be better to do it somewhere I know, so I joined their conversation.

“Hello.”

“Ah. Yes. Hello.”

When I suddenly interjected into their conversation and greeted them, they awkwardly greeted back.

“I overheard you’re doing volunteer work tomorrow.”

“Ah. You look young. An intern?”

The person named Secretary Park asked me with a kind smile if I was an intern. I was about to answer no when one of the people next to him hurriedly took out his cell phone from his pocket and stopped me from speaking.

“Huh? Wait a moment.”

He quickly moved his fingers and then looked back and forth between the screen and me with big eyes.

“What, what is it? The prince?”

“Ha, employee. He is handsome but what prince. Gross.”

“No. Really the prince. Our Eunha Group’s prince.”

“ ... ”

Secretary Park snatched the phone as if taking it away, and looked at me with a surprised face like the previous person. After a few seconds of that, he shook his body as if struck by lightning and bowed his waist 90 degrees to greet me again.

“Hello.”

The other people were also startled and bent their waists to greet me.

‘Ha, damn it. It’s not easy living as a chaebol.’

“Hello.”

I also bent my waist and greeted them the same way. Then they glanced at each other and got up one by one. As I also straightened up, they had an awkward smile, perhaps embarrassed.

“Our conversation was a bit much, right? It wasn’t serious, just joking around. We’re close so we were playing around.”

At Secretary Park’s words, the other two nodded their heads in agreement. What did they say? I wasn’t listening carefully so I don’t know well. Anyway, that’s not important so I said what I wanted.

“I was wondering if I could also participate in the volunteer work tomorrow.”

“You, prince? Ah, no, young master?”

...What did Ha Jin do to be called prince by the group employees? Being called young master isn’t pleasant to hear either...

“I’m Ha Jin.”

When I revealed my name, I felt them having difficulty as they glanced at each other.

“Please treat me comfortably. I’m 21 now. You’re all older than me, right?”

“That’s true, but...”

“Just treat me comfortably, please. I want to go to the volunteer work tomorrow too, so how can I do that?”

“But why volunteer work?”

“My school says I have to do it to graduate.”

“Wow, for us too, it’s like a custom we have to do to get promoted, a forced non-force. What era is it to have this culture. Ouch! Ah, why did you hit me, Secretary?”

“Ha, employee?”

Secretary Park called him through gritted teeth and he grumbled asking if he was wrong. Then Secretary Park poked his side again.

“Employee Ha is still new.”

Indeed, new employees are the most courageous.

\* \* \*

Upon entering the hospital room, the only one welcoming me is Sun Woo. The hospital bed was empty as Grandmother had gone somewhere.

“Did the event go well?”

“Yeah. Where’s Grandmother?”

“She said she’s taking a tour of the hospital. She just left.”

“Will she be back soon?”

“Who knows. But she’ll probably come in by dinner time at the latest. Come here.”

Sun Woo was sitting on the sofa and wiggled his finger as if telling me to come over. Approaching at that gesture, I thought ‘This seems similar to calling a mutt?’ and frowned. But still, I was walking towards him. Clearly it’s annoying, but strangely, Sun Woo has an irresistible force.

“Ha Jin. Is it because of yesterday?”

Perhaps concerned about my frowning face, he asked and I tilted my head.

“Yesterday?”

“Because I didn’t stay with you.”

It was totally off the mark.

“It’s not that.”

“Come here. Were you disappointed that I left you alone yesterday?”

“I said no.”

As I sat on the sofa, Sun Woo slowly leaned his head on my shoulder. At his tired-looking gesture, I couldn’t move my shoulder and supported his leaning body. He must be anxious and tired from just waiting for Grandmother’s test results. Wanting to tell him there will be good results, my mouth was itching. As I barely held back, Sun Woo’s fingers caressed my lips.

“Your mouth is going wild. What do you want to say?”

“I have nothing to say?”

“Give me a kiss? Are you too shy to say it if you’re not drunk?”

“ ... ”

When I look down to the side with a pathetic gaze, my eyes meet Sun Woo’s who is laughing with raised eyes.

“Today, I’d like you to do it, Ha Jin.”

As soon as I saw Sun Woo sticking out his lips, I shrugged my shoulders to make him sit up straight. He does this every chance he gets. As if Sun Woo had predicted my reaction, he didn’t fall over, and that’s a bit annoying too. The guy is too perfect.

“Ha Jin. Stay at the hospital tonight. There’s a small room inside.”

Sun Woo pointed to a spot with his finger.

“I have to go out early tomorrow. I think I should go home and sleep. Instead, I’ll sleep over next time.”

“Where are you going?”

“To do volunteer work.”

“With whom?”

Again, he asks this and that about my plans. Sun Woo suddenly turned his body towards me and grabbed my shoulders with both hands. Influenced by that, I also turned my body towards him.

“With company people.”

“People on your father’s side?”

Well, it’s not wrong. But the nuance sounded strange. Calling them people on my father’s side made them feel like villains.

“I guess?”

“I’ll go with you.”

“Why?”

“I have to repay the favor.”

“Repay the favor? What favor-repaying magpie are you? Are you going to hit paper with your head?”

“I have to hit to save.”

Save what. What’s dangerous about doing volunteer work. I sincerely want to see inside Sun Woo’s head just once. As the culprit, I can’t even guess what he’s thinking.

“What about Grandmother?”

“Grandmother is fine. I told you you’re as important to me as Grandmother.”

I didn’t know that importance was the same as Grandmother. I thought about what to do, but I already knew it was no use refusing once Sun Woo had made up his mind. Thinking the more the merrier for volunteer work, I told him to come.

\* \* \*

After having a hospital meal with Grandmother who returned to the room and spending time, I was on my way back. Walking down the hospital building corridor, a student in a school uniform was picking up fallen paper from the floor in an uncomfortable posture.

Being originally good-natured, I couldn’t just watch the student picking up the paper dropped by the person ahead.

I quickly approached next to the student, picked up the paper and handed it to him.

“Thank you...”

The student, who received the paper and was expressing gratitude, checked me and trailed off the rest of his words. The boy wearing the uniform of the prestigious B High avoided eye contact and crumpled the paper I had barely picked up for him in his hand, shunning me.

“Huh? You?”

I didn’t expect to run into him like this. The boy my age who had been hit and came out of my father’s office still had a cast on his right arm and was wearing a school uniform. Slightly shorter than me, he had a small build for a high school student. His face, which I thought was ordinary, had no flaws anywhere when seen up close. His eyes that stretched refreshingly without double eyelids and the corners of his mouth were downturned, but his thick lips were charming like a sullen cat.

“High school student?”

Was it a problem that I was short-spoken at our first meeting? The student bowed his head deeply and didn't answer.

"I mean..."

You got hit by my father, right? It was a bit much to act like I knew. Why would I blurt that out with my own mouth as if it's something to boast about? I was curious who he was, but he didn't seem to want to talk to me. I wasn't tactless enough to keep holding onto someone like that, so I shut my mouth.

I'm tall too, so I felt a little like I was extorting money from a high school student. Thinking his round head was cute as he bowed, I reached out my arm to him.

"Then. Be careful on your way."

I really just wanted to pat his shoulder without any ulterior motive. I had absolutely no intention of molesting him, but the student quickly pulled his body back and stepped away as if I were some shameless pervert. Withdrawing my arm that was awkwardly stretched out with nowhere to go, I scratched my cheek with my finger in embarrassment.

The student, still with his head bowed, walked past me and quickly left the hospital lobby.

"...This is new. It's the first time someone showed such dislike."

The student was doing exactly what Sun Woo did to Ha Jin in the webtoon. Avoiding people as if detesting them. Then, when I imagined Sun Woo in that behavior, I only got hurt for no reason.

'Wow, just imagining it hurts my heart.'

Rather than a Sun Woo with normal thinking who acts cold, I much preferred the slightly strange magpie guy who says he'll repay the favor.

[The Lives of the Golden Spoons]

-Ha Jin's Forbidden List 13. Sleep startle disorder forbidden

└ Um... Teacher? What is that? Sleep startle disorder?

└└ It's when you wake up moving your body as if having a fit while sleeping.

└└└ Oh... So that's what sleep startle disorder is called... I'm learning all sorts of things here.

LLL LOL It's truly an educational 19+ webtoon.

L Kicking the desk leg while slumped over during class. Isn't that a required course?

LL How dare you slump over in class? Death penalty!

LL LOL As if Ha Jin would do that. He'll just skip class and sleep comfortably at home.

L Agreed, this should be banned by law. The favorite doing that? His favorite qualification should be revoked immediately.

LL There's a favorite qualification? LOL Is it a national certificate?

L As I've said numerous times, the only time Ha Jin wakes up startled is when Sun Woo ran away. Remember that.

L As if it goes as he wants just because he doesn't want to LOL His muscles aren't ready to sleep!

LL Yeah, all body control is possible.

LLL What? Teacher? Are you in your right mind?

#052

The next day in the early morning, there seemed to be about 20 people gathered to do volunteer work. They said people usually do volunteer work as new employees. Because they took the advice of their seniors to heart that you have to do it when you're young to suffer less later.

The reason I learned about these circumstances floating around the company was thanks to Employee Ha, one of the three people I was with throughout the donation event yesterday. It was fun hearing him tell me various stories related to the company that I didn't know, but the other two looked tired from constantly checking my reaction and covering Employee Ha's mouth or poking his side.

"Hello."

As I approached while greeting, the gathered people focused on me with eyes full of tension and curiosity. When I smiled brightly at them, only then did they relax their guard and return the greeting. Among them, the familiar Employee Ha, with his curly hair fluttering, ran up to me.

"Ha Jin. You're here? Who's behind you?"



Employee Ha, who speaks to me in a friendly manner, is definitely an extrovert with conviction. I briefly introduced Sun Woo behind me.

“This is Sun Woo, my friend. When I said I’m doing volunteer work, he said he’ll do it together too.”

“Which group is he from?”

He seems to think Sun Woo is also a chaebol son since I said he’s my friend. Strictly speaking it’s true, but not right now, so I shook my head.

“He’s a school friend.”

“Ah. I thought he had a noble air about him.”

Employee Ha, perhaps embarrassed, randomly grabbed my arm.

“Let’s go, Ha Jin. There’s a vest you wear when doing volunteer work. I’ll get it for you.”

At that moment, Sun Woo suddenly grabbed Employee Ha’s arm and detached it from me. Employee Ha was naturally flustered, and I wondered why this magpie was suddenly hitting his head against a bell for no reason. There’s no snake attacking a scholar here either.

“He’s not a kid. He can walk on his own just fine. Just tell us the location.”

“Really? They’re handing them out over there...”

Employee Ha awkwardly used formal speech and pointed ahead with his finger. In the place he pointed to, a person holding a neon green vest could be seen.

Sun Woo slightly nodded his head and went to receive the vest. The abandoned Employee Ha immediately drooped the corners of his eyes and made a pitiful face. Indeed, even I find it a bit scary when Sun Woo speaks bluntly, so how much more so for Employee Ha who just met him.

“Is it because I misspoke? I mistakenly thought he was a group heir... I’m sorry about this.”

“It’s not that.”

“Then? He seemed super pissed?”

“... ”

I couldn't bring myself to answer. Sun Woo clearly dislikes when someone touches me. Through several situations, even though I didn't want to know, it just got inputted into my head. It was like a formula. Someone makes contact with me. Sun Woo immediately intervenes and detaches them from me. And then I had to smooth over the awkward atmosphere. Sun Woo, why are you doing this to me?

"Just... It'll be fine as long as you don't come near me."

I indirectly told him not to touch me. Employee Ha looked at me with a face that said I was talking nonsense, but I couldn't give a detailed explanation. I'm too embarrassed to even say out loud that my friend is overprotective of me.

Employee Ha naturally left my side when Sun Woo came back with the vest. He was quick to read the situation. Sun Woo rolled up the vest he received from the bottom and put it around my neck. Even doting parents wouldn't do this. He's treating me, a college student, at the level of a kindergartener with a runny nose.

"Weren't they people on your father's side? He's quite friendly with you."

"It's only natural for company people to be nice to the group's successor."

I finished putting on the vest and tapped Sun Woo's shoulder.

"Mr. Magpie. Please don't hit your head against a bell at any time."

Sun Woo made a deflating sound and smiled at my joke. Seeing his smile, my expression also naturally softened. He must have really followed me to the volunteer work out of concern for me. Studying together with me and paying so much attention to take care of me just because I got hit by my father a few times.

I felt touched for no reason and my heart felt fluffy.

\* \* \*

The volunteer work was delivering fans in preparation for the heat wave. It was providing Eunha Electronics fans to the vulnerable class, but most of the houses were in places difficult for vehicles to enter, so we had to walk and deliver them directly.

