

Yes, It's Me. The Obsessive Side Top

##061 - Read Yes, It's Me. The Obsessive Side Top #061

#061

"Fake, you say."

I escaped from his grasp and responded with a relaxed smile. But inside, all sorts of speculations were running wild. Is he someone who knows that I've possessed Ha Jin? Or did he notice that I'm acting differently from Ha Jin? But that doesn't make sense. How many times have we run into each other? We've never had a proper conversation and have only passed by each other.

But why is this person calling me fake? How does he know?

"You would know better. About being fake."

At his words, I almost nodded my head for a moment. When I seemed unfazed by his bombshell remark, he suddenly shouted.

"Ha Jin. Your name is not Ha Jin."

Of course, my name is not Ha Jin. But right now, I am Ha Jin, aren't I?

I frowned slightly at his loud voice, then smiled leisurely again.

This guy is funny.

"Then. What is my name?"

I asked him instead.

What is the name that he knows me by as he calls me fake. Even Kim Shin, who has been a friend by my side for a long time, considers me Ha Jin, so it's funny that a guy I've only run into a few times is denying my existence. I've lived as Ha Jin while being hit by my father every other day and treated worse than others by my mother. And now you're saying I'm fake? I'm dumbfounded.

"If I'm not Ha Jin, can you tell me who I am? I'm so curious."

I asked him again since he had no answer. If he has a mouth, tell him to speak. If he knows something, he should talk so we can have a proper conversation, right?

"You're really the worst."

Instead of the answer I wanted, he blames me again. Why am I the worst?

“Shameless bastard... Even though you’re stealing someone else’s life entirely.”

He grumbled and turned his body to walk past me.

‘Stealing entirely? Rather, Ha Jin is a character born by stealing my face.’

I followed him and made him stop. His body swayed greatly and stopped. As he slowly turned his head towards me, his eyes were filled with only bright red anger. When those eyes directed at me, I got goosebumps involuntarily.

“Say it properly. So I can understand.”

“You want me to say it with my own mouth? What you already know? Why? What do you want to confirm? While making that shameless face pretending not to know.”

“I really don’t know.”

When I also raised my voice, feeling frustrated, he flinched and lowered his head.

“You don’t know? That’s right. That makes sense. You’re living as Ha Jin by chance? Yeah... You were living with that kind of mindset. It’s a good thought for living without a sense of guilt.”

“What do you...”

“Don’t hold onto me anymore. I want to kill you.”

My words trying to ask more were blocked by his murderous warning. At his words saying he wants to kill me, the strength left my hand. He slowly escaped from me and walked. With his steps that seemed like he would collapse, he disappeared from the rooftop without ever turning back.

He didn’t give a proper answer to my question and even said he wants to kill me before disappearing. As if telling me to figure it out on my own.

After standing on the rooftop where he left for a long time, I took out my cell phone.

What can’t a chaebol do? South Korea is such a convenient world if you have a lot of money. It would be easy to find out about him at Ha Jin’s position.

“It better be nothing much.”

* * *

I called Secretary Kim and requested an immediate meeting. Secretary Kim picked the location, and the place I arrived at was a hotel lounge bar with a nice ambiance.

“For today’s meeting, you’ll have to take care of the overtime pay outside of work hours.”

“I think it would be too much since I’m still a student?”

“Then please take good care of me when I join the company. I want to work less and earn more.”

Secretary Kim, who sat down while joking, seemed a bit tense. He had a slightly worried face since I separately asked to meet. Those eyes saying this rascal must have caused trouble again.

“Secretary Kim.”

“Wait a moment. You should at least give me time to prepare my heart, right?”

Secretary Kim, who cut off my words, called the employee and placed an order. Secretary Kim, who had a gentle smile, stopped me every time I tried to say something. When alcohol and a simple fruit appetizer came out, he finally nodded.

“Young master Ha Jin, you’re treating, right?”

“Of course.”

Secretary Kim, who was drinking alcohol poured into a well-cut crystal glass, also offered me a glass.

‘Huh? Does Secretary Kim not know that I’m weak to alcohol?’

I thought he would know everything about me, but I guess not. How much of a scene Ha Jin makes when he drinks.

“Young master?”

At Secretary Kim’s call that broke my thoughts, I licked my lips with my tongue.

“Secretary Kim, do you remember that time? The day I contacted you first saying I’ll meet Father. I got hit by Father’s fist that day, right?”

“Ah, I remember. Isn’t it the day you came to talk about the final exams?”

As expected, he has a great memory. He immediately remembered the events of that day. Secretary Kim picked up the glass and swirled it once. The ice clinked, making a cheerful sound.

As I looked at Secretary Kim with a serious attitude, Secretary Kim seemed anxious as if I would make a bombshell declaration.

“That day, there was someone who came before me, right?”

“ ... ”

The glass that was spinning in Secretary Kim’s hand hesitated and was placed on the table. Although he was trying to smile without showing it, his stiff expression couldn’t be hidden.

“Yes. Now that you mention it, there was a guest who came first that day.”

“Who is that person?”

“ ... ”

Secretary Kim first examined my expression. As if curious about my intention for asking.

I’m just asking because I’m really curious about who that person is, without any other intention.

“Secretary Kim, you know, right? Who that person is.”

“Young master Ha Jin.”

Secretary Kim called me with difficulty after opening his mouth. Then he closed his mouth tightly again and quietly examined my expression before picking up the glass and downing it all at once. The deeply furrowed wrinkles between his brows indicate that it was a strong drink.

“Why are you asking me?”

He asks with a frown as if blaming me.

“I’m curious about that person. I keep seeing him around these days, so it bothers me.”

Secretary Kim poured himself another drink. He drank it straight again and put the glass down on the table. Secretary Kim, who had been maintaining silence for a while, opened his mouth with difficulty.

"I don't know everything. I'm just an employee, aren't I? Of course, I also don't know that guest whom you don't know, young master."

Secretary Kim's words were strange. It was as if he was implying that since I don't know, he doesn't know either. There's no way Secretary Kim wouldn't know about Father's matters. Moreover, since he was in the same space, he must have heard everything Father said to him.

Even the office manager who was waiting in front said he had frequently come to Father's office.

"Secretary Kim."

"Yes."

"Who is that person?"

"What should I do? I'm very flustered right now."

"Do you really not know?"

"...I told you. If you don't know, young master, I don't know either."

No. Secretary Kim knows. Based on his reaction, he definitely knew. Why does he keep using me as an excuse and not tell me?

"Then that's fine. I'll ask Father."

"Young master!"

When Secretary Kim suddenly shouted, I looked at him in surprise, and he rubbed his eyes with his hand as if frustrated. His gaze full of fatigue turned towards me and changed to being heartless. Just like the gaze when I first met Secretary Kim.

"I will tell you. So don't do that."

"You said you don't know..."

"Haa... I don't know. Since I don't know, I'll investigate and let you know soon. Will that suffice?"

Pressed by Secretary Kim's force, I nodded my head. Secretary Kim hurriedly emptied his glass one more time and got up from his seat.

"...I'll get going now."

“Already?”

“I have unfinished business.”

“...”

Feeling down as if I had asked a difficult question for no reason, Secretary Kim sighed and sat back down when I nodded my head glumly.

“Young master Ha Jin.”

“Yes.”

“It’s best not to disturb a beehive. I hope you understand that quietly avoiding it is also a method.”

“...”

“Anyway, you are someone who will move forward, young master, and the beehive will only stay in that place. Don’t try to get rid of it. It’s just a trivial existence that can’t even follow you when you pass by.”

“What does that mean?”

“It’s the sound my heart makes out of care for you, young master.”

“...Are you drunk?”

“Alcohol is strong.”

“Good for you.”

“Yes.”

Secretary Kim laughed once and got up from his seat. His empty eyes now held warm affection.

“I really have work to do, so I’m going. Don’t make that abandoned face. The alcohol was good. Call me out like this from time to time and buy me a drink.”

“The last part isn’t sincere, right?”

“Yes. Was it obvious?”

I just laughed it off.

“Go back safely.”

“I’ll get going first.”

Secretary Kim softened his expression and walked out first.

Left alone, I fiddled with the half-empty luxurious liquor bottle and became lost in thought.

‘In the end, I didn’t find out anything.’

About him who says I’m a fake Ha Jin.

He was a strange person. He was a character that never appeared in the webtoon, so it was even more puzzling. Judging from the fact that he doesn’t appear in the webtoon, it seems he’s not that important to the story.

A high school student. Someone who gets hit by Father. He revealed that the reason he got hit was because he studied well. That’s a rather unpleasant part. And although it’s not certain yet, he was also involved with Mother. And he acted as if he knew something, calling me fake.

“Wow, I have no idea.”

Feeling frustrated, I felt thirsty and picked up the water glass on the table to drink. The ice clinked and moved inside the glass. Thinking it would be refreshing at the sound, I poured it into my mouth. The water went down, hotly stimulating my throat as if a fire was burning. Only after swallowing it all did I belatedly realize that what I drank was not water but actually strong liquor.

“...”

Am I crazy? Did I just drink alcohol? And even liquor?

The smell of alcohol splashed through my nose as I breathed. The more I breathed, the more I seemed to get drunk. I can’t even throw it up again... The only thought was that I needed to go home quickly before making a mistake. The moment I tried to get up from my seat, my body swayed and I plopped back down on the chair.

“Damn it...”

Even when I got drunk, my body just couldn’t be controlled, but I never swayed or lost consciousness. My mind that stayed clear even when I begged to lose consciousness, but perhaps because the alcohol was strong, my vision was dizzy. And what’s even worse is that the strength is gradually leaving my body. To the point where I can’t even stand up on my own.

I managed to take out my cell phone, thinking I should ask Sun Woo for help. Through my blurry vision, I saw the black screen of the phone.

“Sun Woo... Woo...”

Muttering to myself, I tried to somehow call him, but I couldn't muster strength in my hands. In the end, I placed the phone on the table and collapsed precariously on the chair with my head tilted to the side. An employee who had been watching since I swayed came to my side and lightly shook my shoulder.

“Are you okay?”

When my body shook at the employee's touch, he stopped what he was doing and quietly sat me on the chair. Then, the screen of the phone on the table lit up and it vibrated.

“Woo...”

I try to reach out and grab it, but my hand keeps slipping weakly. In the end, the employee must have pressed the call button for me and brought it to my ear. The voice of the other person that I could faintly hear sounded very pleased. At the pleasant voice, the corners of my mouth also slightly went up.

“Come pick me up...”

The other person said something at my words, but I couldn't understand a single thing. In the end, I lowered my head.

And thus, the alcohol trash met its fate.

* * *

“Ugh...”

A groan came out involuntarily as my head hurt like it was going to shatter. As I opened my eyes feeling a terrible hangover, a completely unfamiliar space appeared before me. It was a spacious room decorated with a bright beige tone interior. I tried to think about what happened, but I just pressed my head at the throbbing headache.

“What... is this?”

This situation, which is similar to how a typical possessee wakes up, what is it? I, who suddenly became possessed in the lecture hall, was thinking strange thoughts, saying this is the standard way of possession.

Suddenly coming to my senses and looking around, the room was filled with objects that reflected someone's taste.

The faintly smelled fragrance was familiar from somewhere. A good scent with a refreshing feeling.

I was sniffing the blanket when I saw the door carefully opening as if trying not to make a sound.

"Oh? You're awake?"

He smiled brightly when our eyes met. I thought the fragrance was familiar. Yeah, it was you.

He came and sat by the bedside with just a few steps. With one hand, he gently rubbed next to my eyes. The headache subsides a little. At his meticulous touch, the scent filling the room became even thicker.

I guess he's good at taking care of people since he's going to be a doctor.

Right? Sin Yeo-un.

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The headache seems to gradually disappear with his touch. They say a doctor's hands are a healing touch. Ah, is that not it? Well, whatever it is, my throat is so dry right now.

"Water, please..."

A hoarse voice unlike my own came out. As I was clearing my throat, Sin Yeo-un handed me the water cup he had placed next to the bed. If I had known it was there, I could have just drunk it myself. The way I am right now, I'm being a total nuisance. I'm not sure what happened, but I can tell that a drunk me is being taken care of by Sin Yeo-un.

Sin Yeo-un wrapped his arm behind my neck and lifted me up slightly. Then he brought the cup to my lips carefully and tilted it to let me drink the water. He's looking at me drinking with a gaze that seems to be falling for me. It was terribly sticky and thick. I averted my gaze that had been glancing at him while drinking the water.

I haven't even bothered Sun Woo yet, so why is he glaring at me with murderous intent? Damn it. Let it be a dream.

"Does it hurt a lot?"

Sin Yeo-un asked with a worried look as I frowned. Before I could answer, he placed his large hand on my back and pressed down on my shoulder with one hand. Naturally, my body fell back and I lay on the bed again.

“I’ll go get some medicine.”

As Sin Yeo-un left the room, I briefly saw the wide living room through the open door. It must be Sin Yeo-un’s house. Crazy, how did I even end up at Sin Yeo-un’s house? It’s summer, so it would have been fine to let me sleep on the street even if I slept outside.

