

Truly

Agony Hidden
Sacrifice
Pain Honesty
Truly
Enough
Fate
Loneliness
Love
Goodbye
Feelings
Trust
Forever
Change
Go
Let
Heartbreak

a Yuri & Tiffany fanfic by aienbest

Synopsis

Kwon Yuri is a young photographer who had never fall in love.
She doesn't believe in romantic stories and hardly show her emotional side to anyone.
But that was all changed when she met a mysterious young woman, Tiffany.
Little did Yuri know that she's about to experience her first love in the tragic way..

"You know that I love you so I..love you enough to let you go.."

- Kelly Clarkson, Already Gone

Characters

Kwon Yuri

Tiffany Hwang

Jessica Jung

Choi Sooyoung

Dong Youngbae (Taeyang)

She Is

*"The shy heart that I hide, I will give it to you..
Your smile, moved the cold me.."*

-Clazziquai's She Is

*I am not the typical romantic kind of
girl who believes in love and fairy tale.
Me, Kwon Yuri had lived for 22 years and
proud to say that I've never fallen in love.
My friends said that I was too picky or
just too slow to notice the affection I have
from the men around me.*

"You're not my type."

Is probably the most common line I used to reply to their cheesy pick up lines.

"Nobody is her type."

Is what my friends labeled me with. Some of them even thinks I'm a lesbian. I don't know, I think I just have a really high standards to actually like anyone in that way.

But Sooyoung said,

"One day you'll meet that one person who will make you believe in love. No matter how hard you tries to deny it, that person is your type. And you will fall head over heels for this fella and willing to sacrifice anything in the world just to make your loved ones happy. Even if it means you're bleeding inside."

Yeah right, anything in the world. Maybe that one day will arrive in another 10 years or so.

That is my over the top dramatic best friend, Sooyoung who is a total opposite of me. She had loved and being heart-broken so many times and yet she's still searching for her so called Mr. Right. She said that experience will make a woman stronger and wiser in the search of finding their soulmates. And yet she came to me crying about another douche. I think she watched too much dramas.

Just thinking about love and relationship makes my head spin. And being surrounded with all these mushy love art-works is not helping. I won't be here if it's not because of my job.

ka cha*

I snapped another photo. It's a photo of a huge painting of a heart shape. The painting looks a bit bizarre, but I can't put my finger on it. Then I saw a faint white line in the middle of the heart, the kind that you can't see it with a glance. It's hidden. The heart..breaks? Hidden heartbreak?

"Yuri-ah!" A voice called.

I turned around and saw Sooyoung's happy face hurrying towards me.

"Have you finished taking pictures at this area? I just met the artist and he agreed to do an interview with us!" She said, excited.

"Oh really? He wants to do the interview now?"

"Yes now! Hurry up before other reporters took our chance!"

I held tight to my camera as I followed Sooyoung who lead me through the crowd at the art gallery. It's the opening week of the famous artist, Kwon Jiyoung's latest work with the theme 'Love'.**

**

"I can't believe we just met the famous Kwon Jiyoung! He's so good looking!" Sooyoung gushed.

"Meh, he's alright, but quite cocky." I replied nonchalant.

I realized the deathly glare that Sooyoung shot at me, but I choose to ignore it. I was too busy checking the photos I took earlier. I hope I have enough usable shots for the article. I must give a good impression on my first article.

I was lucky to get a position as a photographer for Korea's Marie Claire magazine. I thanked Sooyoung who recommended me to her superiors. She's luckier to get the job as a journalist as soon as she graduated while I was wandering without a proper job for a year. It's hard to land a job with a degree in photography. I spend that one year working in various places to pay my education loan and bills. I've worked in the fish market, supermarket, cafes, wore animal costumes and yoga instructor. All at the same time. Life was hard back then.

"He is soooo talented! I mean look at his artworks! All those love themed paintings and sculptures..ahh I'm sure he's a sensitive man! I want to marry him." Sooyoung continued.

"Good luck with that." I replied with a chuckle. I really hope she could just concentrate on her driving instead.

She glared at me.

"Ah, I forgot who I'm talking to. It must be a torture for you to be in that art gallery and surrounded by all the overflowing emotional feelings of love all over you."

I rolled my eyes. Sooyoung is being dramatic again.

"I think you should come to those places more often so that you can shed some light and expose the warmth of love to your dark frozen heart."

Sooyoung poked one finger on my chest as she held the steering wheel.

"I know somewhere in there, is a romantic, mushy part of you just want to come out. After all you're a girl who watches Disney movies and love Mickey Mouse." She said with a wink.

I shuddered.

"Yah! Can't you just concentrate on the road?!" I retorted, pushing her hand away.

Sooyoung shook her head.

"I'm waiting for the day you came to me and say, 'Soo, I think I fell in love..at the first sight.'"

"In your dreams! Love at first sight doesn't exist! It's like Vampires or..Santa Claus!"

Sooyoung sighed.

"One day you'll see. Just wait for it."

Though Sooyoung is such an annoying Juliet, I just couldn't hate her. Maybe I've gotten used to it.

I continue to check the photos taken at the art gallery, one at a time. I took quite a lot of good shots of the mushy paintings unconsciously. I must be brainwashed. I shook my head and go through the photos roughly until I saw that one picture.

It was the picture of the hidden broken heart. I don't know why but I can't stop staring at it. There's something on the picture. Wait, who is that?

I didn't noticed it earlier but there was a young lady in red standing in front of the painting. She was smiling, but I find the expression on her face was nothing but sorrow. As if she was portraying the painting. There were no tears on her face but I could feel her emotions. She's heartbroken but she's trying to hide it with her bitter smile.

"What are you staring at? Is that a hot Jiyoung's picture?" Sooyoung suddenly asked.

I startled and almost dropped my precious Nikon.

"Hey, what's wrong with you?"

"Ssanta claus.." I mumbled.

"What?"

"Nothing."

"Hey, what do you say we hit Youngbae's club after this? Had a drink or two to release our work stress?" Sooyoung suggested, though I know she's only interested with Youngbae's abs.

"Yeah..club sounds good."

**

Me and Sooyoung likes hanging out at the Solar Club. This exclusive club located in Apgujeoung belongs to one of our good friend since college, Youngbae. His rich businessman father financed the place. If it's not for him, I don't think I could afford coming here. A drink alone cost my salary for a day. But since he has a little thing for me, we got to drink anything for free.

This club is a great place to find a guy, either if you're looking for a potential husband or just to have someone for the night. It's a place filled with high rollers and chaebol's sons and daughters. Sooyoung claimed that she came here for the first reason, as her quest for true love continues. But I'm here just to enjoy the heavy bass sounds and grooves my body to the music.

The DJ played a Britney's song that I don't remember the title. Soo is getting wild on the dance floor as she showcases her dancing skills and flaunting her glamorous body. I rested my elbows on the bar and stirs my drink. Now I looked like a loner. But I know it won't be long till someone joined me at

the bar. I'm not bragging but that's what happened every time Soo leaves me alone.

"Yuri, why are you not on the dance floor?" Youngbae suddenly asked. I didn't even realized he's coming.

I smiled warmly at the guy with spiky hair. He had that hairstyle since I first met him.

"Maybe later. Soo is conquering the dance floor right now. I don't want to steal her spotlight."

Youngbae laughed and nodded.

"Hey how about your new job? Does working at Marie Claire is as exciting as you pictured like?"

"Not bad, except that rookies like me had to do the articles that no one else wants to do. I almost puked rainbows after going to that mushy art gallery."

"Hahaha!" He laughed, mocking me.

"I don't know what's next, articles on fancy cat shows, candy factory?"

"Hang in there. It's not easy to land that job you know. You'll get more important articles in the future."

"I know, and I'm not complaining. It's better than wearing a Chicken costume and danced to cheesy idols songs."

He laughed even harder. This guy. I once worked at a chicken restaurant.

The DJ suddenly played a slow number byClazziquai, She Is. The couples on the dance floor slowly embraced each other while the singles moved aside for drinks. I noticed Youngbae stares at me with 'that look'. I know 'that look'. All I can wish right now is for Sooyoung to interfere us before he said something like..

"Wanna dance?"

Too late.

I looked at him blankly, not sure what to say. The last time we danced together, he almost kissed me 'accidentally'. I was lucky to moved away in time. No offense, but my first kiss is very special. It's for someone I want to give it to. And that person is not him.

"Er..I..

He waited. He stares at me as if his eyes could make me say yes. His hypnosis may work on other girls, but not on me.

"Guys! Don't make babies on the bar stool!" Sooyoung suddenly came and sat beside me, she looked a little tipsy.

Saved by the drunk best friend.

"Are you alright?" Youngbae asked, supporting her body from falling.

"Bae! Show me your chocolate abs! Show me!" Sooyoung demanded before she pulled Youngbae's shirt up.

"Yah! What are you doing?! Sooyoung stop it!"

I took the opportunity to get away. Sooyoung will be okay as always but I can't say the same thing about Bae. Poor Bae, but he'll get over it. It's not the first time Sooyoung attempted to rape him.

**

The DJ played my favorite body shaking song, Ciara's 1,2 Step. Like a boss I moves my body to the beat, just letting the rhythm to take control of me. I could feel the crowd's eyes on me, some awed and some jealous but I just love the attention. I feel like a superstar when I'm on the dance floor, someone you can look at but can't touch.

The music then changed to a hip hop number by Akon, and by that time I was already drenched in sweat. I could really use a drink. People around me applauded, impressed at my sexy moves earlier. I smiled at them and shot a few sexy glares at the drooling men. They looked like they're gonna burst. Haha.

I went to the bar but there was no sign of Bae or Soo. I can't help but smiled thinking of what they might be doing.

"Where are you going afterwards?" I heard a man's voice from beside me.

I was about to came back with my usual snobby reply when I realized that he wasn't talking to me. There was a woman next to him, but I couldn't see her face clearly.

"How about we go somewhere more..quiet. Just the two of us." He continued.

Ohh..I know that line. I know that tone. Another douche.

"Here's your drinks sir!" The bartender handed the man two glasses of martini.

"Thank you." He said and put both glasses by him.

I raised an eyebrow. I think I know this move.

The poor woman didn't notice it, but I saw it clearly. He hid a small packet in his sleeve and casually put something into her drink. What a pro.

"Here, have a drink. Oppa's treat." He said charmingly to the unalarmed victim.

I gritted my teeth and balled my fists. Oppa my ass. Here I am knowing what he's about to do and the poor woman will wake up the next morning on a bed of some cheap hotel not knowing what happened to her. What should I do?

The man gently pushed the glass to the woman beside him and I can't longer hold myself. I might get in trouble for what I'm about to do, but I can't just sit here and watch. Blame me for watching too much superhero movies..

"There you are baby!" I called to the woman intimately.

The douche turned around, looked a bit nervous when I came to them. The woman in red also looked at me and..

I froze.

As if my heart had just stop beating.

It's the same woman from the art gallery. The one I captured in my picture. It's hard to forget that milky skin of hers, her dark long hair and the sorrowful look in her eyes.

"Excuse me?" The douche asked, snapping me back to reality.

I turned at him and casually put my hands around the woman. When my hand touches her bare shoulders I could feel the unknown tinge of sensation all over my body. Cold sweats mysteriously rolled down my forehead. But I still kept my cool. I need to get rid of this jerkface first.

"Baby, do you know this guy?" I asked to the confused woman.

She was speechless. "Uh..I..

"Wait a minute, what's going on here?" He asked, shocked. I enjoyed seeing the look on his face. It's like I just said, dude, you just got punk'd.

"I'm the one who should be asking that. Were you trying to hit on my woman?!" I asked, fierce.

My woman. Sounds nice.

He stood up and shook his head. "She's your girlfriend? You two are..? It can't be.."

"Do you have any problem with two hot women dating?"

He creased his eyebrows in disbelief.

"You don't? Then leave!"

Oops, did I just destroyed his pride?

He scoffed. "How dare you!"

Being a douche he is, as expected he raised his hand, trying to hit my face. I had no idea where all the courage came from, but I didn't even blink once. Maybe because I could feel the woman's tight grip on my arms. She's scared. I must be brave for her.

"Hey! Don't try messing in my club!" Youngbae suddenly shouted. He came just in time.

The douche stopped as Bae arrived. Bae is a well known man in this area. Cross him and be prepared to suffer. Bae grabbed his arm and pulled him away from the bar. He tried to explain but it was too late. I reckon he was thrown out of the club for good. I should thank Bae later.

"I don't remember dating you." The woman suddenly said. I swear her voice sounded like a sweet lullaby. I looked at her and awkwardly removed my arms around her shoulders.

I'm never nervous when I talked to strangers, but with this woman I stumbled on a simple reply. If she's any other guy, I've already come back with at least 3 witty lines. But here I am, mute and staring at her like a fool.

"I'm ss-sorry.."

Oh damn, did Kwon Yuri just stutter? What the-

"I only said that to save you from that dou.. er.. man. I saw him put something in your-

Too late. The woman was already sipping her spiked martini. She drank the full glass and looked at me.

"Something in my?"

"-drink."

"My drink?"

I saw her wobbling left and right as the drug begin to take effect. The douche must've used some super drug. I reached for her shoulders to support her body from falling.

As soon as I held her in my arms, she fainted.

Beautiful Stranger

*"You have a mysterious charm that
nobody else has..
..No doubt that you're a beautiful stranger."*

- SNSD's Beautiful Stranger

Am I dreaming?

*I blinked my eyes a few times to check
if this is real. But no matter how many
times I opened my eyes, the fact still
doesn't change. There was a beautiful
stranger lying on my small single bed.*

It's the lady I saved from the bar last night, the same one in the picture I captured at the art gallery. Her long dark hair spread across my pillow and her white milky skin rested comfortably against my bedsheet. Her sleeping face looked so serene, made me wonder what she was dreaming about.

I hope I'm in her dream.

Suddenly I feel my cheeks heating up. It's not even warm but my palms are sweating. What is happening to me?

I looked at her beautiful face again, trying to look for an explanation. But the more I stare at her, the faster my heart beats.

How can there be someone this beautiful?

I ignored my rapid heartbeat and my sweating palms and moved closer to her. I just can't take my eyes off her. The unknown feeling inside me continues to grow and I'm letting it take over me.

I like staring at her face.

I like her.

"Oh my, what am I thinking?" I said, shaking my head vigorously.

My mind began to look for an excuse for me feeling that way. All I can think of is because of my lack of sleep. I barely slept at all last night and my brain has now fried like pieces of

nuggets in the pan. That must be the reason I'm acting weird..but..

The reason I can't sleep last night was her. I sat by her side and guard her while she was sleeping. I didn't even realize it when the morning came. The sun suddenly pried through the windows.

I glanced at the clock by my bed and noticed that it was already 7:30 am. She will wake up anytime soon. Just thinking about it made me nervous.

What should I say to her when she woke up?

I scratched my hair, thinking.

I should.. introduce myself first, then maybe explain to her about last night. I must explain to her that I had to brought her home since I don't know who to call. She had no handbag or phone with her, so how would I know? I don't even know her name. She should be able to understand it, right?

She won't think of me as a pervert, will she?

I shook my head, brushing off my tendency to over analyze things.

"I should buy her breakfast..yeah." I said to myself.

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"Arghhh my head is killing me!" Sooyoung whined.

She just entered the office with a hand over her head. She's half an hour late to work that morning.

"Yuri, do you have any more of that hangover pills? I could really use one right now." She said to her colleague at the opposite desk.

But there was no response.

"YAH KWON!" She shouted.

I startled at Sooyoung's sudden intrusion.

"Oh, Soo, you're..early." I said nonchalant.

Sooyoung looked at me with creased eyebrows as if I just said something wrong.

"What?"

She walked to me and leaned against my desk before putting a hand on my forehead like a caring mother.

"What happened to you last night?" She asked suddenly.

I was shocked at Sooyoung's instinct.

I looked at her without saying anything and then she nodded.

"You met someone isn't it?"

She's just very sharp. Sometimes I think she has psychic powers.

I sighed. "Yes, well..not exactly. It's pretty complicated.."

"Oooohh! Tell me! Tell me everything! I want to know every detail!" She gushed. She pulled her chair immediately and sat closely next to me.

"Is he hot? Is it someone I know?" She asked continuously.

I shook my head. "More like..beautiful."

"Did you guys..you know, do it? Did you get his number? Will you two meet again?" She asked in one breath. I wonder how she did it.

I stared at her, shocked. "That's not what happened! It's not even close to that kind of stuff.."

She let out a loud sigh. "Really? Ah, that's disappointing. I thought you finally letting someone into your bed, er.. i mean your heart."

I rolled my eyes and told Sooyoung everything that happened last night. She stared intensely at me as I unveil my story starting from the art gallery until how it ended in my apartment.

"That's what happened." I ended my note.

"Ohhhh, wow. So you saved her from being raped? Like a hero?"

I nodded.

"And then she left without saying anything? Not even a thank you note?"

"I went out to buy her breakfast, since you know there's nothing edible in my apartment. But when I came back, she's no longer there. Not even a single trace of her was left. Just her.. scent lingers in the air."

"Hmm, scent huh?"

I nodded weakly.

"And I'm guessing now you can't stop thinking about her?"

"Well, I..

"No matter what you do, her face appears and wherever you go, you can't forget her sweet scent. I bet she even appeared on your laptop screen."

..yeah." I replied sheepishly.

I can't hide anything from Sooyoung anyway.

Suddenly she grabbed my shoulders and stared deeply into my eyes.

"OH MY GOD, KWON YURI!" She said, loudly.

"Wh-what?"

"Looks like you're in love." She said, whispering.

I stared at my best friend, dumbfounded. I wanted to deny that statement, but my body just froze hearing her accusation. As if it was true.

"And I think..you're gay." She added, her voice even lower.

I gulped. I'm..what?

Then she grinned, "No worries! I already expected that! I knew there's something off with you when you didn't show a bit interest in Youngbae! That man is one sexy beast!"

"Sooyoung, I don't think I changed my sexual orientation and fell in love with a stranger that I barely knew in one night. That's just not logical. And I do think Youngbae is cute."

"LOVE IS NEVER LOGICAL!" Sooyoung suddenly shouted and I was almost thrown off my chair. I could get heart attack if she keeps this up.

"And you think Bae is cute, means that you only like him as a friend or as a cute pet with spiky hair but nothing more! You don't have that desire..that kind of deep passion with him or any other man you've met! But! With this mysterious beautiful stranger..you just want to make babies with her!"

I could feel my face heated up immediately. Sooyoung looked at the flustered me with her annoying grin. I shook my head repeatedly.

"I-I don't have that kind of intention with her!"

"Of course you don't." Sooyoung replied. I know she's just being sarcastic. This girl.

"Plus..I don't recall girls can get pregnant by having sex with each other-

She pointed at me with her index finger, causing me to stop talking.

"SEE! YOU DO WANT TO DO THAT WITH HER!"

"What the- I DON'T!"

"Okay enough! Why are we discussing about this in the morning? Are you still drunk?"

I opened the top drawer of my desk and grabbed a bottle of pills. I handed the bottle to Sooyoung.

"Eat this and sober up."

Sooyoung took two pills and threw it down her throat before she swallowed it with a glass of water that I gave her. She looked calmer now.

"The thing is.." She suddenly said.

I looked at her and waited.

"..you can't stop thinking about this girl. This never happened to you before, like ever. You're opening your heart to her.." She continued.

I shook my head. "I'm just weirded out by her right now, that's all. I'm sure I'll get over her tomorrow."

"I don't think so. I think she'll still be on your mind tomorrow and the day after. And by the end of the week you'll find yourself still thinking about her no matter what you do."

I laughed awkwardly. "No way. That's bull!"

"We'll see about that."

"Okay, fine."

**

Sooyoung was right.

I hate to say it, but Sooyoung was right. It's already Sunday and I can't get that beautiful stranger out of my head. I simply can't stop thinking about her. Her face appeared everywhere I look and I smell her scent in the air. I had a hard time sleeping on my bed, as she once rested her beautiful figure there. It will make me feel as if we were lying on the same bed.

I ended up sleeping on the floor.

It's stupid.