We split into teams and each rode a truck to disperse. Perhaps in consideration of Sun Woo being my friend, we ended up on the same team. I wish he'd just leave me alone a bit.

Contrary to my concern that he would definitely stick by my side and bother me again, once the volunteer work started, Sun Woo quietly and diligently carried out his assigned tasks. The protagonist seems to have been born a model student. How can he do volunteer work so uprightly too?

'It's hard to adapt when he keeps going back and forth between normal and abnormal...'

Seeing him, I also felt relieved and was in the middle of delivering fans to the places assigned to me.

The fans weren't heavy so I was moving while carrying them easily, but one company employee kept following and walking with me. All he had in his hand was just one camera. At first I thought maybe he had a job taking photos related to the company's volunteer work, but to deliver quickly, we were each moving individually, so it bothered me that he kept following only me. As I was carrying the fan and turned back, he lifted his camera to take a picture of me and struck a pose, so I asked.

"What are you doing?"

At my question, he looked around and confirmed no one else was there except himself, then pointed to his chest with his finger.

"Me? I'm taking photos?"

He asked as if I should know by looking.

"I mean. Why are you only taking pictures of me?"

I put the fan box on the ground and walked over, and he lowered the camera to his waist and fidgeted with it in his hands. Standing in front of him, he frowned and looked at me. It seemed he was also annoyed to be doing this. Meaninglessly following me and only taking photos.

"...Ha Jin, they sent me to take your pictures. So I have to take them."

"Who?"

"The PR team."

The PR team? As I thought about it quietly, I could roughly picture it. Since I said I'm participating in volunteer work, a report must have gone up. It wouldn't have been an ordinary matter for the group's successor to step up and say he'll do volunteer work. And they definitely misinterpreted my intentions a bit. That there was a political calculation rather than a pure heart in the volunteer work.

They must have thought the young master who got into an accident is doing this to improve his image. At that, my expression naturally hardened.

"Please delete all the photos you took of me just now."

“Pardon?”

“I’ll convey the message to the PR team. You don’t have to take them anymore.”

“Did I, perhaps, do something rude?”

He erased his annoyed face and immediately made a frightened expression. He must have recalled that my single word could make his job disappear overnight. Being a chaebol is really no joke. I have to be careful with every word. I relaxed my hardened expression because it felt like I was unnecessarily hurting someone.

“I really came to do volunteer work. So please let me quietly do the volunteer work and leave. I’m not doing it to have my photo taken.”

“...Pardon? But.”

“Really. I’m sincere. You can go now. I’ll tell the PR team nicely.”

“...”

He rolled his eyes as if trying to grasp my intentions. He had a frustrated look as if he couldn’t quite figure it out, but I couldn’t pressure him any further, so I just picked up the fan box I had put down and moved my steps towards the address. When I looked back, he was no longer following me.

\* \* \*

“I’ve been to five places already.”

There were check marks on five of the addresses written on the paper. I took out my cell phone and was looking at the map to find the next house. As I was passing through a narrow alley, I suddenly collided with someone who ran out. I only took a few steps back, but the other person was flat on the ground.

“I’m sorry.”

I reached out my arm to help him up, but he got up right away at a speed that didn’t even need my support and ran off without looking back. He looked like he was in a lot of pain, so as I watched the back of the person running off, I thought his body must be sturdy. I was about to say I’ll see all sorts of strange people and move on, but I heard a loud shout from the alley.

“That bastard! That bastard took my wallet and ran! Aish. Huh? Hey, young man. That guy with the hat! Catch that bastard for me.”

Huh? The person who bumped into me was also wearing a hat? Sure enough, at that sound, the one who had collided with me was adding even more speed and quickly disappearing from the alley. At the man's shout, I put down the fan box and ran after him. As I ran at high speed through the narrow alley, my arm got scratched by a protruding brick on the wall. Without even paying attention to the wound, I kept running after him, and before I knew it, I came out to a wide road after leaving the alley.

At that moment, I saw the person who had been taking my photos until just now trudging and walking in front of the guy running away with a hat on.

"Catch that person!"

At my shout, he turned his head back to look, then without even a chance to think about what was going on, he reflexively threw himself towards the guy with the hat. The running guy couldn't overcome the speed and fell over, and the photographer fell over too. It looks painful just watching.

In case he tries to run away again, he climbed on top of the guy with the hat, pressed his back with his knees, bent both arms behind his back, and restrained them with one hand. The photographer seemed not to grasp the situation and was just blinking his eyes in surprise.

"Wow, thank you. Thanks to you, I caught him."

"Who is he?"

"A pickpocket. Look, that man is running over here. He said that man stole his wallet."

"Ah, yes..."

"Are you okay? You had a big fall."

"I don't know. My mind is actually blank right now."

With his dazed face, I was worried about him for no reason and examined him. He doesn't seem to have anything wrong... As I was looking him over here and there, I saw his camera bag fall to the ground and told him to look with a gesture, and he was startled and lifted the camera bag like handling a precious object.

"Huh? No way. No way! No... Please be intact..."

He rummaged through the bag and closed his eyes tightly.

"Is it broken?"

When I asked with concern, he nodded his head with a crying face.

“Don’t worry. I’ll buy you a new one.”

“Yes... Huh? Yees?”

He answered glumly and then asked back in surprise. More than that, I couldn’t just keep pressing the guy squirming underneath, so I asked him to call the police.

“First, please report it to 112.”

“Ah yes yes. Yes!”

Perhaps because of the sudden incident and his broken camera, he seemed flustered and asked me a very embarrassing question.

“But what’s the number for 112?”

#053

We handed over the pickpocket to the police who arrived quickly, and I left the follow-up to the photographer who had thrown himself to stop him. I told the bewildered photographer that I’m counting on him and not to worry about the camera.

I immediately picked up the box that was left standing alone on the street and safely delivered it to the address. And then I ran into Sun Woo in front of the truck that had returned, as if our timing matched.

Sun Woo is really working hard. If there was a hardworking award for volunteer work, I wanted to give it to him right away. Happy to see him, I lightly bounced as I walked over to Sun Woo and he smiled at me.

“Sun Woo, how many places have you been to?”

“About seven places? Oh right, Ha Jin. I heard police sirens nearby. Did anything happen?”

“Huh?”

When I didn’t answer right away, Sun Woo’s eyebrows twitched. His smiling expression hardened in an instant, and he came close, looked me over here and there, then strongly pulled my arm.

“You got hurt.”

“No wonder it stings.”

“It’s a scratch. What is this, Ha Jin?”

“I must have gotten scratched on the wall because the alley was narrow.”

When I answered brazenly, Sun Woo stared at me intently as if he couldn't believe it. As if I would retract my words just because he does that? No way.

“Is there a first-aid kit here?”

Sun Woo hurriedly grabbed a passerby and looked for a first-aid kit. When the person shook his head saying he didn't know, Sun Woo gently bit his lower lip.

“Ha Jin, stay still until I come back. Don't go anywhere.”

“Yes, teacher.”

I answered obediently like a kindergartener. Even if I grumbled, Sun Woo's force was so fierce that it was obvious I would get scolded more for nothing. Sun Woo ran off quickly without even telling me where he was going. His running speed looked even faster than that thief earlier.

“If I had run at that speed, I wouldn't have caught him.”

As soon as Sun Woo disappeared in the blink of an eye, I took out my cell phone and left a message for Secretary Kim.

[Secretary Kim. I came to volunteer and broke the photographer's camera. Please buy him a new one.]

Then a reply came in less than 10 seconds.

[Who are you rebelling against by breaking a camera while volunteering? I understand for now.]

“It's not a rebellion...”

Now that he said he understood, I took out an ion drink from the ice box in the truck with a much more comfortable mind and drank it. Even before I finished that one bottle, Sun Woo appeared from afar and approached in an instant. He was panting heavily in front of me. Sun Woo's face, which suffers from the heat a lot, was flushed red and sweat was running down his neck. His t-shirt was also completely soaked with sweat. How hard did he run at full strength?

“You're completely drenched in sweat. Drink this.”

I held out the ion drink I was drinking to him. Instead of taking it, Sun Woo grabbed my arm, took something out of the plastic bag he was holding, tore the packaging, and started wiping the wound. The bag clearly had the word “pharmacy” written on it.

“It hurts. Be gentle.”

“I’m being as gentle as I can. Who told you to get hurt?”

After wiping the wound, he even applied ointment. It would have been nice if it ended there. Sun Woo even put on a blue-based Bus character band-aid, which he must have bought to tease me.

“Take off the band-aid. Just applying ointment is enough.”

“You stay still here now. Don’t move.”

Sun Woo didn’t even listen to me at all. I tried to slowly peel off the band-aid with one hand, but Sun Woo’s large hand covered my hand trying to do that. Telling me not to take it off.

“Don’t move, you say? I came here to volunteer, you know.”

“What are you going to do after getting hurt?”

“I have to do this and get my stamp of approval.”

“They’ll give it to you. You’re the Eunha Group’s successor.”

“...That’s not how it should be.”

“Just stay still. I warned you.”

What, am I supposed to get scared because he warns me? Even if I left the band-aid on, I couldn’t give up on the volunteer work. If I stay still just because I got my arm slightly scratched, people will really like that. They’re probably all watching while pretending not to care if that guy is doing anything properly or not anyway.

When I got up from where I was sitting, Sun Woo blocked my way with his body. Is he the only one who’s big? I’m big too.

After gently pushing him aside, I wrote down the addresses and took a box. Then Sun Woo snatched my box.

“Ha Jin is hurt so I’ll go with him.”

The employee who stayed in the truck to distribute the supplies and addresses to the volunteers looked at me in surprise.

“You’re hurt? Where?”



“...I got scratched.”

“Oh my god. What? Go to the hospital. Hospital. Ha Jin, quickly go to the hospital.”

The employee was even worse than Sun Woo.

“I just got slightly scratched.”

“Huh? If you got scratched, you need to quickly get a tetanus shot.”

“I really just got slightly scratched.”

I held out my arm with the band-aid Sun Woo had put on to him. Even with the cute blue character band-aid attached to my arm, he didn't stop worrying. Sun Woo stepped in to the employee who kept telling me to go to the hospital.

“I'll go with him. He's stubborn, saying he'll finish the volunteer work even if he dies soon.”

“Will you do that? If anything seems wrong while going together, you have to go to the hospital right away.”

At the employee's ardent request, I glared at Sun Woo, but he even snatched the address I was holding and walked ahead.

“Why? What happened?”

An employee who came late hurriedly asked as we moved away from the spot, which could be heard behind my back.

“Oh my god. Our prince. He says he'll continue volunteering even though he's hurt?”

“Hurt? How?”

“I don't know. I think he's badly hurt. His friend was extremely worried and said he'll go with him. He said he got scratched somewhere but it seems severe.”

“Should we call 119?”

“No, the prince says it's no big deal. His friend seemed to have treated the wound.”

“The prince is different from what I heard. I thought he just came to show his face for volunteer work but he's working hard.”

“I know, right. His eyes are clear and bright, and when I talked to him, his personality seemed good too...”

I couldn't hear the rest because it was too far away.

"Ha Jin. Could you be the prince?"

Sun Woo must have heard it too.

"..."

"Prince? It suits you well."

"Don't tease me."

"Is it a nickname the employees call you?"

"It's not a nickname. ...More importantly, are you okay? How much did you sweat?"

Sun Woo's clothes were so wet with sweat that they were soaked.

"Your clothes are wet."

"They'll dry if I keep wearing them."

"Give me your clothes?"

"Why?"

"Because it's from running to get my medicine. You changed into my clothes before too when you got wet catching loaches at Grandmother's house. I'm trying to do the same for you."

"Ha Jin."

Sometimes Sun Woo would call my name affectionately. At those times, my heart would melt along with it and I'd feel strange. Sometimes he acts like an uncontrollable wild beast, and other times he approaches me like a soft cloud.

That gap was so thrillingly nice. But I should hide this feeling because it seems a bit perverted.

"You don't need to do that. I'll do everything for you. So just receive it."

A smile spread across my face at his words. Sun Woo makes this kind of word play too?

"At this rate, you'll end up saying you'll support me."

"I will."

The answer came without hesitation.

"You know I can't live in a small house, right? Because of the environment I've lived in."

I jokingly said to him. Sun Woo in the webtoon clearly has a globally wealthy father, so it would be possible. But the current Sun Woo is just a poor college student who has nothing. So naturally, an immediate answer like before doesn't come out. After thinking for a moment, Sun Woo nodded his head.

"That... seems like it will take some time."

"It won't work then. Tell me again after you have it ready."

"..."

He couldn't answer, as if it was absolutely impossible for him. Sun Woo turned his body with a slightly hurt expression and walked ahead.

