FRIDAY NIGHT, AT SOME NOT-SO-POPULAR BAR...


THAT'S IT, GUYS! THIS IS ROCK'N'ROLL!

FORGET IT, MAN.

Don't
Pay
attention!
It's free

NONE OF THE FOUR PEOPLE WHO WERE CRAZY ENOUGH TO SHOW UP TONIGHT GIVE A SHIT ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

RESTROOMS

FINE, MAN, WE HAD A BAD NIGHT. SO WHAT? EVERY LEGENDARY BAND HAS PLAYED TO HALF A DOZEN PEOPLE WHEN THEY WERE STARTING OUT!

WE'RE NOT STARTING OUT, NICK. WE'RE ALREADY IN MID-TWENTIES, AND THIS BAND IS FIVE YEARS OLD. WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE. NOT AFTER YOU DECIDED THAT WE WERE GOING TO STOP PLAYING COVERS TO PLAY ONLY YOUR SONGS. GUESS WHAT? YOUR SONGS SUCK! NOBODY WANTS TO HEAR THIS CRAP. I'M OUT OF THIS FUCKING BAND!

GO TO HELL THEN! YOU'LL FUCKING REGRET THIS! WE CAN EASILY FIND A NEW BASS PLAYER, RIGHT, SAM?

Don't Pay

It's free

ACTUALLY, I'M LEAVING THE BAND TOO, NICK. DON'T GET ME WRONG. I DON'T EVEN THINK YOUR SONGS ARE *THAT* BAD... THE THING IS... I GOT BILLS TO PAY. I CAN'T KEEP PLAYING TO EMPTY BARS. SORRY, MAN!

YOU TWO ARE... TRAITORS! GO AWAY THEN. BUT LISTEN TO WHAT I'M SAYING, I'M GOING TO BE FAMOUS, AND I'M GOING TO BE FAMOUS PLAYING MY SONGS!

I DON'T NEED THOSE LOSERS. FOR TONIGHT, I GUESS WHAT I HAVE LEFT IS TO TRY AND HAVE SOME FUN...

RESTROOMS


RESTROOMS


HI THERE, PRETTY LADY!
CAN I BUY YOU A DRINK?

RESTROOMS

OH, HI! YOU WERE THE ONE SINGING, RIGHT? YOU'RE SO GOOD. I REALLY ENJOYED THE CONCERT!

REALLY? THAT MAKES YOU MY BIGGEST FAN TONIGHT. I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO BUY YOU TWO DRINKS THEN! I'M NICK, BY THE WAY. NICK MOORE.

TEE-HEE NICE TO MEET YOU, NICK, I'M MIN-JI. SORRY FOR MY BAD ENGLISH. I'M HERE ON AN EXCHANGE PROGRAM AND I DON'T KNOW THE LANGUAGE VERY WELL YET.

나는 당신의
영어가 훌륭하다고
생각합니다!

WOW, SO YOU SPEAK KOREAN? LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE A LOT IN COMMON NICK-OPPA. I ALSO LIKE TO SING AND WRITE SONGS, YOU KNOW?

*I THINK YOUR ENGLISH IS GREAT!

GOD BLESS THE LOCAL COLLEGE FOR THIS EXCHANGE PROGRAM WITH KOREAN STUDENTS. AREN'T KOREAN GIRLS THE HOTTEST IN THE WORLD? JUST HEARING THIS CHICK CALL ME '*NICK-OPPA*' MAKES ME SO EXCITED! IT REALLY PAID OFF TO LEARN HALF A DOZEN SENTENCES IN KOREAN...



Chapter One
Fingertip

THREE DAYS LATER...

ONCE AGAIN, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR INVITING US INTO YOUR STUDIO, NICK-OPPA. WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR PRODUCING AND RECORDING OUR SONG WITHOUT CHARGING US A PENNY! YOU'RE TOO KIND!

THAT WAS MY PLEASURE, MIN-JI. IT'S ALWAYS NICE TO HELP FELLOW ARTISTS AND SONGWRITERS!

THANKS ANYWAY! IT'S A REALLY NICE STUDIO YOU HAVE HERE. I BET YOU'VE SPENT A FORTUNE BUILDING THIS.

I'VE INVESTED SOME MONEY IN EQUIPMENT AND SUCH, SURE, BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT I INHERITED THIS PLACE FROM MY UNCLE. GREAT GUY, UNCLE FRANK! HE HAD SOME ISSUES WITH GAMBLING, BUT HE MANAGED TO KEEP THIS PLACE UNTIL THE END, AND IT WAS HIS GREAT PRIDE! HE WAS THE ONE WHO GOT ME INTO ROCK MUSIC AND TAUGHT ME HOW TO PLAY GUITAR. MAN, I REALLY MISS THAT GUY!

WE'RE SO SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS, NICK-OPPA. IT'S ALWAYS SAD TO LOSE SOMEONE WE LOVE. I IMAGINE YOU STILL HAVE YOUR PARENTS, THOUGH, AND THAT THEY ARE VERY PROUD OF YOU. FAMILY IS EVERYTHING, AFTER ALL.

MY PARENTS, PROUD OF ME?! NOT IN A MILLION YEARS!

LET'S JUST SAY MY PARENTS WERE NEVER VERY HAPPY WITH MY LIFE CHOICES, SO WE WENT OUR SEPARATE WAYS. I THINK THIS WAS BETTER FOR EVERYONE.

BUT LET'S PUT THAT ASIDE, OKAY? IN ANY CASE, I'M NOT AN EXPERT ON POP MUSIC, BUT I FOUND THE SONG YOU GIRLS RECORDED... INTERESTING! FROM WHAT I UNDERSTAND, YOU WERE ONCE TRAINEES AT A RECORD LABEL IN KOREA, RIGHT?

THAT'S RIGHT. WE TRAINED TOGETHER FOR LIKE FOUR YEARS, BUT THEN, SADLY, THE COMPANY WENT BANKRUPT BEFORE WE COULD DEBUT. AS YOU CAN GUESS, WE WERE HEARTBROKEN!

LIKE IN YOUR FAMILY, MY PARENTS WEREN'T TOO KEEN ON MY MUSIC CAREER EITHER, AND FOR A FEW YEARS I PUT THAT IDEA ASIDE AND WENT TO COLLEGE. JUST RECENTLY I GOT BACK TO WRITING SONGS, AND DASOM, EUNJOO AND I STARTED PRACTICING SOME CHOREOGRAPHIES AGAIN. IT WAS A GREAT LUCK THAT WE WERE CHOSEN IN THIS EXCHANGE PROGRAM TOGETHER. WE'RE STILL VERY CLOSE TO THIS DAY.