This feeling is stupid. But you know what's stupider?

The fact that I went to Solar every night just hoping to see her again.

And I'm doing it again tonight.

I sat at the bar, the same spot where I first met her. I sipped my drink when I'm not even thirsty as my eyes wanders around the club. The DJ played my favorite song, but I didn't even have the urge to dance.

I just..want to see her again.

"Any luck tonight?" Sooyoung suddenly asked.

I shook my head weakly.

She sat next to me, accompanying me going through this misery. It's so nice of her, but I think she's just enjoying every moment seeing me like this. She said it's like watching a real life drama series. She even made her own synopsis.

'A cold hearted woman who finally opens her heart and falls in love with a beautiful stranger. Will she meet her first love again? What will be the ending of this love story?'

Yes, I'd like to know that too. Thank you so much buddy for turning my life into a drama.

"Are you sure what happened that night was real?" Sooyoung suddenly asked.

I looked at her and raised my eyebrow.

"What do you mean?"

"Don't take this wrongly, but when I think about it, it's getting a bit suspicious."

"Suspicious?"

"Your story was too good to be true. You snapped her picture in the art gallery, then you saved her from a jerk and became the hero. It's like a scripted drama."

"Are you saying that I'm making it all up?"

"I didn't say that. Maybe you were drunk and imagined things.."

"I wasn't drunk!"

"But you didn't even know her name."

"She passed out before I could even ask her!"

"Maybe all these years of being single finally gotten to your head and you subconsciously created an imaginary perfect girl like in that Rain movie I watched the other day."

"Rain movie? The one where he's in the mental hospital?"

Sooyoung nodded.

"That movie was about crazy people."

"Yes." She replied casually.

I felt like smacking her face with a bottle of wine. Or the bar's stool. Whichever I can grab first.

Suddenly,

"Excuse me."

I turn around and..

..it's her.

She stood before me, like an angel came to earth just to make it brighter.

Am I dreaming again?

"Yo-you." was the only thing I could say. And I stuttered again.

She smiled and bowed her head slightly.

"I don't think we've introduced each other properly." She said with her sweet voice.

"No we don't.."

I swear she was glowing in her brown coat and pink dress. Seems a bit polite for a club attire but it doesn't matter. Her hair was let loose and she tucked one side behind her left ear. She looked gorgeous.

"I'm Tiffany. Nice to meet you again." She said, offering her hand for a handshake.

So her name is Tiffany. I can finally put a name on this beautiful stranger. I grabbed her hand and once again I could feel that tinge of sensation as my skin brushes against hers.

"I'm Yuri, Kwon Yuri. Nice to meet you again."

She smiled again and her eyes were smiling too. I'm trying so hard not to show my stupid grin. I need to keep my cool.

"Is this the woman you talked about? She's real?" Sooyoung suddenly interrupted our moment.

Reluctantly I let go of her hand.

"Yes. This is the woman I helped the other day."

"Awww..you finally come."

Did Sooyoung just cooed?

"I'm Sooyoung by the way, Yuri's best friend and also colleague."

"Oh, nice to meet you. I'm Tiffany."

They shook hands.

"It's good that you came." Sooyoung said with a friendly tone. She sounded like the gossiping ahjummas near my apartment.

"You don't know how long Yuri waited for yo- AHHHH!"

Opps. I might have stepped on Sooyoung's foot with my heels. Sorry buddy but you're ruining my cool and charming image.

Sooyoung sat at a stool and rubbed her left foot. That should keep her busy for a while.

Tiffany looked at her, worried. "Is she alright?"

"She'll be fine. She just have a bit problem with her long legs. It's a rare genetic disease." I reply nonchalant.

"So..can I buy you a drink? What would you like? I promise it'll be drug free." I said as I leaned my body at the counter.

She chuckled and it sounded like melodies to my ears.

"I can't." She replied short.

"Oh, well then..maybe some other time?"

"Yuri."

"Yes?" I startled.

"I'm here to thank you for saving me that night. I can't imagine what could've happen to me if it wasn't for you."

"It was..nothing. I was more than willing to help you." I said coolly.

"I'm sorry I didn't show my gratitude to you earlier. I didn't know how to find you. I'm glad we could meet again tonight. I am so thankful for what you did. You are my hero."

"Hero? Ahaha! I'm not a hero.." I said, scratching the back of my head. It's hard to act cool.

"But, why did you left that morning? I was so worried.."

Tiffany looked away.

"I just..don't want to trouble you anymore. You had done so much for me so .."

Then she grabbed my hands and looked straight into my eyes. I froze.

"Thank you so much once again, Yuri."

I gulped.

"It's okay, Tiff..Fany."

We continued to look at each other and I swear it felt as if the world had stopped turning. I want us to stay like this forever. Can we?

"I guess I should get going now. It's getting late." She let go of my hands again.

"O-okay." I was a bit shocked.

She bowed slightly at Sooyoung and then at me, making her leave. I bit my lip. I don't want to let her go that easily. Not again.

"If you're thankful..

..you should at least treat me to lunch." I said boldly.

She looked at me, surprised.

"Lunch?" She asked. And I saw a look in her eyes. She seems kinda..worried?

Okay, I'm nervous now.

"I'm not letting you go easily.. without my free lunch. What's your number?" I asked casually. In reality my heart was beating so fast it could burst out of my chest.

And Tiffany seems to hesitate. She looked at me without saying anything. I can't imagine how nervous I felt. This is more nervous than waiting for my final semester result.

I can't afford being rejected this fast.

"Then maybe..your email? So that I can I add you on FB? Twitter?" I know I sounded desperate but I am.

"Give me your number." She replied.

I swear my heart was jumping in joy. That little fella is throwing a party in my body with the blood cells and pancreas. I've never felt like this before.

I gave her my number and she saved it in her phone.

"I'll be waiting for your call."

She replied to me with a smile. She never stops smiling, does she?

"Thank you for everything Yuri, my hero."

I was speechless. She called me her hero again.

And then she leaves. Leaving behind her footsteps all over my heart. Eww. Since when did I became this corny?

I took out my phone from my handbag and held it in my hand. I won't miss any calls from now on.

Sooyoung laughed.

"That was interesting! You were so nervous around her, it's hilarious! Where did all your confidence and overflowing charms had gone to?!"

I smiled at her.

"I told you she's real."

"Okay I admit you're haven't gone 'cuckoo' yet. Wow, I understand why you're all over this chick. Even as a girl, I find she's hot! So this is the Kwon Yuri's 'type'? You really set your bar high."

I can't stop smiling.

"I've told you love at first sight exist."

Sooyoung put a hand on my shoulder. "And you my friend, you have officially fallen in love with Tiffany. Deep."

"I'm not in love with her." I denied.

Sooyoung rolled her eyes. "Oh yeah? Of course I'm wrong again."

I sighed.

"I just..like her.."

"Really, really like her."

"Truly like her.."

**

I never thought liking someone would be this torturing.

I couldn't stop checking my phone, even when it's not ringing. I panicked every time it rings even when it was only my mom calling. I replaced my 'Hello?' with 'Tiffany?' in all my calls. Everyone had become Tiffany.

A week gone by and she still hasn't called. Sooyoung said that I shouldn't wait by the phone and let the nature take its course. She said that fate will bring us together if we're meant to be.

I hope fate stop lazying around and do its job faster.

"We will have another event to cover this weekend." Sooyoung said.

I glanced at her from my desk.

"Oh yeah? What event?"

"A fancy cat show."

"Tell me you're kidding."

"I'm serious. They have the fancy dress competition and we're there to cover the fashion aspect of the..er..cats."

I buried my face in my hands. Great. Exactly what I needed to make myself feel better. I put my chin on my desk and stared at my phone again.

"Fany-ah, now would be a good time to call." I said to the phone.

Yes, I call Tiffany with a nickname now.

Sooyoung looked at me and sighed.

"Poor Yuri. It's her first time liking someone and she's like this. Talking to inanimate objects. Where is that Tiffany anyway?"

Then suddenly, my phone rang. My ringtone, Shoujo Jidai's Beautiful Stranger filled our small office space. Me and Sooyoung looked at each other.

"Answer it!"

I grabbed it and pressed it to my ear without checking the caller.

"Tiffany?"

There was no reply. There was silence for a while, but continued to wait.

"Yes, is this Yuri?" A female voice asked.

I know that beautiful voice. It's her. Finally.

"Yes, this is her. How are you?"

"I'm great. You?"

"Never better."

"So about that lunch I owe you.."

Since she's not in front of me, I grinned like an idiot.

"Are you free today?"

Yes. Yes. Yes!

"Hmm..let me check my schedule first." I said, and then glanced at Sooyoung.

Sooyoung gave me two thumbs up and mouthed, 'Dae-bak'. I chuckled.

I kept her waiting for a few more seconds then continued.

"Well, you're lucky. I'm free today."

Afraid To Love

*'I should have just passed you by,
I should not have fell in love with you
But the more I turn my back against you,
I miss you even more
I'm getting scared, I'm scared of love'*

– Bobby Kim's Afraid of Love

I'm surprised when she wants to meet me again after our first lunch date.

On that day I tried too hard to act cool, I ended up being clumsy. I spilled my drink twice on the table and even the waiter was complaining. Though I spend hours memorizing the useful jokes with Sooyoung to charms her, but my mind became blank when I'm in front of her. In the end I told her a story about drunken Sooyoung that doesn't even funny. But she laughed at it as if it was absolutely hilarious.

She's not very fluent with Korean and tends to call me Yurree with emphasized R. She told me she grew up in America and asked me to call her English name, Tiffany. I insisted calling her Fany anyway.

I told her a lot of things about myself, like my current job, my friends and my family back home. But the only thing I know about her is her job. She's an art graduate and currently working on personal projects.

But I'm okay with that since I know I have plenty of time to get to know her. I want us to take things slowly.

We met again for lunch the next day.

And the day after.

Sooyoung told me that I shouldn't rush dates and when I told her that I've already went out with Tiffany 3 times, she gave up giving advice to me.

Today is our fourth meeting. We've both agreed to watch a movie after work. I punched out of my office on time and skipping my way to the building's entrance. When I reached there, I stood there and contemplating whether I should take the bus or the taxi. Bus is cheaper but Taxi is faster. I'm saving to buy a car so I'm quite careful about the money I spend.

But in the end, I decided to take the taxi. I don't want to keep Tiffany waiting for me. I rather be the one who waits.

I arrived at the theatre an hour early. It's okay, I can buy the tickets and snacks while waiting for her. I sat by the theatre's entrance with my pair of couple's seat tickets and a jumbo sized popcorn. I sipped on the cola as I wait.

I've finished my drinks and she still hasn't arrived. The movie will start in 5 minutes and I'm starting to worry. Not worrying if we missed the movie, but if something happens to her on the way here. I stood up and glanced around the theatre. There were people everywhere, hence making it difficult for me to look for her.

I took out my phone and called her number. I don't want to rush her but I'm getting worried by the second. It's like pieces of my heart slowly dies. She need to appear before me before I..

"Yuri!" A voice called.

The pieces of my heart came back to live.

Her face emerged from behind the crowd and my heart was beating fast. I pushed a few people just to get to her faster and as soon as I'm in front of her, I stopped.

"I'm sorry! I was stuck in the traffic earlier!"

She's alright. I just want to wrap my arms around her tightly but I didn't.

"Did you wait for me long? I'm so sorry!" She apologized repeatedly.

"Hey, it's okay. I also just got here." I lied.

"Ah really? I felt bad for making you wait.."

I can wait for you forever.

"If you're really sorry, then maybe you can treat me to movies next time." I said, slyly securing another date.

She smiled. "I see what you did there, Kwon Yuri."

"Okay fine, the next movie is on me."

I grinned.

"Let's go, we're already late." I said as I casually grabbed her hand. I feel she's clasping onto my palm in response. I couldn't hide my happiness. We looked at each other and smiled.

It's the first time we're holding hands and it felt so right.

**

"You held hands? That's a good progress.." Sooyoung said.

"I know right? I don't want to wash my hands anymore."

Sooyoung laughed and rolled her eyes.

"What happened after the movie? Did you walk her to her house?"

"We took a taxi and then I sent her home."

"Where does she lives? Big house, apartment, bungalow?"

"I don't know."

"You said you send her home."

"I walked her halfway, but then she insisted me to leave since it was getting late. She only.. cares about me."

Sooyoung didn't say anything, but I saw that look in her eyes.

"Why? Does it matter where she lives?"

"Yeah. Especially if you're serious with her. You should at least know that. Is she living alone or with her family? You can tell a lot from someone's house."

"Well..I will know about that eventually. We've only been seeing each other for a week. You're the one who said that I should take things slowly."

Sooyoung sighed.

"Alright. Do you know what she does?"

"She's an artist."

"A singer?"

"No, I meant a painter."

"Is that why she was at the art gallery that day, to check out paintings?"

"Ah..I think so." I forgot to ask Tiffany about the art gallery.

Sooyoung nodded. "You know Yul, I'm just worried about you."

"Trust me, there's nothing that you should worry about."

"Okay, then maybe you can bring Tiffany to the club sometime and hang out with us. Bae is dying to meet the girl who stole you from him."

I laughed.

"Alright. I'll ask Fany about it."

**

"That movie was so sad! I can't stop crying!" Tiffany said as we walked out of the movie theater. She was holding a piece of tissue that was already wet with tears.

"Yes, it was." I said, glancing at her.

Aww..her eyes were still wet. My heart was tugged as I saw her sad expression, even if it was only because of the movie.

"Wait." I grabbed her hand so that we stopped walking. We stood by the sidewalk.

"What is it? Did you forget something?" She asked

I took out a handkerchief from my handbag and then cupped her face. She gulped as I looked into her eyes. We stayed like that for a moment.

"Yuri what-

Then I wiped the remaining tears on her face with the handkerchief. She stopped talking and let me do my job. Her cheeks turned pink.

"Though I find your watery eyes attractive, other people might think we just had a fight." I said with a smile.

She blushed even more. I let go of her face and then held her hand again.

There was an awkward silence between us for a while. We just continued walking.

"Do-don't you find that movie sad at all?" She suddenly asked, attempting not to talk about what I just did. I cringed at the fact that she stuttered.

"It was sad.." I replied casually.

"But you didn't cry, you're just making that fake sad look on your face to make me feel better." She said with a huff.

I melted.

"Haha, I'm sorry, it's just that I hardly cries."

"Really?"

I nodded.

"Even at your graduation?"

"I didn't even cry, just my mom weeping."

"What about past relationships? You've never been heartbroken before?"

"How can my heart breaks when I've never been in a relationship before.."

I glanced at her and she avoided my gaze. She did that sometimes, I wonder why.

"It's just really hard for me to spill tears. Maybe there's something wrong with my tear duct or something." I continued.

"One of those rare genetic disease again?" She teased.

"Yeah." I replied as if it were true.

We laughed.

As we walked, she let go of my hand and then linked our arms together. I figured she was cold as she suddenly moved closer to me. I blushed. I hope she didn't saw my pink cheeks. That would destroy my cool image.

"Hey, I just have this awesome idea!" She suddenly said, excited. She looked like a cute kid wanting to appear smart in front of her friends.

"What is it, our genius Fany?" I teased.

"You!" She hit my left arm gently to show her annoyance. It's too adorable. It makes me want to tease her even more.

"I dare myself to make you cry." She said suddenly.

I looked at her, amused. "Fany, nobody dares themselves."

"Then I'm the first!" She replied proudly.

I shook my head and let out a small laugh.

"Don't waste your time. I don't think you can make me cry.."

"Oh yeah? Why?"

I gaze softly at her and then we stopped walking. I gathered my strength and gave her my reason.

"Because I'm feeling happiest when I'm with you."

We looked at each other for the longest time. I couldn't read her expression; she seemed shocked, nervous, worried and touched all at the same time. I'd give anything in the world to know what she's thinking at that moment.

Slowly she looked away and we resume walking.

"Okay, what will I get if you failed?" I asked, trying to brighten up the situation again.

She grinned.

"If I win, I will admit that Mickey Mouse is cooler than Totoro."

"Just that?"

She smiled and nodded.

"But if I win, I want you to be my Totoro."

"Huh? How? Do you want me to stuff myself until I'm fat?"

She laughed and suddenly the world seems like a better place.

"Hahaha no silly!" She hit my arm again.

"Then what?"

"I want you to grant me a wish."

**

"Because I'm feeling happiest when I'm with you."

How can you say that so casually, did you know that you're shaking my heart with your words? I'm barely hanging on a thread. Because of you I..

I sighed.

"Yuri..what am I supposed to do with you?" I mumbled to myself.

I sat by the window of my room, staring out at the drop-lets of rain that falls that night. After a while, the coldness hits me and I closed the window shut. I walk weakly towards my large bed in my spacious bedroom.

Lazily I threw myself on my bed and try to close my eyes.

But I can't.

Lately I felt my bed is too fluffy and this bed sheet is too soft. This bed is too big and this room is too huge. I pulled myself up and sat on my bed.

For some reason I'm only comfortable in one bed. The small bed in Yuri's apartment.

Should I just go to her place?

I shook my head immediately.

"What am I thinking?"

I sat there in the dark and stared blankly into space.

To be honest I'm scared.

I'm scared of this feeling I have for her. In such a short amount of time, I'm scared how easily I became attached to her, addicted to her charming smile and her sweet words when I know I shouldn't.

This is wrong.

I should stop it right here and right now in this instant before it gets too far. I grabbed my hand phone and searched for Yuri's number.

'Hero Yul'

Once I found it, I pressed delete.

There, I will never call her again..

Then something popped out.

'Are you sure you want to delete this contact?'

I stared at the screen for the longest time. I want to press 'yes' but I couldn't move my finger.

'No'

I didn't delete her number.

I couldn't.

Not now.

Suddenly tears rolled down my eyes.

"How could I do this? This is so unlike me.."

**

"I'm sorry that we have to take the bus. But I'm currently saving money to buy my first car so.." I said sheepishly to Tiffany.

We had just finished our dinner and I've offered to take her home but bus is all I can afford.

She looked at me and chuckled. "It's okay. Don't you think it's romantic for couples to take the bus at night?"

Couples? Did she mean us? I tried my best to hide my blushing cheeks.

I put an arm around her shoulder and she naturally moved closer to me. Like in the dramas, we're sitting at the back seat of the bus and then..she rested her head on my shoulder. I glanced at her, fighting the urge to kiss her forehead.

"Yuri-ah.." She suddenly called.

I gulped.

"Yes, Fany?"

I just like saying her name.

She plugged in an earphone into my left ear and another into hers. I looked at her in wonder.

"I want you to listen to this song." She said sweetly.

I nodded. "Okay.."

The violin instruments played. And then the male vocalist sang.

I realized it's Bobby Kim.

'I might go crazy

No, actually I already might be already crazy about you'

'A love that can't happen in this world

A person that I shouldn't fall in love with'

It's a tragic ballad. I glanced at her and she was staring at me. I became nervous. What are you trying to do, Fany?

'I should have just passed you by

I should not have fell in love with you'

'But the more I turn my back against you

I miss you even more'

The melody was so sad and as we're listening to the song together, I saw tears slowly pooled in her eyes.

'I'm getting scared, I'm scared of love'

Unstoppable Tears

*"Because I will love only you even though
it hurts so much.."*

Jessica – Unstoppable Tears

'I'm getting scared, I'm scared of love'

*She stared deeply into my eyes until
the song ends. The music had stopped
now but we're still looking at each other.
How I wish I could read her mind. What
exactly is she trying to do?*

Wait, is she telling me that she's..

..in love with me?

No way.

I must be losing my mind to think that she's fallen in love with me. It's only been 2 weeks, and according to the love doctor, Sooyoung it's only the warming up phase of a relationship. Though, I can't really tell the difference between the phases. How many phases are there anyway?

"Yuri.." Tiffany suddenly called.

Her sweet voice sent a jolt to my heart causing it to beat rapidly as if it's been hit by a defibrillator. I could hear it thumping in my chest like it's going to burst any moment. My cheeks are heated up, and I'm sure my cheeks had turned pink. I want to maintain my cool image but there's nowhere to hide.