Sin Yeo-un reappeared and made me sit up to take the medicine. Whether it was a placebo effect or not, the hangover disappeared as soon as I took it. Or maybe my body was beating up the hangover, telling it to go away because it sensed a crisis.

Feeling Sin Yeo-un’s hand supporting me, I tried to recall my memories. It’s not completely dark, but nothing comes to mind. I remember answering the phone. Really, Ha Jin, you’re unbelievable. Not only is your head empty, but your memory is also broken?

“Yesterday...”

I tried to ask something, but Sin Yeo-un suddenly cut me off.

“Do you usually drink to the point of collapsing like that? To the point where you can’t even control your body?”

Damn it. The sight of a grown adult being scolded by a high school student for getting drunk. More than that, I was worried that I might have said something I shouldn’t have while drunk, just like I did to Sun Woo. If that happened, I should just bite my tongue and die.

“Did I make any mistakes?”

“You don’t remember?”

“Yeah.”

“Not at all?”

“Not at all...”

I chewed my tongue inside my mouth. As if I would bite it and die at any moment.

Sin Yeo-un smiled and ran his fingers through my hair. My hair flowed softly between his long fingers. As I stayed still under his languid touch, his smile deepened.

“You were just lying there. Continuously. I was kind of hoping for something.”

I let go of the tongue I was tormenting. Fortunately, it seems I didn't say anything strange while unconscious. It seems like there was something strange about hoping for something at the end of Sin Yeo-un's words...

Ah, forget it. I need to go home quickly.

“It was a blessing that I called you then. What would have happened otherwise?”

I would have just collapsed and slept there. Secretary Kim would have handled it.

“So it was your call...”

Why is the main character unnecessarily calling Ha Jin?

“The hyung who answered the phone suddenly told me to come and get you. Then he didn't say anything, but an employee took the call and explained it to me.”

“Sorry. I thought it was a friend. You had to go through trouble because of me.”

“It's okay. My father was home, so we went to pick you up together. I thought it would be more convenient if we had a car. I want to become an adult quickly. Then I could have driven there myself.”

He would do that to meet Sun Woo, not me. Wait a minute... Director Sin and Sin Yeo-un took care of me together?

“Director Sin?”

“Yes. We met not long ago, right? My father told me about it.”

Fuck. So Director Sin and Sin Yeo-un took me, who collapsed from drinking, together? I really need to bite my tongue. The timing of the call, really. If it's not Sun Woo, I'd rather have Kim Shin. As I was tormenting my tongue, I suddenly became curious.

“...Why did you call?”

“I told you I contact you often.”

“Why?”

“To score some points in advance.”

“With me?”

Sin Yeo-un nodded his head. What reason would he have to score points with me? Maybe he found out that I invested in him? If so, it made sense. But Sin Yeo-un suddenly brought up the topic of university.

“When I get into A University, I’ll be your junior.”

“Aren’t our departments different?”

Sin Yeo-un will be entering the medical department. I’m in the business department. Even the university buildings are different.

“It’s the same school.”

“...That’s true.”

“When I enter university, I want to get a lot of help from you with this and that. And I want to ask you to buy me meals. That’s okay, right? I want to be close with you.”

It doesn’t seem like we’ll get close. He won’t keep contacting me, right? I was doubtful that Sin Yeo-un would want to build a friendship with Ha Jin. Is he just saying that? I looked at him suspiciously, but he just flashed a pleasantly bright smile.

Shaking my head, I got up from the bed, and Sin Yeo-un followed. Fortunately, I was wearing the same clothes as yesterday, so I could just leave like this... As I opened the bedroom door, I gave an awkward smile to the person I faced.

“Director Sin... Hello.”

And I added inwardly, ‘Aren’t you going to work?’

* * *

‘The world is really interesting.’

The webtoon world is really interesting. Don’t you think? Ha Jin even had hangover soup at Sin Yeo-un’s house.

Due to Sin Yeo-un’s mother saying that lunch was ready and telling me to sit at the table, I ended up joining their family meal. Why is everyone at home, I wondered... It’s the weekend?

Of all the days, it had to be the weekend...

I slept in Sin Yeo-un’s room until lunchtime. No matter how I think about it, it’s the worst situation. When did Ha Jin become a character that causes trouble?

All the series of events that happen because of being weak to alcohol are damn awful situations. I wanted to run away home quickly, but they said they made bean sprout soup for me who collapsed from drinking. I couldn't refuse, so I had a hearty meal and even ate watermelon punch because they said I should drink a lot of water to cure the hangover. Only after eating all that could I finally leave Sin Yeo-un's house, whimpering like a puppy that needed to poop.

I managed to shake off Sin Yeo-un who offered to take me home and took out my cell phone to call a taxi.

"Oh no. The power went out."

I hadn't paid attention to charging it since I don't use it often, and it was turned off. I had no choice but to go to the main street and catch a taxi, looking at the black screen.

On the way back, I asked the taxi driver to charge my phone, and as I got off in front of my house, I turned on the phone. As I watched the phone screen slowly turning on, I opened the front door. All the lights in the house were turned on.

"Ah, the electricity bill."

Worrying about the wasted electricity bill, I shifted my gaze to the phone that was now vibrating in my hand.

A call comes in with the name [Kim Ok-bun's Real Grandson] displayed.

I was about to answer the call when suddenly something large pounced on me from the front.

"Wh-what?"

Startled, I stepped back, but my arm was roughly grabbed. Soon, I was pulled into a firm embrace, trapped in his arms.

"Sun Woo?"

The familiar scent, the familiar body temperature, the familiar embrace.

There's nothing unfamiliar about Sun Woo.

"Why are you at home?"

Sun Woo didn't loosen his tight hug and buried his face in my neck without answering my question. I remembered giving him the house key. The day I lost the arm wrestling match. I just handed over a spare key to Sun Woo, who came often. At that time, I thought there would be a time when it would be used someday. You're already using it?

“...What were you doing, coming back now?”

“Uh?”

I couldn't bring myself to say that I was at Sin Yeo-un's house, passed out drunk.

“Something came up yesterday.”

“Why did you turn off your phone?”

“The power went out. I didn't turn it off.”

“I was worried.”

Sun Woo stayed with his face buried in my neck, then suddenly started sniffing. He looked like a detection dog confirming if the missing person was the right one. What's with him all of a sudden? As I was standing still, puzzled by his actions, I suddenly wondered if I smelled bad because I hadn't washed.

“I'll go wash up.”

I tried to break away from his embrace, but...

Ah, seriously. Sun Woo is just strong.

“Sun Woo, can you let go? I haven't washed up. I'm all dirty.”

I groaned and tried to push him away, but as expected, he didn't budge. He sniffed around the other side of my neck and then bit into it.

“...Sun Woo. What are you doing?”

Do you want to play vampire? Why do you always bite my neck?

“Don't. You said you wouldn't leave marks on my neck anymore.”

It doesn't mean you can do it elsewhere though. Sun Woo's head finally pulled away.

“What's that smell?”

“What smell? It must be the stench from my unwashed body.”

“Didn't you say you were going to meet Secretary Kim yesterday?”

“That's right. I met Secretary Kim yesterday.”

Sun Woo's eyes instantly turned cold.

"That's not his smell."

What, are you really a detection dog? I can't even smell it. Does he have the ability to distinguish scents?

"Then is it the smell from the taxi?"

"Why did you take a taxi? I told you not to be in an enclosed space with other people."

"...Is a taxi an enclosed space? It's an excellent means of transportation. My car is in the hotel parking lot."

My words were cut off as Sun Woo suddenly pulled my hand. Sun Woo walked ahead, taking me somewhere. When we arrived, it was the bathroom in my room.

Was the source of the smell really my stench? You should have let me go when I said I was going to wash up. You're just holding onto people for no reason. Sun Woo, who entered the bathroom with me, stood rigidly in front of me. Is he not going to leave? I stared at him, hoping he would leave, and his closed lips slowly parted.

"Take it off."

I blinked for a moment, not understanding what he was saying.

"Sun Woo. You need to leave for me to take it off."

What are you talking about? As his words entered my brain, I pointed to the door with my eyes, indicating that he should leave, feeling dumbfounded. Why are you standing guard when I said I'm washing up because I smell?

There are spare clothes in the bathroom, so now I just need to wash up comfortably.

I was running a simulation in my head, imagining myself turning on the water and washing up, when I was startled by Sun Woo's hands trying to take off my clothes. I stepped back and my back hit the wall. This wasn't in my simulation.

"Try taking it off."

He told me to take it off, but he was the one taking off my clothes. His hardened face showed no signs of backing down easily.

"Is my smell that bad?"

Huh? To the point where you're forcibly taking off my clothes like this? Sun Woo glared at me coldly at my mumbling.

"I have something to check."

Didn't you find the missing person? Are you checking if I'm hurt somewhere?

Sun Woo searched my entire body and then said something even stranger.

"Ha Jin. You boldly came back with someone else's scent on you? I'll wash you, so come here."

...I'm such a pure body that I've never even had someone else wash me at a public bath...

"Why would you wash me..."

You crazy bastard...

#063

Which sub-protagonist gets washed by the main lead? And forcibly too! I pushed him away with all my might, and whether he felt sorry for me or not, Sun Woo didn't insist any further and left.

While washing, I ruffled my hair roughly. Looking at my hair, which had absorbed the water and was sticking out in all directions, reflected in the mirror, I clenched my teeth tightly.

"I'll never drink again."

I feel like I should grab the author by the collar. Do the words sub-protagonist and alcoholic trash even go together? It's as mismatched as making kimchi with durian.

In the midst of that, I wondered if my body odor was really that bad, so I washed thoroughly and meticulously. By the time I finished washing and came out, quite some time had passed, but Sun Woo was still standing exactly where I had pushed him, not budging an inch.

It's a good thing I kept spare clothes in the bathroom. Otherwise, I would have had to show my naked body again. Ah, I already showed it. I was forcibly undressed.

"Why are you here?"

Instead of answering, Sun Woo approached me and buried his face in my neck again. Sniffing me, he laughed softly, seeming pleased.

“You don’t smell grossly anymore.”

Gross? You called it gross? Was my smell that bad?

I thought I washed well and kept myself clean. Did I have body odor? They say people often can’t smell their own scent well.

“I scrubbed really hard...”

As I exuded a gloomy aura, Sun Woo, as if trying to cheer me up, ruffled my hair. My wet hair swayed heavily with his touch.

“I’ll dry your hair for you.”

As I sat on the stool, entrusting my hair to his touch... I think I know what I’m being subjected to right now.

Yeah, this is it.

“A dog!”

When you take dogs for a walk and come back home, you wipe their paws, wash them, and dry them, right? Sun Woo is doing exactly that right now. People who read the webtoon kept calling Ha Jin a son of a bitch. I was literally being treated like a son of a bitch.

Ha Jin and the word dog, they went together quite well.

Sun Woo turned off the hairdryer that was blowing hot air towards me. As the noisy ‘whoosh’ sound stopped, only the occasional sound of fabric rubbing could be heard in the quiet space. Sun Woo’s hand stroked my chin and slowly moved up to fiddle with my lips.

“A dog?”

He must have heard me muttering to myself amid the noise of the hairdryer.

“I really feel like a dog right now.”

“Why?”

“Doesn’t this look like a dog that just came back from a walk?”

“A dog that doesn’t even know its owner was worried, and after being let off the leash, it happily runs around and even dares to come back with someone else’s scent on it?”

“...Just call me a dog. Why are there so many modifiers in front of it?”

His fingers were still fiddling with my lips. Looking at Sun Woo’s faint smile reflected in the mirror, my lips kept getting dry, making me want to lick them, but I held back, thinking it might lead to a rough situation.

Sun Woo clearly didn’t know what kind of expression he was making. That was definitely a seductive smile. It suited the protagonist who was born to make Ha Jin’s eyes roll back.

* * *

In the end, Grandma had to have a small part of her kidney removed. It was a surgery to prevent the cancer from spreading to other parts of her body. They said she didn’t need to undergo chemotherapy, so we all breathed a sigh of relief.

Grandma’s hospital room was always bustling with her three grandchildren. During the summer vacation, Grandma’s hospital room was like our gathering place and playground.

* * *

In the quiet private room of the restaurant, I repeatedly checked my phone while waiting for the person who hadn’t arrived yet. I was waiting for a call from Sun Woo, who said he was going to Grandma’s house.

“I told him to take the car, but he’s so stubborn.”

It would be more comfortable for Grandma to take the car than the bus. Sun Woo never accepted the car key I offered him. And he even insisted that he would pay the hospital bills. I thought he would let it go since the payment had already been processed. But he went to the accounting department, got the receipt, and said he would definitely pay it back. Of course, he could easily pay it back soon, but that’s a matter for later. It’s not just a small amount. It was quite a lot.

“Sun Woo was passive.”

In the webtoon, I mean.

He was the kind of protagonist who was dragged around helplessly.

I looked at the empty plate in front of me and the chopsticks across from it, then glanced at the clock. It was almost time for the appointment.