AT FIRST, WE WERE JUST DOING IT JUST FOR FUN, BUT THEN AN OPPORTUNITY AROSE...

YEAH... FROM WHAT YOU GIRLS TOLD ME, IT'S ALL ABOUT THAT T-PANDA GUY, RIGHT? I REMEMBER HIM EVEN THOUGH I'VE NEVER BEEN INTO K-POP. THAT FUNNY SONG HE WROTE BLEW UP ALL OVER THE WORLD A FEW YEARS AGO, AND WHEREVER YOU WENT IT WAS PLAYING NONSTOP!

EXACTLY. AND T-PANDA HAD ENOUGH OF THE IDOL LIFE AND DECIDED TO START HIS OWN RECORD LABEL. BUT THE THING IS, HE'S TRYING TO DO THINGS A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY THAN THE NORM IN KOREA. INSTEAD OF TRAINING IDOLS FOR YEARS AND YEARS ON END, HE IS LOOKING FOR "AMATEUR" GROUPS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN DEBUTING.

HE JUST ANNOUNCED A CONTEST TO CHOOSE THE COMPANY'S FIRST GROUP. SORT OF LIKE "THE VOICE", YOU KNOW? WITH GROUPS BEING VOTED ON WITHOUT PEOPLE SEEING THE MEMBERS' FACES.

THAT'S WHY WE NEED YOU TO BE BRUTALLY HONEST WITH US, NICK-OPPA.

DO YOU REALLY THINK OUR SONG IS GOOD ENOUGH?

HMM... LIKE I SAID, I'M NOT A POP MUSIC EXPERT. I DO THINK, THOUGH, THAT THE SONG YOU GIRLS RECORDED IS... QUITE CATCHY...

BUT...?

WELL, BEING HONEST, I THINK SOMETHING IN THE VOCALS IS MISSING. DON'T GET ME WRONG, YOU GIRLS ARE IN TUNE AND CLEARLY KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, BUT THE SONG NEEDS SOME HIGH NOTES AND A MORE VIBRANT VOICE, ESPECIALLY IN THE LAST CHORUS.

WHEN WE WERE TRAINEES, WE HAD A MAIN VOCALIST, A GIRL CALLED JIHOO. YOU HAD TO HEAR HER SINGING... SHE WAS GREAT! UNFORTUNATELY, THOUGH, SHE LEFT THE GROUP EVEN BEFORE THE COMPANY WENT OUT OF BUSINESS.

I SEE... WELL, WITH JIHOO OR NOT, I BELIEVE YOU GIRLS CAN DO BETTER. LET'S TRY FEW MORE TAKES. MAYBE YOU WERE JUST A LITTLE NERVOUS BEFORE. JUST REMEMBER TO FEEL WHAT YOU'RE SINGING, OKAY? THIS IS REALLY IMPORTANT. I ONCE WITNESSED A GUY DRINKING A WHOLE WEEK TO RECORD A SONG ABOUT A MONSTER HANGOVER. FUN TIMES... I WONDER HOW TOM IS DOING IN REHAB.

ANYWAY, ABOUT THE HIGH NOTES, I THINK THE SONG WOULD NEED SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

♫ AHHHHHH! ♫

WOW, MINJI-UNNIE WASN'T LYING WHEN SHE SAID YOU HAD AN AMAZING VOICE, NICK-OPPA!

HALF AN HOUR LATER...

OK, GIRLS...


I SHAVED OFF MY BEARD LIKE YOU GUYS ASKED ME TO DO, BUT I STILL DON'T SEE THE POINT OF IT, YOU KNOW?

C'MON, NICK-OPPA, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID IT'S IMPORTANT TO FEEL WHAT ONE'S SINGING, RIGHT? AND YOU PROMISED TO RECORD THE LEAD VOCAL IN OUR SONG SINCE THERE'S SOMETHING LACKING, AND YOU CAN SING IN A PITCH AS HIGH AS OURS!

THAT WAY WE WILL HAVE MORE CHANCES IN THE CONTEST. AND UNTIL THE RECORD LABEL MAKES A DECISION, WE'LL HAVE TIME TO PRACTICE AND SING IDENTICALLY, OR AT LEAST CLOSE ENOUGH, TO YOUR RECORDING.

MINJI-UNNIE IS RIGHT. BUT EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN SING A LOT BETTER THAN US, YOU'RE NOT SOUNDING GENUINE, NICK-OPPA. YOU'VE TRIED A LOT OF TAKES, BUT EVEN SINGING IN A HIGH PITCH, YOU'RE NOT SOUNDING LIKE A GIRL. THAT'S WHY YOU NEED SOME... INSPIRATION.

I UNDERSTAND, GIRLS, BUT... MAKEUP?! ISN'T IT A LITTLE TOO MUCH?

I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE SO RELUCTANT, NICK-OPPA. HOW HARD CAN IT BE FOR A MAN LIKE YOU? IT'S NOT LIKE A LITTLE MAKEUP WILL TURN YOU INTO A GIRL, RIGHT?

ME AND MY BIG MOUTH! YES, I WAS THE ONE WHO STARTED THIS TALK OF FEELING WHAT YOU'RE SINGING, AND NOW THEY WANT TO PUT MAKEUP ON ME TO SING A SONG ABOUT A GIRL BECOMING MORE FEMININE TO SEDUCE HER CRUSH!

FUCK, WHY DID THOSE KOREAN GIRLS HAVE TO BE SO HOT? I JUST CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT AROUND THEM! AND MINJI HERE IS REALLY PLAYING HARD TO GET... WE HAVEN'T EVEN KISSED YET!

SIGH FINE, LET'S DO THIS THEN!

FABULOUS! I THINK WE SHOULD START WITH YOUR NAILS, THEN!

N-NAILS?!

I ALWAYS HAVE SPARE NAILS IN MY PURSE BECAUSE A GIRL NEVER KNOWS WHEN SHE'S GOING TO HAVE AN ACCIDENT... ONE NAIL GLUED, NINE TO GO!

MAN, THIS IS CRAZY! HOW DO YOU GIRLS MANAGE TO DO ANYTHING WITH NAILS THIS LONG? ONE THING'S FOR SURE, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO PLAY THE GUITAR RIGHT NOW!

NOBODY'S EXPECTING YOU TO PLAY GUITAR, NICK-OPPA. YOU JUST NEED TO SING SWEETLY! LET EUNJOO-YA PAINT YOUR PRETTY NAILS.

OH FUCK...

WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE, OPPA... OR SHOULD I SAY UNNIE? *TEE-HEE* REMEMBER THAT NOW YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE PLAYING THE ROLE OF A GIRL WANTING TO BE CHARMING AND FEMININE. YOU SHOULDN'T BE CURSING!

I KNOW WE'RE PUSHING A LOT, OPPA, BUT THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US! WE'LL OWE YOU A BIG ONE. SO, COULD YOU START TALKING LIKE A GIRL? TO GET INTO CHARACTER, YOU KNOW?

WHEN YOU KOREANS GET AN IDEA IN YOUR HEAD, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE YOU FORGET ABOUT IT, RIGHT?

CORRECT! COULD YOU TRY THIS, PRETTY PLEASE?

L-LIKE THIS?

HMM... NOT BAD...

NOW LET'S DO YOUR MAKEUP, SHALL WE?

DON'T LOOK SO SAD, UNNIE!
MAKEUP IS A LOT OF FUN!

I'M NOT GOING TO WORRY ABOUT FOUNDATION BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE ANY OF YOUR SHADE HERE, BUT LET'S TRY SOME BLUSH, OKAY?

YOU STILL HAVE SOME HAIRS ON YOUR FACE. NOT GOOD. MAYBE YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT ELECTROLYSIS! *TEE-HEE*

NOW SOME MASCARA AND EYESHADOW. ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT ME TO PLUCK YOUR EYEBROWS? YOU COULD LOOK EVEN PRETTIER!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR VOICE? REMEMBER THAT YOU MUST SPEAK LIKE A GIRL!

YES, I'M SURE.

AND, OF COURSE, WE CAN'T FORGET THE LIPSTICK! IT FEELS GOOD, DOESN'T IT? LET ME DO SOMETHING WITH YOUR HAIR TOO. IT DOESN'T LOOK SO STYLISH -


THERE, MUCH BETTER! DO YOU WANT TO SEE HOW YOU LOOK?

WHATEVER... *AHEM*
I'M SURE I LOOK
RIDICULOUS, ANYWAY.

DON'T BE SO SURE!

YEAH, LIKE I SAID, RIDICULOUS!

NOT EVEN FIVE MINUTES AS A GIRL, AND YOU'RE ALREADY ACTING LIKE ONE, HUH? YEAH, WE ALWAYS THINK WE CAN LOOK BETTER, DON'T WE?

ABSOLUTELY, UNNIE!

I KNOW I ASKED YOU TO PRETEND TO BE A GIRL, BUT I WASN'T PICTURING YOU AS A BITCHY ONE. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE SARCASTIC WITH ME, OPPA.

C'MON, NICOLE, DON'T BE LIKE THAT- I KNOW YOU'RE MAD, BUT LET'S JUST RECORD THIS SONG SO WE CAN HAVE FUN...

FUCK, I JUST CAN'T RESIST HER WHISPERING IN MY EAR LIKE THIS. IT'S SO DAMN HOT!


O-OKAY...

THAT'S MY GOOD GIRL!

Chapter Two
Knock Knock


THE NEXT MORNING...

NICK, OPEN THE DOOR RIGHT NOW OR I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, YOUR SON OF A BITCH!

HMM...?


WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?
WHO IS MAKING SUCH A DRAMA?

MAN, I FEEL LIKE I GOT HIT BY A TRUCK. THOSE KOREAN GIRLS MAY LOOK CUTE AND ALL, BUT THEY SURELY DRINK LIKE LUMBERJACKS!


OUCH, WHY THE HELL DID I JAB MY EYE?

OH, OF COURSE, IT'S THOSE DAMN FAKE NAILS! EUNJOO SAID SHE DIDN'T HAVE THE SOLVENT WITH HER YESTERDAY. SHE REALLY SHOULD HAVE CHECKED THIS OUT BEFORE GLUING THOSE THINGS TO MY FINGERS!

FUCK, I DON'T THINK I'LL EVER FORGET HOW HUMILIATED I FELT YESTERDAY...

C'MON, NICOLE, WE'VE TRIED THIS ABOUT THIRTY TIMES ALREADY!

I'M DOING MY BEST, OKAY? THAT'S NOT EASY SOUNDING LIKE A GIRL. TO MAKE IT WORSE, I HAVE TO SING IN KOREAN, A LANGUAGE I BARELY KNOW. DO YOU REALLY NEED TO KEEP CALLING ME NICOLE, ANYWAY?

YES, I DO. NOW MORE THAN EVER! YOU SEE, THAT IS THE PROBLEM, YOU'RE NOT TRYING HARD TO BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE NICOLE, A GIRL BECOMING MORE FEMININE AND CONFIDENT TO SEDUCE HER CRUSH. IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT YOU CAN SING BETTER THAN US IF YOU CAN'T PLAY THE CHARACTER. YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, GIRL!

SO NOW I WANT YOU TO LOOK AT YOUR PRETTY NAILS AND BE PROUD OF THEM... THINK OF THE TASTE OF YOUR LIPSTICK AND HOW GIRLY IT MAKES YOU FEEL... WHAT ABOUT THE WEIGHT OF YOUR EYELASHES? YOU JUST LOVE THE WAY THEY FLUTTER CHARMINGLY... IT'S ALL SO EXCITING KNOWING YOU'RE ONE STEP CLOSER TO WINNING YOUR CRUSH'S HEART...

AND YOU DO WANT TO WIN YOUR CRUSH'S HEART, DON'T YOU?

A-ALRIGHT... LET ME TRY AGAIN.

I WAS ONCE SOMEONE WHO HAD NO PLACE,
HIDING MY SMILE, A MASK OVER MY FACE.
BUT NOW I'M STEPPING OUT, BREAKING FREE,
UNLEASHING THE GIRL I'M MEANT TO BE.

I'LL SLIP ON HEELS, REACHING FOR THE SKY,
WITH EVERY STEP, I'LL CATCH YOUR EYE.
IN SHADES OF ROSE, MY LIPS WILL SHINE,
OH BOY, YOUR HEART WILL SOON BE MINE.

HEY, HEY, HEY, BOY,
YOUR HEART WILL
BE MINE!

OH, NICOLE, THAT WAS GREAT! I THINK YOU DESERVE A REWARD.



AND THAT WAS ALL I GOT... ONE KISS. THE SWEET MINJI CONTINUED TO RESIST MY ADVANCES AFTERWARDS, WHEN WE WERE HAVING A DRINK TO CELEBRATE RECORDING THE SONG, SAYING IT WAS TO SOON. WAS ALL THE HUMILIATION WORTH IT? MAN, I KNOW IS THAT WAS A FUCKING HOT KISS!