She continued to stare at me with her sparkling eyes. Wait, is that tears?

Suddenly my cool image became irrelevant. I cleared my throat.

"Fa-Fany, are you-

I paused. I don't know if it's the right thing to do at this moment, but I want to ask her about her feelings for me. That is if she has any. This could be the turning point of our possible relationship.

I gulped and gathered the strength to continue. I'm putting my pride on the line as I continued.

"Are you saying that you..er..we -

"HAHAHAHA!" Suddenly she bursts out laughing.

Other passengers in the bus were startled by her and all were glancing at us with their annoyed looks. I slightly bowed my head at them and mouthed 'I'm sorry' from my seat.

Tiffany finally stopped laughing when I held her hands. She seems to calm down a little when I gently rubbed her arm. She was laughing so hard that tears were running down her cheeks. I'm not sure if she's crying or laughing.

"Oh gosh, Yuri-ah.." She mumbled.

I took out my handkerchief and gently wipe the tears on her cheeks. She looked at me and smiled, enjoying the way that I'm treating her.

I'd wipe your tears away anytime, Fany-ah.

"Why are you being so serious?" She asked.

"Eh?"

She let out sigh.

"As expected, it doesn't work on you."

I creased my eyebrows in confusion.

"What? I'm kinda lost here. What doesn't work on me?"

"Hmm..do you still remember our bet?"

"Bet?"

I shook my head. My mind was blank.

"I'll win if I can make you cry?"

"Oh! That bet?"

She nodded excitedly. "Yes that one!"

"That song you just heard is my favourite sad song. I let you listen to it hoping that you'll be moved to tears, but..as expected it doesn't affect you one bit."

"Ah..really?"

To be honest, I was disappointed.

"Maybe there's really something wrong with you and your tear duct. You only looked at me with your handsome stiff face." She explained, slightly pouting.

I can't help but chuckled.

"You think I'm handsome? It's the first time someone thinks of me that way."

She replied it with a cheeky smile. I died.

"So this is all because of the bet?" I asked before I'm drowned in her charming eyesmile.

"Of course. What were you thinking?" She said as she moved closer to remove the earphone from me.

Her face was so close to mine I could smell the mint gum in her breath. I glanced at her and my eyes immediately focused on her lips.

I gulped.

Only god knows how hard I'm trying to fight the urge to kiss her lips.

"I thought..oh well..

I looked away quickly.

..nothing. Anyway, you lost it."

**

I am so nervous tonight.

Tiffany and I were sitting at the small dining table at my apartment. I watched her munching down a spoonful of rice with dish anxiously. It's the first time she tastes my food and it's also the first time I cook for someone other than my family or Sooyoung.

She swallowed it down and looked at me with no expression. I gulped.

Darn it. Did I put too much salt on the meat? Or is the rice too hard to chew?

"DAEBAK." She said suddenly. She even gave me a thumb up.

I let out a loud sigh of relief.

"Ahh really? You scared me. I thought it tastes bad.."

"ARE YOU KIDDING ME? THIS IS SO DELICIOUS!!" She shrieked.

My mouth crept up, and I'm unable to contain how happy I am. I smiled wide and proud. At times like this that I want to hug my mom and thank her for all the cooking lessons she gave.

"Wow, you're a great cook Yuri-ah! I'm a terrible cook to the point of being shooed out of the kitchen!" She said as if it's a proud thing.

I chuckled. She's cute bragging about things she shouldn't.

Actually she's cute at doing anything.

"It must be good if someone can cook me delicious dinner like this every day." She said, smiling.

"You can. If you marry me I'll cook you not only dinner but breakfast and lunch too. I'll cook you anything you want." I said spontaneously.

We looked at each other and suddenly the atmosphere turned awkward.

Darn it. Did I just propose to her?

I wonder why I said that to someone I'm just seeing for 3 weeks. I can't jump to the last phase of dating this quick!

Sooyoung had warned me about taking things slowly. Gosh, I want to hit my head on the wall!

"HAHAHAHA! YOU'RE FUNNY!"

She bursts out laughing again. I felt so relieved that she's not taking what I said earlier seriously. I don't want her to think of me as a marriage obsessed woman or something like that.

I smiled awkwardly.

"Ahahaha yes, I'm only joking.."

But still, I'd love to have her by my side for the rest of my life.

**

We planned to watch a DVD after dinner. We look through my DVD collection to choose a title and Tiffany picked Titanic in a heartbeat with the attempt of making me cry. It was actually Sooyoung's. She left it here and since she never asked, I forgot to return it back.

We sat on the only couch in my apartment while watching the movie. Ten minutes into the movie and we're already sharing a blanket. Half an hour later I slid my hand around her waist and she inched closer. An hour later she rested her head on my shoulder and we crossed our legs together.

Honestly I barely paying any attention at the cheesy movie, instead I glanced at Tiffany every five seconds to make sure she's still there. I'm so afraid that this is only a dream.

"Oh Jack.."

I looked at the TV screen and just noticed that it's the romantic scene between the leads characters. I don't have problem watching these scenes with my friends but right now I'm with someone that happens to be the girl I truly like and this is just plain awkward. I could feel my whole body heated up again.

Oh no.

"Hahaha!" Tiffany laughs all of the sudden.

Too late. I looked at her and she's smirking.

"You're blushing!" She teased.

"I-I am not!"

"Yes you are! Are you embarrassed? Gosh how old are you?!"

She grabbed my cheeks and pinched it lightly.

"You're too cute, Yuri-ah!"

I blushed even more.

"Fany.."

She glanced at the TV and then looked at me.

"Hmm..should we do it too?" She asked cheekily.

I gasped.

"Do wh-what?!"

I panicked. The first thing that came to my mind involves naughty actions and I'm not sure if I'm ready for it yet.

Tiffany leaned to the right and grabbed her bag. And then she pulled out a sketch pad and a pencil.

"Let me draw you." She said gently.

Just when I'm about to let out a sigh of relief, I glanced at the screen and saw Jack sketching the naked Rose. Rose was naked. Does this mean..

"Can you look at me and tilt your head a bit to the left? You look really beautiful from this angle." She said, gently pushing my chin down to the angle that she wants.

"But honestly, you're beautiful at every angle." Tiffany muttered under her breath but I heard it.

I grinned.

She removed the blanket and sat at the coffee table opposite of me, all prepared with her sketch pad and pencil. She looked like a true artist.

"Wait, do I have to take off my clothes and lie on the couch too?" I asked.

“HAHAHAHA!” Tiffany laughed before she threw a cushion at my face.

“Ouch!”

“You just showed me that side of you, Yul.”

“What side?”

“Keep quiet, pervert. I’m trying to sketch your handsome face.”

“So am I beautiful or handsome?”

“You’re both.”

**

Tiffany put down her pencil on the table.

“I’m finished with the sketch!” She said excitedly.

“Let me see!” I asked impatiently. I’ve never seen myself in the form of paintings before so this is quite exciting.

“No you can’t! It’s not fully finished yet! I want to add colours to it first then I’ll show it to you.” She said, quickly closing her sketch pad.

“Aw, just a glance!” I pleaded with aegyo that just came out of nowhere.

She pats my head and shook her head. “Not yet.”

I raised my eyebrow. “Wait, did you draw me naked?!”

She gasped before hitting my arm. “NO!”

“Then why can’t you show it to me? You probably imagining me with no clothes on and sketch whatever you think is underneath..”

“Gosh, why would I do that?! If I want to see you naked I’ll just ask!”

We looked at each other in silence. And then we both burst out laughing. Who knew nudity can be so amusing?

She glanced at her watch and stood up.

“I have to go. It’s getting late.”

My heart sunk. I want her to stay.

“Fany-ah, can’t you just stay here for the night?” I asked bluntly.

And then I realized that question might imply to something else. Darn. I want to hit my head against the wall.

Tiffany looked at me and smiled sweetly. She held my hand and pulled me with her to the front door.

“Maybe next time.” She replied.

“Yeah, next time.”

"Hmm..Yuri-ah, I had a great time. Thank you for the delicious dinner and the movie that we didn't finish watching." She said with a chuckle.

"I'm good at making breakfast too, you know." I said, still not wanting to let her go.

She laughed. "You're so sly, Kwon Yuri."

"Only when I'm with you." I replied.

And then we didn't say anything else. We only looked at each other's eyes with the warm fuzzy feelings. I can't help but moved my gaze from her pair of mesmerising eyes to her pair of luscious lips. I'm gathering my senses, trying to fight my urge to kiss her. But then,

..I did it.

At that moment, my heart took over my senses. I grabbed her face and gently pulled her closer before I pressed my lips on hers.

I..

..kissed her.

The kiss didn't last long but it felt magical. It's everything I imagined my first kiss to be like. I felt like I was just given wings and flew up to the sky.

And if I was meant to die tonight, I have no regrets.

She looked at me with her sparkling eyes. But then she creased her eyebrows and then looked away. I couldn't tell what she was thinking.

I'm nervously waiting for her reaction.

"Yuri-ah, I'm sorry.." She suddenly said.

I was so shocked. Out of all response, she.. apologized?

"Why?"

She smiled and shook her head.

"I have to go. Thank you for the beautiful evening." She said, letting go of my hand.

I didn't know how to react. She turned around and stepped out of my apartment. I can't just let her leave like this..

I wrapped my arms around her from the back and embraced her. She was shocked with the back hug but then she tightly held my hands that were around her waist. We stayed like that for a few moments before I can finally let her go.

She turned around and looked at me.

"Goodbye."

That was all she said before she turned around and walked away from me. I stood there and watched her from afar until she was no longer in my sight.

I put a hand on my chest. There's a heavy feeling in my chest and it's also suffocating me. I can only think of one thing.

Tiffany..I think I'm in love with you.

**

"Sooyoung, why? Why?" I asked to my best friend who's driving.

It's in the evening and we're on our way back from work. Sooyoung talked me into following her to the club.

"Why didn't she pick up her calls? Did something happen to her?" I continued to ask.

Sooyoung glanced at me.

"How long has it been since your last date with Tiffany?"

"3 days ago."

"And after that she didn't call or message you at all?"

I nodded.

"She also didn't pick up my calls or reply my messages. What do you think is going on? It doesn't make any sense! Everything went well that night. We even had our first kiss!"

"Maybe you're a bad kisser and she was traumatized."

Sooyoung teased.

"Hey!" I retorted and hit her arm.

"Okay, relax! I'm driving here! Do you want to kill us both?!"

I looked away and crossed my arms defensively.

"Yul.."

Suddenly the mood turned serious.

"Why do you think she didn't contact you anymore?" Sooyoung asked.

"Maybe she lost her phone.." I replied nonchalant.

Sooyoung sighed. "That's what most people want to believe."

"What do you mean?"

"Yeah, yeah.. maybe she lost her phone.."

"Hey, be honest with me! What is it?"

"Relax, you're acting like it's the end of the world if she didn't call you."

"It is the end of the world for me."

She glanced at me with an eyebrow raised.

I looked at her and continued. "I feel like there's a heavy thing tugging my heart each day thinking about her.."

..thinking of what would happen if I can't see her anymore..it's so..”

She shook her head.

"I can't believe this is happening to you."

"What?"

"Yuri-ah, you're in love with her."

I sighed. It's true.

"Aissh..and it's only making it harder for me to say this.."

"Say what?"

"Nah nothing. Let's just assume that she lost her phone."

"Hey, tell me!"

“It's nothing, forget it.”

“If you really are my best friend, you'll be honest with me.” I said.

She rolled her eyes and gave up.

“You want me to be honest?”

"Yes."

She sighed. “It's nothing, just a wild hunch of mine. So please don't take it seriously.”

“Your hunches are always correct though.”

“But I hope I'm wrong this time.”

“What is it?”

"Actually, I have a bad feeling about Tiffany.."

I bit my lip. I have a feeling that I won't like what she's going to say.

"But since you like her that much, I just couldn't bring myself to tell you about it. I don't know why but I kept having this feeling that.."

She paused and glanced at me.

..you're not the only person Tiffany is seeing."

There was silence.

I gasped. "Yo-You mean.."

"Yeah. She's cheating on you."

"N-No way. She's not that type of girl!" I retorted, angry.

"You don't know her that well. You're only seeing her for 3 weeks!"

"But that was long enough for me to know that she's not like that! She won't do that to me! I know she likes me! How could you accuse her, Sooyoung-ah! Do you have any proof?!" I asked continuously. My face had turned red from anger.

"Hey hey! Why are you shouting at me? I've told you that it's only my hunch! I was only being honest!"

"Well yes, but to say that she's playing me is just-"

"It's just an assumption." Sooyoung cuts in.

I creased my eyebrow and shook my head. I looked out of the window, not wanting any eye contact with Sooyoung. I might punch her face. How could she say that about Tiffany?

"For your sake, I hope she lost her phone." She continued.

"I hate you right now, Sooyoung."

"Think about it. You barely know anything her. She refuses to let you walk her to her house and..what is her last name again?"

I bit my lip. "I don't know, i just call her Fany.."

"Exactly." She said as if she was right.

As Sooyoung drove past a junction, I saw the road leading to Tiffany's house.

"Take the left turn." I ordered.

"Why?" She asked as gave the left signal.

"We're going to Tiffany's house."

"Now?"

"I'm curious about her too."

**

Sooyoung parked her car by the road because the path we were going was too small for vehicles. We continue our journey by foot.

"You said you don't know where she lives." Sooyoung said.

"I always drop her here, so she must be living somewhere near." I replied.

We walk along the small path and when we reached the end of the path, we're up for a surprise. There was a huge mansion built inside the gated perimeter. It's the only house there.

"So she lives here? Wow she must be filthy rich.." My best friend mumbled.

I didn't say anything as I'm too shocked to respond. The house, no, the mansion was about ten times the size of my parent's house. The entrance was guarded by two security officers. I thought luxury residence like this only existed in movies and dramas.

"So Tiffany is a chaebol's daughter? Who knew.." Sooyoung mumbled.

I froze. My mind was cluttered with so many things about Tiffany and I don't know who she is anymore. When

she's around me she don't seems like someone from a rich family. Everything just doesn't feel right.

Suddenly we saw a headlight heading towards the mansion. We took a few steps back and stayed in the dark like ninjas who does not want to be found.

A luxurious white car stopped in front of the entrance. The driver's door opened and a beautiful young woman came out of it. Sooyoung and I looked at each other in wonder. She walked to the other side of the car and opened the door for her passenger like a gentleman.

Suddenly a woman walked out of the passenger's door.

It was Tiffany.

Sooyoung gasped and glanced at me. I froze.

The woman held Tiffany's hand and they stood face to face by the car.

They were seen talking and seems very close together. The other woman fixed Tiffany's hair and tucked it behind her ear affectionately. I balled my fist in jealousy. Who is she? How dare she touch Tiffany like that?

Suddenly the other woman leaned in closer to Tiffany's face.

Slowly I find it hard to breathe.

No way.

Please don't.

"Fany, please.." I muttered.

She kissed Tiffany. I witnessed it with my very own eyes how the woman I love being kissed by another.

And my heart was crushed into a million pieces.

Suddenly I felt something wet on my cheek. I wiped it with the back of my hand and realized that it was tears. Am I crying?

I am.

"Yuri-ah, are you okay?" Sooyoung asked. She seemed shocked to see me with tears rolling down my face.

Unable to stay there any longer, I turned around and ran as fast as I could down the small path. I heard Sooyoung calling me from behind but I keep on running....with tears that can't stop rolling down from my eyes.

Congratulations Tiffany. You won the bet.

Missing You

*"Even though I'm missing you so much,
yearning so much,
these are the words I cannot say"*

FT Island - Missing You

*Jessica pressed her lips against mine
by surprise. She was holding my cheeks
with her hands and poured her emotions
into this kiss. I closed my eyes and sa-
voured the taste of her sweet lips.*

*Everything felt so right, and so in
place until...*

..Yuri-ah...

My eyes shot open and I realized that I am kissing Jessica.

This is Jessica.

I pushed her away immediately, causing her to be thrown a few steps away from me. I didn't mean to push her that hard.

She looked at me, and I could see through her eyes how shocked and hurt she was by what just happened.

I know I have a lot of explaining to do. I'm just not sure if I'm ready for it.

"What's wrong with you?" She asked and I could sense her anger.

I looked away and crossed my arms. She walked towards me, demanding an explanation. But I kept my cold expression and avoided her gaze.

Seeing me that way, she let out a loud sigh and began to calm down. She held my arms and stared into my eyes.

"Are you still mad at me?" She asked gently.

I scoffed.

"I've told you I'm sorry," she continued.

"This is not something that can be solved with a simple apology!" I snapped.

Jessica was startled.

"You left me, Jessi."

Her expression turned soft and I could see that gentle look in her eyes.

"You went to Paris and left me alone for a month! How do you expect me to act like nothing happened?!"

"You knew that my mom dragged me there and it wasn't easy for me to get in touch with you..."

"Stop giving me excuses! Can't you just send me a simple email? I waited for you for a week but there was nothing!"

"Well okay, I was wrong for not contacting you. I had to think about things..."

"Think about things?!" I shook my head.

"Tiffany, I came back... that's all that matters, right?"

"You came back a month later and.... that made all the difference! If only you called me the first week... things won't be...

...this complicated."

"What are you talking about?"

"Everything had ended when you left me that day."

Jessica shook her head vigorously.

"Wh-what has ended? Stop talking nonsense!"

"Just go, Jessi."

"Don't say that, Tiffany!"

I kept mum.

"You know that we are meant to be..." Jessica mumbled.

"While I was in Paris, I realized that I can't live without you. You're the only one that I want to be with..."

I closed my eyes. This is too much for me to take.

I scoffed and looked at her.

"You kept changing your mind, Jessica. Why should I trust you again? If you really are sincere with me, then why do we have to lie in front of your family? Why am I just your best friend?"

"It's... not that simple, you should be able understand," she said, pointing at my house.

I rolled my eyes.

"Because of the inheritance?"

Jessica kept mum.

"I want someone who can hold my hand in the crowd. Someone who's not worried about what people think and wipe my tears in public, or ride a bus with..."

"What are you talking about? Bus?"

"You never once cooked for me!"

"Cook? If you want, I can-

"Just... go. I want to be alone," I said as I turned around.

"Tiffany, I'm sorry that I keep hurting you. But honey, you know how I feel for you. For these five years we've been together, there's only you in my heart and....I love you."

I bit my lip and turned around.

And then I started running towards the gate. I could hear her voice calling me, but I keep on running. I just couldn't listen to another word from her. Because it can only make me even more confused.

I've loved Jessica for so long but now.....I don't know anymore.

**

"I..am...so..damn..tired.." Sooyoung said, panting.

I glanced to my friend who's running on the treadmill beside me. She has only been running for five minutes with the flat 3 km/hr speed but she's already out of breath. I smiled at her and shook my head.

"You don't have to do this if you can't. Take a rest at the lounge and drink, you look terrible," I said to her as I continued my exercise.

"It's okay, I'm good... haha..." Sooyoung said as she decreased her speed.

I was surprised that a lazy bum like her offered to join me at the gym after work. I know it's not because she suddenly became a health conscious person; she's just concerned about me after what happened last weekend. Even though I repeatedly told her that I'm fine and there's nothing she should be worrying about, she still insisted on following me around, worrying if I do stupid things.

I guess seeing her tough friend break down crying really made her worry.

"Yuri-ah... good job..." she suddenly said with a thumbs up.

I knew what she meant and nodded.

"It was our effort together. We make a great team." I replied.

Our art exhibition article gained high praises from the head editor of Marie Claire. She was so pleased with it that we were assigned to cover the final day of the Seoul Fashion Week this coming Saturday.

I'm so happy that Sooyoung and I got to do something major like this. There are so many things to be done and I'm so busy at work. It helps me to get my mind off things.

Actually it's just a person.

..Tiffany.

Work seems like the best way to distract myself from thinking about her. I gave my full attention to my job at work, and while I was there, I was able to smile and laugh with my colleagues. I even enjoy being scolded by my boss.

I would head to the gym after work and stayed there until 10 before going home. The sound of the crowd and the exercise machines helped me a great deal from thinking about Tiffany.