Ah, damn, what is this? It's completely cute.

"It will cost a lot of money to take care of me."

I tried teasing Sun Woo, but I couldn't see his expression since he was walking ahead. But even just his back looked very angry. But he doesn't want to admit that anger, so he's keeping his mouth shut tight. What, he was good at joking around but why is he suddenly getting hurt now?

Looking at Sun Woo's back walking ahead, I keep wanting to tease him.

"Ouch."

As I made a pained sound with a grin spilling out, Sun Woo immediately turned back and approached me. His reaction speed is truly amazing.

"Does it hurt?"

Sun Woo examined me with a worried face, then saw me smiling and hardened his expression.

"Ha Jin. There are other things to joke about."

Sun Woo warned me fiercely while clenching his teeth tightly. Seeing Sun Woo's face getting seriously angry, I shrunk for no reason and smiled awkwardly.

"Sorry. Then why did you leave me behind and walk ahead. You said we'd go together."

“Haa...”

Sun Woo eventually matched his pace with me. Wanting to be of some help by his side, I folded the paper with the addresses written on it into a fan shape and fanned him.

That’s how the volunteer work where Sun Woo and I unnecessarily stuck together came to an end. After completing the delivery of all the items to their respective addresses, it was almost dinner time.

After the volunteer work, the employees said they were going to have dinner together, so I was saying goodbye when Employee Ha came running up. He tried to grab my hand right away, but upon discovering Sun Woo, he naturally swung his arms back and forth.

“Ah, my shoulders hurt?”

He spoke awkwardly for no reason, making his naturally connected action awkward.

“Ha Jin. Let’s go eat dinner together.”

At Employee Ha’s words, everyone’s eyes turned to us for a moment. Looking at those filled with reproachful gazes towards Employee Ha, I felt sad as if I had become a clueless boss who tries to stay with the employees until the end of the dinner gathering.

I guess superiors have their own struggles too.

“I’m fine.”

“Let’s go. If you’re a college student, you can drink alcohol, right? If we eat and drink together, we’ll quickly become close. Hey, when will we ever eat with the Chairman’s son like this? He’ll be our boss later.”

Employee Ha, read the room... I thought Employee Ha might get scolded a lot at the dinner because of this.

“We’re good.”

When Sun Woo stepped in like a savior, the employees and I all sighed in relief. Employee Ha still seemed scared of Sun Woo, hesitating and checking his reaction.

“Ha Jin...”

“We have a separate dinner appointment.”

We have to go see Grandmother.

“Really? That’s too bad. Then let’s meet again next time.”

“Yes. Good work, everyone.”

“Yeah. Good work, Ha Jin.”

“Sun Woo, good job too.”

“You can go in.”

As the time for parting approached, everyone waved their hands at me and said goodbye with bright faces. Not close enough to have dinner together, but they seemed to have become a bit more comfortable, as no one was bowing their waist while saying goodbye.

\* \* \*

On the way to the hospital, Sun Woo suddenly entered a store without a word and bought something before coming out. I wasn’t curious about what he bought, but one signboard attached to the front of the store particularly stimulated my curiosity.

[Lottery]

I glanced back to check the store sign and asked Sun Woo, could it be?

“Did you buy a lottery ticket?”

“...I did.”

“Why?”

“...”

Sun Woo ignored my words and walked quickly. I also walked quickly following him, but couldn’t hold back the laughter spilling out.

“To buy a house?”

“...”

“You know you can’t even dream of the house I live in with lottery prize money, right?”

“...”

“Huh? Are you going to live on monthly rent?”

At my words, Sun Woo started walking even faster. As I also sped up following him, we ended up running before we knew it. I don't know if it's because he suffers from the heat, but Sun Woo runs while trying hard to ignore me with flushed cheeks.

Sun Woo is really cute.

#054

I was resting at home when I got a call from an unknown number, so I hesitated whether to answer or not, but eventually did. I had an uneasy feeling, but since Grandmother was in the hospital, I was anxious about just ignoring it. The hospital might need to contact me.

"Hello."

Even though I answered after contemplating, there was silence on the other end. I thought it might be a wrong number, but soon a dry voice came through.

– We should go shopping, right?

It was an unfamiliar voice, but based on the content of the conversation and the voice, I could tell the other person was Ha Jin's mother, Baek Su-ah. She said we have to go shopping every quarter. The date has already approached. But this family is really funny. Do we have to go shopping every quarter?

"I guess so."

I also roughly spat out words as if I were very indifferent and stayed still. Then a deep sigh was heard from the other end.

– I'll be there in 30 minutes, so come out when I call you again.

"Wait a minute!"

I stopped her as she was about to quickly hang up. I still had something to say.

.....

"Do we have to go together?"

– What does that mean?

"I was wondering if I could drive there by myself."

Silence followed again. I thought maybe going together was also included in the “shopping every quarter,” but an answer was heard over the receiver. It was a completely different answer than I expected.

– It’s better for me if we go separately. You’re the one who put going together in the request, aren’t you?

“?”

– Then let’s meet at 3 o’clock at Fleure Department Store.

As if worried I might change my mind, she said that and immediately hung up. I stood there frozen, staring at the blackened phone screen for a long time.

“Ha Jin? Requested it?”

What does this mean? I thought it was funny enough that we go shopping every quarter. That was requested by Ha Jin? When the hypothesis was formed, a rough situation was drawn.

Ha Jin, the chaebol son. The cute boy who used to smile brightly when he was young, but gradually loses his smile under his cold parents. However, in a corner of his heart, there is still the young Ha Jin who yearns for his parents’ love... It’s like a setting that often appears in makjang dramas.

So it sounded like Ha Jin requested shopping every quarter to create time with his mother. Including riding in the car and moving together.

“I don’t want to know about Ha Jin’s hidden narrative...”

Why does only Ha Jin’s pitiful side keep coming out? Why are you making this son of a bitch a poor puppy shivering and trembling in the rain? To think Ha Jin had the worst narrative among the webtoon characters.

“I’m the only one who’s pitiful.”

Everyone else is on a flower path, but only I’m on a thorny path.

\* \* \*

Just like last time, I thought we would continue shopping without much conversation, but when the employees left their seats for a moment and the two of us were left alone, mother brought up what she wanted to say to me.

“If you’re going to release them anyway, why don’t you stop shopping too?”

As expected, my prediction was correct. It was now certain that Baek Su-ah goes shopping with Ha Jin every quarter at his request. I reserved my immediate answer.

"If you're releasing them step by step, I wish the period until the next release was a bit shorter."

It's just because Ha Jin became a little bit pitiful. My brows furrowed involuntarily at her attitude that didn't seem like treating a son. Blood is thicker than water, my ass. It's very thin and transparent.

"How can you be so similar to the Chairman that you don't answer when you think it's disadvantageous to you? You look like me but your personality is like the Chairman. You're dying to show that you're our child, aren't you?"

Baek Su-ah snidely remarked as if she was displeased with even the natural principle of a child resembling their parents. She wasn't like this at our last meeting, but today she was extremely hostile towards me as if something had happened. Her furrowed face looked like it would spew venom at me at any moment. She was already spewing quite a bit, though.

Right now, it seems like the three of us should hold hands and go to a psychological counseling center together, not shopping. To a place that specializes in family counseling.

"I know, right. Of all things, even if I resemble you in appearance..."

Resemble you? Ha Jin!

Baek Su-ah, his mother, is saying he resembles her. But in fact, Ha Jin's face was modeled after my face. I haven't asked the author yet, but is that important? I'd rather be told I resemble you. Seeing Baek Su-ah dislike it so much as if she didn't want him to resemble her, I suddenly felt heated for no reason.

"Watch your words."

When she's been the one saying bad things so far. Baek Su-ah warned me, trembling her lips. What did I do? Her face, distorted with anger, was transparently showing how miserable a situation she was in, as if I had really said something terrible. Rather, it felt like I was the one who got slapped in the face out of nowhere.

'But why?'

I'm dumbfounded and dazed as if I got slapped while staying still.

"It's not like he wanted to resemble you, is it?"



As if Ha Jin wanted to be born with this face.

“Can you convey those words to the Chairman too?”

“Why should I? You told me to maintain my handsome face well. I don’t want to do things that will get me hit.”

“How can you not lose a single word?”

“Each and every word is attacking me. Wouldn’t it be strange to stay still?”

Since I’m not just taking it, mother frowned and gave me a cold look. The way she’s suppressing her anger while twitching her lips is similar to father. They say married couples grow to resemble each other.

At that moment, with a knock, our confrontation ended as employees came in with clothes and bags. The employees glanced at each other in the unusual atmosphere and showed the items to mother.

“Secretary Lee. Have you lost your sense? Do you think this design suits me?”

Unlike the previous shopping trip, mother couldn’t hide her low mood well and revealed her sharpness.

“I apologize. I’ll bring something else.”

“You carefully selected and brought this too. What difference would it make to bring something else?”

“...Shall I call another person in charge instead of me?”

“That would be better.”

Seeing the employees’ flustered faces, I felt like the employees had committed some crime, so I left the room to change the mood. Thinking the atmosphere might improve a bit if I’m not there.

I thought I’d just look around the famous Fleure Department Store and aimlessly looked around the building. I heard luxury brands that are known to be picky are dying to enter Fleure Department Store. Indeed, Fleure Department Store was filled with all kinds of luxury brand stores up to the 4th floor, as if having them on the 1st floor wasn’t enough. Unlike a typical department store, the ceiling was high and the corridors were wide, making it nice to look around.

Thinking they would have finished selecting items by now and mother’s mood would have improved a bit, I walked to the VIP room.

“Ha Jin, you foolish bastard. What’s so good about a mother like this that you want to go shopping together? Haa...”

I really feel bad for him that I want to hug him tightly if he’s in front of me. I steeled myself in front of the room for no reason and went in, but there were only shopping bags with items inside and no one was around.

“Is everything settled?”

I thought, but suddenly I heard a bright laughter. When I turned my head towards the sound, what I saw was the fitting room set up inside the room. The ceiling was open, so there was no soundproofing at all.

‘Are you trying on clothes?’

The laughter that sounded like she was in a good mood was mother’s voice that I had heard before. It was the same voice she had when I first saw her at our house, sitting on the sofa and laughing while talking to someone on the phone.

‘While laughing so well.’

How can a person be so cold and dry to her own child? I crossed my arms to pat my shoulders to hug the pitiful Ha Jin. Another giggling laughter is heard from beyond the fitting room.

“Really? You want to eat the ramen I make for you? But ramen isn’t even hard to make. Why can’t you make it yourself? How cute.”

Since I don’t hear another person’s voice from inside, she must be on the phone. Who could mother be making ramen for? Thinking it doesn’t suit father, I clicked my tongue for no reason.

“No, I’m not busy. What’s so hard about making a bowl of ramen for someone you love? I’ll make it for you today.”

I had assumed their marital relationship would be bad, but it doesn’t seem to be the case. I wondered if mother calling him Chairman was just like a pet name. Honey was dripping from her voice. To the point where it could be a call with a lover who just started dating. As I kept listening, I got spiteful at the sight of a happy couple, excluding only Ha Jin.

‘They would be a perfect family if only Ha Jin wasn’t there.’

I quietly left the room again, thinking I would only get an upset stomach if I kept listening. I went to the bathroom for no reason, and this time I made a loud knocking sound and entered.

“ ... ”

Seeing mother narrowing her eyes and looking down on me as if she's seen all sorts of things, I wondered if the kind laughter I heard earlier was a video of actress Baek Su-ah that someone played by mistake. She's so cold to me, but she's being so lovey-dovey with father like that?

“Let's go now.”

She picked up her bag and got up first. Strangely, my mood hit rock bottom as she left the room. I feel so bad for Ha Jin. So bad! Those two people who make Ha Jin pitiful! It's too much that only those two spend cozy time together. I have to stop by the main house and check Ha Jin's childhood photos anyway.

“Shall I interfere a bit?”

\* \* \*

Putting my thoughts into action was quick. I drove straight to Ha Jin's main house. How surprised will they be to see me showing up suddenly? Thinking their cozy time will be shattered because of me was refreshing and a little sad.

‘Aren't we family? Why is only Ha Jin... left out?’

I believe a child turning out wrong is always the parents' fault. Thinking about how Ha Jin acted like a son of a bitch in the webtoon, it might seem like an excessive conclusion, but the young Ha Jin I saw was just too cute, like an angel. Even though it was a photo, his bright energy and loveliness could be felt to the point where he was like an angelic child. If you look at the changes in his face as he grew up, it's absolutely the parents' fault that Ha Jin grew up to be like this.