I CAN HEAR YOU, YOU MORON! OPEN THE FUCKING DOOR THIS SECOND OR I'M GOING TO BREAK IT DOWN AND STICK THE DOORKNOB DOWN YOUR THROAT!


OH, GO FUCK YOURSELF!

CAN'T YOU WAIT
A FUCKING MINUTE?!

YOU?! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I WANT TO KNOW WHERE MY STUFF IS, YOU PIECE OF SHIT!

YOUR STUFF? WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I'M TALKING ABOUT THE DRUGS, YOU ASSHOLE! YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE BESIDES ME WHO KNEW WHERE THEY WERE HIDDEN, AND NOW THEY ARE GONE!

LISTEN, ROY, I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU THINK...

WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU DONE TO YOUR NAILS?!


MAN, I'M BEING SO STUPID TODAY! WHY DID I OPEN THE DOOR WITH MY NAILS LOOKING LIKE THIS?

UMM... IT WAS ALL ABOUT A STUPID BET I LOST AND...

A BET MY ASS! I ALWAYS KNEW YOU WERE A FUCKING SISSY, NICKY. A SISSY PRETENDING TO BE A WANNABE ROCK STAR!

YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU TALK ABOUT, ROY!

WHY? WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO? CALL YOUR BOYFRIEND TO DEFEND YOU, SISSY BOY?


I'LL SHOW YOU WHO'S SISSY HERE!



OUCH!

WHAT'S WRONG? DID YOU BREAK A NAIL, POOR SISSY? YOU REALLY HAVE FAIRY HANDS, DON'T YOU? LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT A REAL PUNCH LOOKS LIKE!





NOW TELL ME WHERE THE DAMN DRUGS ARE!

I DON'T KNOW SHIT, MAN. I DON'T DO DRUGS.

I DON'T EITHER... NOT ANYMORE. BUT I WAS STRAPPED FOR CASH, AS OUR GODDAMN BAND WAS GOING DOWNHILL, AND I TOOK SOME TO SELL. YOU KNOW I HAVEN'T PAID FOR THAT CRAP YET, RIGHT? AND I GOT THE STUFF FROM VERY DANGEROUS PEOPLE. IF I GET SCREWED, I SWEAR I'LL TAKE YOU DOWN WITH ME. JUST IMAGINE WHAT JP AND HIS GANG WOULD DO TO A SISSY LIKE YOU?

YOU HAVE UNTIL TOMORROW. AFTER THAT... YOU ALREADY KNOW.



FUCK...

HELLO. ARE YOU MR. BAXTER?
DID I COME AT A BAD TIME?

Chapter Three

Alone?

A FEW HOURS LATER...

THAT'S AN ABSURD IDEA, MINJI! I'M TELLING YOU, I WON'T DO THAT IN A MILLION YEARS!

YOU'RE NOT BEING REASONABLE, OPPA. LET'S RECAP EVERYTHING, SHALL WE? YOUR FORMER BEST FRIEND IS ACCUSING YOU OF STEALING SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO HIM, AND YOU BELIEVE THAT DANGEROUS PEOPLE ARE AFTER YOU BECAUSE OF IT.

AS IF THAT WEREN'T ENOUGH, YOU'VE BEEN INFORMED THAT YOUR UNCLE, WHO BEQUEATHED YOU THE STUDIO AND THE HOUSE YOU LIVE IN, HAS UNPAID GAMBLING DEBTS, AND YOU'VE RECEIVED A COURT ORDER TO VACATE THE PROPERTY. NONE OF YOUR FRIENDS AGREED TO HOST YOU AND I'M THE ONLY ONE OFFERING YOU A HAND.

YES, YES, I KNOW ALL THAT, AND BELIEVE ME, I AM VERY GRATEFUL TO YOU, MINJI! BUT WHAT ARE YOU SUGGESTING...

IT'S THE ONLY WAY, OPPA.
UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU WANT
TO ASK YOUR PARENTS FOR HELP.

NEVER! I ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT THIS IS ABSOLUTELY OUT OF THE QUESTION!


THEN I SEE NO OTHER OPTION.
AS I EXPLAINED TO YOU, WHEN WE CAME TO THE US FOR THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM, THERE WERE NO FREE ROOMS IN THE COLLEGE DORM, BUT WE MANAGED TO RENT THIS COMFORTABLE HOUSE FOR A VERY GOOD PRICE. THE LANDLADY'S ONLY RULE WAS THAT BOYS COULDN'T LIVE HERE.
SO IF YOU WANT TO STAY FOR A FEW DAYS, YOU'LL NEED TO BE A GIRL.

BUT MINJI, EVEN IF I AGREED TO THIS CRAZY PLAN, THERE'S NO WAY I CAN PASS AS A GIRL. IT GOT CLEAR YESTERDAY!

YESTERDAY WE HAD NEITHER THE TIME NOR THE SUPPLIES TO TRULY WORK ON YOU, SILLY! BESIDES, EVEN IF THE LANDLADY REALIZES YOU WERE BORN A MALE, IT DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T BE A FEMALE, RIGHT? SHE JUST NEEDS TO BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE A TRANS GIRL IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSITIONING. HOW HARD CAN IT BE, OPPA? THIS IS JUST FOR A FEW DAYS, RIGHT?

NOT LONG AFTER...

RELAX, OPPA! NOW THAT THE GIRLS HAVE GOTTEN RID OF YOUR BODY HAIR, THEY CAN GET ON WITH THE WORK. I KNOW EVERYONE HERE. EVERYTHING WILL BE ALRIGHT.

YOU SEE, SABRINA EVEN AGREED TO OPEN THE SALON ON HER DAY OFF SO YOU'D BE MORE COMFORTABLE WITH NO OTHER CLIENTS AROUND. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK, OKAY? I JUST NEED TO BUY SOME STUFF.

W-WAIT, WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SABRINA?!

TRUST ME, SWEETIE. YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS. DO YOU SEE HOW AMAZING THE CREAM I APPLIED ON YOU IS? YOUR SKIN LOOKS CLEARER AND I'VE EVEN MANAGED TO DISGUISE THE BRUISE UNDER YOUR EYE!

NOW THAT I'VE WORKED ON YOUR EYEBROWS, I'M JUST USING SOME SURGICAL GLUE TO MOLD YOUR EYES INTO THE DESIRED SHAPE. NOTHING PERMANENT, OF COURSE! IN JUST A FEW WEEKS EVERYTHING WILL BE BACK TO NORMAL! I'VE DONE THIS BEFORE FOR FASHION SHOWS AND PLAYS.

YOU NEED TO LISTEN TO ME! I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S GOING ON!