But when I get home, all alone in my room.....I cry.

And I would spend the whole night thinking about her. I wouldn't know if I was sleeping or awake.

It was pathetic, but I'm not over her.

I don't want to get over her.

I...

Suddenly, my phone vibrated. Sooyoung noticed it and glanced at the phone next to my tumbler.

Incoming call...

Tiffany

My heart almost stopped beating. I pressed the emergency stop button on my treadmill and stood still, staring at my phone.

Am I dreaming?

Tiffany is calling?

Sooyoung seems as surprised as I am. We looked at each other, stunned.

The phone was still vibrating.

I reached my hand towards it, not even hesitating to pick it up.

"What are you doing?" Sooyoung asked, serious.

"It could be important..." I mumbled.

"Kwon Yuri, where is your pride?" Sooyoung asked, shaking her head.

I paused and pulled my hand away from the phone.

And suddenly it stopped.

"You wanted to pick it up."

I gulped.

"I'm just curious and maybe she wanted to say something to me..."

"She didn't contact you in a week and we saw her that night with her girlfriend, yet you still want to give in to her?"

"I didn't mean that-

"You still want to be with her after what she did? Gosh, Yuri..." Sooyoung cuts in.

I sighed and shook my head. I didn't like the way Sooyoung judged me right now. She didn't understand how I felt. I was not in the mood to argue with her, so I pushed the quick start button and resumed my run. I increased the speed and ran.

I want to ignore Sooyoung.

Just leave me alone.

"Yuri, look at me."

I didn't even glance.

"Yah Kwon Yuri!"

Sooyoung looked at me and shook her head.

"Fine," she said with a heavy sigh.

She left after her attempts of trying to talk to me failed.

After she left, my eyes automatically glanced down at my phone again... and again.

Tiffany, why did you call me?

Did you know how much I.... miss you?

**

This is the first major event that Sooyoung and I had the chance to cover. We were given the exclusive all-access press passes for the job. Our first time. We wore it around our necks as if it were the Olympic gold medals just to show off to people.

The fashion show ended about three hours later and all the VIPs and designers headed to the hall for the after party.

At this point I was quite content with the photos I took. The head editor had high expectations of us so we couldn't take this task lightly. We were hungry for stories the whole time and conducted interviews with all the big name designers we met. Sooyoung was really good with words and was able to make them feel comfortable to talk, so we're a great combo.

"There's just one more person we need to meet," Sooyoung said to me as we were sipping our cocktails at the party.

"One more? Who?" I was tired, but since Sooyoung seems enthusiastic, I just couldn't say no.

"The woman who built the J.Estina empire," she replied.

"You mean, Madam Jung? I didn't know she's here."

"I saw her sitting with the VIPs earlier. And I heard from other reporters that she even brought her daughter."

"The one who's studying in Paris?"

Sooyoung nodded.

"We must get this scoop."

"Yeah, but where is she? Finding her among these rich people is hard, they are all dressed so grandly-

"Give me a drink," A woman suddenly asked to the waiter near us.

We looked behind us and saw a beautiful middle-aged woman at the bar. I gulped and looked at Sooyoung. She had her jaw dropped.

This was Madam Jung.

We were panicked at first and paced back and forth as she waited for her drink. She raised an eyebrow at us before looking away, probably thinking about how weird we were.

"Excuse me."

I didn't know when did Sooyoung mustered the courage and stepped forward to talk to her. I scurried next to my friend with my camera.

"Yes?"

"We're from Marie Claire..."

**

Madam Jung was surprisingly friendly, despite how cold she looked from the outside. She answered all the questions that we asked with a smile, making us feel more comfortable. We were sitting at one of the couch at the venue, casually sipping our drinks during the interview.

"We heard you brought your daughter to the party. We're wondering when we'll be able to meet the future face of J.Estina," Sooyoung said slyly.

"Hahaha, yes. She's here," she replied.

I tightened my grip on the camera, immediately prepared to snap photos of her mysterious daughter. No magazine has ever featured the young successor, so we're practically jumping at this chance.

"Oh, there she is," Madam Jung said with her head jerked forward.

We turned our heads and saw a young woman in a blue dress walking towards us.

I almost dropped my camera.

It was the woman I saw with Tiffany.

It had to be her.

The same walk, the same look in her eyes.

It was her.

I could feel Sooyoung staring at me in concern, but I was too shocked to glance back.

"Come here, Jessica," Madam Jung called.

Jessica lazily walked to the couch and crossed her arms. She glanced at Sooyoung and I before glaring away.

"What is it mother?"

"This is my daughter, Jessica Jung," she said proudly to us.

I saw Jessica rolling her eyes at first before forcing out a smile.

"Hi."

Sooyoung cleared her throat.

"Ah, it's really a pleasure to finally meet you, Miss Jessica!" She said, faking a cheerful smile.

"Of course you would," Jessica replied arrogantly.

Madam Jung seemed embarrassed with Jessica's attitude. Her expression turned dark.

"Mother, have you seen Stephanie?" Jessica said to her mother, ignoring our existences.

Stephanie?

"I think she's taking some air outside."

"Okay, see you later," Jessica said as she hurriedly leaves.

I couldn't take my eyes off her as she walked towards the left door. It was so hard for me to accept how beautiful she was in that dress, which I'm sure was worth at least three months of my salary. She even wore a tiara, like a princess in a ball. I sniggered to myself, can't help but compare. Me, I was just wearing a black dress I borrowed from Sooyoung, because I don't even have a proper dress for this occasion.

The gap was too big.

I was jealous.

"Honey!" Suddenly Jessica called.

It seemed like there was someone at the door. I waited in anticipation, as my heart raced. Somehow I have a feeling that I know that person.

Is it you?

A young woman in pastel pink dress came in and Jessica reached forward to grab her hands gently.

I gulped.

The woman turned around, revealing her face.

I froze.

I saw her face and suddenly everything else became irrelevant. As if the room was pitch dark and there was a light surrounding her, she was the only one I saw in the room.

It is you.

Fany-ah.. ..I miss you

You Are My Spring

*"I miss you, I want to embrace you.
I want to be by your side even though
it hurts."*

Sung Shi Kyung - You Are My Spring

It is you...

Fany-ah...

I miss you.

I froze as I watched Jessica reached forward to grab Tiffany's right hand. I felt as if a needle just pricked through my heart and god, it hurts so much. I saw Tiffany's mouth crept up, forming a sweet smile as they walked hand in hand into the hall and my heart just sunk deeper.

"Hey, that's Tiffany, isn't it?" Sooyoung asked, slightly whispering beside me.

I nodded weakly in response. In my mind there were hundreds of questions I wanted to ask Tiffany.

Who is she to you?

Who am I to you?

Then why did you make me fall in love with you?

How could you-

Unknowingly I paced forward towards them.

"Yuri, where are you going?" I heard Sooyoung asked.

I didn't reply her, instead I kept my steps steady and firm, determined to confront them. I was sick of running away and crying in my sleep, thinking about all the questions without answers.

Sooyoung followed me.

"Yul, what do you want to do?!" Sooyoung asked, panicked. She tugged my shirt, attempting to stop me.

But I didn't say anything.

And soon we caught up with them.

"Excuse me, Miss Jessica," I said, as polite as possible.

Jessica and Tiffany stopped walking and they slowly turn around. I held my breath, waiting for them to face me... .. and then our eyes met.

Tiffany and I.

Her expression changed tremendously as our gaze finally met. Her sweet smile was gradually replaced by a pale and shocked face.

"You-

THUD

She paused when she dropped her purse to the marble floor.

Jessica shook her head and looked at Tiffany incredulously, as if it was a crime to be clumsy. I bit my lip and kneeled down to pick up her purse without hesitation.

I could feel their eyes on me as I got up with Tiffany's purse. But I simply didn't care.

"Here you go," I said, handing the expensive purse to Tiffany.

Even though I was hurting, I still managed to smile at her. Don't get me wrong, it wasn't a fake smile. Truly, I'm just so happy to see her on this night.

Yes, I missed her that much.

"Th-thank you," Tiffany said.

She let go of Jessica's hand and reached forward to take her purse from me. Our eyes met again, and I could see the guilt hidden behind her eyes.

I gulped.

"My pleasure," I replied short.

Our eyes were still fixed on each other even after she took her purse. There were so many unspoken things between us and it can't be resolved by just staring at each other like this. I was determined to find the answers tonight.

"Yuri, let's go," I heard Sooyoung whispered from beside me. She pulled my arm.

"It was nice meeting you both..." Sooyoung said, pulling me away. But I stood still, not moving an inch from where I was, like a statue.

"Steph, we should go," Jessica said, grabbing Tiffany's hand.

I bit my lip. I can't explain how much it hurts seeing them holding hands. It just...hurts.

To everyone's surprise, Tiffany pulled her hand away, leaving Jessica's hand to touch nothing but air.

"Steph-

I suppressed a smile.

"Can I ask you two a few questions?" I boldly asked. Sooyoung stared at me, worried if I might do something stupid to the J.Estina heiress.

"Didn't I already answer you back there?" Jessica replied, annoyed.

"Yeah, but we'd like to get to know you better, Ms Jessica. I'm sure people want to know more about the beautiful heiress of one of the most successful jewellery line in South Korea," I said with deliberate emphasize on the 'beautiful' part.

It didn't take long until Jessica shrugged before nodding, "Okay, but hurry up."

I smiled, amazed at the power of flattery.

"First things first, can you two move a bit closer for a photo?" I said, with my camera ready in my hands.

"Wh-Why?" Tiffany asked, puzzled.

"Because..."

I smiled.

... you two look good together," I replied bitterly.

Tiffany bit her lip, speechless.

Then Jessica put her arms around her waist and posed for a friendly picture. I smiled and pressed the shutter, even though my fingers were shaking. I wonder how much longer I can fake this.

I cleared my throat, "So you two are...

"Best friends," Jessica quickly replied.

"Of course," I nodded.

Tiffany looked down.

"So... how long have you two been 'best friends'?" I asked casually.

"We've been best friends since high school. It's been almost... 5 years now," Jessica replied proudly. Casually, she turned to her side and adjusted Tiffany's bangs with her fingers though the latter seems uncomfortable with her actions.

I let out a small laugh to prevent the tears that's been building up in my eyes from falling. I don't think I take this anymore.

"Oh... that's a really long time... I'm guessing you two were still best friends say like..... a month ago?" I asked as the tough wall around me slowly falls apart.

Sooyoung gasped at my rather obvious question.

"What are you talking about?" Jessica asked back, puzzled.

"Wh-what she, er meant was er..." Sooyoung scrambled for words to salvage the situation.

"She left me a month ago," Tiffany quickly cuts in.

Jessica seemed shocked with Tiffany's reply, "Steph-

Tiffany stared at me as she continued,

"And we didn't contact each other at all in that span of time. I may.....I may have met a new friend..."

"I left to Paris to study, but then I came back.. so that is out of the question," Jessica added, her tone firm.

She glanced at Tiffany, but the latter avoided her gaze. She looked at me instead. The atmosphere quickly turned tense and awkward. I couldn't hold back the tears that's been pooling in my eyes any longer.

I looked down, "Go-good. You two look great together anyway..."

"Thank you for your time."

I turned my back on them and walked away with a pain throbbing in my chest. My steps were slow at first, but soon I end up running just like the tears that fell down from my eyes.

**

I splashed the water to my face again and again.

I let the water run down the sink and stared into the mirror in front of me.

"Yul, are you okay?!" Sooyoung called as she entered the restroom. She was panting, I figured she followed me here.

"I don't know..." I replied short. It was the truth. I don't know if I'm okay or not.

She came by my side and handed me a few ply of tissues from her bag. Weakly, I took them and wiped my face. I feel a bit better after crying.

Sooyoung shook her head.

"You look terrible, let's go. I'll drive you home..." She said, picking up my camera bag.

I nodded and turned off the water tap.

Suddenly,

"Yuri..." A voice called. There was someone by the door.

It was Tiffany.

I stared at the beautiful lady and gulped. I didn't expect her to come and seek me. I mean why would she want to leave her princess' side?

I was shocked when suddenly Sooyoung let out a scoff and walked to Tiffany.

"What do you want?! How dare you turn up after what you did to her..."

Tiffany's eyes were fixed on me, as if I was the only one there. I doubt if she noticed Sooyoung at all. She walked in and paced towards me, ignoring Sooyoung who was standing by with her hands on her waist.

She stood in front of me and looked into my eyes. I was too shocked to react. Her presence simply took my breath away.

"Yuri, can we talk? I can explain everything..." She said, her tone seemed desperate.

Sooyoung shook her head vigorously, "There is no need for explanations! We get it, you have a beautiful and rich girlfriend, and Yuri is just someone you happen to stumble upon when you're bored. Was it that fun playing around?"

"I WASN'T PLAYING AROUND!" Tiffany snapped. She stared at Sooyoung in anger, as if she could hit her face there and then.

And tears were pooling in her eyes.

"Soo, could you wait for me outside?" I asked.

She seemed displeased with the idea, "What? You're not gonna listen to her, right?!"

"Please..." I pleaded gently.

Sooyoung shook her head before hesitantly leaving the two of us in the room. We looked at each other with no words spoken. There were so many things that we wanted to say, but we both didn't know where to begin.

Tiffany took a step forward towards me and looked straight into my eyes.

"Yuri-ah, I...

She bit her lips before continuing. I waited.

..I want you to know that I really enjoyed the time that we spend together..."

She smiled.

"I'm not the type who calls first, but I can't stop myself from dialling your number."

"I don't like crowded places, but I enjoy going to the cinema with you."

I shook my head.

"But you're dating an heiress," I added, bitter.

Tiffany gulped and then nodded.

"Jessica and I have been together for a long time and... our relationship has always been complicated," she sighed.

"But, during that time we were seeing each other... she left me. I did wait for her, but I kept bumping into you and that's how it began..."

"I drew a line and thought we can be just friends, but the more time we spend together, I was drifted away from that line... and after that kiss, I....I'm confused," she said, as tears started running down her cheeks.

It hurt me so much seeing her cry. But I understood why she didn't contact me after the kiss. She was still in love with Jessica.

"Yuri, all I wanted was to let you know that I was sincere during the whole time we were together. It was never my intention to hurt you, because honestly, I truly..." she paused and looked at me with the tears in her eyes.

..I truly like you."

I couldn't believe what I just heard. I froze.

Tiffany quickly looked away and wiped her wet cheeks with her hands.

"I know there's no use for me saying all this. You must hate me and I understand it... if you don't want to see me anymore..." She said as she was looking down at the floor, avoiding my gaze.

"Yuri, I'm really sorry..." she added, sobbing.

My heart was already hurting from seeing her with Jessica, but now it hurts even more when I see her crying like this.

Please don't cry Fany...

On impulse, I walked to her and wrapped my arms around her shoulders. Gently, I pulled her in closer for an embrace. Tiffany was stunned by my actions and suddenly stopped sobbing. She looked at me with creased eyebrows. Her confused face looked adorable. I chuckled and cupped her face.

"Yuri what-

She stopped talking when I tenderly graze my fingers across her cheeks to wipe away the remaining tears. I smiled and stared into her beautiful pair of dark brown eyes.

"Fany-ah, listen to me," I said.

"Even though I know that you're with another person,... even though I know it's foolish of me to be doing this, even though I know that it's wrong, and even though you broke my heart but..... all that reasons are not enough for me to fight my feelings for you."

She seemed surprised by my words. She must have thought that I would yell and shout at her, but what happened was anything but.

She was too fragile for me to shout at. I just couldn't.

I took a deep breath to gather my strength before continuing. What I was about to say was something I have never said to anyone before. I might regret it but, I can't leave these words left unspoken.

"I know this is probably the most inappropriate time and inappropriate place to say this but...

I paused and...

... Fany-ah, I have fallen in love with you," I confessed.

Her eyes widened, "Yuri..."

I continued, "For the first time in my life, I finally know how it feels to be in love..."

And that reason alone is enough for me to keep holding on to you."

"Yu-Yuri-ah..." she said, utterly speechless.

"Can't you love me back?" I asked gently.

Tiffany gulped.

"Only me and no one else," I added, firm.

We stared into each other's eyes intensely for a while, as I waited for her reply. I am ready to accept whatever it is, because I have nothing to lose. My heart was already broken into pieces anyway.

Suddenly she grabbed my hands. "I-I..."

Yes.

"Yuri, I-

She hesitated.

At that moment, suddenly the restroom's door was flung open, revealing Jessica.

"Jessi..." Tiffany mumbled, and immediately let go of my hands. She even took a few steps away from me. I don't like this feeling.

Jessica looked at us suspiciously.

"What is going on here?"

Hello

*You're the person that used to love me
Now I can't touch you but
Will you long for me as much as I long
for you?*

Huh Gak - Hello

I stared at the beautiful woman before me, nervously waiting for her reply. She looked back at me with her round sparkly eyes, and her lips trembling as she was struggling to answer.

"Yu-Yuri, I.." Tiffany began, stuttering.

I unknowingly nodded with each word that came out from her mouth. The anticipation had driven me half-crazy.

She continued. "I-

Tiffany never managed to finish her sentence, she stopped when the restroom's door was suddenly flung open, startling us both. I turned to the door and ready to vent out my anger at anyone who disturbed us at such crucial moment.

But I didn't.

In turn, I was frozen like a cursed statue when I saw the person who came in.

It was Jessica Jung.

She entered the restroom, alternately moving her gaze from Tiffany and me with a displeased look on her face.

"Jessi..." I heard Tiffany mumbled, at the same time letting go of my hands that she gripped tightly earlier. And from the corner of my eyes, I saw her taking a few steps away from me.

I don't know how to describe the feeling, except that it hurts so much.

The young heiress crossed her arms and continued to look at us suspiciously. She was scanning me from head to toe, like a police that was about to question a criminal. I am not a criminal.

"What is going on here?" She asked, with an eyebrow raised.

"Nothing. I'm just about to leave." Tiffany replied nonchalant as she turned around to face the mirror.

Jessica looked at her girlfriend for a few moments, waiting for a better explanation but she received nothing more than just silence. Tiffany avoided her gaze and pretended like she was fixing her make up in the mirror.

All of a sudden, I became invisible. Jessica didn't look at me, as if I wasn't there.

She sighed.

"That's good. Everyone was looking for you. Let's go." Jessica said, grabbing Tiffany's hand.

And that was my limit. I couldn't stand another minute of being in the same room as Jessica Jung. It irritated me how perfect and how better she was than me. I grabbed my bag and walked to the door. I could feel Tiffany's eyes on me as I made my way to the door and I chose not to look back. If I did, I might run to her and drag her away with me. The decision belonged to Tiffany and I won't do anything to ruin it.

But I can't help but glance at Jessica. It was hard not to notice her sharp glare on me when I was passing her.

Our gazes met.

Though it was only a mere second but I won't forget the look in her eyes.

She was threatening me.

**

After Yuri left, Jessica turned to look at her girlfriend with an eyebrow raised.

"Do you know that photographer? You two seemed... friendly?" She interrogates.

"She's er... a friend." Tiffany replied short.

"Oh really?"

Tiffany ignored Jessica, she hurriedly walked past her to leave the restroom and the topic once and for all but the latter suddenly grabbed her arm. She stopped and gulped.

"Should I worry?" Jessica asked, her tone serious.

Slowly, Tiffany turned to looked at Jessica,

"Jessi, can you send me home now? I don't really feel like being here." She replied gently, diverting her from her question.

Jessica let out a sigh and nodded.

"Okay."

**

Tiffany sat on a wooden stool in the middle of the room with a white canvas in front of her. The room was surrounded with paintings hanging on the wall and some are neatly stacked on the floor. It was Tiffany's favourite part of the house, her art workshop.

She was smiling as she lifted her brush to touch the paint next to her, so carefully so that it won't be mixed with another. And then she turned back at her canvas, where a portrait of a woman was sketched on. Her smile grew wider upon landing her eyes on the portrait, so wide that her eyes were smiling along.

"You're so pretty, Yuri." She mumbled as she jerked her body closer to the canvas. Then she brought the brush to the portrait, and gently grazed the brush on it.