When I arrived at the main house with high spirits, the front gate opened automatically. I guess Ha Jin's vehicle is still registered. It felt more like a high-end private resort than a regular house. From the outside, this structure wasn't visible at all because of the large walls. It was a scale that required driving for a long time to get inside.

“This is crazy. To have a house like this in Seoul where land is expensive...”

I was admiring the main house I was visiting for the first time when an employee hurriedly came out from inside the house as if knowing I had arrived. When I got out of the car, they greeted me with a surprised face.

“Young master, what brings you here?”

“I just thought I'd have dinner with my parents.”

“Pardon?”

My words must have been quite unexpected, as they made a surprised face. Well, the two of them will be flirting, so they must be flustered that I came.

“Ah, haven’t you heard?”

What, that the two of them are making ramen together?

When I shook my head, the employee showed a crying face.

“The Chairman and Madam said they will come in after having dinner outside today.”

They’re eating ramen outside? For a moment, I thought the two of them had gone camping together. But at the employee’s next words, my mind had to give up rational thinking once again.

“The Chairman has a corporate event, so he went to a formal dinner gathering, and Madam has a meeting with acquaintances, so she said she’ll come in after having a meal.”

“What?”

Mother clearly said she’s going to make ramen for someone she loves...

What kind of nonsense is this like a daily ending of a makjang drama?

[The Lives of the Golden Spoons]

– Ha Jin’s Forbidden List 14. Ctrl + S forbidden while writing a document

└ I’m having difficulty breathing.

└ Oh no! My vision is going dark.

└ Stop!

└ Teacher. I earnestly request you to withdraw this list.

└ LOL Look at the office worker readers rushing in as soon as they see the comments  
LOL

└└ Please include the college students mixed with assignments too!

└ Please. That’s something that can’t happen.

└ Calm down. It says Ha Jin's forbidden list. It doesn't apply to everyone LOL

└ LOL This is so powerful that they don't even see it's written as Ha Jin's forbidden list LOL

└ Possible to possess the favorite waiting for Su's answer when the mouse cursor is spinning around. Depending on Su's answer, you either 'smile happily' or 'go crazy and break things around you'.

└ When the computer lags while writing, we all pray with our hands together, right? It's not just me, right? I even call upon my ancestors.

└└ I wear a hanbok and bow in front of the computer.

└└ I bring water from the water purifier in a bowl and pray. (You can trust it's purified water!)

└└└ LOL What's this now LOL Purified water LOL

#055

The shocking news made me forget to even look for Ha Jin's childhood photos. I turned back without even taking a single step inside the house. I drove absentmindedly and when I arrived, I realized it was the hospital parking lot.

"I didn't expect this. Well, it does seem to suit them more than getting along... Haa... Even the most dysfunctional families aren't like this."

It's slowly becoming too much for me to handle. I enjoyed watching makjang dramas knowing they were obviously fiction and not something I was going through, but now that my family is heading down the makjang path, my mind became complicated.

"No way. The two of them can't be lying and secretly meeting to cook... and eat ramen together. Absolutely not. Why would a married couple meet in secret?"

I really don't want to know Ha Jin's hidden narrative. I made up my mind to no longer care about Ha Jin's family and got out of the car. Walking blankly in a dazed state, I somehow arrived in front of Grandmother's hospital room. Standing in front of the room and looking at the letters spelling 'Kim Ok-bun', I suddenly missed Grandmother's embrace. I opened the door and entered with my arms wide open.

"Ok-bun!"

I need to quickly purify this dirty mind. By being embraced by our lovely Grandmother.

Instead of Grandmother smiling warmly and welcoming me from the bed as I expected, Sun Woo who was standing in the room discovered me, hugged me tightly as I entered.

“Sun Woo. Where’s Grandmother?”

I asked in a serious tone, but Sun Woo’s arms only held me tighter.

“You’re late, Ha Jin.”

“I wanted Grandmother to hug me?”

“She went to the cafeteria to eat. She seemed to have heard they’re serving janchi guksu (feast noodles) today.”

“What about you?”

“I was waiting for someone who hasn’t contacted to see when they would come.”

“What? You should have contacted me instead of waiting. What if I didn’t come?”

Right. If my parents were really cooking ramen at home, there’s no way I would be here right now. Haa... Damn it. How can I erase this memory? It didn’t seem like it would be erased easily. That’s how shocking it was. As I leaned my body on Sun Woo powerlessly, he stroked my hair with his large, pretty hand. It’s not as much as Grandmother’s embrace, but Sun Woo’s arms were nice too.

“I knew you would come.”

His single sentence made me choke up for a moment. The fact that there was someone waiting for me brought comfort to my heart. I put my arms around Sun Woo’s back. As I buried my head in his shoulder, Sun Woo’s chest that was touching me moved slightly twice as if he was laughing.

“What’s this, staying still in my arms unlike Ha Jin. It doesn’t seem like you drank alcohol.”

“There are days like this too.”

“Shall we stay together today?”

“...Okay.”

I accepted his suggestion that I would have usually declined. Sun Woo kissed my head and stroked my hair again as if soothing me.

“Did you have dinner?”

“No.”

“Is there anything you want to eat?”

At Sun Woo’s question, ramen suddenly came to mind. I also wanted to eat ramen full of someone’s affection.

“Ramen.”

“Really? Let’s go to the gimbap restaurant in front of the hospital.”

“It would be nice if you cooked it for me, Sun Woo.”

At my request, Sun Woo finally burst into laughter out loud. His breath tinged with laughter ticklishly touched my ear and disappeared, and his sweet voice enveloped me once again.

“Then shall we go to your house?”

“Okay.”

“What’s this, Ha Jin? Why do you keep doing cute things today?”

Sun Woo’s voice was filled with laughter as if he was happy. When I thought this might be what Ha Jin wanted, my nose felt stuffy again for no reason. The pitiful Ha Jin was a child who craved this kind of affection. Since he never received love, he didn’t know what to do, that stupid fool.

\* \* \*

On the way home, we stopped briefly in front of a convenience store to buy ramen for Sun Woo to cook. As Sun Woo went inside to buy the ramen, I sat in the car waiting for him to come out.

– Thud thud

Suddenly there was a sound and the car shook slightly. When I turned to look with an indifferent face, three students in school uniforms were passing by, pounding on the car with their fists.

“ ... ”

I only heard that kids these days are scary. My goodness, they had the guts to hit this kind of supercar with their fists. Clicking my tongue in disbelief, I got out of the car.

Under their short summer school uniforms, their arms had flashy tattoos sitting bravely. Well, that's their taste, so I'll respect it.

"What are you doing?"

Even after seeing me get out of the car, they didn't look surprised or apologetic.

"I said, what are you doing?"

I asked again. Then they exchanged glances with each other and made a very delinquent-like expression. Even so, in my eyes, they were just high school students with scribbles on their arms. That's all.

"What do you think we're doing?"

He immediately spoke informally. Judging by their build and height, they were as big as me, so I was planning what to do if we ended up fighting. I thought if I could knock out just one properly, they would get scared as high school students and not be able to respond properly. I felt like I could fight three high school students.

"You're not asking because you don't know, are you?"

"If you know, why are you asking?"

"I'm wondering if you know what you're doing."

"I saw a car parked on the street where people walk by, so I just pounded on it."

"How was it when you pounded on it?"

"..."

My reaction must have been different from their expectation, so they seemed to hesitate a bit. Usually in this situation, most people would cower or something. But I've never seen a truly strong person among those who have tattoos in visible places. Especially if they're high school students.

"I'm asking you. How was it when you pounded on it? And it may be a place where people walk by, but it's an alley. There's no distinction between the sidewalk and the road. Don't you see that I parked the car right against the wall? I didn't purposely block your way as you were passing by."

At my words, one of them glanced sideways with shaky pupils. I also carefully observed the direction he was looking at, as it would be problematic if more people gathered here. Then I saw someone hiding in a corner. When I discovered the camera covering half of his face, I wondered what that was.



‘What?’

The camera was pointing at me, and at that moment, the picture of the shooting violence incident came to mind.

“Did someone tell you to do this?”

“Wh-what are you talking about!”

“Tell me. Who told you to pick a fight with me?”

The three looked at each other’s reactions in bewilderment. Seeing that, I was convinced. Damn it, why are they messing with me? Do they want to take a picture of me fighting that badly, even by manipulation?

For what reason?

“What nonsense are you talking about by yourself!”

One of them swung his arm at me. Did he think I would stay still and get hit knowing my picture was being taken? Am I afraid of some photo that I would go around getting hit? As I was about to fight back against his attack, the other person’s arm was suddenly grabbed by someone who appeared. Sun Woo had somehow appeared and was stopping him.

“Ha Jin. What’s this?”

“Argh!!”

Sun Woo twisted the student’s wrist, ignoring his scream of pain, and asked me in a quiet tone. His cold, calm gaze was quite murderous.

“Young students trying to pick a fight with me?”

“Why would students pick a fight with you?”

“Who knows. Maybe it would be a bigger issue if I hit a student?”

“ ... ”

Sun Woo made a face that he couldn’t understand and pushed the body of the student whose wrist he had twisted with his arm. It looked like he just gently pushed him, but he fell on the asphalt floor haphazardly. The other two hurried over and helped him up.

“Do you know who I am as you’re picking a fight?”

The students made puzzled faces and alternately looked at me and Sun Woo. They must have felt that the opponent was too strong to fight. More than that, who is the person trying to put me in a difficult situation by recruiting these kids who don't know how the world works?

When I turned my gaze to the spot where the person with the camera was, they had already disappeared. They must have thought the tables had turned.

"Your life will become tiring if you mess with us."

They must have seen the person disappear as they also looked somewhere, and they hurriedly left the scene.

"Ha Jin. Why did you get out of the car? Don't stay alone. It's dangerous."

"Am I a one-year-old baby?"

Ignoring my words, Sun Woo grabbed me and looked me over here and there.

"You're not hurt anywhere?"

"No. I was about to get hit, but you appeared and saved me."

Not even a prince on a white horse. You appeared with good timing.

As if Sun Woo really didn't want to leave me alone, he held my hand and entered the convenience store. It seemed he had hurriedly come out while paying, as his card and a bag with ramen were placed on the counter.

"Are you okay? I called the police, but..."

The convenience store employee asked with a worried face while packing the items.

"Fortunately, I didn't get hit. The kids ran away. Please cancel the police report."

"Ah, yes. I'll do that. We have a CCTV installed outside because of illegal dumping. Shall I send you the footage?"

At the employee's words, I shook my head, and Sun Woo called out his number.

"Please send me the footage."

"Huh? Ah... Yes. I'll cut out just the footage and send it to you."

While Sun Woo was doing that, I went to the dairy section and picked up a chocolate milk. Smiling brightly, I went to the counter and Sun Woo saw what I was holding and laughed.

“Ha Jin. You want to buy that in this situation?”

“I told you. It’s my habit to buy this whenever I come to a convenience store.”

When I gave him a big smile, Sun Woo put his hand on my cheek. I was feeling the warm temperature of his palm cupping my face when the employee in front of us cleared his throat and made a coughing sound.

“Shall we... pay?”

“Ah, ah... Yes.”

I had forgotten that the employee was there and was too immersed in our own world. Being with Sun Woo, I felt like I became the protagonist of a sweet romance story instead of a makjang, and I was getting lost in it absentmindedly.

#056

The ramen Sun Woo cooked for me was delicious. He even remembered to cook the egg without breaking it, and I was touched again by his thoughtfulness.

‘Look. I have someone who will cook ramen for me too if I say I want to eat it!’

I shouted loudly inside, but it was obvious they couldn’t hear me anyway. I was sitting at the table watching Sun Woo clean up. Even if I say I’ll do it, he tells me to stay still because he’ll be surprised.

Far from being surprised, I’m fine with it... If I was surprised by anything, it was Sun Woo’s strength that easily subdued and gently pushed over a high school student of similar build.

In the webtoon, the difference in strength between Ha Jin and Sun Woo was similar. Of course, Ha Jin was a bit stronger. Well, even considering that the Sun Woo at that time seemed to have no motivation like he had seen everything in the world, and Ha Jin acted like a crazy dog. The basic level of strength wouldn’t be much different.

I suddenly became curious.

Ha Jin and Sun Woo. Who would be stronger between the two? If you’re curious, you can try it. Both characters are here, after all.

“Sun Woo.”

At my call, Sun Woo, who had finished cleaning up and sat across from me, raised his head towards me. He was using his hand to tear open a straw and insert it into a chocolate milk. How much has he had that he can find the straw hole and insert it well without looking?

It didn't seem like Ha Jin would lose to Sun Woo who's drinking chocolate milk. The student who picked a fight must have been weak.

"Wanna arm wrestle with me?"

"Why arm wrestling all of a sudden?"

"I think I might be stronger than you."

"Are you serious?"