TRY NOT TO TALK FOR A MINUTE, HONEY. BECCA IS GOING TO WORK ON YOUR MAKEUP NOW. OH, AND YOU'LL DEFINITELY NEED SOME FILLING ON THE LIPS!

THERE, MUCH BETTER!

OUCH!

CALM DOWN, DARLING! I KNOW THAT PIERCING THE EARS IS A BIT OF A PAIN, BUT DO YOU SEE HOW CUTE YOU LOOK WITH PRETTY EARRINGS?

ALRIGHT, YOUR HAIR IS DONE TOO. OH, IT SEEMS THAT MINJI IS BACK. JUST IN TIME!


OH MY... I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW BEAUTIFUL YOU LOOK, NABI-YA!


WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON, MINJI? WHY DID THOSE CRAZY BITCHIES DYE MY HAIR BLACK AND PUT CONTACTS IN MY EYES? THEY EVEN PIERCED MY EARS THREE TIMES! AND WHY ARE YOU CALLING ME NABI?

NOW, YOU NEED TO CALM DOWN, DOLL! FIRST OF ALL, YOU SHOULD CALL ME UNNIE FROM NOW ON, BECAUSE I'M OLDER THAN YOU AND WE'RE BOTH GIRLS. YOU KNOW THAT SHOWING RESPECT TO THOSE OLDER THAN YOU IS SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT TO KOREAN PEOPLE!

OLDER THAN ME? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'M TWENTY-FIVE!

NO, YOU'RE NOT. NICK IS TWENTY-FIVE, BUT YOU'RE NOT NICK, RIGHT? YOU'RE KIM NABI, A NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD KOREAN GIRL.

WHAT?! WHY DO I NEED TO PRETEND TO BE KOREAN?

BECAUSE THAT WAY IT'LL BE EASIER TO CONVINCE OUR LANDLADY TO LET YOU STAY WITH US. WE'LL TELL HER THAT YOU LEFT KOREA TO FINALLY BE ABLE TO BE YOUR TRUE SELF, AS YOU WERE FACING A LOT OF RESISTANCE AT HOME, AND THAT YOU DON'T KNOW ANYONE ELSE HERE. GOT IT? NO MORE QUESTIONS NOW, NABI-YA. WE STILL HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO!

FIVE MINUTES LATER, IN A CHANGING ROOM...

WHY ARE YOU TAKING SO LONG? IS EVERYTHING OKAY THERE, NABI-YA?

YES YOU DO! THIS IS A GAFF, A SPECIAL UNDERWEAR FOR GIRLS LIKE YOU. NOW PUT THIS ON!

DO I REALLY NEED TO WEAR THESE PANTIES? MAN, THIS IS SO HUMILIATING!

FUCK, THIS IS PAIN IN THE ASS, OKAY?

WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT BEING RESPECTFUL, GIRL? YOU DEFINITELY HAVE A LOT TO LEARN. ALRIGHT, I'M COMING IN!

AH, AMAZING! YOU'RE COMPLETELY FLAT DOWN THERE. JUST PERFECT! THERE'S A PART OF YOUR BODY THAT WE DON'T WANT TO BE SO FLAT, THOUGH. LUCKILY, I HAVE THE SOLUTION FOR THAT.

YOU'LL UNDERSTAND IN A MINUTE.

W-WHAT ARE THOSE THINGS?

W-WAIT, MINJI, I DON'T THINK...

STOP MOVING SO MUCH, GIRL! WE NEED TO WAIT FOR THE GLUE TO DRY! THEN I'LL USE SOME MAKEUP TO HIDE THE EDGES.

GLUE?!

WHAT THE FUCK? THESE BOOBS LOOK SO REALISTIC! THIS IS INSANE!

YOU CAN ADMIRE YOUR "GIRLS" LATER, NABI-YA. NOW IT'S TIME FOR YOUR FIRST BRA. ISN'T THAT EXCITING?

IT ALL FEELS SO FUCKED UP, MINJI!

YOU KNOW, I SHOULD START PUNISHING YOU EVERY TIME YOU SWEAR AND NOT CALL ME UNNIE. NOW STOP WHINING. YOU'LL WEAR YOUR PRETTY LINGERIE ALL THE TIME AS LONG AS YOU'RE A GIRL! AND I HAVE ANOTHER SURPRISE FOR YOU...

STOP IT, MINJI! THIS IS TOO TIGHT! I CAN'T FUCKING BREATH!

OH, IS THERE SOMEONE TALKING TO ME?

PLEASE, STOP... UNNIE!

THAT'S BETTER! YOU SEE, NABI-YA? GOOD THINGS HAPPEN WHEN YOU'RE A GOOD GIRL!

ABSOLUTELY NOT, GIRL! BEING BEAUTIFUL REQUIRES CERTAIN SACRIFICES. DON'T WORRY, THOUGH. YOU'LL GET USED TO THE CORSET... IN TIME. NOW LET'S GET YOU DRESSED!

I WOULDN'T CALL ANYTHING THAT'S HAPPENING A "GOOD THING". COULD YOU LOOSEN THIS FU... THIS FREAKING CORSET, PLEASE, UNNIE?





OH MY... THIS IS SO MUCH FUN!
I FEEL LIKE I HAVE MY OWN
LIVING BARBIE DOLL, NABI-YA!

C'MON, UNNIE, EVEN YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THIS IS TOO MUCH! YOU CAN'T REALLY EXPECT ME TO WALK OUT OF THE SALON DRESSED LIKE THIS!

YOU HAVE NO CHOICE, NABI-YA, UNLESS YOU WANT TO GO OUTSIDE WEARING ONLY YOUR PRETTY LINGERIE! I'VE GOT RID OF THE CLOTHES YOU WERE IN WHEN YOU GOT HERE.

YOU WHAT?! YOU HAD NO RIGHT TO...

I THINK YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S GOING ON HERE, NABI-YA. DO YOU REALLY WANT TO MAKE IT WORK? THEN YOU NEED TO START LISTENING TO ME. I'M YOUR UNNIE AND I KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU. I'M GETTING TIRED OF YOUR RUDENESS.

B-BUT...

FOR THE LAST TIME, SILLY GIRL, IF I'M SAYING YOU CAN GO OUT WEARING THIS OUTFIT IT'S BECAUSE I KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. THERE'S JUST ONE THING WE STILL NEED TO FIX, THOUGH. OPEN YOUR MOUTH, PLEASE.




W-WHAT THE HEEL WAS...


OUCH! WHAT DID YOU DO TO *COUGH* MY THROAT? IT HURTS *COUGH* LIKE HEEL!

OUCH!