The young painter continued to smile as she gave colour to the woman on her canvas. At times, she would even hum a song, expressing her joy. Though it was only her portrait, Tiffany felt as if she was really spending time with Yuri. And it made her so happy.

Suddenly, she heard someone knocking on the door.

Tiffany's head jerked up, glancing at the door, wondering who dared to disturb her while she was working. She could only think of the maid. It was impossible to be her father, as

he rarely step into the workshop. She chose to ignore the knock and got back to finishing her painting.

And to her surprise, the door was opened, followed by the sounds of footsteps.

Tiffany gripped her brush tightly in her hand, trying to control her anger. She really hated being disturbed while she was in the workshop. She stood up angrily to shove out whoever that had just entered the room.

She grunted. "How many times I've told you-

But she couldn't continue, instead she swallowed her saliva and froze.

The person who came to visit her late that evening was Jessica.

Jessica walked into the room with her eyes briefly scanning the workshop. Tiffany glanced at the Yuri portrait and gulped. Just a few steps ahead and Jessica will see it. Quickly, she grabbed a white cloth nearby and casually put it over the canvas to cover it.

"You didn't reply my texts," Jessica said as she traced her fingers on one of the painting on the wall.

"I... was busy, didn't notice it." Tiffany lied. She did notice her phone beeping and read all the messages Jessica left, but she just didn't reply it.

"You didn't pick up my calls either." Jessica added as she slowly turned around to face Tiffany.

Tiffany bit her lip.

"Well, I've told you I'll be busy today. Why do you want to meet me? Is there anything important?" She said, nonchalant. She walked to the nearby window and pushed it open, letting the cold night air enter the room.

Jessica scoffed.

"What? Do I need a reason to meet you?"

Tiffany shook her head, realizing that it did sound harsh. "I didn't say that, it's just..."

She didn't finish her sentence, instead she leaned her back against the wall and crossed her arms. She noticed that Jessica was looking at her but she avoided her eyes and checked her hands. She removed the plastic gloves and threw it into the rubbish can by her foot. She looked at her hands and saw some paint splattered on her arms. Though she has been doing this for years, she's still a clumsy painter.

Suddenly, a pair of arms circled waist and pulled her forward.

Jessica wrapped her arms around the woman before her tightly as if she'll disappear once she let go. She rested her chin on her shoulder and smelled the scent of her tied-up hair,

as if it was the last scent she wanted to remember. But the latter just stood there stiffly, not returning her hug.

Jessica was worried, so much she wanted to cry.

"I miss you." She whispered.

Tiffany gulped. For the first time, she was not feeling anything while being in Jessica's arms. She didn't know what to do.

"Can I stay here tonight?" Jessica asked gently.

The question was simple, and usually Tiffany was the one who drove to her house late at night asking the same question. But now she can't even give her a reply.

'Yes' or 'No' will change everything.

Tiffany hesitated for a while, the warmth of Jessica's body did feel so good but she wasn't sure if this was what she wanted right now. Initially, she planned to finish the painting tonight and now..

"No, you can't."

Jessica was stunned by her reply, the words echoed in her mind for a few moments and slowly, she pulled herself away from Tiffany. She looked at her, no longer hiding her worried expression. In fact she looked pale, as if her last breath has been taken away from her with that reply.

Tiffany cleared her throat.

"I'm just tired, and I plan to finish that painting by tonight. That's all." She explained, though the latter wasn't asking.

"What happened?" Jessica suddenly asked, her tone serious.

"Nothing happened, I'm just tired and..

"Save your breath. I know it when you're lying to me, Tiffany."

The two women stared at each other as the tension between them amplified with that statement.

"Something happened." Jessica said bitterly.

Tiffany sighed and looked down, the last thing she wants that night was to argue with Jessica but it looks like it's impossible to avoid.

"You're right. Something happened when you're not around." She said.

"You weren't there. That's what happened." Tiffany added.

Jessica creased her eyebrows and shook her head, as if it would block out the words from entering her mind.

"But I'm here now..."

"Jessi, I'm tired of this cycle. You're leaving me and then come back as though nothing happened. You didn't even care about how I felt, how lonely and scared I was thinking that I might lose you every time you leave."

Jessica shook her head. "This is only temporary...

"Five years is not temporary." Tiffany cuts in.

"Tiffany, please give me more time." Jessica said, desperate.

"It's not about time. It's just you." Tiffany said, looking away.

"How could you-

Jessica paused when suddenly the wind blows from outside the window, causing the drawing papers on the desk flown and scattered around the floor.

Including a piece of white cloth that was covering the canvas Tiffany was working on.

Both of them diverted their attention to the exposed canvas, where a beautiful portrait of a woman was halfway finished. Tiffany gasped and begin to panic, she glanced at Jessica; wondering how she will react.

"It's not about time, or me, or all that crap..." Jessica said, rolling her eyes.

She looked at Tiffany. "It's because... there is someone else."

Tiffany didn't look away, but she kept mum. To Jessica, her silence confirmed everything.

"Ho-How long has it been?" Jessica asked, trying to stay composed.

"About a month. Since you left me and went to Paris." Tiffany replied calmly.

Jessica scoffed and shook her head repeatedly; she hated how calm Tiffany was as if her seeing someone else was nothing big. There wasn't a bit of hesitation in her voice, like she was prepared to tell Jessica the whole thing.

Jessica hated this.

She took a deep breath, and playing her game and be calm.

"So did you... sleep with her?"

Tiffany was startled with the question and shook her head immediately.

"No, I didn't!"

Jessica somehow felt relieved and turned around, hiding the tears that was pooling in her eyes.

"Okay, I understand." She said, with her back facing Tiffany.

"You were frustrated with me and had some fun with the photographer girl. Okay. I can take that." She added.

Tiffany was shocked; she didn't expect her to be so calm.

"But playtime is over now and you must break up with her." Jessica continued.

Tiffany creased her eyebrows, confused with her reaction.

"Jessica why.."

"I SAID BREAK UP WITH HER!" Jessica shouted furiously. Her voice echoed in the room.

A rush of guilt suddenly came to Tiffany, and at that moment she wanted to hug Jessica tightly and told her not to cry. Though she was only facing her back, she could guess that tears were rolling down Jessica's cheeks right now.

She was right.

Tears was running down Jessica's cheeks.

"Jessi, calm down..." She hushed.

But that only made her snapped.

She stomped her feet and shouted. "END EVERYTHING YOU HAVE WITH HER! BEFORE-

She paused to wipe the tears on her left cheek with the back of her hand.

"..before I change my mind." Jessica said before walking out the workshop and slammed the door.

Tiffany ran to the door to chase her as soon as she left, but stopped when she's about to turn the knob. Tears begin to

fall from her eyes, drop by drop until they became a stream of sad waterfall.

She closed her eyes and leaned her back against the door.

"I'm sorry, Jessi.."

**

I took another sip of the drink on the table. I don't even know what it was nor why I am here, Sooyoung forced me to be here and 'meet new people'. I came along with her, saying 'no' to all the new people that approached me. I kept glancing at my watch, wondering how much longer Sooyoung wanted to dance before going home.

"You're not gonna dance?" Taeyang asked suddenly.

I looked at him and replied with a shrug. I don't know how long he's been staring at me to ask me that. He can be creepy sometimes and I wonder when will his infatuation on me will end.

"Dance with me." He said with his charming smile.

I sighed. Not again. He looked at me with his puppy eyes, hoping I will say yes.

"I'm sorry but I'm not in the mood right now." I replied, crushing his hope once again.

He huffed. "No one comes to the club and not dance!"

"There is one!" I put up my hand and grinned.

He rolled his eyes and walked back to behind the bar.

Suddenly, I felt a tap on my right shoulder and I turned around.

It was... Tiffany.

She was standing so close to my face, my heart almost stopped beating.

"Yuri, dance with me." She whispered.

I'll Protect You

*I can't give you to anyone else's arms
my heart cannot let you go...*

Kim Jaejoong - I'll Protect You

*"Yuri, dance with me." Tiffany
whispered to me.*

She took my hands and gently intertwined it with hers before pulling me away from the stool where I was sitting. As if I was hypnotized by her eyes, I stood up and followed her to wherever she was taking me to. I stared at her beautiful bare back as she pushed through the crowd on the dance floor, in her sexy green party dress that made a few heads turn along the way. Soon, she stopped, as we reached the middle of the dance floor and the people around us moved, making a room for the two of us.

I was unable to say anything to her, when she was gleaming under the disco ball; I suddenly became a fool. She looked at me, with that pair of sparkling eyes of hers, filled with hidden codes behind her gaze that a fool like me can't decipher.

When she suddenly let go of my left hand, I felt as if I lost my balance and almost fell. But she quickly slid that hand around my waist and in turn, saving my life. I wrapped my arm around her waist, tightening any gap between us.

Only God knows how much I missed her.

We looked at each other, diving deep into each other's thoughts without caring about our surroundings. We were not even dancing.

"How are you?" I asked.

She smiled, but I could tell that she was faking it. Her eyes weren't smiling along.

"I almost finished your portrait." She replied, not really answering the question. I don't give a thing about that portrait.

"Don't you miss me?" She suddenly asked.

I was surprised. But it was a pleasant surprise, and my heart was leaping with joy.

"I see your face in my breakfast, lunch and dinner," I replied.

She chuckled, and it quickly became my favorite sound of the day.

Suddenly, she removed her hand from my waist and threw it around my shoulders. I became stiff when she buried her face at the crook of my neck. I was just glad I washed my hair this morning.

I felt her warm breath on the sensitive part of my body, and it sent tingles to my heart.

"Yuri... I'm tired," she whispered.

Though the club stereo was blasting, I felt as if I could filter the noise and hear only her voice. Her whispers were clear to me.

"You should rest-

"But I have to talk to you," she cut in.

There was something in her tone that made me scared. She slowly looked up and stood straight in front of me. We looked at each other.

She took a deep breath, like there was something important she has to announce. I held my breath in anticipation.

"Yuri, I came here today to tell you that I...

She paused and looked at me, as if I could help her finish her words. I can't; all I could do was sensing hesitation in her unfinished sentence. She didn't want to say it, but she HAVE TO.

"That I..." she paused again.

I saw her eyes begin to fill with tears. This was heart-breaking.

"I'm sorry, Yuri I..." She paused for the third time.

I took her hands and gently pressed it with mine. She looked at me, like a little puppy in distress.

"Fany-ah, it's okay, you can tell me," I said, calming her down.

I was ready to accept anything she was about to say, I'll leave if she asked me and stay if she wants me. Though I'm praying hard for the latter.

Tiffany stared straight into my eyes, and it was so intense I could hardly breathe. That was when she said it, the three magical words that changed my life.

"I love you."

The only thing that came to my mind was...

Am I dreaming?

I never knew hearing a confession from someone you love can make you feel like you're floating ten feet off the ground, and suddenly the world around you stop spinning, and the crowded club turned into an open field with green grass where there was no one else but us two. The annoying hip hop song in the background changed to a cheesy love song in my ears, and the disco ball above me is the sun shining in the morning. I could list another 40 feelings I felt at the time.

"Yuri, I love you," Tiffany repeats as if the first time wasn't clear enough.

I looked at her, who was blushing like it was her first time ever saying those words to anyone.

There was no word that was enough to express my feelings, so I followed my heart. I wrapped my arms around her waist and pulled her closer before I pressed my lips on hers with one swift move.

Our eyes were closed, and leave the world behind us as we shared our passionate kiss.

**

When Tiffany opened her eyes that morning, she did not feel like leaving the bed. She pulled the blue blanket over her body, and tucked her hand under the pillow like a little child preparing for bedtime. She missed the bed, the blanket and the pillow so much she didn't feel like getting up. The only thing that could take her away from the bed was the owner, Yuri.

Tiffany could not stop smiling as she laid on the mattress, recalling what happened the night before.

From the club, they shared a taxi and headed back to Yuri's apartment. Yuri made a bowl of ramyun, which they shared while snuggling in bed. The story finished as they emptied the bowl and fell asleep in each other's arms. Tiffany knew it could lead to so much more, but she was holding herself back. Things are not yet final between her and Jessica.

She wanted to hide under the blanket for a little longer, but the smell of fresh pancakes lured her out of the bed. She climbed down, making her way to the kitchen in Yuri's oversized Mickey Mouse pajamas. There she saw a beautiful young woman standing by the stove, busily flipping the last pancake for their breakfast. Tiffany could not help but flutter at the sight; Yuri with her hair was tied up, wearing a white top with beads of sweat on her forehead.

Sneakily, she tiptoed to her, making sure her presence was unnoticed. She stood behind her before slyly slid her arms around the other girl's waist.

"OMO!" I was startled.

"Good morning, Yurree~" Tiffany said cheerfully.

Realizing the person was Tiffany and not a perverted intruder, I let out a relieved sigh and turned around.

"Morning Fany-ah," I replied, still in disbelief that this girl was now in the kitchen with me.

I stared at the beauty in front of me, as the memory of last night played back in my mind. The feeling of cuddling her to sleep last night was still fresh on my mind. Even though we were just sleeping together like two teenagers having sleepover, it was by far the best moment in my life.

Suddenly, a strong burnt smell crept up my nose. And judging by Tiffany's scrunched nose, I'm sure she smelt it too.

"OH MY GOD! YOUR PANCAKE!" Tiffany suddenly shouted, pointing at behind me.

I totally forgot that there was a last pancake in the pan. I could not even differentiate the pancake and the pan anymore; they were all charcoal black. I turned off the stove immediately and threw the pan into the sink before turning on the tap and let the water run on it. The pan made sizzling

sounds under the running water, emitting another unpleasant smell.

"Ewww!" Tiffany shrieked, while pressing her nose close with her fingers.

"Now that was a 'pan' cake." I said wittily.

We looked at each other and laughed.

**

Tiffany creased her eyebrows as she stared at the bottles in front of her.

"Is there anything wrong?" I asked as I put down a mug of hot chocolate by her side.

"Honey or Milk?" she suddenly asked.

I took my seat opposite of her at the small dining table in my kitchen. Then I realized that she was referring to the pancake toppings.

"Oh, honey or milk. The question of the century," I said, exaggerating.

Tiffany smiled weakly, "Sometimes it's hard to make a choice."

The atmosphere in the room suddenly turned awkward. We both knew it was not just about food anymore.

I cleared my throat.

"Okay, honey or milk?" I asked casually.

Tiffany shook her head, "I can't choose. I like them both."

"But if you can only choose one, which will you choose?" I insisted for an answer.

Tiffany gulped and looked at both bottles on the table.

"Then... I rather eat a plain pancake," She said, dismissing the topic.

I wasn't content with her reply. She has to learn to make up her mind; honestly, I don't like the feeling of being the other woman.

I grabbed the bottle of honey and poured the content onto her pancake. She looked at me, surprised and confused by my actions. I ignored her and cut a small piece of the pancake and picked it up with a fork. I smiled at her and feed her the honey-coated piece of pancake.

She hesitated at first, but then she ate it.

"You deserve something sweet," I said.

She looked at me with an unreadable expression. And worries tugged at my heart once again.

"I have to go," she said, standing up.

I was shocked; I didn't expect her to leave this soon.

I stood up and grabbed her arm. "Why, what's wrong? Does the pancake taste bad?" I asked gently.

She smiled and shook her head, "No, your pancake is so delicious."

"But... it's so good that I'm worried I might want more of it," she added.

I looked at her, deciphering her hidden codes. I got what she meant.

"You know you want more of it," I replied.

Tiffany gulped and looked away, and judging by her reactions, I know I was right.

"A car is waiting for me, I have to leave," she said, grabbing her bag on the sofa.

I couldn't describe this feeling; it was like she just gave me heaven and now she wanted to take it away. All I knew was that I couldn't let her go.

"Stay..." I said. I knew it sounded desperate, but I didn't care.

She turned around and looked at me, and her eyes were brimming with tears.

"Yuri, I actually came to see you last night to tell you that... we shouldn't meet each other anymore."

"That you should forget all about me..." she added.

I was shocked, but that explained her hesitation last night.

"But that wasn't what you said..." I said, puzzled.

"I just couldn't bring myself to say those things to you..." She said, trying hard to hold back her tears.

"I told myself again and again that... letting you go is the best solution, but when I was in front of you....I was unable to lie to myself."

"So I told you the truth."

"I love you." She said, her voice weak.

Her voice echoed in my head like a beautiful melody.

"But Yuri, my love will only hurt you. I... don't want you to get hurt." She said, at the verge of tears.

"Why would I get hurt?"

"Because... Jessica found out about us."

I gulped and my mind went blank for a moment. Jessica knew.

"I don't want to drag you into this anymore. Yuri, you don't know what's she capable of."

"So, it's best if we stop right now before we go any further..." Tiffany continued, and this time she couldn't hold back the tears from escaping her eyes.

I bit my lip, as my heart sunk seeing her cry. I stepped closer to her and cupped her face with my hands. She looked at me with creased eyebrows and I replied her with a smile. Then, I gently wiped the tears on her delicate cheeks with my fingers.

"Fany-ah, I don't want to stop."

"I want to go as far as I can, with you."

"I'm not scared of her."

**

"Huh..huh..huh.." Choi Sooyoung panted as she was running on the treadmill.

She glanced at her friend beside her, who has been running at faster rate than her, yet hasn't showed any sign of needing a break. Sooyoung shook her head; she knew she can't ever compete with Yuri in fitness-related activities. She decreased the speed of her track, slowing down before she pressed the stop button that she has been longing to hit.

I glanced at Sooyoung, she was sweating badly as if she had just ran a 5km marathon.

"I..can't..do this..anymore.." She said to me.

"Oh come on, it's only been 15 minutes!" I said, teasing her.

"I don't... want to die.."

"Nobody dies from running on treadmill at minimum speed!" I said with a laugh.

Sooyoung shook her head and made a X sign with her arms, declaring defeat to the machine.

"I'm gonna hit the shower first; you can continue as long as you want." She said, grabbing her towel.

"Fine, go."

I chuckled watching Sooyoung as she was making her wobbling steps to the shower room.

Jessica Jung crossed her arms as she observed the young woman running on the treadmill. It wasn't hard finding out about Yuri; she was a member of the gym that happens to belong to her. It was a small world after all.

Yuri was wearing a tight sports top, slightly revealing her cleavage. Jessica bit her lips, she couldn't deny that Yuri is beautiful. Her mind unconsciously pictured Yuri and Tiffany together and jealousy quickly took control of her senses.

I checked the timer on the machine, and it showed that I have ran for half an hour. I smiled in content and decided to do other exercises for the rest of the hour. After gradually slowing down my speed, I pressed stop and stepped down from the machine.

"Leaving so soon?" Asked a voice.

I stopped and turned around. I gulped. There she stood, in her classy outfit and arrogant gaze, Jessica Jung.

"I think we have to talk, don't we Kwon Yuri-shi?" She asked arrogantly.

"What's there to talk about?" I asked, nonchalant.

She rolled her eyes.

"I believe you took something that is mine."

**

Jessica brought me to an expensive restaurant in the same building that I did not even know existed. A place where only VIP members are allowed to enter. All this time I thought this was an exhibition centre.

I sat awkwardly in my jeans and jacket opposite her; I know I looked like I don't belong here. No one told me beforehand that I was going to have evening tea with the wealthy girlfriend of the girl I'm in love with.

"Leave her." Jessica suddenly said, without even looking at me.

I don't know how, but she was really good at making people feel like slapping her face repeatedly. Two words from her mouth and that was all it took to make me boiling inside. I planned to be nice, but the way she was acting right now simply didn't allow me to.

I looked away.

"I can't." I replied.

My arrogant reply caught her attention and she turned her gaze at me. She gritted her teeth, probably trying to stay composed and preserve her image. She was in the public after all.

"How shameless can you be..." She muttered under her breath.

I turned to look at her and our eyes met.

She scoffed.

"Do you really think that you can be with Tiffany? A girl like you? Have you checked yourself in the mirror? A black duck wanting to be with a swan, you really make me laugh," she said, followed by a small laugh.

I bit my lip. Did this woman just compare me to a duck?