Sun Woo asked with a faint smile. When I nodded my head, Sun Woo smiled prettily.

"What's the title?"

"Title?"

"It's more fun to bet on something."

Sun Woo suggests making a bet. Then suddenly my confidence plummeted. Honestly, I know that in the webtoon, Ha Jin is stronger. But that's when Sun Woo wasn't like he is now.

It was unpleasant, but I couldn't take back the words I had spit out here.

"Yeah. Let's bet. What should we bet on?"

I shouted with as much confidence as I could, but I was anxious. The Sun Woo I actually experienced was different from the webtoon, strong in every way, mentally and physically.

"Granting a wish for just today."

"Just for today? The day has already almost passed? It's evening now. Isn't just today too short?"

"A day is enough."

"...But Sun Woo, you talk as if you're going to win?"

"I'm not confident."

He says he's not confident, but his expression was more confident than anyone.

"I just have to grant it for a day, right? Okay, let's do it. Let's try it."

I pompously placed my arm on the table. I put my elbow on the table and reached out my hand to Sun Woo. Sun Woo also took my hand in the same posture as me.

"..."

The moment he grabbed my hand, I was struck with the feeling that I absolutely couldn't win. His large hand with slightly bulging veins was holding my hand... How can even his hands be so handsome?

"Sun Woo. Don't use your strength yet."

I kept warning him out of anxiety. Sun Woo looked at me with a relaxed expression as if he found me ridiculous. Regardless of how he looked at me, that's how it seemed to my eyes.

"St-art!"

Matching my call, we started exerting strength against each other. My face turned red as I used my strength, but Sun Woo's arm didn't tilt at all. Only I was grunting and using strength, while Sun Woo was just staying still without his face color changing one bit.

'What? It's not like he's not using strength. Why is his expression so peaceful?'

As I was examining Sun Woo's expression, suddenly a vein slightly bulged on his forehead and my hand met the table surface. I lost so simply that I couldn't even speak.

"Huh?"

At my question mixed with a sigh, Sun Woo gently stroked the back of my right hand. As if that wasn't enough, he raised my hand and blew on it, hoo hoo. As if blowing on an injured child saying "get better", hoo.

"..."

Fuck? I lost? I lost to Sun Woo who used to be crushed under Ha Jin?

I couldn't cleanly accept the result. Very disgracefully, the words "let's do it again" came out of me.

"Do it again!"

Sun Woo grabbed my outstretched hand again with a smiling face. In the arm wrestling that started once more according to my call, Sun Woo immediately exerted strength and knocked me down. If there was a difference from the previous arm wrestling, it was that he exerted strength right away so it ended quickly, and his left hand was supporting the back of my hand so it wouldn't directly hit the table.

I blankly stared at his hand that acted as a cushion.

"Ha Jin. Again?"

"...No."

The first round, he went easy on me. As if he knew my inner thoughts of wanting to do it again, Sun Woo didn't give any more room and immediately won. How could I say let's do it again to that? He might have gone very easy on me even now. Unlike me whose face turned red from exerting strength, only a vein bulged on Sun Woo's forehead.

"Haa, I lost. Sun Woo, say your wish. Tell me the wish I have to grant just for tonight."

Sun Woo showed a pleased smile.

"You must be tired, so wash up first."

"Is that your wish?"

"No."

"The wish? There's not much time left now."

"I'll tell you before we sleep."

"?"

It's a wish I'm granting for today, so why is he saying he'll tell me before we sleep? I couldn't understand right away, but Sun Woo wasn't the type to say two different things, so I let it go for now. If he says so, then that's how it is. Without further questioning, I went to wash up.

When I came out after washing, I saw Sun Woo already lying on the bed. He must have washed up too, as he was lightly shaking his not fully dry hair.

"Did you wash up?"

At my question, Sun Woo pointed to the guest room with a nod of his head. I see, he washed up in the guest room.

“Come here.”

Sun Woo called me over while sitting up with his upper body at the head of the bed. As I walked to the bed at his words, my heart was oddly pounding. Even though I’ve suggested sleeping together before. Friends can sleep in the same bed too, you know. I tried hard to ignore my pounding heart.

‘Wait. Do friends usually sleep in the same bed? When there’s another room?’

After sleeping with Sun Woo for a few days at Grandmother’s house, sleeping together became too natural.

Looking at the clock, it was past 10 o’clock. Time passes so quickly no matter what I do. When I got into bed and laid down, Sun Woo’s hand fiddled with my hair as I was lying down. Lying down and looking up at him, I asked.

“The wish?”

“It’s nothing much.”

“There’s only 2 hours left now. Don’t you have to say it quickly?”

“2 hours. That’s not lacking.”

“What the heck is it?”

I was racking my brain trying to think of a wish that wouldn’t be lacking in 2 hours, when Sun Woo’s hand fiddled with the nape of my neck. Exactly the mosquito bite spot he had sucked and bitten. As if searching for that faint trace now.

“Ha Jin.”

Sun Woo called my name again in an affectionate tone. Ah, I’m weak to Sun Woo calling my name like this. He probably won’t say an unreasonable wish, but I felt a bit of burden thinking ‘What is he trying to say by doing this?’

“Hm?”

“My wish is for you to not resist.”

“Resist?”

“Like not kicking me with your feet like last time.”

Sun Woo brought up what happened at Grandmother’s house.

“We said we wouldn’t do that at Grandmother’s house. So it’s okay here?”

“Wa-wait!”

I spit out urgently. What is this about now? So he’s going to do what he couldn’t do then again, and he’s telling me not to resist?

“Ha Jin.”

Sun Woo’s excited breath mixed in between my name. He moved his body to straddle me and lowered his head. Crazy! I thought we were going to spend time quietly.

Sun Woo’s eyes looking down at me while straddling me were deep, profound, and full of lust. Despite having such eyes, his face was upright and beautiful, drawing out my hidden desires. No, I shouldn’t feel lust here.

I quickly racked my brain. How can I quell this desire? Talking about studying is the best way to calm excitement after all.

“Sun Woo. Shall we study together in the 2nd semester too?”

“Yeah. Let’s do that.”

My study attack didn’t work either, as Sun Woo rubbed my earlobe with his fingers. When two of his fingers grabbed and rubbed my ear, it became hot as if lit by a match. It’s dangerous. At this rate, I felt like I would be bewitched and swayed by Sun Woo’s pace again.

“C-course registration is coming up soon too, right?”

“There’s still time left.”

Sun Woo was unaffected. One of his hands was already inside my clothes. Beads of sweat were forming on his neat face, perhaps due to the heat. Damn it. Even the beads of sweat are too sexy.

“Grandmother!”

Afraid of being mesmerized by his appearance, I unknowingly shouted Grandmother’s name loudly. Sun Woo, who hadn’t moved at all until now, stopped his actions for the first time.

“Grandmother. I need to contact her. She’ll be worried.”

“Haa... Ha Jin.”



Taking advantage of the opportunity, I slipped out from under him. Sun Woo was following me with his eyes. His gaze coldly followed me, but I smiled even more brightly for no reason.

"I'll quickly contact her. I left without saying anything."

"I contacted her saying I'm staying over today."

"When?"

"When I left the hospital room."

I see. I thought Sun Woo was doing this without considering the circumstances. Fortunately, Sun Woo stopped his actions and reached out his arm to me. Flinching at that, I curled up my body, and he just stroked my hair and pulled away.

"Where are you going?"

I asked urgently to Sun Woo who got up from the bed. It was an embarrassing question for me to ask when I was only thinking of escaping from his embrace. I was acting as if he couldn't go anywhere when I was the one who ran away first.

"Going to wash with cold water and come back."

"Didn't you wash up?"

At my question, Sun Woo smiled faintly at me and went into the bathroom. Looking at his back, I tilted my head and opened my mouth.

"You have a lot of heat in your body, huh?"

\* \* \*

The first thing I saw as soon as I opened my eyes in the morning was Sun Woo's sleeping face. I would have believed it if someone said it was a sculpture stolen from a museum. Such beauty should be left as a national public property. It felt like a waste for me to be looking at it alone like this. I gently stroked his face so as not to wake him up.

"It's soft."

I traced his neat eyebrows with my finger. When I lightly touched his long eyelashes under his eyebrows with my finger, his eyelids furrowed. I held my breath and waited for his expression to relax, and when his face became peaceful again, I admired his face.

"To think Ha Jin is doing this next to Sun Woo."

To be able to look at Sun Woo sleeping with a fine face so peacefully like this.

'Ha Jin. How is it, are you happy?'

Why is Ha Jin clinging to his parents, longing for affection he can't even receive? What is he expecting now from people who neglect even their young child? In the end, he only ate away at himself. That foolish guy.

I gently ran my finger down Sun Woo's well-defined nose bridge. And when my finger touched his plump lips, a strange urge arose. I slowly brought my face closer and lightly touched my lips to his lips.

After stealing a kiss from him, I carefully hugged him. Then, as if in his sleep, Sun Woo wrapped his arms around me and pulled me towards him. With my head bowed and my face buried in his chest, I stayed still and heard his heartbeat.

Thump thump thump thump, the steady rhythm and warmth felt nice, so I stayed like that for a long time, and Sun Woo hugged me tighter with more strength in his arms. Sun Woo, who was stroking my back with his palm and patting me, rubbed his face in my hair, then firmly pressed his lips on my forehead and pulled away.

"Are you awake?"

When I asked him and raised my head, there was Sun Woo's face smiling with half-open eyes.

"You got bitten by a mosquito properly."

Sun Woo spoke while stroking the nape of my neck. It's because he left a mark there again last night.

"It's summer so I can't even wear a turtleneck. How do you expect me to hide it..."

"The mark is very visible. It's sexy."

His finger gently stroked the mark and then licked it once with his tongue. I pulled my body back as a sign to stop.

"I'll make it in a place that's not visible now."

Only a sigh came out at Sun Woo's words. I just wish he wouldn't think of making them at all...

I was sitting cross-legged on the bed, eating rice cakes that Grandmother had gotten from another hospital room. As I was receiving the rice cakes Grandmother was picking up with a fork into my mouth, Sun Woo's brows furrowed. He's doing it again. I thought Sun Woo's snide remarks would come soon, and as expected, Sun Woo grumbled.

"Ha Jin. Did your hands appear and disappear again?"

"Oh. My hands disappeared~"

"Grandmother, I'll feed him."

"Oh my, you want to do it, dear? You only think about our dear Jin-i?"

Seeing it as thinking about me, Sun Woo uniquely picks fights only in these aspects. He seems to look at me nicely no matter what I do otherwise. He always frowns and dislikes it when I just rely on other people's hands. But is it okay when he feeds me? He doesn't frown and rather likes it.

Look look. Even now, where did his furrowed brows go and he's smiling, right? While holding out one hand so the bean powder doesn't fall. I was barely holding back my laughter, but at Sun Woo's serious face carefully matching the fork to my mouth, I couldn't hold back anymore and burst out laughing. Because I laughed with my mouth closed, my nose breath came out strongly and the bean powder on the rice cake flew straight towards Sun Woo's face and scattered.

"Ah, sorry. Sun Woo."

When I lightly brushed it off with my hand, Sun Woo closed his eyes tightly as if holding back his anger.

"Sorry. Sorry. Sorry."

While apologizing with my mouth, my eyes were looking at Grandmother and laughing.

"Jin-i, do you like it just by looking at his face?"

At Grandmother's words, I burst into laughter again.

"Yes. I like it just by looking at his face. Sun Woo is handsome, isn't he?"

"Right? He's totally your type, isn't he Jin-i?"

"Yes. Totally my type."

The corners of Sun Woo's mouth slightly went up and then came back down. That sight was so cute that I wanted to kiss him, but I held back because Grandmother was in front. ...Huh? Wait a minute.

'Are you crazy, Ha Jin? You want to kiss him?'

I've completely lost it. To even think about wanting to kiss Sun Woo. After roughly brushing off the bean powder on Sun Woo's face, Sun Woo narrowed his eyes and looked at me.

"Do you like my body?"

'What are you saying, you crazy bastard!'

While I was looking at Grandmother's reaction in horror, Sun Woo was relentless.

"Ha Jin. You don't like my body?"

"Uh, huh?"

"Yes, tell me Jin-i. Grandma is curious."

Grandmother, why are you asking too? Are these two connected by blood asking shamelessly, talking about a different meaning of body than I'm thinking?

With even Grandmother asking like that, I was flustered and blushed for no reason, not knowing where to look, my gaze going here and there.

'I like it. Sun Woo's body. It makes people lose their minds.'

When catching loaches in the countryside, Sun Woo took off his clothes for me, so I got to see it properly. And because he keeps sticking by my side, I've already grasped his firm body with my eyes and my own body.