“He’ll be here.”

It was a meal to express gratitude to the hospital director who had put a lot of effort into Grandma's treatment. A moment later, the door opened, and instead of the familiar hospital director, his son Sin Yeo-un entered with a smile on his face. What? Why?

"You're here early."

Seeing Sin Yeo-un naturally sitting across from me, I was quite flustered.

"Huh? I ordered meals for two people. Just a moment."

"Two servings are enough."

"What about the hospital director?"

"An emergency patient came, so my father was in the middle of discussing it at the hospital. He told me to come in his place."

"We could have postponed the appointment."

"It's almost the appointed time. The food must be ready anyway. It would be rude to the restaurant."

"...That's true."

As I nodded in agreement, Sin Yeo-un smiled brightly. His face was full of the freshness and innocence unique to his age, but there was also a strange mix of unexpected maturity that didn't match his age.

"I really wanted to have a meal with you. I'm in such a great mood right now."

"That time when I was drunk... We ate together at your house."

"Just the two of us."

What nonsense is he talking about? What reason would there be for me to have a meal with him alone? While I was inwardly displeased with his words, I just smiled awkwardly on the outside.

Sin Yeo-un looked at me with a smile that made even the onlookers feel at ease. He has a good personality too. Seeing him smiling brightly, a sigh naturally escaped from within me. He was a person of the light, and Ha Jin was a person of the shadows.

"Am I making you uncomfortable?"

You are. Sin Yeo-un spoke as if he could see right through me. But I couldn't tell him the truth, even though he had taken care of me when I was drunk. He was a kind kid and someone who would be of great help to Sun Woo...

"It's not like that."

"My father has talked a lot about you since I was young. So I think I had a sense of closeness to you on my own. Is it burdensome for you when I act like this?"

"It's not burdensome."

In response to his question, I once again suppressed my true feelings and gave an answer full of social niceties. At the same time, I kept brainwashing myself that he was just a young brother, which seemed to make me feel more at ease.

"That's a relief... Are you very busy these days?"

"Not really, since it's summer vacation."

"Really? Your replies to my messages were slow, so I thought you were busy."

"I usually don't check my phone much."

"But you keep checking it right now."

I must have been checking it unconsciously. At Sin Yeo-un's words, I turned my phone face down on the table. Sun Woo will come, he's not someone who won't contact me. Well.

More than that, I had a slight headache at how Sin Yeo-un casually spoke informally to me. It was because scenes from the webtoon came to mind one by one.

Even though Sin Yeo-un was two years younger, he received great support from readers as the main lead, not only because of his appearance but also because of his occasional reversals like this. If he had been a character who was only kind, caring, and considerate, he might have been less attractive, but Sin Yeo-un showed the charm of reversals at just the right moments.

When he was in a bad mood. When he did this and that to Sun Woo.

Some said Sin Yeo-un's behavior was cool, while others found it creepy.

But seeing him act like this to me too, is it just his personality? A bit rude?

"Do you like the business administration department?"

Sin Yeo-un asked while we were eating after the food was served. It was a question that required no further thought. Because for me, it was the worst.

“Not really.”

“But it must be bearable with Ha Jin there.”

I thought Sin Yeo-un had a really good personality for being so friendly. He was leading the conversation naturally with a bright smile without any awkwardness. Seeing myself responding naturally before I knew it, I couldn't help but praise his sociability.

“There's a senior at our school who is one of the top five in the entire school. He said he's going to the business administration department.”

“Isn't it B High School?”

“That's right.”

B High School is famous for being a prestigious school, so the top 5 students should have no problem entering the medical department of A University. Why would they come to the business administration department? No, more importantly, a senior? How can there be a senior in the same grade as a third-year high school student? Did he repeat a year? I thought it was unusual for someone with those grades to choose the business administration department.

“Is he going to take over the family business?”

“I don't think that's the case. He's just an ordinary kid.”

“Really?”

“So, about that, senior. Should I also go to the business administration department?”

“Cough.”

At his words, I choked on the water I was drinking. Sin Yeo-un, startled, came closer and patted my back.

“Are you okay?”

Only after coughing violently a few times did I finally calm down and ask the guy who had caught me off guard.

“The business administration department. Why?”

“Wouldn't it be better if I became your direct junior?”

He was still patting my back with his palm, not erasing the worried expression on his face.

...He's crazy, right? If the hospital director had been present, I wonder if he would have thrown the chopsticks he was eating with. Well, given the hospital director's personality, he might not have thrown them.

Why are there so many crazy people in this webtoon?

I thought only Ha Jin was crazy. It's not like there's a law of conservation of craziness. Is it because I'm not doing crazy things, so the other leads are doing it instead?

#064

"Wasn't your dream to follow in your father's footsteps?"

That's what you said in the webtoon.

"That's true, but... Huh? How did you know that? That it was my dream?"

"Oh? Well, I heard it from the hospital director during a conversation."

"You even remembered that? I'm happy. But dreams can change anytime, you know."

Still, it's not the business administration department. You said since you were young, you would become a doctor like your father. Of course, that's what you told Sun Woo in the webtoon. How many lives will you save as a doctor in the future?

"Yeo-un."

"Yes."

Sin Yeo-un answers slowly and gives me a smug smile. Why are the two main characters so captivating? They are truly a match made in heaven.

"You as a doctor. I think it would suit you quite well."

"Really?"

Sin Yeo-un nodded his head, smiling brightly.

"If you say so, going to medical school doesn't sound bad either."

What a ridiculous guy. He never intended to come to the business administration department in the first place.

I finished eating and planned to get up after drinking the tea that was served for dessert. As I was wondering if I should take Sin Yeo-un home, he suddenly asked me a question as if he just remembered something.

“Senior, do you have anything you like?”

“Things I like? That’s a very broad question.”

“Then what about your favorite food?”

“Not really... Oh, perilla leaf wrap with snail soybean paste?”

“That’s a healthy dish. I guess you take care of your health.”

“It’s the first dish the person I like made for me.”

“...The person you like?”

Sin Yeo-un stopped smiling and showed a stiff expression for the first time. His hardened lips and cold eyes looked unfamiliar. He’s already big, but when he makes that face, it sends shivers down my spine. The part where readers said it was creepy wasn’t like this.

“I had it this summer vacation. It was delicious.”

“Oh... Is that so?”

Sin Yeo-un had a downcast gaze and only looked under the table. Seeing his dejected appearance, I thought it was strange and continued.

“Anything tastes good when grandma’s touch is added, right?”

“Grandma?”

He lifted his head with surprised rabbit eyes.

“Yeah. Grandma who was discharged this time. You didn’t know? She made it for us when we went to visit her.”

“You’re talking about the grandma you visited every day at the hospital, right? I heard from my father. He said she’s your friend’s grandma. You must be very close with your friend. You visited the hospital every day. You even went to grandma’s house to hang out.”

Sin Yeo-un suddenly changed his expression and smiled, emitting bright energy. Is it because he's in his third year of high school? It's that time, I guess. I also had ups and downs in my mood when I was in my third year.

"I see. But that's something I can't do for you. Is there anything else you like?"

"Money?"

"Money? You already have plenty, senior."

I do have plenty. I think it's more than Ha Jin's father. Then would I get hit less?

Sin Yeo-un laughed out loud as if he thought I was joking. He really laughs well. When a good-looking guy laughs, it makes me laugh along unconsciously. As I slightly curled the corners of my lips, Sin Yeo-un stared at me quietly with his gaze fixed on me.

"I think I like people who smile prettily."

"Most people would."

"But I also like people who cry prettily."

"Then isn't that just saying you like pretty people?"

"That's right. I guess I'm a materialistic person who cares a lot about looks."

After finishing his words, Sin Yeo-un laughed out loud again, seeming to be in a good mood. Sin Yeo-un's ideal type was obvious. Sun Woo is pretty. A handsome and pretty guy. How pretty must he be that Sin Yeo-un fell for him at first sight when he saw him crying in the webtoon? I've never seen Sun Woo cry.

"Senior, there's someone I'm interested in these days. Do you want to see? I'll show you a picture."

"Interested?"

Sin Yeo-un is interested in someone? Out of curiosity, I took the phone he handed me. There was a picture displayed on the screen... It was Sun Woo, smiling as tiny as a mouse poop.

"...Sun Woo."

"Is your friend's name Sun Woo? That grandma's grandson?"

Sin Yeo-un seems to know about that too now.

“What do you think? His smile is really pretty, right?”

It was a picture taken during a date at Mi-eun’s request for a final project. Yeah. He is pretty. Even though he was smiling as small as a mouse poop, anyone could see it was a pretty face. Next to him, I was leaning on Sun Woo with a delighted expression, looking like I was about to die from happiness after getting drunk on wine-ade. Of course, in Sin Yeo-un’s eyes, I would just be seen as a background. I heard the picture spread a bit, and even Sin Yeo-un knows about it.

“He’s pretty when he cries too. That person.”

“...”

‘What the heck, Sun Woo. When did you cry in front of Sin Yeo-un?’

Well, they are the official couple in the webtoon, so they must have been involved in some way. Although the timing and situation would be different.

‘You two are really destined for each other.’

Strangely, my heart settled calmly. It’s probably because I haven’t seen Sun Woo cry, right? That’s why I feel this way when Sin Yeo-un has seen something I haven’t. So if I see him cry, I won’t feel this way, right? I should try making him cry sometime.

But how would I make Sun Woo cry?

“That person. When he cries, he doesn’t even make a sound and just lets the tears fall. It’s heartbreaking.”

“Really?”

Is that how Sun Woo cries?

For some reason, I felt bad and was about to send Sin Yeo-un back alone, but when I saw his innocent smiling face, I couldn’t bring myself to say it and ended up giving him a ride. I asked Sin Yeo-un, who kept talking to me from the passenger seat, about the day I got drunk.

“By the way, did the hospital director pay the bill that day? When I contacted the restaurant, they said the person who came to pick me up had already paid.”

“I paid the bill that day.”

The price must have been substantial.

“How much was it? I’ll take care of it for you.”

"No, it's okay. Don't worry about it."

"I'll pay you. I feel really sorry about what happened that day. And it's the bill for alcohol. A high school student can't pay for me."

"Then, senior. Can you pay me back with something other than money?"

"With what?"

"When I go to college, buy me lunch with that money."

What is he talking about? Why would I buy you lunch... I simply expressed my intention to refuse.

"I'll pay you in cash."

"Then forget it. It's fine."

"..."

Sin Yeo-un's repeated refusal made me feel like I hadn't fully taken care of the matter. No matter how well-off Sin Yeo-un's financial situation was, it went against my conscience to have a minor pay for my alcohol. In the end, I smacked my lips and spoke.

"Okay. I'll buy you lunch."

I'll just have to buy him a few expensive lunches.

Sin Yeo-un smiled, seeming pleased with my answer.

* * *

Sun Woo seemed to be incredibly busy after Grandma finished her treatment and went back home. Just how many jobs was he working? I could barely see his face. On days when he finished work early, Sun Woo would always stop by our house before leaving. Even if it was only for about 30 minutes.

He wouldn't stay the night even if I told him to.

He wouldn't use the car even if I told him to.

I felt upset by his actions that seemed to suggest he no longer wanted any help from me. But that upset feeling would quickly dissipate as soon as I saw Sun Woo's face, which was also frustrating. When I see his handsome face, my mood improves without

me realizing it, so how could I have time to be annoyed? I was just grateful that he stopped by the house even for a short while.

‘What kind of work are you doing so much?’

One day, when I asked, Sun Woo smiled prettily despite his tired face and said,

‘I need to make money as soon as possible.’

Why are you overworking yourself to make money? The area under his eyes was really dark. Even when I asked him to go out and eat something delicious, Sun Woo just said he preferred to stay quietly with me and left after chatting. I wanted to tell him that he would have immense wealth later, my mouth was itching to say it.

He doesn’t need to try so hard.

Days passed by like that, and before I knew it, it was the first day of the semester. When I entered the first class, the familiar faces were still there as expected.

“Wow, Ha Jin. I almost forgot your face. How have you been?”

Cha Beom-jun approached me, chattering.

The atmosphere that had been subdued due to the lingering frame of the firearms violence incident and the not-so-favorable gazes of my classmates lightened a bit when Beom-jun approached me with a smile.

“It’s been a while.”

“Ha Jin. You didn’t block my number, right?”

“I didn’t.”

“Ah, I knew it! I was so worried throughout the vacation, thinking you might have blocked me. Why didn’t you reply? I asked you to go camping.”

“Sun Woo said he replied on my behalf.”

“Still, you should have replied. I was waiting for your message. Not for Sun Woo’s short replies in the group chat.”

“Hey! Cha Beom-jun! Can’t you see me?”

Behind Beom-jun, Mi-eun entering the lecture hall could be seen. As soon as Mi-eun spotted Beom-jun, she shouted at him.

“Beom-jun is going to get scolded again.”

Kim Shin, who sat next to me, laughed softly.

“You just got here.”

“Ah, anyway! I’m here now.”