"Okay fine. Do you want money? That's what people like you always want anyway," she said, taking out her checkbook. She had prepared everything.

I could not describe how I felt, being treated like a beggar. She pushed my patience to the limit.

"Now I know why Tiffany wanted to leave you," I said suddenly.

Jessica raised an eyebrow, offended.

"What did you say?"

I smirked. "From the outside, you look so beautiful and perfect but inside you're... ugly and rotten."

"How dare you..." She said, her eyes filled with anger.

We looked at each other, in an intense eye contact battle. Her gaze was slowly suffocating me, but I refused to look away.

"Tiffany will never leave me," she suddenly said.

She looked away and leaned back on her seat.

"Our five-year relationship won't be affected by some petty girl like you. You're just a phase she's going through, like a new toy. Once she's bored with you, she'll come back to me-

"What if you're wrong?" I quickly cut in.

"What if I'm not just a phase? What if she really has gotten tired of you leaving her and decided to move on?"

"Stop this crap! You're delusional!" Jessica said, pissed.

"Am I? Or is it you the one who's delusional?"

Jessica gritted her teeth, speechless.

"No matter what you say or do, I will never give up on Tiffany," I said, my voice firm.

"Why?! Why is it so hard for you to just get out of our lives?!" She snapped.

"Because... I love her." I replied.

Suddenly, I felt a strong push on my left cheek, almost causing me to fall off my chair.

I gathered my strength, fighting the pain on my cheek and in my heart to look at Jessica. She was staring straight at me, furious; her right hand was still shaking from slapping me.

"Don't you dare... say that again," she said.

"Kwon Yuri, I'm going to give you one last chance. I want you to stay away from her."

I shook my head, "I won't."

Jessica nodded.

"Then, you're going to regret this."

Time Machine

"Ahh, I'm so tired," I whined as soon as I entered the office.

It was already noon when I finally reached my desk because of a meeting with the editors earlier. I couldn't help but notice my desk mate, Sooyoung looking at me with mischievous grin plastered across her face.

*"Right now, if I could ride a time machine,
I wouldn't wish for anything else,"*

- SNSD 'Time Machine'

I put down my notebook and pulled out my chair before sitting on it.

I glanced at her, "Is there any good news? Why are you smiling at me like that-

I paused as something suddenly crossed my mind while Sooyoung continued to stare at me with her creepy smile.

..gosh, don't tell me it'll be raining food this evening," I said, a little terrified if it's real.

Sooyoung's grin changed into a frown, "Yah Kwon Yuri, you think I'll only be happy if it's something related to food? Is that how you viewed me? I'm disappointed in you, my friend."

I chuckled and patted her arm, "Then, raining shirtless men?"

She rolled her eyes, "No! Great, you've ruined my mood, and now I don't want to tell you about it. Even if it is about you."

I laughed and grabbed her shoulder, "About me? Hey, Sooyoung-ah. Come on, I'm only joking tell me!"

"Tell me about it! Tell me, tell me, t-t-t-tell meeee~" I said, shaking her shoulder as I annoyingly sang to her ear.

"Okay, okay! I'll tell you so stop singing that song! Wow you really know how to get on someone's nerves.." Sooyoung said, finally giving in.

I smiled in satisfaction, knowing that Sooyoung can never be angry at me for too long.

"So, what's the news?" I asked, impatient.

She looked at me and her expression was serious, "There's a rumor going around the office."

"Rumor?"

She nodded, "I heard that our Head of Department likes you so much and she wants to you to join the fashion photography team,"

I looked at her, dumbfounded. "Huh?"

"You know... the elite ones in Marie Claire that gets to cover high class fashion shows locally and internationally," Sooyoung explained.

I know the elite team she was talking about but I couldn't believe what she just said.

"Me? Joining the elite team? But I've only been working here for three months, you're telling me that I'm receiving promotion this fast? Yah Sooyoung are you tricking me?" I asked in a breath.

Sooyoung laughed, "Why should I trick you? It's real Yuri-ah. Everyone in the office has been talking about it since this morning. One of our professional photographer jumped to CeCi because of their hefty offer so there's an opening now. There's a high chance that Madam Kang will break the news to you today."

"So, you're not lying to me? Th-this is real?" I asked, giving her a suspicious glare.

She sighed, "Just wait till she calls you then. There's someone in her office now, but I bet she will call you later."

I looked at Sooyoung, still in doubt.

Sooyoung nodded and smiled, "Believe it my friend. Congrats! You'll be living your dream soon!"

I looked at my friend's face, I know her long enough to know if she was lying and right now I'm sure she's not.

Her words were honest and sincere.

I couldn't contain my emotions and my mouth slowly curled up into a wide smile. I got up and wrapped my arms around Sooyoung's neck embracing her in a tight hug.

"Yul! I can't breathe!" Sooyoung said, gasping for air.

But despite her pleads for freedom, I still didn't let her go. My mood and confidence level was lifted tenfold by this

news, after it was crushed yesterday in the brief meeting with Jessica.

Finally, good things are happening to me.

I let Sooyoung go after a while, when she said that she was choking for real. Her face almost turned blue by the lack of oxygen. I felt bad, so I promised to treat her to buffet lunch to stop her from whining about her near-death experience. She agreed in a heartbeat. Case closed.

"Eh, Yul, what happened to your face?" Sooyoung suddenly asked.

I looked away, and pretended as if I didn't hear her. I knew she was talking about my bruised cheek, the result from the arrogant heiress slap yesterday. I don't want to talk to Sooyoung about it, since I knew she will only nag me to leave Tiffany.

But Sooyoung refused to take silence as an answer and leaned closer to take a better look at my cheek.

"Looks like you've been hit. Did you get into a fight while drunk?" Sooyoung asked, concern.

I nodded, "Yes! I've joined a gang and we beat up people in the back alleys late at night." I replied sarcastically.

Sooyoung broke into a laughing fit, as her imagination ran wild picturing me with leather jackets and baseball bat going around beating people up.

At least that distracted her.

Suddenly my phone beeped, telling me there's a new message. I picked it up and checked my inbox.

'Tiffany'

My heart flutters just by reading her name.

'I've finished your portrait. Would you like me to drop it at your office?'

My mind quickly thought of a witty reply.

I want to meet you. I can't let you draw a naked painting of me and get away with it.

Send.

She replied it in less than a minute, and I was impressed by her texting skills.

'Tiffany'

It's not a naked painting! Why would I draw you naked?

I grinned.

Okay, then we meet this evening, at 5 in the park.

A minute later she replied,

Okay, see you there.

I grinned.

It's a date.

Send.

"Hey hey hey! Stop texting at work! Don't you want to join the elite team?" Sooyoung interrupted.

I shrugged, "Hahaha! Jealous? Go text with your boyfriend then."

"Are you trying to rub it in my face? You know I'm single now!" Sooyoung replied, offended.

Suddenly, the Head of Department's office door opened, causing everyone in the department to act busy. I stopped laughing immediately and begin typing gibberish on my laptop that wasn't even turned on, while Sooyoung was busily flipping an empty file.

"Let me walk you to the elevator," the Head of Department, Madam Kang said to someone.

"It's okay," another voice replied.

The voice sounded so familiar, and curiosity was getting a hold of me.

Could it be?

I slowly looked up from my blank laptop screen and saw a stylish and elegant young woman talking with my boss.

She turned around and looked at me. I had somehow expected this.

It was Jessica Jung.

She glared at me before walking away with a smirk that was obviously directed at me. As if it was a warning that something bad is going to happen.

"Isn't that Jessica Jung? What is she doing here?" Sooyoung asked, whispering to me.

I froze.

"Kwon Yuri-shi." Madam Kang suddenly called.

"Ye-yes!" I replied, shocked.

"Come see me in my office now."

**

Madam Kang walked to her desk but she didn't sit down. She turned to look at me with a serious expression. Whatever it is she's about to say, I'm sure it isn't about the promotion. I was preparing myself to be scolded anytime now even though I didn't do anything wrong.

"Kwon Yuri-shi, starting today you won't be covering any outside events." She said, firm.

I didn't know what to say. I looked at her, confused by her words.

I gulped. "Madam Kang, what do you mean?"

"I will assign another photographer to help Choi Sooyoung-shi to cover events. You don't have to do it anymore," she replied coldly.

I froze and for a moment I felt like my whole world was crumbling down. I'm not stupid, and I understood what she meant. What does it mean to be a photographer but not allowed to take photos?

I've just been demoted.

"But why?" I asked boldly. The word just slipped from my mouth.

She looked at me with creased eyebrows.

I gather my strength to continue, "Why is this so sudden? What did I do? Madam, you even said you liked my photos."

She nodded, "I do like your photos. In fact I like your energy at work, you are exactly the person we need, but.... why did you mess up with J.Estina?" She asked.

"J.Estina? When did I-

I paused.

Jessica.

"It was your idea to conduct an interview with Jessica Jung during the J.Estina product launch, right?" Madam Kang asked.

I nodded immediately, "Yes I did and it received great responses when it was published in this month's issue, you like it too. What's wrong with it now?"

"Jessica Jung claimed that she didn't give us the permission to conduct the interview. And so she was furious that we're publishing her photos and words without her consent."

"Th-that's ridiculous! She did give us the permission! How could she say that now?" I retorted.

"SHE'S THREATENING TO SUE US!" Madam Kang shouted.

I looked at her, shocked.

"I had to plead her not to make a fuss out of this issue, because of you!" She continued, angry.

I looked down and bit my lip.

"Just be grateful I didn't fire you."

**

I left the office last that evening. Even though Sooyoung offered to send me home, I refused. I just needed to be alone to sort out my cluttered mind. I even switched off my phone.

I dragged my feet through the sidewalk of the busy Seoul with a camera hanging around my neck. My head was empty, and I couldn't think of anything. I wanted to cry but the tears wouldn't come out. My heart felt heavy with emotions but no matter how hard I try, I still couldn't let it out.

Sometimes I hate not being able to cry freely like everyone else.

Carefully I picked up the camera that I was carrying and rubbed it gently with my hands, as if it was a genie's magic lamp. It was the thing that I treasured the most; the first camera that I bought with the money I saved from working several part time jobs in college.

To others it might be just an old camera, but to me it's a symbol of hardwork, hope and dreams.

Being a professional photographer has always been my lifetime goal since I first flipped through my mother's copy of Marie Claire. I was only 7 years old, yet I felt so inspired by the colorful photos inside the fashion magazine. Since then, editorial photography became everything that I've been dreaming of.

I still remembered how ecstatic and excited I was when I landed the job at Marie Claire. I called my mother and broke the news to her through the phone. I heard the sound of her sobbing as she congratulated me. My best friend, Sooyoung celebrated it with me in her usual way by partying all night.

And now, my dreams are slipping through my fingers because of a woman.

My mind slowly wondered if this was all worth it.

If I let her go, then none of this would've happen.

If I hadn't been too stubborn, holding on to her, then I'm probably promoted now.

If..

My trail of thoughts was interrupted when I realized that I'm passing the park. There were kids playing around and couples walking holding hands. I didn't know how I got here, as if my feet had a mind of its own and brought me there.

Suddenly, I caught a glimpse of someone familiar.

It was her.

Tiffany, sitting alone on the park bench just a few steps away from me.

She was fidgeting on her seat and glanced at her wrist-watch every now and then, like she was waiting for someone. Suddenly the wind blew, causing her hair to be blown in the direction of the wind. The wind messed her hair, so she fixed it with her fingers. Gently, she tucked her hair behind her ears. The wind was cold in the winter, and she pulled the edges of her brown coat closer to her body to keep warm.

I was unable to describe how beautiful the scene in front of me was. I wasn't sure if there was a word yet invented in this world to picture that kind of beauty.

But I was sure of one thing; my aching heart began to pound faster at the sight of her, as if it was healing by itself.

Slowly, my frowned mouth crept up into a smile. For a moment, I forgot the reason of my sorrow.

"I wonder what she's doing at the park.." I muttered to myself.

Then I saw a huge square frame wrapped with clear plastic beside the bench. It hit me instantly.

The portrait.

I forgot that I was supposed to meet her at 5.

I glanced at my watch and realized that it's already 5.35.

**

I walked to her with careful steps so that she wouldn't notice me coming. I stood behind her as she was rubbing her hands together to keep warm.

"How much is it for this painting?" I asked.

She was startled and turned to look at me. Her expression was so adorable, she was smiling excitedly at first but then she pouted.

"Kwon Yuree! You're late!" She said, grunting.

"I'm sorry!" I said nonchalant, to purposely annoyed her.

I grinned and walked to the painting and squatted down to take a closer look. It was a nicely done painting of me. She used the right colors to suit my features, making it look real. I couldn't put a price on it.

"Ahh, who is this woman? She is so gorgeous!" I praised the girl in the painting.

Tiffany smiled and eventually laughed, "Woah, how can someone praise themselves that way? You're so shameless!"

My heart fluttered seeing she's smiling and hearing her laughs.

I picked up the painting and sat next to her on the bench.

"I've never had a portrait of myself before. How much do I need to pay for this, Miss Fany Da Vinci?" I asked jokingly.

"It's a gift, you pabo." She replied, gently hitting my arm.

I grinned, "Thank you, Fany-ah. Maybe I should draw you too sometime."

"Please don't. Hmm, just cook me some food."

Suddenly, Tiffany looked into my eyes for a long time without saying anything.

I gulped, "Wh-why?"

"Yuree-ah.." She called.

"Hmm?"

"Did something happen?" She asked softly.

I was shocked with her question. I tried hard to conceal my feelings; I wondered how she was able to see through me.

"Ahahaha! What do you mean? No-nothing happened.." I said, faking my laugh.

"Nothing happened, really.." I added, looking away.

Suddenly, a pair of hands grabbed my cheeks by surprise. It was Tiffany, cupping my face with her warm hands, not letting me avoid her eyes.

"I don't know what it is, but....stay strong Yuri-ah." She said, smiling earnestly at me.

I looked into her sparkling eyes and suddenly I realized something.

She is worth it.

There are no 'if's.

She is worth losing everything for. She is my everything.

The emotions that was building up in me slowly rushed out. Tears pooled in my eyes and soon it rolled down my cheeks.

Tiffany looked at me with wide eyes, surprised to see me cry. The cold, hard Kwon Yuri who hardly spill tears is crying in front of her.

Gently, she wiped my tears with her fingers, just like how I always wiped it for her.

"Just let it out." She said.

She pulled me into her arms and wrapped me in her warm embrace.

Tears wouldn't stop falling from my eyes when I was in her arms. I was sobbing like a little baby and cried like never before.

She gently rubbed my back and it felt like the pain in my heart was taken away with each of her stroke.

Someone was watching them from inside of a white car.

Jessica bit her lip, trying hard to stay tough and mustered her strength not to spill any tears. The scene in front of her was unexpected, as she thought she had done what it took to make everything go her way.

But there they are, still together and embracing each other. The more she stared at them, the greater the pain in her heart became.

What else can I do?

Soon, tears escaped her eyes.

**

Jessica Jung stood on the balcony outside of her room. Though it was cold, she let the night breeze blow through her hair and pulled the thin, grey cardigan tighter around her body.

She leaned her body forward at the metal railings as she gazed at the sky. She felt like the dark sky was especially beautiful that night, with the constellations of stars staring back at her from above.

They seemed so close yet so far.

Her mind ran through what happened that day. She had ruined Yuri's career that day, and she thought she would feel triumphed and proud but.. she wasn't.

It felt as if all her effort was useless. Tiffany still didn't leave Yuri. Nothing had changed.

Jessica let out a sigh and turned around. She leaned her back on the metal railing and stared blankly into her room. The sweet memories slowly came back to her and the corner of her lips curled upward.

Like a movie played, she watched the images of herself and Tiffany in that room. How they would spend hours with each other and would never even feel bored. She looked at the study desk where Tiffany always disturbed her when she was working.

She remembered one time when she ignored Tiffany because she was busy working, and her girlfriend pulled out the computer's socket to get her attention. The incident leads to a huge fight where she shouted at Tiffany and slammed the door. Tiffany cried.

She changed her gaze to the door and her heart sunk deeper. This time, the image of her and Tiffany standing by the door appeared. She was carrying a luggage with a plane ticket in one hand. Tiffany was holding tight to her right arm, begging her not to leave.

But she left, and Tiffany cried again.

Jessica bit her lip as tears were pooling in her eyes.

She knew she had caused so much pain to Tiffany, and now she was ready to make amends. She reached into her pocket and took out a small red velvet case. She put it on her palm and slowly opened the case.

There was a silver ring with a pink diamond.

Suddenly, there was someone knocking on the door.

Jessica quickly closed the case and put it back into her pocket.

"Come in." She said.

The door opened and Jessica was shocked seeing the person that entered her room.

It was the one she's been thinking of, Tiffany. She had to blink her eyes a few times to make sure it was real.

Tiffany walked into the room and closed the door behind her.

She looked at Jessica and greeted, "Hello Jessi."

Jessica was still surprised with her appearance but she greeted back, "Hello Tiffany."

They looked at each other as the tension sets in the atmosphere.

Jessica cleared her throat, "What brings you here?"

"I have to talk to you about something." Tiffany replied.

"Something?"

Tiffany nodded, "I hope you stop doing things to Yuri."

Jessica gulped and looked away, "I didn't do anything to her."

"Jessi, she didn't do anything wrong. If there's someone you want to blame, it's me." Tiffany added.

Suddenly, Jessica grunted, "Arghh! Stop talking about her!"

"I told you to end things with her, but why are you still seeing her? Are you...in love with her?" Jessica asked, her eyes were burning with jealousy.

Tiffany gulped.

"Don't answer that. I don't want to know." Jessica quickly added.

Tiffany stared at Jessica; she has never seen her so distressed before.

"Honey, what happened to us?" Jessica asked, gently.

Tiffany looked down and bit her lip, "You know what happened."

Suddenly, Jessica took long steps towards Tiffany and in a matter of seconds she was right in front of her.

"I know I made mistakes, but nobody is perfect." Jessica said as she was staring straight at Tiffany.

"If I have a time machine, I would go back in time to unbreak your heart, and catch every single tears that you've spilled because of me."

"And I would never be leave you alone even for a day." She added.

Tiffany looked at Jessica as her heart was slowly shaken with her words.

"All I'm asking is one more chance to make it up to you." Jessica said.

Suddenly, she got down on one knee and held Tiffany's hand. Tiffany was shocked with her action.

"Wh-what are you doing?" She asked, puzzled.

Jessica smiled sweetly at her and reached her left pocket. Tiffany gulped when she saw a small red case on Jessica's palm. She doesn't have to be a genius to guess what that was.

When Jessica opened the box, Tiffany gasped as she saw the beautiful silver ring.

"Tiffany Hwang, whom I've been loving for 5 years. Let me continue to shower you with my love for a thousand years more."

"Marry me."

Already Gone

*Started with a perfect kiss then we could
feel the poison set in
Perfect couldn't keep this love alive
You know that I love you so, I love you
enough to let you go*

Kelly Clarkson's Already Gone

“Marry me.”

*Tiffany looked at Jessica who was
kneeling down in front of her.*

She had never thought of seeing her this way, down on one knee, proposing to her. She had waited years for this day to come, and all the memories came to her at that moment. She still remembered how Jessica used to avoid talking about marriage and commitments.

“Where do you see us in ten years from now?”

Jessica looked away and sighed.

“Tiffany, why are you talking about the future?”

“Jessi, I need to know where are we heading, where this relationship is going..”

“Does it matter? I’m with you now, aren’t I?”

“You won’t leave me again... right?”

Jessica never answered that question.

Tiffany felt like laughing, seeing the irony of the situation. There were nights she spent crying, worrying that Jessica will slip through her fingers but now, she’s offering her a life-time commitment.

“Why now?” Tiffany asked.

Jessica was speechless.

“I-I don't know..” Tiffany mumbled.

She took a step back away from Jessica and about to leave when Jessica quickly grabbed her hand.

“Think about it!” she said, desperate.

Tiffany looked at her and bit her lip.

“Tiffany, at least think about it. Don’t give me the answer now... I can wait.” Jessica continued.

She stood up and grabbed both of Tiffany’s hands.