"I guess he's too embarrassed to answer."

"Aw. Jin-i is so cute. His cheeks are turning red, so cute. Dear."

It was embarrassing to sit there because of the two people teasing me.

"I'll go out for a bit and come back."

"Where are you going?"

"..."

I don't know where I'll go either. First, I need to escape from here.

As I was trying to leave in a hurry, Sun Woo smiled slightly and waved at me. The nerve of him.

\* \* \*

Since the hospital room was located on the top floor, I only had to climb the stairs a little to quickly reach the rooftop. I approached the railing that was blocked high with transparent glass and looked down. The people and cars moved busily like small toys.

Because it was a summer day with strong sunlight, no one came up to the rooftop. I went to the pavilion with a roof and sat on the edge with just my bottom.

Among the various thoughts floating in my head, the content related to the webtoon passed by fleetingly. Then, because of the location, the content related to Hope Hospital came to mind.

In the beginning of 3rd year when Ha Jin was tormenting Sun Woo. He visits the hospital to treat the wounds caused by Ha Jin. And at this hospital, he runs into the protagonist Sin Yeo-un. Sin Yeo-un, a student at A University's pre-med department, already knew Sun Woo by sight. Because after taking the college entrance exam in his 3rd year of high school, he found Sun Woo crying by chance in a rural village he briefly visited while going to a ski resort with his friends, and fell in love at first sight.

During the winter break, Sun Woo was immersed in the sadness of having sent off his grandmother. And in that place where he thought no one would be, he unexpectedly ran into Sin Yeo-un.

'If crying is this pretty, he must be really pretty when he smiles.'

Those were the words Sin Yeo-un said to the crying Sun Woo. Saying he'll see all sorts of strange guys, Sun Woo avoided the spot and Sin Yeo-un didn't particularly try to stop him. If it's fate, they'll meet again. Sin Yeo-un, who remained there, stared at the spot where Sun Woo had been crying for a long time, and as if it was really destiny, he reunited with him at Hope Hospital.

"He's a golden-spoon guy."

Kind, capable, and even perfectly smart, so when Ha Jin caused trouble with his antics, Sin Yeo-un considered his reputation and set up a trap, waiting for the other person to fall for it. And he solved the problem very refreshingly.

I haven't tried it, but if Ha Jin and Sin Yeo-un had properly fought, Ha Jin would have been utterly defeated. Sin Yeo-un was the protagonist who couldn't even be compared to in terms of brains, abilities, or personality.

As I quietly organized the content and looked to see if there was anything that could help Ha Jin, there was really nothing. Ha Jin just persistently caused incidents and accidents. Just that alone made the story rich, so there probably wasn't a single line of hidden narrative.

I was grumbling that the author's favoritism was severe when my cell phone rang. When the name [Kim Ok-bun's real grandson] appeared, I was surprised and answered the phone. Why is he calling at this timing when he doesn't usually call?

"Sun Woo. Why? Did something happen?"

– Ha Jin, where are you? Are you still outside the hospital room?

"Yeah. I'm outside."

– Where outside?

At Sun Woo's words, my heart oddly pounded as if it would burst. If he has something to say, he can just say it, so why is he looking for where I am? Making people nervous for no reason.

"On the hospital rooftop."

– Then go back to the hospital room right now.

"...What, why are you doing this?"

– Grandmother's examination results came out. You'll cry, won't you?

"Why would I cry?"

– Because you cried every time. Don't cry outside, go to the hospital room and cry alone. I was going to tell you later when we meet, but I wanted to tell you a little earlier. Ha Jin. Are you going to the hospital room? I can't talk on the phone for long.

"Tell me. I'm listening."

– I told you to go to the hospital room... Ha... You really don't listen. You don't want to show others that you're crying.

"What's there to show or not show. Tell me. I won't cry."

There was a very brief silence. That time passed so slowly that even the blinking of my eyes felt sluggish. Soon, Sun Woo let out a faint sigh over the receiver.

– Grandmother. They say she can be treated. Ha Jin.

I stayed still without answering.

– I have to go in now so I need to hang up. Ha Jin. Stay put in the hospital room. I'll go quickly.

Sun Woo spoke quickly as if in a hurry and hung up the phone. I guess the results came out well as the hospital director said.

When I looked up at the sky, the sunlight was unusually painfully intense. The sunlight shining on the rooftop was only not reaching the spot where I was sitting. It was because of the shade created by the pavilion installed on the rooftop. Looking at the roof of the pavilion creating a cool shade, I slowly blinked my eyes. Will I also get shade like this?

The webtoon's content has changed.

"Crazy..."

I covered my face with both hands.

How is this possible? Grandmother... will remain by my side? Did they leave Grandmother by my side so that Ha Jin can navigate well through the thorny path that fills his surroundings? Then I could willingly walk the thorny path even barefoot.

When I removed my palms, tears immediately fell to the floor with a thud. The tears falling on the floor painted with green waterproof paint turned into a dense green color in a circle.

Damn it. I'm really crying. It's good news. I thought I had already shed tears once and had no more tears to shed, but I'm crying again.

Why do I have so many tears? When I had no tears at all.

"..."

As I was crying while suppressing the sound, someone's shoes appeared in front of the spot where my tears fell. Clean white sneakers. It wasn't Sun Woo.

Whether the shoes were in front of me or not, I was staying still without paying attention when a handkerchief was silently held out to me without a word. When I didn't accept it, there was a sound of clothes rubbing and the person sat down in front of me with their legs bent. I couldn't see his face because I was looking down, but the clothes he was wearing were a neat school uniform. He was still holding out the handkerchief to me.

The fingers holding the handkerchief were long and thick. Just by looking at his hands, I could predict that he would be quite tall.

The flowing tears didn't stop even though there was a person in front of me. I should have gone back to the hospital room as Sun Woo said. I just stayed because no one had come up to the rooftop until now, but I ended up showing this sight to someone else.

'Sun Woo told me not to cry in front of others...'

Surprised by the sudden thought of Sun Woo, I raised my head.

'Fuck... This is definitely Sun Woo's brainwashing.'

When I raised my head in surprise, the person in front of me looked blurry due to the tears. When I blinked once, the tears that had welled up flowed down and my vision became clear.

"!"

My eyes met the eyes of the person who was intently looking at me with one hand propping up his chin. The guy with deep and dark eyes smiled brightly at me. His distinct features, refreshingly deep eyes, and dark hair calmly covering his forehead were impressive. After seeing his handsome face smiling brightly at me, I was so surprised that my tears disappeared.

Although he still had a young face, he had an aura that made it difficult to see him as younger than me. His wide shoulders and long legs were noticeable even though he was bending.

There was only one man with this atmosphere and appearance. I had even met his father not long ago.

He was a boy who went well with the blue summer day. A man who was refreshing, bright, and made you feel good just by looking at him.

He was Sin Yeo-un, the protagonist of this webtoon.

Perhaps because Ha Jin would be too miserable if a confrontational structure unfolded between Sin Yeo-un and Ha Jin, the author never put the two in the same scene. But why is he in front of me now? Moreover, he was smiling at me with a harmless face.

When the handkerchief he held out wasn't taken back, Sin Yeo-un put it back into his own pocket. Then he immediately reached out his arm to me. Sin Yeo-un gently wiped the moisture from the corner of my eye, smiled brightly, and opened his mouth.

"I thought your smile was pretty, but your crying is pretty too."

'If crying is this pretty, he must be really pretty when he smiles.'



This line. The content is slightly different, but it's definitely what Sin Yeo-un said to Sun Woo at their first meeting.

#058

'What does he mean by saying my smile is pretty too? Sin Yeo-un wouldn't have even seen me smiling.'

Flustered, I pulled my upper body back. Then Sin Yeo-un withdrew his touch and stood up as if regretful. Sin Yeo-un, whom I had to look up at for a while from my sitting position, was quite taller than I had imagined. He, wearing a school uniform, went well with his upright image. The unique fresh smile that appeared in the webtoon was still hanging on the corners of his mouth.

"Why were you crying?"

Sin Yeo-un took a step closer, cupped my face with both hands, and slightly lifted it up. Sin Yeo-un's touch gently wiping away my tears with his thumbs was very careful. The tears didn't flow anymore, but the tear stains that had already flowed down disappeared with Sin Yeo-un's hands. Sin Yeo-un caressed various parts of my face as if washing a child's face. He even pushed my hanging bangs to the side, looked at my revealed forehead, and smiled slightly.

The kind and considerate Sin Yeo-un was a man close to perfection.

While admiring the real-life protagonist, I belatedly felt strange about his actions. The skinship of him putting his hands on me was as natural as flowing water. Only then did I realize that his actions were inappropriate to do to someone he was seeing for the first time. I detached his hands from me.

"What are you?"

Sin Yeo-un was acting as if he knew me. Did he meet me when I was young, like how his father the hospital director knew me? As I was thinking, I suddenly remembered what the hospital director had said.

'You haven't seen Yeo-un, right? He's my son.'

It was certain that Sin Yeo-un didn't know me.

"I'm Sin Yeo-un, 3rd year class 2 at B High School."

He suddenly took out something like a card from his pocket and held it out to me. When I received it in a daze, it was his student ID with his photo.

I carefully examined the student ID as if doing an identity check.

‘He’s really Sin Yeo-un?’

“Sin Yeo-un. That’s my name.”

I know. That you’re the protagonist and an incomparably better guy than Ha Jin. This young guy already has an incredible aura. While Sun Woo had an aura that draws people’s attention, Sin Yeo-un possessed a heavy charisma.

‘Ha Jin. This isn’t a game. You have to admit what you have to admit.’

“Do you know me?”

“Are you curious?”

I was curious. How he knew me. But I didn’t particularly answer yes. In the webtoon, they were two people with Sun Woo between them, but they had no significant points of contact. So I thought this scene would just pass by as a flowing story.

I frowned and was leaving the spot when Sin Yeo-un suddenly called me.

“Ha Jin hyung.”

“?”

What, you know my name too? Does Sin Yeo-un really know me?

“Can I borrow your phone for just one call?”

“Huh?”

“It’s really urgent. Please.”

He even politely bowed his head, so I was too kind to refuse him. When I handed him my cell phone, he pressed the numbers firmly and called somewhere. It seemed like a ringtone was heard from somewhere, then Sin Yeo-un took out his cell phone from his pants pocket.

After checking the screen, he returned the phone to me.

“Thank you.”

Wait a minute. This is too old-fashioned that I’m dumbfounded?

“This.”

I was about to hold up the phone, laugh hollowly, and retort to him, but he cut me off with a smile.

“That’s my number. I’ll contact you often.”

Sin Yeo-un, with his brightly smiling face, passed by me and went down from the rooftop first. Everything was so natural that only after some time did I realize the strange points.

“Why do both Sun Woo and Sin Yeo-un make me into a soft rice cake?”

Does my iron wall not work on the protagonists?

\* \* \*

I also came down from the rooftop and returned to the hospital room. After confirming that no one was there, I immediately headed to the bathroom and washed my face with cold water.

“Sin Yeo-un.”

The young guy already had an excellent appearance. Poor Ha Jin. If the opponent he had to fight over Sun Woo was like that, there was no way he could win. Well, Ha Jin didn’t intend to win from the beginning anyway. He just thought forcefully taking would be enough.

While I was in the bathroom, I heard Grandmother’s laughter, so I hurriedly went out without even wiping the moisture from my face. Grandmother saw me suddenly popping out of the bathroom and raised her small fist to pound on me.

“Oh my! You startled me, Jin-i. Do you want me to die of shock after barely staying alive?”

Even while being hit by Grandmother, I tightly hugged her, saying it was good. I don’t have to send Grandmother away. Now it’s really certain.

“Oh, Grandma can’t breathe. Jin-i.”

At Grandmother’s words, I gently detached from her embrace. Grandmother was smiling so brightly that her eyes couldn’t be seen, and she took my hand, put it between her two hands, and patted it.

“Jin-i is my savior.”

“Ok-bun. We don’t have to prepare to part ways now, right?”

“Yes, yes. Grandma won’t go, so don’t worry.”

“Ok-bun.”

I slightly hugged Grandmother again. They say Grandmother’s illness is treatable. Sun Woo doesn’t have to get hurt, and I also don’t have to worry about the shade prepared for me disappearing.

‘To think I gained someone to rely on only after coming to the webtoon.’

I was constantly trying not to cry in front of Grandmother, but someone hugged my shoulders from behind. Sun Woo, who had his arms around me, lightly kissed my cheek and rested his head on my shoulder. Fuck, my tears are disappearing.

“Thank you, Ha Jin.”

“...”

“Well, I don’t have anything to give... Do you want to have me?”

“Yes Jin-i. Take our boy. Grandma will give him to you.”