“...Yeah, right. Did you come to the department?”

“Yes. With Mi-eun.”

As Mi-eun approached, acting overly cute, Beom-jun pretended to vomit and left the lecture hall. Mi-eun clicked her tongue at Beom-jun and then handed me a piece of paper.

“Our fellow student. Next Friday, Saturday, Sunday! There’s a schedule, so come along.”

“Schedule?”

Looking at the paper, there was information about the business administration department’s MT (membership training).

“Do I have to print and distribute these things in this day and age? Ha Jin, why haven’t you made a KakaoTalk account? I posted an announcement in our group chat. Do I have to take care of you separately like this? Someone who’s not smart at all in the smart era?”

“Sorry.”

“Ah, it’s okay. Actually, I’m just happy to be able to talk to you like this, Ha Jin oppa. Please continue to receive my care in the future. I’ll always look after you. So make sure to come to the MT.”

After Mi-eun left with a friendly tone of threat, Kim Shin poked my arm.

“You’re going, right? I think it would be fun if we go together.”

Kim Shin spoke in a tone that didn’t suit him and leaned his head on my shoulder. And he immediately pulled away. Since Kim Shin wasn’t one to pull away so quickly, I turned my head and saw someone’s hand pushing Kim Shin’s head away.

Sun Woo, with dark circles under his eyes, nodded at me while pushing Kim Shin away.

“Ha Jin, move to the seat next to you.”

There was an empty seat next to me, but Sun Woo, perhaps because of his position as the main character, always insisted on sitting in the middle.

“Do you like me that much, Sun Woo? You always aim for the seat next to me.”

“Ha Jin. Where are you going?”

Sitting in the middle, Sun Woo ignored Kim Shin’s words and asked me.

“We’re going to the MT next week. Mi-eun just informed me about it.”

“Are you going?”

“I’m thinking about it.”

“I can only participate on Friday.”

“Why can Sun Woo only go on Friday? More than that, are you planning to attend too, Sun Woo? I’m so happy that Ha Jin and Sun Woo are going to the MT together.”

“Are you free on Friday?”

“They said they’ll excuse us from lectures to go to the MT, and I don’t have work at that time. I have to come back in the evening.”

“Can’t you hear my voice? Can’t you see me? What do I do? I think I’ve become a ghost. I’m going to follow Sun Woo around and curse him like this. Ah, no, I’ll follow Ha Jin around and...”

When Sun Woo turned his head and said, “I can see you. I can hear you. Happy?” Kim Shin finally stopped his joking, looking satisfied.

“Come down with me too.”

“On Friday evening?”

“Yeah.”

“Why?”

I asked, wondering why he wanted me to come down with him. Kim Shin also seemed curious and leaned in close to Sun Woo’s back to listen. Sun Woo, receiving our gazes, sighed and opened his mouth with an expression that seemed to say he was asking something obvious.

“How can I leave you alone in a place where I’m not there?”

#065

Sitting at the desk in the study, I quietly glared at the envelope Secretary Kim had left behind.

It contained information about that guy. If it were up to me, I'd like to just ignore it and toss it straight into the trash can.

"Sigh... But I should take a look."

I need to know my enemy to either prepare or ignore him.

I calmed my strangely pounding heart and took out the documents. There were a few photos and a single sheet of paper, which had a simple personal profile written on it.

-Name: Baek Ha-yeon (20 years old)

-Occupation: High school student (B High School, 3rd year, Class 5)

-Address: 00 Apartment, Building 00, Unit 000 (Owns, lives alone)

-Family: Father, Mother, Myself

-Hometown: Busan

-Parents reside in Busan. Large commercial building rental business. Monthly income of 0000 won.

-Lived at a relative's house in England from age 5 to 17. Returned to Korea at 18 and enrolled in B High School.

It was content that had absolutely no connection to me. Moreover, he was someone who had only been in Korea for 3 years. If so, the reason he was so hostile towards me was because some series of events had occurred within those 3 years. Do I have to investigate that separately? It seemed like Secretary Kim would never tell me. Even now, he only informed me of the very basic parts.

"His smile is cute."

Looking at the photo of his cat-like face smiling so brightly that his eyes weren't visible, I unconsciously let out a chuckle. It was a different side from the face filled with hatred and angrily shouting at me.

"Smiling so well like this."

I put the documents back into the envelope without much gain.

“I don’t see anything particularly strange.”

I put it in the desk drawer and closed it. If me being fake has some kind of impact on him, he’ll probably approach me again. Actually, I don’t know what he wants from me. It does bother me, but since he doesn’t even appear in the webtoon, he probably isn’t an important character. So I only need to make one thing clear.

“That I am Ha Jin.”

Yeah, that’s enough.

* * *

“What’s that?”

Sun Woo asked, looking at my luggage. Seeing everyone dragging a suitcase each at the resort reception, it doesn’t seem like I packed something I couldn’t bring, but Sun Woo was staring at my luggage as if he was seeing something strange.

“My luggage.”

“It’s too big?”

“Big? It’s for 2 nights and 3 days, you need to pack this much at least.”

Sun Woo, who only brought himself, was the strange one. I know he said he’s going back down in the evening. But I didn’t expect him to come up like that. I even packed a swimsuit because they said there’s a pool. It’s not like Sun Woo is going to swim in his underwear. He must really be planning to go back down at night.

A luxury resort for a college student MT... Moreover, there was no student contribution at all, I wonder how much money the department has. It’s all money that flowed from the Eunha Group. How much money did our group pour into my college admission and exam fraud? I should enjoy it all before I leave. I can’t just leave like this.

“2 nights and 3 days?”

“The MT is 2 nights and 3 days. You didn’t know?”

“Ha Jin. Aren’t you going down with me today?”

Why is Sun Woo deciding my schedule? I had no intention of going down at all. Of course, he did say ‘How can I leave you alone in a place where I’m not there?’ in the lecture hall, but that’s Sun Woo’s thought. I’m going to fully enjoy this nice resort and then leave. Before possession, I went to the military early, so I only had one semester of

college life. Moreover, after returning to school, I couldn't even play properly because I was struggling with strange gazes.

"What are you talking about? Going? I already got our room key."

Kim Shin approached, waving the card in his hand. But our room?

"Our room key?"

"Yeah. Mine and Ha Jin's room."

The more Kim Shin's lips curled up, the colder Sun Woo's expression became.

"Ha Jin. If you're going down today, do you need a room?"

"I'm not going down today. I'm staying for all 2 nights and 3 days."

"Yeah, Sun Woo. Just play with us for this MT. Why do you keep trying to go down? Huh? Would it be better if we slept together? We can drink in the room at night and see Ha Jin drunk. That's what I'm thinking."

At Kim Shin's words, Sun Woo's expression froze, not just cold. It seemed like something big would happen at this rate, so I grabbed Sun Woo's arm and pulled him.

"Let's go unpack first."

"I'm excited. A night with Ha Jin. Ah, we slept together at Grandma's house too, right? I killed mosquitoes for you then, it's a beautiful memory, isn't it?"

As Kim Shin hummed a tune, Sun Woo, who was walking led by my hand, abruptly stopped. Kim Shin and I, who were following, also stopped with a screech due to the sudden brake.

Sun Woo spoke to Kim Shin with a murderous air.

"The room. Can three people use it?"

Ah, I wondered why he was so murderous. It was a question asking if we could share the room. Why is he asking if three people can use it? He said he's going down today?

"The room is big, so it should be possible."

"Then I'll use it together too."

"You decided to stay? You actually wanted to hang out with me deep inside, right?"

Sun Woo ignored Kim Shin's words and pulled me to walk. With one hand pulling the luggage, I was helplessly led by Sun Woo's hand. So it's not that I'm losing in strength. It's the luggage. Because of the luggage.

Damn it. It's too much to say it's because of the luggage, Sun Woo's strength is too great.

What did he do to get stronger day by day?

As soon as we got on the elevator, Sun Woo roughly pressed the button. But when the floor number didn't light up, he pressed it again repeatedly. Of course, the light still didn't turn on. He's going to break it at this rate.

I snatched the card from Kim Shin's hand, placed it on the elevator card reader, and pressed the floor number instead.

"This is how you do it."

Sun Woo's eyes turned fierce and glared at me. Ha, what did I do wrong? He was quiet for a while, I thought. Is he fixated on something strange again and doing this to me?

"Sun Woo. Are you really staying?"

"If Ha Jin says he's not going, I have to stay."

"Don't you have to work?"

"I'll explain the situation. I can adjust the schedule."

"You don't have to do that because of me. If you have work, go."

"Don't worry about that. I told you that you always come first. This time, I'll stay with you. Try having fun."

He says it so casually that it doesn't bother him. No. Why isn't he going if I'm not going? It's strange, strange. But at the same time, I was happy to be with Sun Woo. Now that the semester started, I at least see his face at school, but recently there was no time to be together at all. Sometimes I missed Sun Woo's embrace... Huh? What kind of dog-like thought is this? Is this really a thought that came from my head? Me? Missing? Sun Woo's embrace?

"Did I become invisible again?"

Kim Shin mumbled to himself with a laugh.

* * *

Of course, there was no way an MT would be without a drinking party. The scene of people freely sitting at the outdoor tables around the pool and drinking gave off the feeling of a pool party rather than an MT. The resort's unique tranquil music and the lighting beautifully decorating the night. Hanging out at a pub in Daehak-ro is nice, but a place like this also had its own atmosphere and was good.

Yeah. It has a nice atmosphere.

"Hahaha. Crazy. Cha Beom-jun. Is it you again? Are you not going to answer this time too?"

Contrary to the quiet atmosphere, a soju bottle was spinning around on the table. As the mouth pointed towards Beom-jun, Mi-eun laughed loudly, holding her stomach. Beom-jun, whose face had already turned red, tried to glare at Mi-eun with hazy eyes, but that was it.

"Ah, that stupid expression. I need to take a picture of this."

Mi-eun took out her phone and kept clicking, taking photos.

"Beom-jun is really drunk."

Kim Shin looked at Beom-jun with pity, but Mi-eun didn't care and mercilessly poured soju into Beom-jun's empty glass until it overflowed.

"Ah, I rilly feel like I'm gerna throw up..."

"Then just say it. Why do you keep shutting your mouth and drinking?"

"How can I drink wish my mouf shut?"

"Even when drunk, Cha Beom-jun is still sharp-tongued as always. Tell me. Who was your first love?"

"Can't tell..."

"What's the big deal about a first love story? Why don't you just say it?"

"Ish embarashing... Embarashing... Sniff."

At Mi-eun's scolding, Beom-jun pitifully swallowed his tears.

"Ish my firsht love... My firsht love... How can I shay it...?"

At Beom-jun's tears, Mi-eun seemed flustered and abruptly stood up from her seat.

“You fool. Then you should have said you don’t have one and not drink. I thought you were hiding something because you kept not saying it. Are you okay...?”

Mi-eun looked after Beom-jun with an apologetic face. Beom-jun sobbed and lifted his head, then whined while looking at me.

“Ha Jin. Can you be my black knight? I’ll tell you everything...”

Beom-jun was slowly pushing the full glass towards me. If I drink that, I think I’ll pass out rather than be a black knight. At that moment, Sun Woo, who was next to me, blocked the glass Beom-jun was pushing with his hand like a wall. Beom-jun kept pushing the blocked glass towards me with difficulty. I moved Sun Woo’s hand, took the glass, placed it in front of Beom-jun’s quivering lips, and smiled at him.

“Beom-jun. You said you don’t have a first love, so you don’t have to drink. You look like you’re having a hard time, drink some water.”

I explained to Beom-jun, whose pronunciation was slurring, and gave him a glass of water.

“Haa... Thanks, Ha Jin. Thanks. Thanks... I’m so thankful, I’ll do anything for you... What should I do?”

The people at our table all looked at Beom-jun with pitiful faces. The kid was so innocent, I was worried he might get scammed somewhere. Although he always gets fooled by Mi-eun, I thought he wasn’t a pushover, but he was more innocent than I thought. How many drinks did he have because he couldn’t say he didn’t have a first love?

“Then... Now I’ll spin it...”

Beom-jun spun the soju bottle again, waving his hand. Until now, there was a 90% probability that it would land on Beom-jun. The spinning soju bottle must have felt sorry for him too, as it pointed its mouth at someone else.

“Wow. Kim Shin. It’s Kim Shin! Hey, Cha Beom-jun. Get a hold of yourself. You have to ask the question properly. Huh?”

Mi-eun shouted excitedly, standing up. It was a heated atmosphere just like the Korea-Japan match. Min-ha, who was next to Mi-eun, grabbed her and pulled her down, telling her to calm down.

Kim Shin was smiling leisurely. Beom-jun rested his chin on one hand on the table and blinked his eyes. He looked at the soju bottle, slowly moved his gaze towards the mouth of the bottle, and then raised his head.

“Kim Shin?”

“Hey, Beom-jun. Let’s make him eat it properly. Let’s see Kim Shin get drunk for once. Or let’s find out something about Kim Shin.”