DON'T BE SUCH A DRAMA QUEEN, NABI-YA. YOU'RE JUST USING YOUR VOICE THE WRONG WAY, SO TO SPEAK. BUT DON'T WORRY, YOU'LL GET THE HANG OF IT!

TWENTY MINUTES LATER...

YOU KNOW, GIRL, IF YOU TRULY WANT TO AVOID DRAWING ATTENTION, YOU SHOULD WALK MORE DELICATELY. ANYONE WHO SEES A CUTE LITTLE THING LIKE YOU WALKING AROUND LIKE A BRUTE WILL STOP TO TAKE A SECOND LOOK!

HUMPH!

WHAT'S WRONG, DOLL? ARE YOU STILL MAD ABOUT THE SPRAY? YOU KNOW THAT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. YES, YOU'VE ALREADY PROVEN THAT YOU CAN SPEAK IN A PRETTY FEMALE VOICE, BUT YOU'VE BEEN TOO STUBBORN. WHAT IF DURING YET ANOTHER TANTRUM YOU DECIDED TO USE A MALE VOICE, PRETENDING YOU'RE A MAN IN FRONT OF MY LANDLADY?

REMEMBER THAT I AM RISKING A LOT TO HELP YOU. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT EVERYONE BELIEVES THAT YOU'RE A TRANS GIRL WHOSE BIGGEST DREAM IS TO BE AS GIRLY AS POSSIBLE. WHY DON'T YOU TRY TO SAY SOMETHING? REMEMBER, THE DEAL FOR ME TO LET YOU WEAR A MASK IN PUBLIC TODAY WAS THAT YOU WOULD COOPERATE!

MAN, I HATE THAT FUCKING SPRAY SO BAD! IT FORCES ME TO SPEAK IN AN EVEN HIGHER VOICE THAN THE ONE I USED TO SING YESTERDAY. I NEED TO SOUND A LOT CUTER AND GIRLIER THAN EVEN MINJI AND THE OTHER GIRLS IF I DON'T WANT TO BE IN EXCRUCIATING PAIN!

THIS IS AS EMASCULATING AS THESE RIDICULOUS CLOTHES I'M WEARING. I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M WALKING IN PUBLIC DRESSED LIKE THIS!

WHEN *AHEM* WILL THIS SPRAY WEAR OFF, UNNIE? YOU SPRAYED IT DOWN MY THROAT ALMOST HALF AN HOUR AGO, SHOULDN'T I ALREADY BE ABLE TO SPEAK NORMALLY AGAIN?

MY SWEET NABI-YA, YOU'RE SPEAKING NORMALLY RIGHT NOW! AND YOU SOUND SO FREAKING ADORABLE! GOSH, I LOVE IT! GET USED BEING THE CUTEST GIRL AROUND BECAUSE THE SPRAY WON'T WEAR OFF FOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS!

TWO WEEKS!??

Chapter Four

Yes or Yes

THREE DAYS LATER...

KNOCK!
KNOCK!

HMM?

IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP, NABI-YA!
THE OTHER GIRLS HAVE ALREADY LEFT
FOR CLASS. I MADE BREAKFAST!

AL... *COUGH* *COUGH*
ALRIGHT, GIVE ME A MINUTE!

YAWN!

FUCK, I HATE THIS VOICE SO MUCH! I HATE GETTING UP AT THIS HOUR TOO. I DON'T KNOW WHY MINJI-UNNIE ALWAYS WAKES ME UP SO EARLY!

WAIT... WHY AM I CALLING HER UNNIE WHEN SHE ISN'T AROUND? HAS SHE SCREWED UP MY MIND THIS MUCH ALREADY? IN JUST THREE DAYS?

MAN, I DEFINITELY NEED SOME COFFEE!

AH, HERE'S SLEEPING BEAUTY!


HUH?!

UNNIE! Y-YOU DIDN'T SAY... G-GUEST!

CRAP, I'M SO NERVOUS I CAN BARELY SPEAK! I CAN'T BELIEVE THERE'S A STRANGE WOMAN SEEING ME DRESSED LIKE THIS. IT JUST GETS MORE AND MORE HUMILIATING!

YOU SEE, MRS. GOMEZ, AS I TOLD YOU, THE POOR NABI-YA CAN BARELY SPEAK ENGLISH!

NICE TO MEET YOU, HONEY! YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ASHAMED. MINJI ALREADY TOLD ME ALL ABOUT YOU. I'M THE GIRLS' LANDLADY.

I GOT VERY TOUCHED BY YOUR STORY AND I DECIDED TO HELP YOU. I WON'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER!

Chapter Five
Navillera

TWO WEEKS LATER...



MAN, THIS IS SO UNFAIR!

I WAS SURE BY THEN THINGS WOULD HAVE CLEARED UP AND I'D BE BACK HOME, BUT EVERYTHING IS GOING FROM BAD TO WORSE! JB AND HIS GANG ARE INDEED AFTER ME BECAUSE THEY THINK I STOLE THEIR DRUGS. WITH THAT HAPPENING, I HAVE NO WAY OF FIGHTING TO GET BACK THE HOUSE AND STUDIO I INHERITED FROM MY UNCLE!

MEANWHILE, HERE I AM, LIVING IN HIDING AS A SUBMISSIVE SISSY!

I MEAN...



...IT'S INSANE HOW DELICATE AND WEAK I LOOK THESE DAYS! AND THAT'S NOT ALL...

FUCK!



MINJI-UNNIE INSISTS THAT I'M SEEING THINGS, BUT I'M ABSOLUTELY SURE MY CHEST IS GETTING MORE AND MORE SWOLLEN. THIS ALL STARTED AFTER I WENT TO THAT DAMN DOCTOR!

THAT'S THE STUPIDEST THING I'VE EVER HEARD! I'M NOT TRANS AND I DON'T NEED A DOCTOR TO HELP ME WITH MY TRANSITION. YOU KNOW IT VERY WELL!

THE IMPORTANT THING HERE IS THAT MRS. GOMEZ BELIEVES YOU'RE A TRANS GIRL, OKAY? AND SHE WANTS TO HELP YOU FOR SOME REASON. SHE NOT ONLY REFERRED YOU A DOCTOR BUT ALSO OFFERED TO PAY FOR THE APPOINTMENT. YOU DON'T HAVE A CHOICE, NABI-YA. YOU WILL HAVE TO GO.

THERE'S NO REASON FOR SO MUCH DRAMA, THOUGH. WORST CASE SCENARIO, THE DOCTOR WILL PRESCRIBE YOU PILLS THAT YOU CAN SIMPLY NOT TAKE. SEE? SIMPLE!

YES, I DIDN'T TAKE ANY PILLS BUT STILL...