She looked straight into Tiffany’s eyes,

“Just think about the times we had gone through together.”

Tiffany looked away.

“Though they’re not all sweet memories....give me one last chance to make it up to you, with the rest of my life.” Jessica added.

**

Tiffany sat down on their usual park bench that evening, waiting for Yuri after work. She gazed blankly at the green field, as she was lost in her sea of thoughts. There were so many things on her mind, all cluttered and tangled with one another.

Suddenly, she saw a young woman in dark blue jacket walking with rapid steps towards her. Their eyes met and she waved at her.

“I’m sorry I’m late!” I said, bowing apologetically to Tiffany. I was almost half an hour late.

But she wasn't angry at me. She smiled ever so adorably when she looked at me.

“As expected of Kwon Yuri.” She said, teasing.

I sat down beside her and puffed, “Hey, it’s not like it was intentional! They gave me too much work so I had no choice to get off later than everyone else!”

“Aww, bad day at work?” She asked with her sparkly eyes.

I almost gasped, “N-No. Everything was okay, don’t worry.”

It was a lie.

Nothing has been okay since I was forced to put down my camera. They've assigned me all the chores that no one else want to do. I just spend the whole day photocopying documents for others. For the first time, I hate going to work.

“Where’s your camera?” Tiffany suddenly asked.

She noticed that I was only carrying my small handbag.

I gulped as I quickly think of an excuse, “I-I didn’t bring it to work today. Even though I’m a photographer, I’m not taking photos every day.”

She nodded in response, believing everything I just said. “Ohh, it’s just weird seeing you without it since you carry it with you almost all the time.”

“Enough with the camera! Do you miss the camera or its owner?” I asked, trying to distract her from asking too much.

Tiffany laughed and I forgot how stressful I was at work earlier.

“Of course I miss the owner.” She said and then playfully patting my hair.

I grinned, in my head I wished I could be her pet so that she would do that to me every day.

I smiled, “Okay, so what are we going to do tod-

I didn't manage to finish my sentence when Tiffany suddenly plugged an earphone into my right ear. I looked at her in wonder.

“Let's listen to music together.” She said gently.

I can't help but chuckled at Tiffany’s hobby of forcing other people to listen to her favourite songs. It was not the first time she's plugging earphones to me.

A song played. It was an English ballad and it was sung by a female singer. I think it was by Kelly Clarkson, that is if I'm not mistaken.

Tiffany looked at me and I looked back at her with a blank stare. I’ve never been really good with English since I was in school. Even my teacher laughed at my accent and awkward sentences. It’s just not my favourite subject.

“Do you like that song?” She asked, smiling.

“Ah..it was okay..”

I liked the melody but I wasn't really sure what the lyrics were about since I only caught a few lines.

Tiffany looked at me with shifty eyes.

“You don’t understand it, don’t you?” She asked, an eyebrow raised.

I gulped, “Wh-What? English? I do understand it! What makes you think I don’t?”

Tiffany laughed. “I think I can tell it when you’re lying. You're so bad at lying!”

“Hey hey! I’m not lying!” I retorted.

“Okay then prove it.”

“Prove..what?”

“Speak to me in English to prove that you’re not lying.” She said, crossing her arms in demand.

I gulped.

“Sure!” I said in English.

She seems impressed with my usage of ‘sure’ so I was feeling confident.

“Okay, go on.” She said, in English.

I took a deep breath.

“Hi, nice to meet you. My name is..Yuree Kwon. I am-

Suddenly Tiffany starts laughing. I looked at her, puzzled. I don't think I said anything weird yet.

"Your name is Unicorn?" She asked, still pressing her stomach and laughing.

"It's Yuree Kwon!" I corrected, laughing along. It doesn't matter if she was laughing at me, just seeing her so happy made me feel like I just saved a country.

"Okay then, continue." She said, grinning.

I smiled, "Sure!"

"TODAY IS MONDAY!" I continued.

Tiffany laughed even more until people passing by stared at us as if we're a couple of crazy ladies who escaped from the mental hospital.

I stared at her as she continued laughing at my fail English and I fell even more deeper in love with the woman in front of me. At that moment, I made two wishes.

I wish I could see make her laugh like this every day.

I wish she could stay by my side like this always.

**

It was another day at work.

I used to feel excited going to work every day but not anymore now.

This is not work; it was more like human slavery. As usual, as soon as I arrived, I was greeted by a pile of photocopied documents to be arranged and clipped together. I felt like I was bullied but what can I do? I should feel lucky to still be working in this company.

I was sitting at my desk, clipping the papers when suddenly Sooyoung called me.

"Yul, someone is waiting for you at the lobby." Sooyoung said.

I picked up the last sheet of the photocopied document and looked at her, puzzled.

"Someone wants to see me? Who?"

She was a bit hesitant to tell me.

"Yo-You should go down and look for yourself."

**

It was Jessica Jung.

I don't know why but somehow I had an idea that it will be her.

She was waiting for me on the couch at the lobby, wearing her expensive sunglasses indoor, looking like a celebrity entering airport. I wonder if she thinks she's an idol star.

I walked to her with my weak steps and she noticed me coming. She took off her sunglasses and stood up as I came nearer.

"Why do you want to meet me?" I asked as soon as I was right in front of her.

She looked different this time; there was less arrogance in her eyes as she looked at me.

"I need to talk to you about something. Can we go somewhere and talk?" She asked.

**

We went to a coffee shop ten minutes away from my office. She ordered a cup of Americano and sipped her drink quietly as we sat. I gripped my cup of cappuccino as the awkwardness set in between us. Her silence made me nervous.

"Jessica-shi, what did you want to talk to me about? I have to go back to the office, I'm a very busy person, you know." I said in an arrogant tone, crossing my arms.

She looked up and stared at me. For a moment she wasn't saying anything.

"I just..want to talk you, from a woman to another. I hope you can listen to me for a while." She said.

I looked at her, as her gentle tone caught me off guard. It's like I'm seeing a different person. There was sadness behind her eyes; emotion, something that I thought a woman like her doesn't have.

"Yuri-shi, I never thought this would happen to me." She begins.

"I really thought.. Tiffany would never fall for anyone else, and that she will wait for me no matter what happen."

"But,..you came along and changed everything." She added with a glance.

I quickly looked away and shook my head.

"It was your fault since the beginning. You think anyone will have that amount of patience to wait for someone who leaves anytime they wanted to? She waited for you long enough," I said bitterly.

She clenched her fist that was on the table and stared at me.

"Try to be in my shoes for one day!" She said, almost shouting.

I looked at her, shocked.

She bit her lip, "If you were in my position, I'm sure you will understand."

"Do you think it's easy being a successor of my family's business and being in a secret relationship with Tiffany at the same time? I have to try to live up to my parent's expectation every day.. do you know how stressful that was?!" She said, slightly slamming the table.

I gulped. Other people in the cafe turned and fixed their curious gaze upon us. Realizing the attention she had caught, Jessica sighed and leaned her back on her seat, as she was trying to calm herself.

"No matter what I had went through with her, there was never once I imagine living without her....and now she's slipping away through my fingers and there was nothing I could do about it. I feel so hopeless." She mumbled.

I cleared my throat, "What exactly are you trying to say?"

She looked at me, "Until now, I've done everything I could just to make things back to the way it was."

"I threatened her so that she will leave you....I ruined your career..

I gasped.

..but that doesn't have any effect."

I became speechless with her honesty.

"I tried.. to compete with you, but this has never been a fair competition right from the start." She said with cracked voice as she was holding back her tears.

"I'm obviously way better than you, whether in background or financial status but those are not the criteria that come into play in this. This is so unfair. I don't know how to be poor and live carelessly like you!"

I scoffed, offended with her remarks, "That's not my problem."

"Let's make this fair." Jessica said, her voice firm.

"Fair?" I asked, an eyebrow raised.

She nodded.

"We will never have an ending if you keep holding on to her, so....let her go."

I looked at her incredulously. I thought she was kidding but her expression was serious.

"You have to let her go." She repeats.

I shook my head repeatedly, "Th-This is ridiculous!"

"If that's all you want to talk to me about, then I'm leaving." I said as I stood up and grabbed my handbag.

"Are you sure that she truly loves you?" Jessica suddenly asked.

That question stopped me from leaving.

I scoffed, "Why should I tell you about it?"

"If you're so sure of it then, tell me why she still hasn't let me go?" She asked.

I gulped. She had a point there.

Then suddenly she continued,

"Yuri-shi....actually, I proposed to Tiffany two days ago"

I turned to look at her immediately; to see if she really said that. Her expression was serious as she was staring straight at me, and I knew she meant every word.

I've never felt so intimidated and scared in my life before. I stared at her, as my mind begin to play tricks on me.

Did Tiffany said yes?

Or she said no?

If she accepted Jessica's proposal....then who am I to her?

There's only one way to find out.

With all my might, I moved my trembled lips to ask, "And..what did she said?"

"She said.. she will think about it." Jessica replied calmly.

I pressed my lips shut. However that wasn't the answer I was looking for. A 'maybe' is worse than a 'yes' or 'no'.

We looked at each other with no words spoken. I wasn't sure how to react to the news. I want to scream and shout at her, asking her why she proposed to Tiffany but there's no point in doing so. I will only look like a fool and a lunatic.

Jessica sighed,

"Tiffany must be confused with this situation. She's basically..dating us both."

"This is why we should let her sort her feelings and make her own choice." She added.

I stared at her, trying to stay strong.

"Aren't you curious to know what she's feeling for you is love or just..a mere fling?" She asked.

I can't answer her, I just can't.

"So let her go." Jessica said.

"No-not gonna happen." I replied, still putting up my tough act.

But her gaze was still fixed on me,

"If she still chooses to be with you, even after you let her go....I will admit defeat and I promise that I won't disturb you anymore."

"But,..if she chooses me, you have to get out of her life and never see her again." Jessica quickly added.

I crossed my arms.

"How is that fair? Sounds like you're trying to make me dump Tiffany then you will pick her up like a hero."

"Yuri-shi, if you are confident with her feelings for you then there's no reason for you to be worried. People always say that, if you truly love someone, you let them go." Jessica replied calmly.

"So, do you love her enough to let her go?"

**

"You looked terrible. What did Jessica Jung said to you?" Sooyoung suddenly asked, with her mouth still full with rice.

I almost choked on my salads, hearing that name. What a topic to bring into lunch.

I shrugged. "Just stuff."

"She threatened you to leave Tiffany again, right? I knew it. She's not going to give up until she get what she wants. Such a princess." Sooyoung continued.

I kept mum and swallowed my food.

"But Yul, what are you going to do?" She asked.

"What?"

"Are you seriously going to carry on with Tiffany even though you know that she's dating Jessica?" Sooyoung asked in a breath.

I looked down and scooped another spoonful of salad.

"I don't know." I replied slowly.

Sooyoung sighed, "I feel sorry for you. The first time you fell in love, and it's with the wrong person. Love is cruel."

Suddenly, I jerked my head up, alerted with the song played in the cafeteria.

"What's wrong?" Sooyoung asked.

"This song is by Kelly Clarkson, isn't it? What's the title?" I asked, pointing upward.

"This song? It's Already Gone, one of my favorite from her. Why do you ask?"

I ignored Sooyoung's question and took out my phone to search for the lyrics.

Found it.

Remember all the things we wanted

Now all our memories they're haunted

We were always meant to say goodbye

Even with our fists held high

It never would've worked out right

We were never meant for do or die

I didn't want us to burn out

I didn't come here to hold you, now I can't stop

I want you to know that it doesn't matter

Where we take this road someone's gotta go

And I want you to know you couldn't have loved me better

But I want you to move on so I'm already gone

Looking at you makes it harder

But I know that you'll find another

That doesn't always make you want to cry

Started with a perfect kiss then we could feel the poison set in

Perfect couldn't keep this love alive

You know that I love you so, I love you enough to let you go

I bit my lip.

Is this what she was trying to tell me?

Suddenly Jessica's voice echoed in my head,

"So, do you love her enough to let her go?"

It Hurts Here

*It hurts here, because of our ended love,
These tears fall so my heart is bruised,
It really hurts a lot even if I touch it a little,
In my heart that is about to crumble,
There is a scar that is greater than a scar,
It Hurts Here.*

Baek Ji Young - It Hurts Here

There were so many paintings in Tiffany's workshop. But they were all covered with white cloths. This is the first time I entered her art workshop. She let me watch her work and I was so impressed. She looked different when painting, even more beautiful if that's possible.

There were so many paintings in Tiffany's workshop. But they were all covered with white cloths. This is the first time I entered her art workshop. She let me watch her work and I was so impressed. She looked different when painting, even more beautiful if that's possible.

She was painting the whole canvas in front of her with bright red, like the color of the heart; while I stood up and paced to look around. I walked closer to a huge painting covered with cloth, tempted to take a peek. I glanced at Tiffany and noticed that she was still concentrating on her piece. Slowly, I lifted the cloth and saw something long and black. I realized it was a huge painting of someone.

When I try to peek more to see who it was, someone grabbed my hand, stopping me from doing so.

It was Tiffany.

She smiled and pulled my hands away from the painting.

"I've told you not to peek on my unfinished paintings." She warned, but with a smile.

"I'm sorry Fany-ah, it's too tempting. But, are all these unfinished?" I asked, pointing at others in the room.

She smiled.

"I want to put them in my exhibition one day. I'll give you a special invite and you'll get to see all of them."

"Ahh, that's a long time then."

"Well, you have to wait. Trust me, my artworks are worth the wait." She replied with a chuckle.

I looked at her who was grinning proudly like a little girl.

It's that smile that had me captured so helplessly in love.

It's not just her smile, it's her whole existence.

I fell in love with every little detail about her,

her husky voice,

her pair of smiling eyes,

the way she flips her hair,

the sound of her laugh..

I could go on and on and on.

I noticed she was staring at me with creased eyebrows, something she did when she's curious.

Even her eyebrows are attractive to me.

"Yuri, is everything okay?" She suddenly asked, concern.

"Hmm? I'm okay.."

"But.." She moved closer to me and gently cupped my face.

I froze as her hand touched my skin.

"But, why are you crying?" She asked tenderly.

I was startled, "Crying? I'm not-

I paused when I realized that my cheeks were wet. I cried without realizing.

"What's the matter?" She asked.

I looked at her without saying anything. I could tell that she was worried about me.

"Yuri, why-

"Fany-ah.." I cuts in.

"Yes?"

"I'm sorry I can't afford a diamond ring."

She seemed shocked when I said that.

I took her hands from my cheeks and held it down.

"I work as a photographer and.. was recently been demoted."

"I took trains and buses everyday because I don't have a car."

"I borrow Sooyoung's clothes to attend lavish parties because I don't even have a nice dress."

"Yuri, why are you saying all this?" She asked, uncomfortable.

"If Jessica is a Titanic, then I'm just a small fisherman's boat.. no, maybe just a raft." I continued, ignoring her question.

"I don't have anything fancy to offer you, but....there is one thing that doesn't cost money I can give."

"My love."

"Too bad there are no tools in this world that could measure how great is my love for you." I said with a chuckle.

"If it could be measured in money then you are the richest person in this world."

"If it could be measured with time then.. it's more than forever."

I looked at her as tears were brimming in her eyes. I held her hands tightly as if she would disappear if I let go.

"Yuri, I love you too." She said.

I forced a smile, "But.. I'm not the only one you love."

She gulped.

"And it's not fair for me." I added.

I looked down and stared at our intertwined hands as if it's the last time we will ever hold hands.

Slowly, I let it go.

She was shocked when I let go of her hands and took a step away from her.

"Yuri-ah, I-I just need some time to sort out my feelings. You know that I'm not playing with your emotions." She said, desperately.

"Yuri, I'm sincere when I said I love you." She added.

I nodded.

"But, who do you truly love?" I asked.

She looked at me, unable to answer.

"That's why I've decided to give you all the time you need to think and sort out everything." I added.

"Yuri.."

I nodded and mustered every ounce of energy in me to say this,

"Fany-ah, let's stop seeing each other."

It was so hard saying those words, I felt like I just let go of a part of myself.

I looked at her, expecting a response but to my surprise she just kept mum. She agreed.

Suddenly, it felt hard to breathe.

She looked down and tears rolled down her cheeks.

My heart sunk seeing her shedding tears. It's too painful as if my heart was being torn apart into pieces.

I turned around, unable to watch it any longer.

"If..it's me in your heart....you can come back anytime."

"Come back to this person who truly loves you."

"I will be waiting for you."

"Always."

I lifted my foot one by one, making my steps to the door. It felt so hard to move, to leave her side.

I was hoping that she would stop me.

Yell at me and tell me how stupid I am.

Embrace me from behind and don't let me go.

But she didn't.

**

"YURI THAT'S ENOUGH!!" Sooyoung shouted at her friend.

She grabbed the wine glass from her friend's hand, though it was by force. She just couldn't bear to stand and watch as her friend destroys herself with alcohol. Usually, Yuri wasn't a heavy drinker, but tonight she's already on her second bottle.

"Give it back!" I shouted at Sooyoung, without caring about the stares from other people in the club.

"No! You already had too much! I'm not letting you have more!" She said, quickly taking away the bottle in front of me.

"Sooyoung-ah!" I grunted.

She came and sat beside me before grabbing my hands. I know she was only trying to comfort me, so I let her do so.

"Do you want to go home now? I'll drive you." She said gently.

I know she just wants to take me away from there.

"It's too early to go home." I replied coldly.

"Yul, let's go. We have work tomorrow.."

"Work?" I said with a scoff.

"All I do in the office was copying papers and staple them!"

I stood up and pulled my hands away from Sooyoung.

"I don't need you to feel sorry for me.." I mumbled.

I glanced at the dance floor and saw Taeyang walking towards me. I sighed.

"It's all because of her, isn't it?" He asked as soon as he reached my side.

I looked away, ignoring him.

"How long are you going to act like this? It's been two months since you last heard from her, it's time for you move on!" He added though I kept ignoring him.

Unable to stay calm any longer, he grabbed my arm and turned me around to face him.

"Hey Yuri look at me!"

I grunted, "Oh my god! What do you want?!"

He gulped.

"Youngbae, what do you want from me huh?!"

"Guys, relax.. don't be like this. " Sooyoung said, trying to save the situation.

"So what if it's been two months? You want me to forget Tiffany and then what? Hook up with you?!"

"YES YURI, YES!"

"I don't know why I'm never good enough for you! I've been waiting for the day you will accept me as a man in your life! I want you to forget about her and give me a chance! Is that too much for me to ask?!"

I stared at him, speechless.

He sighed, "If only you could give me a chance..

"I'm really sorry, Youngbae." I cut in.

"There's nothing wrong with you. I know you are a good man....but to me, you are a friend, and that's how it will always be."

"Yuri-ah!"

I sighed,

"It doesn't matter if it takes two months, or two years or two thousand years....I will wait for her."

**

As the weeks and months passes, I've slowly picked myself up.

Though the days at work was depressing, I tried to make myself busy with the trivial chores so that I won't think about her that much. I also no longer use alcohol to ease my pain from missing her. Instead of going to the club, I'd returned to the gym after work and exercise until I became too tired to think of anything.

But I am still waiting for her.

On weekends I would go to the cinema we used to go on our dates and watch a movie alone.

I would get on a bus and sit by the window at the back seat like how we used to do. There was no clear destination; I just let the bus take me around the city until it reaches the last stop.

I would go to the park after work and sits on the bench that used to be ours.

It's already been six months.

And today, it's also the same.

I sat on the bench in the park.

I plugged in my earphones and let the music runs through.

It was Bobby Kim, Afraid To Love. The first song she forced me to listen.

Memories began to play in my head like it has only been yesterday she was sitting next to me, laughing at my lame jokes.

Like it was only yesterday I was holding her hand....and bashfully told her that I love her.

It was the first time I ever said that to someone.

It was the first time I ever felt what it's like to be in love.

And it's also the last.

**

"Kwon Yuri, I want you to cover the J.Estina new product launch event this Thursday," said Madam Kang to me.