At Grandmother’s playful words full of laughter, I swallowed the rough words right away. I spoke very mildly, looking at Sun Woo leaning on my shoulder.

“You’re too big so I’ll decline.”

“I’ll lose weight.”

“Does losing weight reduce your huge build?”

“Oh, he may be big in size but he’s still a baby.”

Surprisingly, Grandmother got along very well with Sun Woo. Even though their personalities seem completely different, when they say things like this, they are inseparable friends. Still, thinking that I can continue to see Sun Woo saying such strange nonsense, a smile slowly spreads across my lips. Sun Woo, who was watching me like that, lightly pulled my cheek with his hand.

“While you’re happy inside.”

“Jin-i, take good care of our boy. Grandma has to take care of her health now so I can’t pay attention to our boy.”

Grandmother got out of my arms and stepped back, waving her hand as if really entrusting Sun Woo to me. As if telling me to take him quickly. I was just laughing at

Grandmother's joke, feeling good, when I felt Sun Woo's breath still hanging on my neck. He kissed my cheek again. And he still doesn't let go.

"Oh my. Baby, do you like it that much? Hm? Grandma is so happy that you two get along well. Right, Jin-i?"

Well, if Grandmother is happy. I smiled back, with a big baby nearly 190cm tall hanging around my neck.

\* \* \*

"As expected. It's not a typical birthday celebration."

I let out a small sigh. I was stupid to think it would be a small birthday party.

I-na sent a message saying she wanted me to come because it was her birthday. When I tried not to go, somehow she found out right away and the following messages included words that if I felt sorry to her, I must come. I had no choice but to swallow the words I was going to say to decline and replied that I understood.

There was no way she, who was using her top popularity, would have a quiet birthday party. I still hadn't escaped much from the thoughts of a commoner. Still, fortunately, since it was I-na's birthday party, I came dressed in a suit.

I-na, being the protagonist, wasn't here yet as if she would appear last, and for some reason, Kim Shin, who always came first to greet me, was also absent.

Excluding those two, I didn't know anyone, so I was just standing there when someone approached me, pretending to know me.

"It's really Ha Jin, huh?"

I thought it was another trashy group, but it was someone I recognized. Where have I seen him before? I was racking my brain trying to remember, but I couldn't recall at all. What was certain was that he wasn't a member of the private gathering.

"You still came to your ex-girlfriend's birthday? This beats Hollywood. Being friends with your ex-girlfriend too. Someone like you, Ha Jin, would understand that much. It's not easy to cut ties with you, Ha Jin."

"..."

"Your face got a lot better since I last saw you? It's been about half a year since we last met, right?"

When I saw his brightly smiling face, I remembered who he was. It was Lee Ji-hoo, who debuted as an idol and just started acting. He was a person mentioned a few times in the stories I-na told me while having dinner together after filming a movie with her this time. Despite being a rookie as an actor, the reason he was able to snatch the lead role was thanks to his kind image and handsome face.

His acting was still lacking, so I-na had to carry hard in this movie. Even though he was the lead, his role was quite small.

“Ji-hoo hyung?”

“Why are you calling me hyung? Call me Ji-hoo like before. It gives me goosebumps when you call me hyung. I heard you came to your senses, but this is disappointing, Ha Jin. We still have a bond of doing bad things together. You completely ignored my contact and it even said the number doesn’t exist?”

Ah, this person was also a trashy group. Well, that’s how the people around Ha Jin are. What does he mean by bad things? And that we did them together? He looks like he has a righteous image... I shouldn’t easily judge by outward appearance after all.

“I’m in the process of settling the past.”

“Ah. Am I included in that past?”

I glanced at him once and turned my head. It was a sign that I didn’t want to get involved anymore, but he didn’t care.

“Your personality is still prickly even though you’ve come to your senses. This is why many kids are hung up on you. Anyway, you’re charming. It was fun when anything beyond imagination was possible with you around. I miss not seeing you these days?”

Is this guy completely crazy? Anyway, Ha Jin, really. There’s so much shit he left around everywhere that it’s not easy to avoid it. Wherever I step, it’s shit.

“Keep missing me like that. There’s no reason to hang out with you anymore.”

Even when I spoke roughly, he just laughed as if he was in a good mood.

“Ha Jin. You’re not cursing? Your cursing sounds like dirty talk and it’s fun to hear. You know it’s fucking exciting whenever vulgar words come out of that noble mouth of yours?”

“Crazy...”

“Wow. I just flinched a little.”

You avoid shit because it's scary, not because it's dirty. I tried to move to another spot, but he put his arm around my shoulder. Before I could escape, he whispered softly in my ear.

"We met after a long time, but you're being so cold? Ha Jin, hm? We have so many memories of playing dirty together."

#059

I strongly swatted his arm away.

Due to the murderous atmosphere, the gazes of the people around us gathered. Not wanting to cause unnecessary trouble on I-na's birthday, I quietly hissed at Ji-hoo,

"It's a day to celebrate, so let's appropriately back off from each other?"

"Ooh. Scary."

Ji-hoo exaggeratedly moved away from me. Then he smiled despicably, brought his face close to mine, and whispered quietly.

"Don't pretend to be noble. We should play properly, shouldn't we? You're a hedonist, Ha Jin."

"You're on the rise these days, so will it be okay?"

"..."

"Do it in moderation. Don't cause trouble for I-na."

"I'm a bit disappointed to hear you say that?"

"What does your disappointment have to do with me? You should take care of your image. If it's known that you played dirty, I wonder if even a handful of fans will remain?"

"Seriously. I'm telling you, you have to acknowledge Ha Jin's bluntness."

He frowned as if his feelings were hurt, but he managed to make a kind voice and moved away from me. His tail-between-his-legs escape looked quite funny. I guess he doesn't want his entertainment career to end? But I can only sigh at his words that he can't let go of his lingering attachment and will wait for my contact.

"Ha Jin."

Who's calling me again? Without easing my frown, I turned around and saw Kim Shin looking at me with a puzzled face.

“You’re late?”

Kim Shin smiled brightly, trying to hide his rough breathing at my question.

“I didn’t know Ha Jin was attending too. You should have contacted me? Then we could have come together. I rushed over here after hearing the news that you came.”

Contrary to his calm tone, his chest was constantly moving up and down. After catching his breath with effort, he rubbed my furrowed brow with his finger. My furrowed expression relaxed at his touch.

“Why are you upset? Did something happen?”

“Nothing special.”

“Can’t you tell me that you were bored without me? I think I would be so happy to hear that.”

The brow I had tried hard to smooth furrowed again.

“Relax your expression. You’ll get wrinkles on your pretty face.”

I tried to slap away Kim Shin’s approaching hand again, but the surroundings became noisy and congratulatory remarks popped out from here and there.

“Wow. I-na dressed up with determination today. She put in more effort than for an awards ceremony?”

I-na was seen walking with a bright smile among the people. I-na, who was looking around as if searching for someone while receiving congratulatory greetings, made eye contact with me and immediately walked towards me. After discovering me, she seemed to half-heartedly listen to the greetings around her, and eventually, when she came close, I-na spread her arms and jumped into my embrace.

I reflexively held her up. She felt light in my arms as if she doesn’t even eat properly.

“I really didn’t think you would come. I didn’t get my hopes up in case I got disappointed after hoping in vain.”

I-na murmured in my arms as if complaining. I-na, whose mouth corners were up to her cheekbones, had a very happy face. Thinking ‘Could it be, still?’ I thought I shouldn’t have come.

Moreover, everyone is paying too much attention. I felt sorry as if my existence was needlessly staining the popular I-na.



“Happy birthday. I-na.”

When I quickly detached her from my embrace, I-na was rolling her eyes with a face that looked happy enough to die. Afraid she might hug me again, I quickly pulled Kim Shin.

“Our I-na. Shall we go to the protagonist’s seat?”

With good sense, Kim Shin separated I-na from me. Even while being pulled by Kim Shin’s hand, I-na maintained a happy face.

‘Yes, she’s so happy, so I guess I came well.’

The long table covered with velvet cloth like a new work production announcement was decorated with colorful flowers, and a pretty 3-tier cake was placed in the center. The cake befitting the glamorous venue suited I-na well. Kim Shin, who was sticking close to her side, also suited the glamor quite well.

Even while sitting there, I-na kept making eye contact with me. Although it seemed like most people were whispering, knowing about me and I-na, I smiled brightly as if I didn’t care. I thought the whispers would decrease if I at least gave a good-natured smile.

People’s birthday song started and I-na blew out the candles. While I was watching I-na cut the cake, I clearly heard a very small voice in my ear.

“Blood doesn’t lie, I guess.”

They were chatting without minding their surroundings, as if thinking it wouldn’t be heard in the space where loud music was playing. My ears perked up at their conversation. It was a sarcasm that didn’t suit the birthday celebration.

“I-na? She has an incredible aura. Is it because her family has been prestigious for generations? She gives off the vibe of a rich young lady, don’t you think?”

“We’re not talking about I-na, you know?”

The sharp remark sounded tiring just by listening to it, so I tried to divert my attention, but at that moment, I heard a familiar name. In the end, I had no choice but to listen to their conversation again.

“No. I mean Baek’s son. Ha Jin. I thought he was American or something. How can he even think of coming to his ex-girlfriend’s birthday party?”

“I-na must have invited him. I saw I-na earlier and her lingering feelings were dripping.”

“Still, she’s his ex-girlfriend. Cool, so cool. Even Baek is totally American-minded.”

"She's not even active now. It's been so long since she retired, why are you suddenly mentioning Baek?"

"I saw something incredible."

"What?"

"Ah, well."

"Ah, why do you stop talking midway? Say it properly."

What, as if she's Baek Su-ah herself? Why is she babbling about someone else's story? My eyebrows furrowed involuntarily at the woman's arrogant attitude.

"No, I recently moved because of a sasaeng fan. To an apartment with strong security."

"Is it nice there? I want to go there too."

"No, that's not the important part. Not just anyone with money can enter that place. But recently, I started seeing a male high school student in our building."

"Is he handsome?"

"Just average. Ah, don't interrupt me. It's an important story."

The content of the conversation... I was starting to doubt if they were really talking about Baek Su-ah.

"I saw that high school student holding hands affectionately with a very pretty woman. The woman's outfit was a bit mature for a girlfriend... Anyway, it was like that. So I took a closer look and that woman's bag, you know the bag?"

"How would I know that woman's bag?"

"There's a bag that came out as Baek Su-ah's dedicated line from Erna."

"The luxury brand Erna? It was a huge deal this time. The chief designer there revealed in an interview that his muse is Baek Su-ah. Hey, it's been over 20 years since she retired. But to think she's the muse of Erna, beating out all the currently hot people. Wasn't it a big issue? Her impact is no joke even after retirement."

"Yes, that bag. That woman was carrying that bag."

"What? What does that mean... Don't tell me you're saying that woman is Baek right now? Are you crazy? Hey, you said it was an average male high school student."

“That’s why.”

“Eh, no way. It can’t be.”

“I thought it sounded too absurd too, so I even looked up Baek Su-ah’s recent status these days? The hairstyle! Even the light brown hair dye was exactly the same.”

“Are you out of your mind? What does Baek Su-ah have to be desperate for?”

“That’s what I’m saying! She must have a lot of money. Her face, honestly, even if she comes out now, she would crush everyone. Ah, I don’t know. How would I know her true feelings? But they were really holding hands affectionately.”

“Oh no, it can’t be. It won’t be. My idol.”

What is this?

I turned my head and looked back. The two people who were talking flinched as if pricked by my gaze, and soon left their seats.

What did I just hear?

If I hadn’t heard my mother’s phone call at the department store, it would have been a story that I could have laughed off as completely nonsensical. But just a few days ago, I had even indirectly confirmed that my mother went to cook ramen for someone other than my father.

But they’re saying the other person was a high school student?

“Mi-ja?”

“Who’s Mi-ja?”

Kim Shin, who had approached me at some point, asked me.

“A minor.”

“...Ha Jin. That’s not okay.”

“What?”

“That’s a crime.”

...What are you saying? No, more than that, yes, it’s a crime. It’s a crime, Mother. It’s not Mi-ja, is it? The scale of the makjang seemed to keep getting bigger.

“Ha Jin. Don’t drink just anything. Most of the drinks here contain alcohol.”

“Okay.”

“But why do you look so out of it? You seemed to be in a bad mood earlier.”

“Well...”

Kim Shin laughed slightly and carefully observed my neck.

“Wait a moment.”

Kim Shin raised his hand, firmly pressed on my neck, and let go. The spot he pressed was where Sun Woo had bitten before. Fuck.

It was so noticeable that I had been wearing tape matching my skin color... Did it come off slightly? ...Did he see it?