“Okay. Kim Shin. Our Shin. Tell us about your first kiss. If you don’t want to answer, you have to drink a bottle of soju.”

“What are you saying?”

Mi-eun frowned. I didn’t really understand what he said either, but Min-ha seemed to have miraculously understood Beom-jun’s mushy pronunciation and shyly opened her mouth.

“He’s asking to tell us about his first kiss partner.”

“Oh, Beom-jun is not dead yet? Good job, Beom-jun.”

As Mi-eun patted him, Beom-jun seemed to feel nauseous and greatly swayed his upper body, making an “Ugh” sound.

“Ha, don’t do that...”

“Why? Do you feel sick?”

“Ugh!”

Making a sound, Beom-jun suddenly got up from his seat and ran away. Mi-eun, who was watching him, also followed in surprise, and Min-ha sighed and got up from her seat.

“Ha, I should go help too. The three of them were drinking. I’ll take care of the kids and bring them back soon.”

Various things happened in an instant.

With even Min-ha leaving, only Kim Shin, Sun Woo, and I remained at the table.

“As for my first kiss partner...”

Kim Shin smiled, spinning the tip of the soju glass with his finger. Neither Sun Woo nor I were particularly interested in the content.

“Should I tell you when the kids come back?”

At Sun Woo’s words, Kim Shin gulped down the soju.

"I can't tell the kids. I think it will cause an uproar."

"Why would it cause an uproar?"

At my question, Kim Shin smiled slyly.

"I drank, so I don't have to answer. Do you want to know?"

Kim Shin looked at me with a mischievous smile. Well, I was a bit curious. Did he have his first kiss with some amazing person?

As I showed a slightly interested reaction, Kim Shin came close to my face. He covered his mouth with his hand and wrapped it around my ear, and Sun Woo sighed lightly and held my hand. What the, why are you suddenly holding my hand?

All my attention was focused on Sun Woo holding my hand. Kim Shin's presence approaching my ear was becoming faint, but Kim Shin's whisper completely erased Sun Woo's existence as if wiped out with an eraser. The whisper he delivered to me was truly a nuclear bomb level.

"My first kiss. It's you, Ha Jin."

After hearing his whisper mixed with hot breath, a mushroom cloud puffed up above my head.

#066

As I sat there dumbfounded, Sun Woo tightened his grip on my hand. It seemed like he didn't like that his presence had been erased. Kim Shin moved away from my side with a satisfied expression. He lowered his head, trying to hold back his laughter, and Sun Woo looked like he wanted an explanation for what was going on.

'Sorry, but I can't say this out loud.'

My mind was hazy at the thought of kissing a friend... No. That shouldn't be a big deal, right? I've kissed Sun Woo many times. Yeah. In this webtoon world, a kiss between friends is nothing. It's such an open-minded world.

Damn... That's nonsense.

"Ugh..."

Groaning, I dropped my head on the table. Then I turned my head and glared at Kim Shin.

"Kim Shin. Take your jokes only so far."

With Ha Jin's crazy personality, why would I kiss you?

"Huh? I may be exaggerating, but it's not a joke. You really are my first kiss partner. Hmph-"

I reached out and covered Kim Shin's mouth as I lay there.

"Are you drunk? Kim Shin. Do you really want to die? Why are you lying?"

"I'm not lying."

Kim Shin turned his head to escape my hand and quickly spoke. In response, I firmly covered his mouth with my hand again. Even with his mouth covered, Kim Shin looked relaxed. As if he could escape anytime but was letting me do it, he obediently stayed under my touch.

"What did he say to make you like this?"

Sun Woo frowned, looking at my hand.

"Nonsense. Crazy talk. Anyway, weird stuff."

"Who's his first kiss partner?"

Sun Woo started to get strangely curious.

"You don't have to answer that. You. You drank."

I sternly told Kim Shin. Then Sun Woo, who had been quietly watching what I was doing, grabbed the soju bottle and rolled it. As if rolling it would make the bottle point to Kim Shin again.

Huh? It's pointing to Kim Shin?

The soju bottle that had been spinning around stopped exactly facing Kim Shin. Damn it...

"Kim Shin. Who's your first kiss partner?"

At Sun Woo's question, Kim Shin, with his mouth covered by me, squinted his eyes and laughed, even shaking his shoulders. I was covering his mouth very firmly, afraid he would escape like before. But I couldn't cover his eyes. Kim Shin kept pointing at me with his eyes. I shrugged my shoulders with a dumbfounded face.

"Why is he looking at me?"

When I tilted my head as if I didn't know, Kim Shin pushed my hand away and burst into laughter.

"Since I answered, I don't have to drink, right?"

Either because of Kim Shin's words or the lingering hot weather, sweat trickled down my back.

"...Aren't the kids coming back?"

Ah... I'm doomed. I'm doomed.

I awkwardly left that spot, looking around as if searching for the kids. And when I thought I was out of sight, I suddenly ran.

'Ha Jin, you blockhead. Tell me. Did you really kiss Kim Shin? When? Why? Are you crazy?'

I could tell from Ha Jin's behavior that I had witnessed that there was no way that would happen. But Kim Shin wasn't the type to make up a story that didn't exist just for fun. Kim Shin definitely wasn't lying. And Ha Jin wasn't that kind of person either.

So why did he answer that I was his first kiss? Why?

Then a dizzying assumption came to mind.

"Fuck... That's right. Alcohol..."

If it was Ha Jin's drunken habit, it was possible. Whenever he got drunk, he would stagger and lean on the people around him, being clingy. Beyond my control.

I was running, not being able to get over Ha Jin's karma, when suddenly a firm arm wrapped around me and stopped me.

"It's dangerous. Ha Jin."

At the gentle whisper, I turned my head to see Sun Woo frowning and catching his breath.

"You run fast. Ha Jin."

Sun Woo, who was breathing roughly, stretched his lips and tightened his arm around me. Am I the only one who finds Sun Woo really scary right now?

"Why are you here?"

“You ran away, Ha Jin. I was already in a bad mood. It’s getting worse.”

“ ... ”

“I thought it would be like this. Ha Jin. You lived quite a promiscuous life? But you should hide such facts. I’m not a saint, so I get angry and hurt by things like that too.”

Sun Woo’s face was smiling kindly as if he had never frowned. That definitely wasn’t a smile with good intentions.

“Promiscuous? Me? Sun Woo, you’re killing me.”

“I didn’t expect you to have kissed Kim Shin too.”

“That’s not true.”

As I stammered, my voice was turned upside down. I have to insist. There was no evidence for this, and no one would believe it. I’ll have to make excuses that Kim Shin is just playing around by himself.

“Is it really not true?”

Instead of immediately nodding my head at Sun Woo’s question, I raised my eyes diagonally and belatedly nodded my head with an atmosphere of ‘Could it be?’

“Ha Jin. I don’t intend to blame your past either.”

“I told you it’s not...”

My voice lost strength towards the end. Why am I so bad at lying? No, it’s not a lie, I just don’t remember. Why can’t I be confident?

“Turn your head.”

“Huh?”

“Turn your head for me. Ha Jin.”

As if enchanted by Sun Woo’s words, I turned my head to the side, and he puckered his lips from behind. His hot lips, exhaling rapid breaths, lightly touched and then parted.

As I felt frustrated by his teasing kiss, Sun Woo buried his head in my back and let out a big sigh.

“The past is the past. But I still feel bad.”

“The past? I told you it’s not.”

“Yeah. You keep denying it like that, Ha Jin. I prefer that.”

“Ah, seriously... I said it’s not.”

While Sun Woo was leaning on my back like that, Min-ha appeared in front with surprised eyes.

“Is Sun Woo drunk too?”

She seemed to have misunderstood seeing him leaning on my back. Sun Woo did drink, so let’s just say he is.

“I think he’s a bit drunk.”

“Wow. Does Sun Woo get drunk too? Well, he doesn’t come to drinking gatherings often, so drinking itself must be unfamiliar. Let’s go. Beom-jun changed his clothes and Mi-eun will bring him.”

“Why the change of clothes?”

“He ended up throwing up. Mi-eun will take good care of him, so don’t worry. Even though Mi-eun may not seem like it, she really cherishes Beom-jun. Where’s Kim Shin?”

“Probably at the table?”

“Alone? He must be bored.”

As Min-ha walked quickly with concern, I tried to follow, but Sun Woo grabbed my hand.

“Hold my hand.”

His tone sounded like he still wasn’t in a good mood. Seeing him act like he was throwing a tantrum, I found it strangely cute and smiled, tightly holding his hand.

“Are you very drunk?”

When I asked playfully, Sun Woo’s eyes narrowed.

“You two seem quite close when I see you together like this. It seemed like you were together during the vacation too.”

Min-ha laughed and looked down at our held hands.

* * *

And at the table we arrived at, Kim Shin was smiling while looking at his phone.

Everyone sat back in their seats, and soon Mi-eun and Beom-jun appeared.

Beom-jun, who sat down with a pale face, groaned.

“I can’t drink anymore.”

“I won’t give it to you because it’s dirty. I’ve really seen all sorts of things in my life.”

“Sorry. Mi-eun.”

“Drink in moderation. Don’t drink everything just because I give it to you.”

“Okay...”

After Beom-jun answered with a sullen face, Mi-eun glanced at him once and then shifted her gaze towards Kim Shin.

“Right. It was Kim Shin’s turn to answer. Tell me. Who was your first kiss?”

“Kim Shin drank.”

As I quickly intervened, not only Mi-eun but also Beom-jun and Min-ha widened their eyes and looked at me.

“Ha Jin. I didn’t know you cared for Kim Shin too.”

“What’s this, Ha Jin? You’re being affectionate. You even held Sun Woo’s hand earlier because he was drunk.”

“Kim Shin must be happy? How does it feel to have Ha Jin take care of you after only having one-sided love? Huh?”

At Mi-eun’s words, Kim Shin opened his mouth with a smile.

“Does a first kiss have to involve tongue?”

“Ugh, how vulgar. Really, look at Kim Shin talking. Why are you asking that? Isn’t it obvious? It can only be called a real kiss if there’s a perfect deep kiss.”

“Then I don’t have one.”

“Huh?”

“What?”

“Really?”

Everyone expressed their surprise one by one. Among them, only Sun Woo and I kept our mouths shut.

As expected, it was a lie that we kissed. I made a fuss for nothing.

“Kim Shin, what are you? You’re saying you’ve never had your first kiss?”

“That’s right.”

When Kim Shin answered with a smile, Beom-jun clasped his hands with a moved expression.

“I’m so relieved. I wasn’t the only one. Kim Shin has been single all this time too.”

“Wow, this is quite shocking.”

Thinking that Kim Shin had never kissed anyone until now felt strange. With that handsome face and body, he’s never done it even once? He seems popular.

Kim Shin slightly nodded his head, looking pleased, and reached for the soju bottle on the table. No way? I thought, but he spun the soju bottle with all his might. The soju bottle that had been spinning stopped in front of Sun Woo.

What? Until now, it kept pointing only to Beom-jun.

Kim Shin had a pleased smile on his face, thinking about something. Mi-eun’s eyes sparkled again as she alternately looked at Kim Shin and Sun Woo.

“Ah, this is so fun.”

Everyone was waiting for the question that would come out of Kim Shin’s mouth, and Kim Shin seemed to enjoy the attention, swaying to the rhythm of the music and slowly leaning his body towards Sun Woo. I couldn’t even guess what question Kim Shin would ask.

‘Come on, he wouldn’t ask about the first kiss, right?’

“Sun Woo. Who was your first kiss partner?”

Damn it. Kim Shin was returning what he had been subjected to. Feeling anxious, I grabbed the soju bottle and poured it into Sun Woo’s glass. Just like the soju that overflowed beyond the capacity of the glass, I was overwhelmed with uneasiness.

“Drink.”

At my words, Sun Woo slightly curled the corners of his lips.

Ah, I'm anxious, anxious. Why is he smiling?

"Ha Jin, stay still and watch. I was curious about this too."

Mi-eun pulled out a napkin and placed it on the floor where the overflowing soju had flowed. As the napkin absorbed the soju and gradually became wet, Sun Woo opened his mouth with a slow smile on his face.

"My first kiss partner is here."

At Sun Woo's answer, everyone's gaze unanimously focused on one spot.

Why is everyone looking at me?

#067

Feeling the gazes directed at me, I forced a smile. Damn it, why are they looking at me in this situation? I awkwardly looked around. My eyes saw my classmates from the business administration department sitting and happily clinking their glasses.

"Wow, there are a lot of people here. Don't you think? Is it someone among all these people?"

Why does everyone have a pitiful look on their face the more I talk? They were all looking at me with downcast eyes. In the webtoon, they never looked at Ha Jin like that, right? They were gazes of fear or avoidance. Why are you looking at me with pity?

"Sigh. Let's stop this now. Seeing Beom-jun almost die and come back to life, this drinking game is no good."

Mi-eun picked up the fallen soju bottle and set it upright.

"Yeah. Let's just talk."

Min-ha made eye contact with me and smiled slightly. Beom-jun suddenly sat up straight. His face was full of indignation.