MOAN


WHAT THE HELL!
DID I GET TURNED ON BY
TOUCHING MY NIPPLES?!

YOU KNOW WHAT? ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! I NEED TO GET MY LIFE BACK. I'LL TELL MINJI I'M LEAVING TODAY!

DING DONG!

SPEAK OF THE DEVIL... SHE MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN HER KEYS AGAIN!



THAT'S IT! IT'S TIME FOR ME TO STOP ACTING LIKE A SISSY AND BE A MAN AGAIN!

AHHH...?!


WHERE'S NICK?
N-NICK?

SLAM!

LISTEN TO ME, I DON'T HAVE TIME TO WASTE! JUST TELL ME WHERE THAT MOTHERFUCKER IS IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!

SOW-LEE,
NO ING-LISH!

NO ENGLISH, HUH? YEAH, I HEARD THERE WERE A BUNCH OF ASIAN GIRLS LIVING HERE. I ALSO HEARD THEY WERE HELPING NICK, THAT FUCKING COWARD! SO WHERE IS HE? THE GUY! WHERE IS HE HIDING?


NO GAI! JUS GULS HEE-UH!

JUST GIRLS HERE... FUCK, I JUST TOLD MYSELF IT WAS TIME TO STOP ACTING LIKE AN SISSY AND BE A MAN AGAIN! NOW I'M SAYING THERE'S NO GUY IN THE HOUSE!

BUT LOOK AT THIE SIZE OF THIS BASTARD! I LOOK EVEN MORE GIRLISH NEXT TO HIM. HE WOULD KILL ME WITH JUST ONE FINGER IF HE KNEW WHO I REALLY AM!

VERY WELL, IF THAT'S THE TRUTH, YOU DON'T MIND ME TAKING A LOOK AT THE HOUSE, RIGHT? ALSO, KEEP IN MIND THAT I'LL BE AROUND FOR AWHILE. I HAVE ORDERS TO FIND THAT SON OF A BITCH AND THAT'S WHAT I'M GONNA DO!

AND LET ME TELL YOU, IT WON'T HURT TO KEEP AN EYE ON A HOT CHICK LIKE YOU. MAYBE WE CAN EVEN HAVE SOME FUN!

DID HE REALLY CALL ME A HOT CHICK?!

Chapter Six
Marionette


Kiss Me
OLDEST BOULANG


OLDEST BOULANGERIE
PREMIUM QUALITY BAKERY
BAKERY & CO.
COFFEE SHOP
SINCE 1963
Kiss Me
YOU NEED TO RELAX NABI-YA. YOU LOOK LIKE A SCARED KITTEN!

OF COURSE I'M NERVOUS!
IT'S ALWAYS SCARY LEAVING
HOME DRESSED AS A GIRL!

WHAT ELSE DID YOU EXPECT TO BE WEARING, SILLY? YOU'RE A GIRL!

SIGH FINE, BUT I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU GUYS MADE ME GO OUT TODAY!

C'MON, NABI-YA, AREN'T YOU TIRED OF STAYING AT HOME ALL THE TIME? BESIDES, MINJI-UNNIE HAS A SURPRISE FOR YOU.

CRAP... WHATEVER MINJI-UNNIE HAS IN MIND, IT DEFINITELY CAN'T MEAN ANYTHING GOOD FOR ME!

A WEEK BEFORE...

...THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED, UNNIE. THAT SHADY GUY SHOWED UP EARLIER TODAY LOOKING FOR ME, AND BY SOME MIRACLE I MANAGED TO TRICK HIM. I DON'T THINK I'LL BE SO LUCKY NEXT TIME, THOUGH, SO I'LL GO AWAY.

THIS STUPID SITUATION IS TOO DANGEROUS NOT ONLY FOR ME, BUT ALSO FOR EVERYONE AROUND ME. I NEVER WANTED TO PUT YOU GIRLS AT RISK!


WHAT A CUTIE!

I DON'T THINK SHE REALIZES IT, BUT IT SEEMS THAT SOME GIRLY MANNERISMS HAVE ALREADY BECOME NATURAL TO HER. YES, THE TRAINING IS PAYING OFF. MY SWEET NABI-YA... MAYBE THIS WILL WORK, AFTER ALL!

YOU CAN'T LEAVE, DOLL. NOT NOW. THAT'S DEFINITELY OUT OF THE QUESTION!

WHAT? DID YOU HEAR WHAT I JUST TOLD YOU?

SHHH... CALM DOWN, NABI-YA. YOU NEED TO TRUST ME, OKAY? I'M TELLING YOU EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE ALRIGHT.

B-BUT...

JUST THINK ABOUT IT FOR A MINUTE. IF THE HOUSE REALLY IS BEING WATCHED, DON'T YOU THINK THOSE MEN WOULD FIND ONE OF THE GIRLS DISAPPEARING OVERNIGHT SUSPICIOUS? THAT'S IT. IF YOU WANT TO SEE US SAFE, YOU MUST STAY.

OF COURSE, WE NEED TO PERFECT YOUR DISGUISE. YOU WERE LUCKY TODAY, AS YOU SAID YOURSELF, BUT WE CAN'T COUNT ON LUCK AGAIN.

AND WHAT DOES THAT MEAN, UNNIE?

OH, DON'T WORRY YOUR PRETTY LITTLE HEAD ABOUT THAT, I HAVE SOME IDEAS IN MIND!

OH, HELLO!


I THOUGHT YOU GIRLS WEREN'T GOING TO COME ANYMORE!

WELL, IT WASN'T EASY GETTING NABI-YA OUT OF THE HOUSE. THAT'S WHY WE'RE LATE.

I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M DOING HERE, UNNIE!

YOU'LL UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING SOON, SWEETIE. GIRLS, COULD YOU LEAVE NABI-YA AND ME ALONE FOR A MINUTE?

SO, CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHAT'S GOING ON NOW, UNNIE?


YOU SEE, NABI-YA, YOU'VE BEEN IMPROVING A LOT SINCE YOU STARTED COOPERATING. I LIKE THE FACT THAT IT'S BEEN MANY DAYS SINCE YOU LAST FORGOT TO ADDRESS ME CORRECTLY! YOU CAN BE SUCH A GOOD GIRL WHEN YOU WANT, DON'T YOU?
HOWEVER, THIS ISN'T ENOUGH YET!

W-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

TAKE YOUR CLOTHES OFF, NABI-YA.

W-WHAT?!!!

Kiss Me

YOU HEARD ME, DOLL!
LET ME GIVE YOU A HAND.

W-WAIT, UNNIE...