I stared at my boss for the longest time. I was worried when she called me into her office earlier, thinking that she was going to fire me, but now she's saying that I'm back to taking photos? Is she joking?

"Here, the camera kit for the event." She added, putting a bag on the table and pushed it towards me.

I looked at the bag, still in disbelief.

"Go on and take it." She said.

"Excuse me for asking, but Madam did you just asked me to cover for.. J.Estina event?" I asked.

She smiled and nodded. "Why? You're not happy with this?"

"No, that's not what I meant! It's just that this is all too sudden. I thought Ms. Jessica forbid me from entering any J.Estina event."

"I'm not sure what happened between you two, but looks like she'd already forgave you for the last incident."

I gulped.

"She called me as soon as she arrived from New York yesterday and asked me if you could go to the event." She replied.

"She..personally asked for me?" I asked, slightly stuttering.

In my head I can't stop myself from wondering why suddenly Jessica was being nice.

Could it be that..

No.

**

Jessica looked different.

I haven't met her for six months and now she looks like a new person.

Instead of the weak and sensitive woman who hid behind her arrogance, the woman who's standing on the stage now was oozing with confidence and grace. She really looked like someone who could take over the family business empire.

I snapped her pictures along with a group of other photographers. I doubt she even realized that I was there.

But then she looked at my direction.

Her gaze was straight at me.

**

Here we go again, another one-on-one interview with Ms. Jessica Jung.

I didn't know when Sooyoung arranged for an interview with her, but here we are, the three of us, sitting on the couch in a room.

At first we were being professional journalists, with Sooyoung asking her standard questions taken from the reporters handbook. And Jessica, though she seemed a bit tired, answered all the questions with smiles, showcasing her charms as a public figure.

I took her photos after the interview ended. Though it was quite awkward, we pulled it through. I was itching to ask her about Tiffany, but somehow I didn't.

I couldn't.

I was scared to know the answer.

Suddenly,

"Ms. Jessica, have you heard from Tiffany? Seems like she had disappeared for the last six months." Sooyoung suddenly asked.

I almost dropped my camera upon hearing that.

"Hey, Sooyoung-

"Yes." Jessica replied short.

I looked at her, shocked. "You do?"

Then Jessica continued,

"She was together with me in New York for the last six months."

..together in New York..

Suddenly,

..the world around me turned dark.

There was no sound.

My hands were trembling so I dropped my camera.

I saw Sooyoung and her mouth was moving like she was saying something.

While Jessica stared at me.

So Tiffany chose her.

All this while, I was waiting for nothing.

It hurts.

I put my hand on my chest.

It hurts here.

It hurts so much.

It hurts so much so I turn around and ran out of the room.

I continued to run, pushing through the crowd of guests in the hall.

I saw the main door of the hotel so I ran faster.

I need to get out of there.

I pushed the doorman too hard and he fell.

Once outside I continued to run.

I ran until I reached the main road.

And I stood still in the middle of the road.

Cars passed around me but I continued to stand in my spot.

So this is how it feels.

So this is how it feels to have your heart ripped into pieces.

Suddenly I saw a bright light coming straight towards me.

But I don't care.

Truly

I saw Tiffany sitting in the middle of her art workshop. She was wearing white and her hair was let loose. Diligently she was working on her painting, stroking her brush gently against the canvas.

*Because I'm truly,
Truly in love with you girl,
I'm truly head over heels with your love.
I need you, and with your love I'm free,
And truly, you know that you're all I need.*

Lionel Richie - Truly

I stared at her as my feet moved by itself and I find myself walking towards her. Each step I took made my heart beat faster. It felt like it was going to jump out of my chest.

Suddenly, she put down her brush and looked at me.

I gulped. I couldn't bring my feet any further when her gaze was fixed on me.

And I stood still like a statue.

We looked at each other in silence. There were no words exchanged between us, just glances.

I bit my lip.

I want to tell her how empty I felt going through each day without her for the past six months.

I want to tell her that the only reason I was able to live was because I was waiting for her.

I want to tell her that she is the only person I truly love in this whole world.

But, when I opened my mouth to speak there was no sound coming out.

Suddenly, it became a world without sound.

Tiffany stood up from her stool and looked at me. She opened her mouth to speak, but there was no sound. No matter how hard I tried to concentrate, I still can't hear a thing.

I felt like crying for not being able to hear what she wanted to say. Tears were brimming in my eyes.

I felt so hopeless.

Suddenly,

"Yurree.."

I gulped hearing her voice.

My mouth slowly crept up, and I ended up smiling widely. Hearing her voice calling my name calms my weary heart. Only god knows how much I missed her voice.

Suddenly, the ground began to shake like there was an earthquake. I looked around me and saw the wall around the workshop begin to crumble. They all melted like chocolate exposed to the sunlight.

I glanced at Tiffany and she was still standing there.

"*TIFFANY!*" I called, but there was no voice came out.

I tried to run to her, but both my foot were stuck in the melted floor.

"*FANY-AHHH!*"

She didn't do anything; instead, she just looked at me and smiled.

Tears were rolling down my cheeks as I struggled helplessly to get to her side. But she was disappearing with each passing second.

"FANY-AHHHHHHH!"

"Hey Yul, calm down!" A voice said to me.

"FANYYYY!!" I continued to shout.

"Yuri-ah, relax. Tiffany isn't here," said another voice.

She isn't here?

I slowly opened my eyes and saw the white ceiling. Confused, I looked around me and saw my best friend, Sooyoung who was looking at me with tears in her eyes. I was sitting on a bed, and I was wearing ugly white clothes. I realized that I was in the hospital.

"Ti-Tiffany isn't here?" I asked.

Sooyoung didn't reply anything; instead, she suddenly threw her arms around my shoulders and hugged me tightly.

"Thank god you're okay, Yuri-ah.." She mumbled as she sobbed.

I was choking from her tight embrace and gasping for air when I saw another person in the room.

It was Taeyang.

He looked at me without saying anything but I saw something in his eyes. He was worried about me.

"Wh-What happened?" I asked them after Sooyoung set me free from her embrace.

"You almost got hit by a car. Luckily, the driver was an old granny who drove very slowly. She was able to brake in time before hitting you. Then, you passed out." Sooyoung replied.

I didn't remember a thing.

"What were you thinking? Standing in the middle of a busy road at night.." Taeyang suddenly asked, angry.

I looked down and kept mum.

"Were you trying to get killed?" He continued.

"Bae, stop it. The important thing is that Yuri is safe now." Sooyoung said.

"SHE COULD'VE DIED!" He burst.

Sooyoung was startled and became speechless for a moment.

He looked at me and gritted his teeth, "Is she worth that much for you to give up your life?"

"How stupid can you be? What can you do if you're dead?"

He sighed, "If you really love her you should continue to live and....try your best to get her back."

I was shocked hearing that from him.

"If I can't have you, at least I want to see you happy." He added.

"Youngbae-

He turned around and left the room before I could say anything.

**

I return to work a week later. Since the J.Estina event, Madam Kang had reinstated my position as photographer and I got busy again. I was thankful for everything, because the work assignments kept me away from being depressed.

Sooyoung was also very helpful; she was one of the factors that keep me going strong. She always tried to cheer me up with her crazy love stories every time I was feeling down. She was still going around dating the wrong men and went through multiple heartbreaks. I wonder how she managed to do so and still live cheerfully like this.

I'm not even over this one girl.

Still..

**

"Yul, let's go!" Sooyoung said, grabbing my arm.

"Err... where to?" I asked, puzzled. I was editing photos in the office when she suddenly came.

"We have an event at the gallery to cover today, hurry up or we'll be late!" She replied, panicked.

"What event? I thought Angel and Michelle are going to work on that one.." I said, referring to our colleagues.

"Those two old people are stuck at Jeju airport from yesterday's coverage. They overslept and missed their flight. They won't make it in time so we have to do this for them!" Sooyoung said, grabbing my camera and bag.

I sighed, "Seriously?"

**

We arrived at the gallery just in time for the start of the launch; though we were the last press to arrive.

I didn't even bother hanging my camera around my neck as we got in. I couldn't help but feel quite pissed for doing the job for someone else. I was still tired from covering two events from yesterday, and I will have a fashion editorial photo shoot tomorrow.

"Cheer up! We'll ask them to treat us to expensive food once they come back." Sooyoung said, cheering me up.

I glared at her, "Not everyone can be easily bribed with food like you."

"Oh come on, get over it! We're here now. Since we're already here, why don't you look at the event's brochure first?" She said, handing me a pink card.

"I don't want to. I'll just snap a few photos and then we'll leave." I replied, uninterested.

Sooyoung was still prancing around cheerfully, and at that time I don't understand why she was so happy about working on that day. It's not even a party, just a boring art exhibition filled with a bunch of boring looking people with boring fashion sense.

I sighed and began to pay attention to the event.

Then I realized it.

This was the same gallery where I first saw Tiffany.

The memories that I tried to leave behind rushed into my head. That day was still fresh in my mind.

I still remember the sorrow in her eyes when she was staring at the painting of the broken heart.

That was the sight that first captured my heart.

"Yul, you should start taking pictures now." Sooyoung suddenly said, interrupted my train of thoughts.

"Ye-yes, sure." I said, nodding.

I noticed that Sooyoung was still staring at me with her creepy motherly gaze.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" I asked, annoyed.

She forced a smile and shook her head, "Nothing. Hurry up and take photos, Yuri-ah."

"Especially the paintings." She added.

"Okay."

While Sooyoung was interviewing a few visitors, I walked towards to the first painting where a few art lovers were ogling at.

"She is so talented," said one man.

"Though this is just her first exhibition but she'd already won an award for one of her paintings while she was in New York," replied a woman.

"Impressive."

I rolled my eyes at their praises for the artist and began adjusting my camera lenses for a photo of the painting.

It was a painting of a white unicorn. They were right; it was beautiful. There was something calming about the painting, but I'm not sure what it was.

Suddenly, it triggered something in my memory.

Of that one fine evening when Tiffany and I were sitting at the park bench.

I was trying to prove to her that I can speak English.

"My name is Yuri Kwon."

"You're Unicorn?"

"It's Yuri Kwon!"

I smiled, but emotions were rushing to my heart and I realized that my eyes were brimming with tears. I quickly shook my head to pull myself together.

It was not the time to be strolling down memory lane. After all, I was there for work.

And then I moved to the next painting.

But unlike the 'Unicorn', I couldn't understand this one. It was a painting of something round and dark brown on a black round shape surface. I thought it was weird, as it was completely different than the previous artwork. How did the two paintings relate to each other?

I can seriously never understand art.

I turned around to check more artworks at the opposite side of the room, but I was up for a surprise.

Almost all the guests and media present there were staring at me.

I thought they were staring at the painting, but no. They were looking at me as if I was a painting too.

I was worried and puzzled; wondering why they were looking at me.

Did I do something wrong? Or maybe I ripped my shirt without realizing and now they were all staring at my exposed chest.

"Is there something wrong.." I said, uncomfortable.

"It's her," I heard someone said.

"No doubt, that's the woman," said another one.

"She looks prettier in real life," one guy added.

I gulped, and creased my eyebrows in confusion. I looked for Sooyoung but she was nowhere in sight, I panicked.

"That's why you should read the brochure and do research before coming to an event," a familiar female voice behind me said.

I turned around immediately and saw Jessica Jung staring at me.

In her hand was a pink card, like the brochure Sooyoung tried to give me earlier.

“Yuri-shi, you-

“What are you doing here?” I asked, accidentally cuts her sentence.

She shook her head, “You have a serious bad habit of not letting people finish talking.”

“Excuse me?”

“Just like last week when you ran off when I tried to tell you about Tiffany.” She replied, crossing her arms.

I shook my head, “Enough. You don’t have to explain it, I think I know.”

“No you don’t.” She said.

I turned around and faced her again. Somehow, I feel like I should hear what she was trying to tell me.

“Tiffany came to see me a day after you broke up with her.” Jessica began.

I waited nervously for her to continue.

“She came to return the ring and.. rejected my proposal.” She continued.

I gasped, shocked.

“But I thought..”

“Well, I won’t lie; I was very, very devastated.” She added coolly.

“Wait, but you said you were in New York with her for the past six months.” I asked, confused.

“That’s true. At first, I thought she was going to meet you and reconcile, but she didn’t.”

“Instead she told me that she promised you a special invite for her first art exhibition, to show you her collection of paintings. So she decided to go to New York and make a name for herself as an artist first.”

I became speechless.

“And so I went to New York to help her fulfil her dream because I thought.. that was the least I could do for her to make up for all the pain I put her through.”

“I just wanted to see her happy.” She added, smiling weakly.

I looked at Jessica and saw the difference in her. It was not the Jessica I used to know.

“Anyway, she won an award for one of her paintings in an art festival two months ago. It was a painting of a young woman and though I beg to differ, everyone were saying the woman is pretty and all that..” Jessica added, mumbling the last part.

I was still frozen in shock and speechless. A part of me still refused to believe that this was real.

Jessica handed me a pink card, "Here you go."

"A special invite for her first art exhibition, though you've already entered using your media pass.."

I stared at it blankly at first, and slowly I took the card from her hand.

She let the card go reluctantly and sighed,

"I will keep my promise."

"But..if you ever break her heart, I'll make your life a living hell." Jessica added, serious.

She walked past me after giving the card and went to Sooyoung, who was standing by. I didn't realize when Sooyoung got there; she wasn't around when I was looking for her earlier.

"Sooyoung-shi, would you like to have coffee with me?" Jessica asked coyly.

Sooyoung seemed surprised.

She scoffed, "Coffee? That's so lame. But, since you're insisting, sure."

I didn't know when they got close enough to have coffee together, but I have a feeling that Sooyoung tricked me to be here.

They both left and I was still standing there with the pink card in my hand. The visitors were still staring at me, but all of that became irrelevant.

Everything became irrelevant except this pink card.

I looked at the card as my heartbeat increases.

'Tiffany Hwang's first art exhibition: Truly'

My hands were trembling as I continued to read.

'Dedicated to the one woman I truly love.'

"Fany-ah.."

I looked up and saw a painting in the middle of the room.

'Winner of New York Art Festival: Best New Artist.'

I gasped.

It's the same painting that I tried to look at the day we broke up.

"I've told you not to peek on my unfinished paintings." She warned, but with a smile.

"I'm sorry Fany-ah, it's too tempting. But, are all these unfinished?" I asked, pointing at others in the room.

She smiled.

"I want to put them in my exhibition one day. I'll give you a special invite and you'll get to see all of them."

‘Title: Yurree.’

It was a painting of me.

Tears were brimming in my eyes.

I turned around to wipe my tears and saw the weird painting of something round and dark brown on a black round shape surface I saw earlier.

And then it hits me.

That morning when I made her breakfast for the first time.

"OH MY GOD! YOUR PANCAKE!" Tiffany suddenly shouted, pointing at behind me.

"Ewww!" Tiffany shrieked, while pressing her nose close with her fingers.

"Now that was a 'pan' cake." I said wittily.

We looked at each other and laughed.

‘Title: Pan Cake.’

I chuckled, after realizing that the complex artwork was just a painting of my burnt pancake.

I quickly paced forward to look at more of the paintings in the gallery.

There was a painting of a bench in an empty park.

I remembered her warm and gentle hand caressing my cheeks that evening.

"I don't know what it is, but....stay strong Yuri-ah." She said, smiling earnestly at me.

And when I looked into her sparkling eyes and suddenly, I realized something.

She is worth it.

I bit my lip, trying hard not to cry.

I realized that all the paintings in the gallery were the collection of all the things I did with Tiffany.

The back seat of the bus where she used to lean her head on my shoulder,

a camera that I always carry,

a box of popcorn that we always bought when watching movies,

a pancake with honey on top..

They were all our memories painted on canvas.

At that time, I was no longer able to hold back my tears.

Suddenly,

“You promised to wait for me,” said a voice behind me.

I gulped.

I know that voice.

I miss hearing that voice.

I quickly turned around and almost fell on my knees.

It was her, the one my heart was yearning for.

Tiffany.

She looked just the same since the last time I met her six months ago.

She still took my breath away with her enchanting smile and mesmerizing eyes.

"I hope six month wasn't too long," She said, smiling.

“Fa-Fany..” I tried to reply but my lips were trembling.

“How could you-

I paused.

“How could you showcase a painting of my burnt pancake in a gallery?”

We looked at each other in silence.

And then we both chuckled.

“You’re complaining about that painting? I thought you were going to yell at me!” She said, laughing.

“I want to.” I said slowly.

“I should yell at you for disappearing for six months....and made me cry at night for missing you.”

“But I just can’t.”

She smiled.

Then she walked towards me and stopped when she was only a few steps away.

“Six months ago you asked me who I truly love.” She said.

“I’ve decided the answer right after you left me that night.”

“It’s you.”

“Yuri, I love you.”

“Truly.”



Epilogue

“I hate her.” Jessica muttered.

Tiffany glanced at her and shook her head. They were in a restaurant, waiting.

“You keep saying that and yet, you’re still dating her.” Tiffany said with a chuckle.

“Aren’t you annoyed at all, Tiffany? Doesn’t Yuri also always turn up late for dates because she got some sudden event to cover? I’m a very busy person you know.” She asked, rolling her eyes at the second part.

“Well, yes, but they are working for one of the biggest fashion magazine. By the way I think Sooyoung always puts you first.. most of the time.”

“Oh really? When?” Jessica said, crossing her arms.

**

“I hate her.” Sooyoung muttered as she was driving.

“No you don’t.” I replied nonchalant.

“She will nag at me for being even a minute late. Seriously, why is she always rushing time? It’s not like she’s some kind of president of a country..”

“Excuse me, she is the vice president of Korea’s biggest jewelry company.” I cut in.

“Yeah, but..”

“You need to chill, Sooyoung-ah. By the way, I think Jessica tries her best to make time for you even if she’s busy. You shouldn’t complain.”

“Oh really, when? Why are you on her side when I am your best friend?”

**

“I’m leaving.” Jessica said, standing up.

Tiffany grabbed her hand.

“Hey, just wait for a while. They’ll be here soon. Plus, it’s your idea to have a double date tonight; you can’t just leave.”

Jessica scoffed, “Whatever, you can date them both tonight. I have to meet my mother later on and-

Jessica paused when she saw Yuri and Sooyoung rushing from through the door.

Tiffany saw Yuri and smiled sweetly at her.

“You’re late.” Jessica said, crossing her arms.

Sooyoung sighed, “You know Sica....it was all Yuri’s fault.”

“I told her to hurry because I don’t want to make my princess wait but she took such a long time in the toilet and that’s why we’re late..”

Sooyoung had changed into a completely different person in front of Jessica.

I shook my head at the typical whipped Sooyoung and walked to my one and only.

“I’m sorry I made you wait.” I said to Tiffany.

She shook her head as she took my hand.

“It’s okay, Yurree-ah.”

The four of us sat there for dinner and even though it was a double date, there were rarely interactions between the couples. Sooyoung and Jessica were being bipolar at the table, with the sudden bickering and the sudden lovey-dovey spoon-feeding every now and then.

“They’re too noisy.” Tiffany said to me.

“Hmm, should we go out for a walk?” I asked.

“How about the bill?”

“I’m sure Jessica will take care of it.”

Tiffany chuckled.

We left the table, and they didn’t even realize it.

We held hands and strolled by the sidewalk, enjoying the night air.

It has already been a year but it felt like it was just yesterday we had our first date.

Suddenly, Tiffany stopped walking.

“What’s wrong?” I asked.

She smiled and took out an iPod from her pocket. And then, she plugged in an earphone into my left ear.

“What is it that you’re trying to tell me now?” I asked, worried.

“Just listen.” She hushed.

Girl, tell me only this

That I'll have your heart for always

And you want me by your side

Whispering the words I'll always love you

And forever I will be your lover

And I know if you really care

I will always be there

Now I need to tell you this

There's no other love like your love

And i, as long as I live,

I'll give you all the joy

My heart and soul can give

Let me hold you

I need to have you near me

And I feel with you in my arms

This love will last forever

Because I'm truly

Truly in love with you girl

I'm truly head over heels with your love

I need you, and with your love I'm free

And truly, you know you're all I need

THE END