"Hey, wait a minute. But Sun Woo didn't specifically say who it was. Then he should drink, right?"

"Beom-jun. Do you want to be quiet, or do you want to be tormented for about a year with the fact that you vomited on my clothes?"

"Huh? No... I'm just saying we should calculate it accurately."

“Yeah. Calculate it accurately, and do you want to receive my anger for a year?”

“No... Mi-eun, that’s not what I meant... It’s unfair if we just let it go like this...”

Beom-jun pouted his lips at the arrows of criticism that were unnecessarily directed at him. Mi-eun was gently slapping Beom-jun’s protruding lips with her hand and putting them back in.

“I’ll drink.”

Sun Woo reached out to grab his glass. But before that, Kim Shin snatched it away, so he couldn’t do it.

Kim Shin, who suddenly took Sun Woo’s glass, gulped down the full glass of soju in one go. He must have opened his throat to drink, as it was just one gulp and he was done.

“Kim Shin, the way you drink is so cool.”

As Mi-eun exclaimed and clapped, Min-ha next to her also clapped. Beom-jun had a puzzled expression for a moment, then joined in and clapped along.

“I was your black knight, so grant me a wish. Sun Woo.”

“I never asked you to be my black knight.”

“Why are you being like this? You were so drunk that you had difficulty walking and held Ha Jin’s hand to come here. I thought about it and became your black knight because I was afraid you would collapse if you drank this. Right?”

Kim Shin put the empty glass back in front of Sun Woo with a mischievous tone. Sun Woo frowned for a moment and then nodded.

“What’s your wish?”

Is he really going to grant the wish? Sun Woo is unexpectedly kind.

When Sun Woo asked, wriggling his eyebrows, Kim Shin lowered his head gently, pretending to be shy, and then raised his eyes. Even though he’s acting shy, his eyes are too lively. Raising his eyes with a fierce face only makes him look scary. When he smiles with his eyes gently closed, he suddenly looks gentle.

“Let’s sleep together tonight, Sun Woo. There are two beds. I want to sleep in your arms.”

As soon as he heard those words, Sun Woo grabbed the soju bottle and poured it into a glass. Then he picked it up and gulped it down.

Ugh... It's bitter.

Just looking at it made me frown, feeling the bitterness.

"Wow. That's crazy. Who drinks like that so savagely, Sun Woo? You're the best."

Mi-eun and Min-ha clapped again. The applause was louder than when it was for Kim Shin.

"Rejected. Satisfied?"

Sun Woo roughly put down the glass on the table and spoke coldly to Kim Shin, whose expression turned sullen.

"I'm heartbroken. Ha Jin, can you comfort me?"

Kim Shin stretched out his arms towards me. As if a child was begging to be held. That sight felt strangely familiar, but Sun Woo got up from his seat and tightly hugged Kim Shin. Kim Shin, wrapped in Sun Woo's arms, placed his arms around Sun Woo's waist.

Sun Woo put his arm around Kim Shin's head.

"Sun Woo, if you use a little more strength there, I think my head will burst."

"Whether it bursts or not."

"So cold. But that's what makes you more charming, Sun Woo."

Mi-eun was busy capturing the two of them with her phone's camera.

"Hahaha, this is really fun. It's fun."

I frowned, looking at the two of them hugging each other.

What is this? Kim Shin... Don't tell me you really have feelings for Sun Woo? Do main leads usually seduce just anyone?

* * *

Since there was only one bathroom, the other two had to wait while one person was washing up. Kim Shin and I finished washing first, and Sun Woo was the last one in the bathroom. Sun Woo, who whispered in my ear before going in, 'I'll come out as quickly as possible,' is really an incomprehensible guy.

Why are you saying that in my ear?

Kim Shin was sitting on the bed, leaning against it and looking at his phone. It was rare for him to look at his phone in front of me, so I started to get curious about what he was looking at.

“What are you looking at?”

“Ha Jin is paying a lot of attention to me today. Are you curious about what I’m looking at?”

“You’ve been looking at your phone since earlier.”

“Since we talked about first kisses. It just reminded me of something.”

What does a first kiss remind you of? As I had a curious expression, Kim Shin called me to his side. I went to the bed where Kim Shin was and sat on the edge with my butt sticking out. Kim Shin reached out and helped me sit comfortably on the bed.

As my body was fully on the bed, Kim Shin brought his shoulder close to mine. Then he held out his phone, so I took it and saw a photo on the screen. In the center of the low-quality photo, there was a round play button.

“Press it.”

“Is it a video?”

“Yeah. My favorite video.”

The background of the paused screen was someone’s home. When I pressed the play button, the scenery started to move rapidly.

On the paused screen, two children were tightly attached to each other on a large sofa.

One of them, boasting an angelic appearance despite the poor video quality, was notably smaller than the child next to him. The child, who was firmly holding the other child’s arm, had tears welling up in his eyes.

Someone’s voice was heard.

‘Ha Jin. Aren’t you going home?’

At the kind voice that sounded like it was calling him cute, the child let his tears fall.

‘I don’t want to go... I’m going to live with Kim Shin forever, right? Kim Shin, would you be happy if I left?’

Even while sobbing, the child was clearly saying what he wanted to say. Kim Shin, who was watching together next to me, gently pushed my shoulder and spoke.

“Isn’t it cute?”

“Is this me?”

“Yeah. Ah, when Ha Jin was young, he was completely stuck to me like glue.”

Damn... It’s really cute. The tiny kid is so pale with those huge eyes. His red lips moved stubbornly. The dialect is really cute too...

Huh? Dialect?

“Isn’t that Busan dialect?”

“Yeah. When Ha Jin was young, his dialect was really cute. He forgot it all now, right?”

“...”

Why is Ha Jin using dialect? Regardless of my curiosity, the video continued to play.

‘Does Ha Jin like our Shin?’

‘Yes. I like him.’

‘Even if you like him, you have to go home. Mom and Dad are waiting.’

‘I don’t want to go. Kim Shin, you should say something too. You should tell me not to go.’

The child who seemed to be Kim Shin’s younger self had a red face and was just stuttering without being able to answer. Young Kim Shin had a face like a baby predator, looking resolute, but unlike his appearance, he was totally spineless. Upset that Kim Shin wasn’t answering, young Ha Jin cried loudly. Judging by the shaking of the screen, the person filming seemed to be laughing, as laughter was occasionally captured.

‘You shay you like me too.’

‘Ah. Yeah, I like Ha Jin too.’

Kim Shin was only big in size, but he was showing off his stupidity. After saying that, young Kim Shin twisted his body as if he was embarrassed.

‘Then you should tell me not to go!’

‘Okay, okay. Don’t go. Ha Jin.’

‘Oh my~ Ha Jin, you can’t do that. You have to go home. You two aren’t even married, so you can’t do that.’

At those words, young Ha Jin mumbled something small as if holding back his tears. Then Kim Shin’s face turned very red, but that sound wasn’t captured in the video.

‘What did you say? Ha Jin? Auntie can’t hear you.’

‘...We can just do it.’

‘Can you speak a little louder?’

‘We can just marry Kim Shin!’

‘Really? Are you really going to marry Ha Jin? Shin. Son? Tell me. Are you going to marry Ha Jin too?’

Young Kim Shin’s face turned as red as a beet and he nodded his head.

‘Ah, so cute.’

A small whisper was heard. Then the screen started shaking wildly. It was because young Ha Jin suddenly kissed Kim Shin on the lips.

‘Oh my. Honey. Come here. Our Shin had his first kiss stolen.’

That was the end of the video. Laughter was heard from Kim Shin who was next to me.

“I was the victim? You stole my lips.”

So this was the first kiss? Damn.

Thinking that I had fallen for Kim Shin’s word play, I hit his shoulder. Then Kim Shin looked at me as if he was wronged for being hit. Well, it’s true that Kim Shin was the victim... Although that’s the case.

“Even if I did it, it doesn’t mean anything. Something from when we were young...”

“What? I’m going to live my whole life with that memory.”

Kim Shin rested his head on my shoulder. I held out my hand to Kim Shin.

“Let me see the video again.”

“Okay. Isn’t it cute when you watch it too?”

“It is, but...”

I played the video again on the phone I received. My expression only hardened as I watched that video. Putting aside the fact that Ha Jin is cute, why is he using dialect? Busan dialect at that? Ha Jin lived abroad until he was 5 years old and then came back. Both of his parents had no connection to Busan.

Where did Ha Jin learn the dialect?

Judging by the way he spoke, it didn’t seem like he was imitating it for fun, but rather he was used to using it in his daily life.

The intonation and way of speaking were perfectly Busan-style.

While I was looking at the phone, my body was suddenly pulled.

Sun Woo, who had finished washing up at some point, grabbed my arm with his hair still wet. I staggered from his touch and barely stood up after getting off the bed. As Sun Woo kept approaching, I stepped back and my legs hit the other bed.

“Ha Jin. You should have stayed put in your bed.”

Where is your bed and my bed here? At some point, Sun Woo seemed to have decided to use the same bed as me. I had a feeling of that when we were unpacking. It felt like there was an invisible line separating Kim Shin’s space and ours.

“Ha Jin. Should we just wash together from now on?”

“No. Sun Woo. You didn’t wipe the water? Your clothes will get wet.”

“Wipe it for me.”

“Huh?”

What kind of absurd nonsense is this?

I glanced at Kim Shin and he was just sitting on the other bed, leaning against it and laughing as if he was enjoying an interesting sight. As if he didn’t like me even glancing at Kim Shin, Sun Woo grabbed my chin and turned it towards him, so I had to endure Sun Woo’s murderous gaze again. He seemed to be in a quite low mood, and unlike him, he was throwing a tantrum. No. It’s scary to call it a tantrum.

“Wipe it for me. Dry my hair too.”

“You’re not even a kid...”

Seeing his resolute gaze, this guy was serious.

“Come here.”

In the end, I couldn’t win and pulled Sun Woo. If I confronted him here, it was obvious that I would be the only one struggling. This is a judgment based on my experiences so far.

“I should ask Ha Jin to dry my hair tomorrow too.”

When I looked back at those words, Kim Shin was smiling brightly. This or that... Sigh...

Am I your nanny?!

#068

The first thing I saw as soon as I woke up and opened my eyes was Sun Woo’s straight, extended neck, and behind that, Kim Shin making eye contact with me and saying, “Good morning.” I carefully escaped from Sun Woo’s embrace, in which I had woken up. Rather than a delicate deer escaping from the arms of a sleeping lion, it was more like a well-built buffalo. That was exactly how it looked.

I looked at Sun Woo, who was sound asleep, and properly covered him with the blanket in case he might get cold from the air conditioning.

Sun Woo, who usually woke up first every day, seemed to be having a lot of hard work these days, as he lay there with his eyes closed without any movement.

After washing up briefly, I saw Kim Shin dressed in light clothing, holding a hat in his hand.

“Where are you going?”

When I asked quietly, being mindful of the sleeping Sun Woo, Kim Shin also glanced at Sun Woo, who was sound asleep on the bed, and smiled mischievously.

“I’m going out to exercise a bit. What about you, Ha Jin? Want to go exercise together?”

“No. I should go eat breakfast. You’re going to exercise right away without eating?”

“It’s my habit to exercise on an empty stomach. I’ll eat a little after exercising.”

As I nodded and was about to leave, Kim Shin peeked his head behind me and looked at Sun Woo again.

“You’re not waking Sun Woo up? If you’re not there, I think he’ll look for you with his eyes like this.”

Kim Shin used his hand to pull his eyelid, expressing the four-eyed gaze of the Four Heavenly Kings who guard the entrance of a temple with a fierce air.

“Sun Woo must be tired these days because of work. I’m going to let him sleep comfortably.”

At my words, Kim Shin looked at the sleeping Sun Woo one more time and then left the room.

After separating from Kim Shin in the elevator, I headed to have breakfast. Perhaps due to the aftermath of yesterday’s drinking, there weren’t many people, and even those who were seen were all stumbling around like zombies.

Looking at the food, strangely, I couldn’t take a step. In the end, I asked an employee for two servings of food, took the packaged meals, and went back to the room. When I carefully opened the door and entered, Sun Woo was sleeping in the same position as when I left. To avoid disturbing his sleep, I leaned on Kim Shin’s bed. How long had I been there when I heard a rustling sound next to me and turned my head?

Sun Woo seemed to be waking up from sleep, groping the air with his hand. As if he couldn’t grasp what he was looking for, he raised his upper body from the bed and slowly scanned his surroundings. When his gaze finally reached me, I smiled as if to show off, but Sun Woo frowned.

“Did you sleep well?”

“Ha Jin, why are you there?”

A faint anger was felt in his low voice.

“To let you sleep comfortably.”

I got up from the bed and approached Sun Woo. He quietly watched me walking. As if he hadn’t fully woken up from sleep, he had his eyes half-open and his eyebrows deeply furrowed. I gently rubbed his eyebrows with my fingers.

“Did you have a bad dream?”

Sun Woo pulled my body into his arms and onto the bed.