“Do mosquitoes only bite there? That’s interesting.”

He saw it, damn it.

As Kim Shin’s gaze lingered on my neck, my ears turned red. Either my skin was sensitive or Sun Woo had sucked hard, but the mark was lasting quite long.

‘I’ll really see if I get caught again next time.’

“Ha Jin. Sun Woo...”

When Kim Shin suddenly mentioned Sun Woo, my ears became even hotter. I grabbed my ears with my hands, feeling the heat. They say the ears have the lowest temperature in the human body. It’s like a separate heater.

“Huh? Sun Woo?”

“Why are you so surprised? Sun Woo’s grandmother. Is she still in Seoul? I think of her sometimes.”

“Ah... Grandmother?”

“Yeah. I guess I got really attached to her in the countryside. I miss Grandmother’s smiling face too. I couldn’t even say goodbye properly that time when you left early in the morning for Seoul.”

What is he talking about? We spent 30 minutes just on goodbyes. Because Kim Shin kept clinging to Grandmother and chatting, our departure was delayed. Kim Shin looks at me with a sad face as if he really misses Grandmother.

“Do you... miss Grandmother?”

“Yeah. If Grandmother is in Seoul, I want to buy her delicious things.”

“It’s a bit difficult now.”

“Why?”

“There are circumstances. Next time when Grandmother has time...”

“What circumstances?”

Kim Shin cut off my words and asked me with an expressionless face. Then, realizing that he had failed to manage his expression for a moment, he smiled again with his eyes curved, but it was useless. I already saw it all, you know? Kim Shin with a blank expression is really fierce.

“There are. Anyway, it’s not possible now and...”

“Ha Jin.”

I tried to change the subject, but Kim Shin suddenly called my name very quietly. Crazy, Kim Shin had such a chilling atmosphere while smiling and being cheerful all the time?

“What happened to Grandmother?”

Kim Shin tried to make his expression as gentle as possible, but he couldn’t hide the coolness emanating from within.

Even though we only stayed together for about 3 days, Kim Shin must have fallen head over heels for Grandmother in that time. He must find it strange that she suddenly came up to Seoul and I keep trying to change the subject. Understanding his feelings, I decided to tell the truth.

“Grandmother is in the hospital.”

“Where? Which hospital? What’s wrong with her? Why? Why is she in the hospital?”

“Calm down, Kim Shin. She’s at Hope Hospital. Fortunately, they say her condition is treatable.”

“...Ha Jin.”

“She’s okay now.”

Kim Shin leaned his face on my shoulder as if all the energy had drained from his body. I heard Kim Shin’s sigh of relief very slowly in my ear.

“Kim Shin, what are you doing? On my birthday... Are you joking?”

I-na was frowning her pretty face and glaring at Kim Shin. The whipped cream slightly smeared on her cheek added a lot of cuteness to I-na’s perfect face. With Kim Shin hanging on my shoulder, I reached out to I-na’s cheek.

“I-na, you have whipped cream on your face. Did you not know?”

I-na’s cheeks instantly turned red and she narrowed her eyes slyly.

“I purposely let it smear there knowing Ha Jin would do this. Why did you intervene and ruin it all?”

I-na spoke shyly in a way that didn’t match her sly eyes, and at the end, she criticized Kim Shin as if reproaching him.

“Yoon I-na. This is how you seduce Ha Jin, like me.”

Kim Shin advised I-na with his head still buried in my shoulder, only tilting his head slightly.

“...What is that?”

I-na. Why are you getting involved in that? Somehow, the people around me seem to have excessive interest in me. But my own blood-related family doesn’t care about me.

#060

“Grandmother. I’m here.”

As soon as we entered the hospital room, Kim Shin ran straight to Grandmother.

“What?”

Although he didn’t say the rest, just by looking at Sun Woo’s expression, it seemed like he was saying, “What’s with that bastard?” He must have been surprised since I suddenly brought Kim Shin without a word. Grandmother seemed startled for a moment at Kim Shin’s appearance but soon greeted him with a smile. Thank goodness at least Grandmother welcomed him.

“Yesterday, Kim Shin suddenly brought up Grandmother. And before I knew it.”

"Yesterday? Kim Shin went to that birthday party with you too?"

Calling it a birthday party made it sound like a cute and small-scale birthday celebration. It was a very grand party.

"We didn't go together, but we met there."

Sun Woo didn't seem very happy about Kim Shin's arrival and was just silently watching. If a friend came, he should welcome him a bit. Kim Shin sat next to Grandmother, wagging his tail like a dog who found its owner.

"Grandmother, when are you getting discharged?"

"Who knows. I'll have to go when the doctor tells me to? I haven't even started treatment yet, my dear."

"What's wrong with you? Ha Jin won't answer me even if I ask him."

"Oh, did he? Jin-i didn't tell you? It's not something to hide."

At Grandmother's nonchalant attitude, Kim Shin seemed to feel relieved and smiled brightly. Judging by his expression, he seemed to think it was an illness that would pass like a cold. Since Grandmother was also smiling warmly, I thought she would brush it off as a minor illness. But my prediction was completely off the mark. Grandmother threw a heavy fast ball at Kim Shin without any warning.

"Oh my. I have cancer, what else."

As Grandmother spoke as if conveying very good news that didn't match the content, Kim Shin's expression, who had been smiling at her, gradually hardened. Then he looked at me with a face like the world was collapsing.

"Ha Jin... You said it's okay?"

"Shin-nie. Grandma is okay, though?"

Still bright, Grandmother poked Kim Shin's cheek as she saw his sad face. Kim Shin's expression remained dark even while his cheek was being poked.

"Grandmother..."

"Oh, it's treatable. Why are you worrying? Shin-nie, you have such a soft heart? Even though you don't look like it? Grandma is fine."

"Do they really say it's treatable? Is it really treatable?"

“Grandma just needs to put in a little effort. Oh my, how awful! If you’re going to cry, go somewhere Grandma can’t see and cry.”

Grandmother’s words comforting Kim Shin were full of playfulness. Although Kim Shin couldn’t completely ease his hardened face, he seemed a bit relieved.

“I guess Grandma suddenly got two more grandsons, so they’re letting me stay a little longer. Thanks to Shin-nie and Jin-i, I’m really lucky. Right?”

Grandmother smiled as she alternately looked at Kim Shin and me.

\* \* \*

On the way back to the hospital room after seeing Kim Shin off, I briefly saw someone wearing a familiar school uniform as I passed through the corridor. For a very brief moment, I saw him going up to the rooftop, and the cast on his right arm was still the same.

Even though I only saw him momentarily, I strangely felt uncomfortable.

Why... are all the circumstances telling me that he is the one Mother is involved with?

Could it be that the reason Father hit an ordinary high school student... was because of Mother?

Thoughts led to more thoughts and guided me to the rooftop. I didn’t need to clutter my mind. I just needed to ask. What should I ask? It felt a bit hasty to ask what his relationship with Mother was. If I was misunderstanding, it would be a big mistake.

As I was pondering over the question to ask him, before I knew it, the rooftop door handle was grasped in my hand.

I slightly pushed the handle down and opened the door. A pounding heart and anxiety, as if opening Pandora’s box, devoured me.

“ ... ”

He was leaning on the railing, looking down. Why did he look so precarious even from the back? As if deeply thinking about something, he maintained a still posture until I approached him closely.

“Excuse me...”

I had no choice but to call him like this since I didn’t know his name. At my call, he flinched and shrugged his shoulders. My figure was briefly reflected on the tall glass



wall installed on the railing. Without turning around, he was looking at me through the glass wall.

"I have something to ask..."

I trailed off, speaking in an ambiguous manner that was neither polite nor casual. As if my words rubbed him the wrong way, he clenched his fists. The bulging veins on the back of his hand represented his mood.

The more he reacted like that, my suspicion gradually turned into certainty.

'Damn it. It can't be, right?'

Erasing the needless thought, I took one more step closer to him.

"I have something to ask. Can I ask a question?"

In the end, I lowered my speech to him. It felt more comfortable since he was wearing a school uniform.

He turned around with a rough gesture. Glaring at me with wide-open eyes, he twisted his lips and clenched his teeth. His eyes looking at me were filled with contempt and anger. Looking at him in his school uniform, I hoped he wasn't involved with Mother.

A high school student. A minor.

"Ask. The question."

The voice that came out of his mouth was sharply cracked and trembled with anger at the end. If someone saw, they would think he met his mortal enemy. No, more than that, he was speaking to me in a casual tone so naturally. Does he think I'm younger than him no matter what?

Laughing hollowly at the absurdity, his eyes were full of only hostility.

"You remember me, right?"

"..."

At my question, he only narrowed his eyes without answering. His action of biting his lips even more only increased my doubts. Why does he dislike me so much?

"We ran into each other at my father's office, didn't we?"

"Huh? So what?"

He was still speaking casually. Well, since I didn't reveal my age, I let it slide.

"Did you get hit by my father that day by any chance?"

"..."

"I was standing outside and heard the sound of an ashtray falling. That's the sound that comes out when I get hit."

I tried to draw a sense of empathy with him. It was to smoothly carry on the conversation because he was too hostile. But far from empathizing, he only had a mocking expression on his face.

"So what?"

"I'm curious why you got hit."

The corners of his mouth trembled slightly as we faced each other. Is it the author's habit? Whenever people suppress their anger, they all tremble their lips. Father, Mother, and the man in front of me too.

"...Why do you get hit?"

He suddenly asked a question. The reason I get hit... Most people probably wouldn't understand well. He might think it's a lie, but what can I do when it's the truth? I opened my mouth to answer his question.

"I get hit for not studying well."

"..."

"It's true."

"..."

"You? I already told you. Why did you get hit?"

At my question, one corner of his mouth twisted up. It was a clear sneer. His expression became arrogant as if he had stepped on me.

"I got hit for studying too well."

"..."

What is this? The answer is too strange, isn't it?

It was clearly mocking my answer. As if someone would hit another person for studying well, even if it's their father. Right?

"What does you studying well have to do with my father? Who are you?"

As soon as my words ended, he swiftly raised his left hand and grabbed my collar. There wasn't much impact since there was a considerable difference in physique, but I was dumbfounded by the sudden action. It seemed like he would fall over if I even slightly swung my arm, so I just stayed still for him.

'But why is he grabbing my collar? It's not like I asked Father to hit me.'

He's not even giving a proper answer and is just getting angry by himself. Still, he looked like a baby cat with its fur all ruffled up. He seemed to think he was threatening me, but it had no impact on me at all. After looking at his distorted face for a while, I shifted my gaze and examined his right arm in a cast.

"Did your right arm end up like that because you studied too well? What and how well did you study to that extent?"

"Shut up."

It was a voice seething with anger.

"But why are you so hostile towards me?"

I grumbled feeling wronged, but there was no response from him. When I lightly hit his hand, it fell away from me powerlessly. Seeing his desolate appearance, I forgot about his hostility towards me and looked at him with sympathetic eyes. His slender build made him look more like the weak one. It's as if I, the big one, am bullying him.

"Do you happen to live in OO apartment?"

As expected, he didn't answer.

"Do you know an actress named Baek Su-ah?"

I asked thinking he would have no answer again, but what do you know? The guy switched on as if a switch was flipped and charged at me fiercely. He grabbed my collar again, making my upper body sway slightly.

"Why are you attacking for no reason."

An attack that doesn't even work on me. It seemed like he would fall over if I shook him even slightly, so I just let him do as he pleased. I could feel him trembling with anger as his fingertips shook. He was breathing heavily while looking at me with reddened eyes.

“Will you shut that mouth?”

He uttered each syllable with difficulty, and I sighed.

Honestly, I hadn't even asked what I really wanted to ask yet. How he knows Mother. What their relationship is. But seeing him react like this... I have a bad feeling.

“You...”

He called me with difficulty again. His reddened eyes were glaring at me, and his hand grabbing my collar trembled even more.

“...Is living fun for you?”

Suddenly he asks me how living is for me.

“How does it seem to you?”

I no longer wanted to give him a proper answer. When I smiled brightly at him, he couldn't contain his anger and bit his lips, eventually drawing blood. Blood slightly seeped from his torn lower lip. He pulled me with all his might. I was about to resist, but feeling sorry for him, I bent my upper body as he led me, and he brought his face close to my ear. The sound of his teeth grinding was heard, and he called me in a low voice.

“Ha Jin.”

“...”

“How does it feel to use a name that isn't yours?”

What is he talking about? A name that isn't mine?

I raised my head and looked at him. He forcibly pulled up the corners of his trembling lips and stretched his lips to smile at me. The blood smeared on his lips gave an eerie feeling. Shocking words continued to come out of his blood-stained lips.

“How does it feel to live a life that isn't yours? Is it fun? Fake Ha Jin?”