“...Don’t go anywhere without a word.”

“I brought you breakfast. Do you want to sleep more?”

I chuckled, looking at Sun Woo burying himself in my arms. He's throwing a cute tantrum.

"Don't go and stay by my side."

"Okay."

I gently stroked Sun Woo's back. Feeling his tense back muscles with my palm, I welcomed a pleasant morning. As if he hadn't fully woken up, Sun Woo fell asleep in my arms with a steady breathing sound.

* * *

I want to go into the swimming pool... I looked at the T-shirt I was wearing and then shifted my gaze back to the swimming pool. Everyone had their clothes on the sun beds and went in wearing only swimsuits.

'Seriously...'

Resigning myself inwardly, I turned my head and saw Sun Woo looking at me with a smile on his face as if telling me to take it off somewhere. Seeing the smile on his lips, a sense of resentment welled up.

'Why do you keep leaving scars on my body?!'

This morning, I fell asleep while putting Sun Woo to sleep, and when I woke up from a strange feeling, I saw a head moving on my chest. What is he doing? As that thought slowly sank in, I felt pain.

When I belatedly removed him, I saw a red mark engraved on my chest.

Last night, I firmly refused Sun Woo's absurd request not to swim. As a result, this situation occurred.

You think I can't swim because of that?

I can just swim with my clothes on, right?

With a 'splash' sound, I jumped into the water. I liked swimming, and it had been a really long time since I had been to a swimming pool. A pleasant smile appeared on my lips, and I moved my body, thinking of swimming.

However, contrary to my intention, it was difficult to even move a hand. A strange sensation began to engulf me. Like a waterlogged cotton, my body became heavy, and I couldn't control it. When I barely lifted my head to see, it was just black. The black sky was coming down towards me at a terrifying speed.

‘Damn it... Ha Jin, are you a beer bottle? What can you even do?’

Water was filling up all the holes in my body – my nose, eyes, and mouth.

* * *

‘Splash’

Kim Shin thought someone was dangerously diving into the swimming pool, so he ignored it without much thought. Other people’s affairs were outside his interest. He was reaching for the bread on the table to replace the missed breakfast. He picked up the bread he wanted and was about to move to a seat in a good mood when...

“Did Ha Jin not bring a swimsuit? He went into the swimming pool with his clothes on.”

At someone’s words, Kim Shin dropped the bread in his hand. When he looked back, he saw Ha Jin floating in the middle of the swimming pool. His bright-toned face reflected in the blue water looked exceptionally pale. The sight of him entering the swimming pool with his clothes on and a smile on his lips made Kim Shin’s heart race. Kim Shin’s eyes grew cold as he saw Ha Jin slowly sinking into the water.

“Fuck. Ha Jin!”

Kim Shin, who shouted loudly, jumped straight into the swimming pool without a second thought. It didn’t matter if the phone in his pocket was submerged in water or if his clothes got wet. He was only filled with the thought that he had to save Ha Jin in front of his eyes quickly.

At the sudden shout, the kids around finally took notice of Ha Jin. At first glance, the sight of him sinking into the water looked like he was playing in the water, so they tilted their heads in confusion as Kim Shin called his name and urgently jumped into the water. When Kim Shin jumped into the swimming pool, there was someone who pulled Ha Jin out faster than him.

Sun Woo pulled Ha Jin, who was submerged in the water, to the surface. He brought the limply hanging Ha Jin out of the swimming pool and laid him down, turning his head to the side. Fortunately, thanks to being rescued quickly, Ha Jin was coughing and spitting out water on his own.

Sun Woo looked down at the pale-faced Ha Jin with a worried gaze. It was hard to believe that he had drowned alone in a shallow area where the water only reached his chest. Sun Woo kept checking Ha Jin’s breathing.

Sun Woo’s eyes were so fierce that the people around him only expressed their worries and didn’t know what to do. One of them was about to call 119, but Kim Shin approached and quietly lowered the phone. It was a quite familiar situation for him.

“Let’s move him to the room.”

When Kim Shin approached Sun Woo and spoke, Sun Woo carefully lifted the unconscious Ha Jin, who had finally spit out all the water and had a deeply furrowed face. Sun Woo remained silent the entire way to the room. Kim Shin looked at Ha Jin’s face and let out a small groan, biting his lips.

Looking at Ha Jin’s pained face as he was laid on the bed, his childhood appearance was projected.

“Ha Jin can’t swim?”

Sun Woo asked in a slightly calmer voice after changing Ha Jin’s clothes and wiping off the water.

“...He can’t.”

“Then why did he go in to swim?”

“He probably thought it would be fine. It was a long time ago.”

“A long time ago?”

Kim Shin frowned as if recalling an old memory.

“Ha Jin... almost died. From drowning.”

“When he was young?”

“On Ha Jin’s sixth birthday. If he had been discovered a little later, he would have probably died. Since that day, he loses consciousness when he enters deep water. I guess the shock from back then was big.”

Kim Shin felt even heavier, as if it was his fault.

* * *

It was as if hazy dust filled the air, and my vision was not clear. It was blurry, as if a filter with low opacity was applied, but not to the extent that the shapes couldn’t be distinguished. In that vision of mine, I saw someone. A tall woman with long, wavy hair had her arms crossed and was looking down at me. She was a beautiful person whose bright hair color and fair skin suited her well.

Affection for her overflowed in my heart.

"Of all days, you had to catch a cold today? Do you need to show people that you're sick at a gathering to feel better?"

I had hoped for kind words, but her tone was so cold that it stung my heart. I took a step back.

"I, I'm sorry."

A small and fragile voice came out of my mouth.

"Madam. Give this child some fever reducer. You said he was healthy... Why did you pretend to be healthy if you were going to be sick all the time? Unnecessarily."

The woman who had been looking at me coldly disappeared, and someone fed me red syrup. I held back my tears and took it, but I choked and coughed, "Ahem, ahem."

"Oh my, young master. Are you okay?"

"I'm sorry."

"It's okay. You always have the words 'I'm sorry' in your mouth. You don't have to do that anymore. What is there to be sorry about? You can just take the medicine again."

Tears welled up, but I held them back, nodded my head, and took the fever reducer that was handed to me. And the scene changed.

The six candles on the cake were blown out by a gust of wind. Everyone clapped and congratulated me. As I shyly smiled, receiving their congratulations, my mother's expression momentarily froze coldly and then relaxed again. And the scene changed again, and a swimming pool unfolded before my eyes.

"Ah, no!"

The sparkling ring that had escaped from my small hand rolled away and fell into the swimming pool with a 'plop.' Not knowing what to do, the small body that had been bouncing on its feet was carefully stepping on the stairs of the swimming pool.

"It's the one Kim Shin gave me when he proposed... If I dive and retrieve it, it will be fine."

I muttered in a small voice and entered the swimming pool filled with water alone. Memories of my childhood, when I was good at swimming, flashed by like a video. No, not my childhood. It was the childhood appearance of Ha Jin.

However, I had no strength in my body due to the cold, and my head was also hazy, perhaps because I had taken fever reducers. I barely dived to the bottom and grabbed

the ring, but I didn't have the strength to get out of the swimming pool. No one was paying attention to the swimming pool. I saw them gathered and chatting, and my consciousness began to fade.

At that moment, my eyes met my mother's.

"He...lp..."

Water quickly filled my small mouth, silencing my voice.

When I barely resurfaced after sinking again, my mother glanced at me and then turned her gaze away, pretending not to see.

All the strength left my body. Water was filling up all the holes in my body – my nose, eyes, and mouth.

At that moment, I thought,

'If I die, will Mother be happy?'

#069

I couldn't move immediately after opening my eyes. I couldn't judge whether what I had just seen was a scene created by my imagination or really Ha Jin's childhood memory. It was such an absurd scene that I wanted to dismiss it as a dream, but it was too vivid to be a dream. I felt the wounded heart of young Ha Jin, and at the same time, the contempt and jealousy of his mother were so heartbreaking.

I lay there blankly, staring at the ceiling.

'It must be my delusion.'

I wondered if Baek Su-ah could have possibly ignored Ha Jin when he was drowning. What parent would turn a blind eye to their own flesh and blood drowning?

Even imagining it was so absurd. A hollow laugh escaped me at the ridiculousness. Then someone flicked my forehead so hard that it made me come to my senses. It sounded like a walnut cracking on my forehead, and stars twinkled before my eyes.

"Ow... It hurts."

As I rubbed my forehead, the culprit of the flick removed my hand and gently covered my forehead with their own hand. Their hand was unusually warm. If you were going to do this, you shouldn't have hit me in the first place.

When I opened my eyes, I saw Sun Woo frowning deeply.

“Making people worry and then laughing?”

Seeing Sun Woo looking genuinely angry, I roughly guessed why I was lying here like this.

I had boldly entered the swimming pool and then lost consciousness after drowning due to this damn body that couldn't swim. I tried to sit up, but the force pressing down on my shoulder made me lie back on the bed.

“Stay lying down.”

“Did I drown?”

“Should we call it drowning or should we say you voluntarily drank water? In a shallow swimming pool. Ha Jin, where the hell do you keep your mind...”

“...”

“Still, it's a relief that it's only this much.”

Sun Woo got on the bed, lay next to me, and hugged me. Judging by my condition, it was clear that someone had taken meticulous care of me. That must have been Sun Woo. Thinking that he had even changed my underwear, my face flushed. Did you see? Did you look? Huh? I asked Sun Woo with my eyes wide open. However, instead of resolving my doubts, he only gave a warning.

“Don't ever do anything dangerous again.”

He slowly and tightly embraced me without any gaps. I was still staring at the ceiling, and Sun Woo was lying on his side facing me. One of his arms was hugging my body, and the other was stroking my hair.

“It's stiff because I only wiped off the water. Do you want to wash up?”

“Just a little longer.”

Perhaps because I had a very bad dream, my mind was a bit confused. As I was thinking about this and that with a troubled heart, something wriggled on my chest. I looked at Sun Woo, the owner of the hand, cursing with my eyes, and he brought his worried face close to me. He didn't give me any time to think at all.

“I have to check if your heart is beating properly.”

“Your touch is a bit...”

To say that he was simply checking my heartbeat, his touch was excessively sticky.

“Don’t ever do that again. You don’t even know you have aquaphobia?”

Of course, I don’t want to either. The webtoon didn’t cover Ha Jin’s physical condition in detail. I think I’ll have to find that out by experiencing it myself. ...No, wait a minute, phobia? I think Sun Woo said something strange.

“Aquaphobia?”

“I heard you almost drowned to death when you were young. How could you think of going into the water?”

“!”

Sun Woo’s words suddenly left me speechless. It’s similar to the content of the dream I had. Just now, young Ha Jin fell into the swimming pool and seemed like he was going to die like that. But he really almost died? I asked Sun Woo in turn. So on the day I almost died...

“On your birthday?”

“On your sixth birthday.”

At the sudden sound of Kim Shin’s voice, I sat up with a start. He was sitting on the other bed, leaning his upper body against the headboard. I had thought it was only Sun Woo and me here until now. No, if you’re here, you should at least say something. If I had known you were here, I wouldn’t have let Sun Woo hug me.

“You were here too?”

When I asked as if it was unexpected, Kim Shin drooped the corners of his eyes.

“Ha Jin. Are you disappointed in me? Do I have so little presence? Aren’t you two getting too close?”

“Huh?”

I distanced myself from Sun Woo and settled in the corner of the bed.

“You were there on that birthday too?”

“How could I not be there on Ha Jin’s birthday?”

I see. If it was your sixth birthday... The number of candles was the same as what I saw. Oh my gosh. Did I really see Ha Jin’s past?

“By any chance, did you give me a ring as a gift?”

It was definitely mentioned that the ring that fell to the bottom of the pool was given by Kim Shin. As I waited for an answer with an anxious face, Kim Shin showed an awkward smile and then turned his eyes away from me as if he was uneasy.

“You still remember?”

“Ha!”

The dream I had was real? How could I see Ha Jin’s childhood in my dream? I was at a loss for words for a while, shocked and amazed.

Kim Shin’s expression gradually changed, and soon he had his usual playful face.

“Do you remember what kind of ring it was?”

“A huge diamond ring.”

How could I forget that brilliance that sparkled even at the bottom of the swimming pool? The embedded gem was so big that it was easy to find and retrieve. But after that, I lost strength and fell into the water. I frowned at the throbbing pain in my head.

“Yeah. That was a wedding ring passed down in our family for generations. I gave it to Ha Jin.”

“...”

You gave a generational heirloom as a birthday present? A wedding ring at that? Is Kim Shin in his right mind? In the end, the sad and painful emotions I felt in the scene I saw were completely erased by Sun Woo and Kim Shin.

As my thoughts cleared, I unconsciously checked Sun Woo’s reaction. He was already in a low mood since I had moved away from his embrace. On top of that, it seemed like his patience had reached its limit with Kim Shin’s story, as I could see his eyebrows twitching.

At some point, Sun Woo was looking at me with a dizzying smile, as if saying, “Yeah, go ahead and do more.” No. I don’t think you should do more.

“Ha Jin asked me to marry him... Ugh!”

To silence him, I threw a pillow at Kim Shin. He lightly caught the flying pillow, but he still pretended to be in pain and made a sound.

“Let’s leave childhood stories as memories from back then. Okay?”

When I made a horrified expression, Kim Shin nodded his head. I'm grateful too. At least Kim Shin knew when to hit the brakes properly. Sun Woo, whose brakes are broken, always goes straight no matter how much you tell him to stop.

"I'll wash you."

Sun Woo reached out and grabbed my arm. As my upper body swayed slightly, Sun Woo got up from the bed. Then, still holding my arm, he pulled me again, making me get up from the bed. My body was moving back and forth like a loose string at Sun Woo's touch.

"...I can do it myself."

"What if you faint again at the sight of water?"

How is swimming pool water the same as water when washing up? I met Sun Woo's eyes as he was making unreasonable demands and spoke helplessly. It was absurd to argue over this.

"I'll wash with the shower on."

"I'm worried."

See, Sun Woo always goes straight. I glanced at Kim Shin, as if asking for help.

'Sorry.'

Kim Shin raised both hands and feet too.

"Then I won't wash up."

"..."

At my words, Sun Woo looked at me as if asking how a person could possibly stay in that state, as if it was dirty. Sun Woo seemed to care a lot about hygiene. Last time when I was drunk and stayed at Sin Yeo-un's house, he immediately sent me to wash up, saying I smelled. Ah, come to think of it, he tried to wash me then too. At that time, I squeezed out all my strength to chase him away. Now I don't even have the strength to do that.

Damn it...

In the end, a compromise was reached between me and Sun Woo.

"I'm washing my hair now."

My voice was leaking out through the slightly open bathroom door. Sun Woo was waiting in front of the door. He said he would watch to see if I fainted or not. Who would faint just from seeing shower water? At least he had his back turned, so that was a relief.

‘What am I doing...’

“I’m rinsing my hair now.”

I closed my eyes tightly. The thick foam on my head flowed down my face. I wish I could just wash away like this and disappear into the drain. At this moment of washing, I couldn’t shake off the feeling of being publicly executed.

“Ha Jin, when are you washing your body? Which part are you going to wash first?”

Suddenly, I heard Kim Shin’s voice. Then there was a clattering sound, and it became quiet.

“I’m washing my body now...”

It was my turn to let them know that I was washing my body. Sun Woo suddenly interrupted my words.

“Be quiet and wash.”

“You told me to speak.”

My words were drowned out by the sound of the door closing. Only when the door closed did a space entirely of my own was created.

“No, you told me to speak earlier. Sun Woo, which beat should I match?”

With the door closed, I could wash up feeling a bit more at ease. When I came out after washing, my stomach growled loudly. I must have been lying down for quite a long time, well past mealtime, so I needed to put something in my stomach quickly.

The three of us headed to the restaurant inside the resort. On the way, every classmate we met expressed their concern for me. In an instant, I had become a sickly person.

Well, Ha Jin is indeed a sickly person who is forbidden from many things.

I’m starting to doubt if Ha Jin is really that crazy character. He seems like such a pitiful person.

Time flew by quickly, and it was already midterm season. I was still receiving Sun Woo's help, but I no longer sought old exam papers.

I had reached a level where I could study on my own without old exam papers. Isn't that amazing? In such a short time, I had become a proper business student. Look how well I've grown. Ha Jin is really amazing, truly amazing.

As I was patting my own shoulder in self-praise, a cup of tea was placed on the table in front of me.

"What are you here for?"

"To kidnap you."

My strength was too insignificant compared to Sun Woo's for that, though. Sun Woo seemed to like my joke quite a bit, as he stroked my cheek with his hand.

Hey, everyone's paying attention to us here, you know? As if such gazes didn't bother him at all, Sun Woo smiled with a handsome face that could make anyone fall for him.

"It would be nice if you did bad things like a kidnapper."

"...Aren't you working?"

I ignored his words as if they were nothing. Even though he knew I was deliberately ignoring him, Sun Woo didn't seem to care at all.

"It's okay for a little while."

Sun Woo handed me a lemon tea and sat in front of me. I was waiting for him to finish his shift at the café where he was working part-time to take him straight home.

I was just sitting there, so I ordered a lemon tea, and Sun Woo even brought it to me personally. Isn't this a self-service place? Somehow, I was the only one who didn't get a vibrating bell. I thought they were discriminating against me.

"But, employee. I ordered iced tea."

As an iced coffee member even if I freeze to death, a warm lemon tea was a betrayal and deception. Even on a winter day with snow flurrying, even if my hands freeze from the cold iced coffee, I can't give up. It was still a chilly autumn day.

Ever since I entered Ha Jin's body, I had only been drinking espresso, so I always ordered something warm. There is iced espresso that cools rapidly, but it had a strong sour taste, so I didn't like it. But for this kind of tea, I always had it iced.

“Cold drinks are bad for your body.”

“What’s with that grandma-like tone?”

“That’s right. It’s Kim Ok-bun’s tone. Are you going to disobey Grandma’s words?”

“Wow... This is a bit too much. You know it’s too much, right Sun Woo?”

“If it’s for your health, I’ll go to any extent.”

As if drinking a warm drink will make me healthier. I grumbled but gulped down the lemon tea he brought. As expected, the theory of elders who have accumulated big data over a long time is trustworthy. I only had a sip of warm tea, but I already feel healthier.

Sun Woo sat for a moment, watched me drink the tea, and then went back to his position. It was a pretty large café with many employees, and even though they were all wearing the same uniform, Sun Woo stood out. As I quietly looked around while drinking my tea, there was one person who exuded a distinct presence besides Sun Woo.

Come to think of it, that person also stands out a bit. Even though he was sitting in a corner seat, his presence was extraordinary. Through his sunglasses, his distinct features were asserting themselves, and his crossed legs were stretched out long beyond the table. As if everyone’s eyes were the same, people’s gazes kept touching him. The person sitting alone, as if he didn’t care about people’s attention, stood out in a different sense.

He wasn’t doing anything, just quietly drinking coffee.

Alone. He didn’t open a laptop at the café. He wasn’t reading a book. He wasn’t holding a phone either. That’s true madness. The madness of coming to a café alone and just enjoying coffee. This place had a nice atmosphere, but it wasn’t known for having delicious coffee. Amazing.

As I was inwardly admiring his true madness, it seemed like he suddenly made eye contact with me for a moment. It wasn’t clear because he was wearing sunglasses.

And he smiled slightly at me. He even waved his hand.

“ ... ”

I tried hard to ignore him and drank the tea in front of me.

‘Ah, hot!’

I was used to only drinking iced drinks, so I habitually drank it and slightly burned my tongue. As I was cooling my mouth with a frown, I saw that person with an overwhelming presence laughing out loud.

Without intentionally giving him my gaze, I followed Sun Woo's movements with my eyes as he worked. Although it looked busy with many customers, Sun Woo seemed especially busier. It must be because customers talk to Sun Woo a lot.

As I was drinking my tea, I unconsciously glanced at the corner seat. And wouldn't you know it, he was also looking at Sun Woo? Although it wasn't clear because he was wearing sunglasses, his face was turned towards Sun Woo.

Then, as if he noticed my gaze like a ghost, he turned his head again to look at me and then smiled, pulling up the corners of his lips.

"There are so many strange people."

I drank my lemon tea, thinking I wish time would pass quickly. Exactly when the lemon tea showed its bottom, leaving only lemon pieces, Sun Woo finished his work and walked towards me. Sun Woo, who placed his hand on my shoulder, smiled at me familiarly as if to show off.

"Shall we go? You must have been tired waiting."

"...Why... are you doing this?"

I asked, looking at him with furrowed eyes, but he still smiled brightly and only stroked my hair once. I know that Sun Woo is actually kind, but it was a bit strange for him to suddenly act like this. His eyes momentarily stared coldly at somewhere and then returned to me again.

'Has he lost his mind from being tired at work?'

I let out a small sigh at his behavior and left the store. Only after getting into the parked car did Sun Woo erase his smile and look at me with a stiff expression.

"Don't come to pick me up anymore."

At Sun Woo's words, a playful spirit suddenly possessed me, and I acted like a clingy lover.

"Why? Do you dislike me? Are you tired of me? Is work more important than me?"

"..."

"He's not responding. How boring."

I laughed playfully, looking at Sun Woo who was staying still. But suddenly, Sun Woo grabbed my shoulder and retorted with a rapid acceleration.

"I don't dislike you."

"Really?"

"There's no way I'd get tired of you."

"Uh-huh..."

"I must have told you that you always come first."

"No. I didn't mean for you to take it so seriously. Sigh. Forget it. Why would I joke around with you about enjoying wealth and glory?"

As I started the engine and left the café parking lot, I saw a rare supercar parked there. I knew it was twice as expensive as the car I was driving. I knew that J.B brand cars were rare in Korea.

While my attention was caught by the appearance of the supercar, Sun Woo spoke to me coldly.

"Anyway, don't come to pick me up anymore."

"I want to pick you up at least during the exam period. You're having a hard time."

"I'd rather have a hard time physically."

"Does it make you feel mentally exhausted when I come to pick you up?"

"It bothers me."

"I think I was extremely well-behaved today. Did I do something wrong?"

It didn't seem like I did anything wrong at all. If it were me, if someone said they would come to pick me up, I would gladly take advantage of it and ride along. Ah, could it be related to Sun Woo rejecting my help these days?

"I don't like other people's gazes on what's mine."

Why is he suddenly bringing that up? It was absurd.

"Who's yours?"

I roughly guessed the answer. He completely regards me as his possession. I don't know where it went wrong.

"Ha Jin. Listen to me."

"...Still, you're tired. Let me pick you up. That's the only way I can feel like I'm being helpful to you. And I like going home with you like this."

What the. I brought it up thinking I should persuade him for now, but the latter part was too forward. I was about to take back my words out of embarrassment, but Sun Woo had already heard it. Next time, I should send this kind of message. That way, I can read it one more time before sending and delete the sentences that need to be deleted. This is what happens when you speak without thinking.

"You like coming to pick me up?"

"Yeah."

Perhaps my answer was somewhat satisfactory, as Sun Woo nodded his head with a slightly softened face.

"Then don't come inside the store. Come as close to the time as possible and wait in the car."

"I will."

Telling me to come on time. It's too difficult of a request for me. I'm the type of person who has a hard time arriving exactly on time. With the belief that I can't make others wait, I usually try to arrive about 10 minutes early when I estimate the time. But to arrive 10 minutes early, I have to leave a little earlier. As a result, I end up arriving about 20 minutes early.

It's a promise I can't keep. Well, if I don't get out of the car, Sun Woo won't know.

As I was driving and turning the car in the opposite direction of home, Sun Woo sat up from leaning on the car seat.

"Where are you going?"

"To nourish Sun Woo's body."

"Then why aren't we going home?"

"Why home? I made a reservation at a nice restaurant."

I was a bit disappointed that I had put in so much effort to find food that would be good for his body because he seemed very tired these days. I had the intention of feeding him lots of good things and squeezing out a high-quality 1:1 tutoring session.

“Going home would be better than that.”

“Why do you keep saying let’s go home? Our aunt’s cooking is delicious, but... Let’s go to the restaurant I reserved today. It will be delicious. I looked into it a lot.”

“Are you dense or just pretending to be?”

Sun Woo snorted, puckering his lips. I’m quite perceptive, you know? It’s just that Sun Woo’s thoughts are too difficult to understand. Just as a commoner cannot understand a genius. A sub-protagonist cannot understand the thoughts of the main lead. That’s why they don’t align. Hmm, I roughly threw that out there, but it sounds plausible.

“Kiss me later when we get home.”

...Is he joking? How should I react to this? While I was unable to choose one out of many options, Sun Woo reached out from the passenger seat, stroked my hair with his hand, and stared at my side profile.

“That’s my nourishment.”

“A kiss is not food.”

“I know.”

“Then you also know that a kiss can’t be nourishing for the body, right? Forget about the kiss, let’s eat something delicious and nourish your body today.”

“Eating is the same. Whether it’s food or Ha Jin.”

“Why are you suddenly eating me? Are you a cannibal?”

“Kissing you is a substitute for nourishment.”

“Ah!”

I exclaimed as if I had realized something and then tightly shut my mouth. What’s with that ‘ah!’ there? I was at a loss for words at what Sun Woo easily explained. How can a kiss be nourishing for the body? I tried to recall our past kisses. Ah, even if I say the past, it was yesterday. Wow... I kiss Sun Woo quite often, don’t I? Yesterday... The day before that... Do we kiss every day without a break?

“How is that nourishing? We do it all the time.”

As soon as I uttered those words, I tightly shut my mouth again. This isn't it.

"Right? I'm always grateful for it."

"..."

"I'll be in your care today as well."

"..."

I bit my lips. As if to say I absolutely won't answer.

Next chapter will be updated first on this website. Come back and continue reading tomorrow, everyone!