DON'T BE SILLY, NABI-YA.
WE'RE ALL GIRLS HERE, RIGHT?
THERE'S NO REASON TO BE SHY.

WELL, LOOKING AT YOU NOW, IT REALLY LOOKS LIKE YOUR CHEST IS A LITTLE PUFFY, YOU KNOW? MAYBE YOU WEREN'T SEEING THINGS, AFTER ALL. LET ME CHECK IT OUT!

GASP

YES, YOUR CHEST IS DEFINITELY SWOLLEN! AND FROM YOUR REACTION, IT ALSO SEEMS TO BE VERY SENSITIVE. DOES IT FEEL GOOD, NABI-YA?

AHHHH---

YES, I SEE YOU'RE HAVING A LOT OF FUN, YOU NAUGHTY GIRL!


A LOT OF FUN INDEED!

W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING, UNNIE? WHY DID YOU PUSH ME?

MY SWEET NABI-YA...

...

...LET'S JUST SAY I WANT TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT YOUR CHEST, HUH?







AHHHH...

YOU REALLY LOVE IT WHEN I PLAY WITH YOUR BOOBS, DON'T YOU, NABI-YA?

B-BOOBS?!! I... I DON'T HAVE BOOBS, UNNIE!

OH, REALLY?



AHHHHHH...!

JUDGING BY THE VOLUME DOWN HERE, YOU *DO* HAVE BOOBS, AND YOU DEFINITELY LOVE IT WHEN I PLAY WITH THEM!


ADMIT IT THIS SECOND OR I WON'T TOUCH YOUR BUDDY HERE EVER AGAIN!

ALRIGHT... I ADMIT! I LOVE IT WHEN YOU PLAY WITH MY BOOBS! DON'T STOP, PLEASE!

GOOD GIRL! NOW KEEP YOUR EYES CLOSED. I HAVE A SURPRISE TO YOU!

A MOMENT LATER...


WHAT'S GOING ON, UNNIE?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

NOW, NOW, BE PATIENT, GIRL.
AND KEEP YOUR EYES CLOSED
OR YOU'LL BE PUNISHED!


OUCH! IT FEELS COLD!

WE'RE ALMOST THERE, GIRL!

B-BUT...

GOOD...

NOW THAT THE ICE PACK IS DOING ITS JOB, I THINK YOU'RE ALMOST READY FOR THE SURPRISE.

LET ME GET THIS FROM MY BAG.

CLick!

HUH...?!



WHAT THE...

GET THIS THING OFF MY COCK RIGHT NOW OR I...



AHHHH---


OR YOU WHAT, SISSY BOY?

I'M NOT A SISSY!


10
6
YOU SURE? ARE YOU A GIRL THEN?

NO! I'M A MAN!

A MAN? DO MEN WEAR PRETTY PANTIES? WOULD A MAN SPEAK WITH A HIGH, SWEET VOICE LIKE YOU? AND MOST IMPORTANTLY...

DO MEN HAVE SUCH PRETTY, SOFT BOOBS?

WE'VE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT THIS, NABI-YA. THERE ARE DANGEROUS PEOPLE AFTER YOU. YOU NEED TO BE A GIRL. MY PRETTY GIRL! IF YOU BEHAVE, THEN LATER YOU CAN BE MY HUNKY MAN! YOU KNOW I'VE ALWAYS HAD A CRUSH ON YOU, RIGHT? CAN YOU DO THIS, NABI-YA?

I... I...

JUST SAY IT, NABI-YA.
JUST SAY IT AND EVERYTHING
WILL BE ALRIGHT!


I'LL BE YOUR PRETTY GIRL!

YOU SEE? THAT WASN'T HARD, DOLL!

AND YOU KNOW THAT GIRLS DON'T USUALLY HAVE COCKS, RIGHT? SO, WE CAN KEEP YOUR BUDDY HERE LOCKED UP FOR NOW. THAT REALLY IS A SHAME... YOU USED TO HAVE A BIG, MANLY MEMBER, BUT IT LOOKS SO USELESS NOW, DOESN'T IT?

B-BUT, UNNIE, I'M SO TURNED ON...
THIS THING IS HURTING LIKE HELL!
PLEASE, I REALLY NEED TO...

WHAT DID I JUST SAY, NABI-YA? WHEN YOU DESERVE IT, I CAN FREE YOUR BUDDY, BUT YOU'RE NOT DOING YOUR PART, ARE YOU? THE MORE YOU COMPLAIN, THE LONGER IT'LL TAKE TO HAPPEN!

I DIDN'T WANT TO GO THIS FAR, BUT YOU YOURSELF SAW THAT ONLY THE GAFF WASN'T ENOUGH TO HOLD YOUR MEMBER, RIGHT? WHAT IF THIS HAPPENS AGAIN IN FRONT OF THE WRONG PERSON? NO, WE CAN'T RISK IT. NOW YOU'RE UNDER CONTROL. AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR BOOBS. WE'LL SEE THE THE DOCTOR AGAIN TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON, ALTHOUGH YOU LOOK KINDA CUTE LIKE THAT *GIGGLES*

NOW GET UP, GIRL...

IT'S TIME FOR THE REAL SURPRISE I HAVE FOR YOU.

Chapter Seven
High Heels

C'MON, NABI-YA!
DON'T BE SHY.

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING.
HOW DID I LET THIS GET THIS FAR?
WHY CAN'T I REACT AS MINJI-UNNIE
KEEPS BOSSING ME AROUND?

I FEEL COMPLETELY HELPLESS AROUND HER. I DIDN'T USE TO BE LIKE THIS... A SUBMISSIVE SISSY!

NOW, THOUGH, JUST THINKING ABOUT FIGHTING BACK MAKES ME WANT TO CRY!

THIS CAN ONLY BE A SIDE EFFECT OF THOSE DAMN HORMONE PILLS, THE SAME ONES THAT ARE MAKING ME GROW BOOBS! BUT HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE IF I DIDN'T TAKE ANY OF THE PILLS THE DOC GAVE ME?

IS MINJI-UNNIE PUTTING THEM IN MY FOOD OR SOMETHING? WHAT WOULD SHE HAVE TO GAIN FROM DOING SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

ALL I KNOW IS THAT I'VE LOST EVEN MY COCK, WHICH IS NOW LOCKED UP IN A FUCKING CAGE!


WE DON'T HAVE ALL DAY, GIRL. MOVE!

COME ON, NABI-YA!

WE'RE STILL JUST STRETCHING, SO YOU HAVEN'T MISSED ANYTHING YET!

I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M DOING HERE, GIRLS.

THAT'S VERY SIMPLE, SWEETIE. AS YOU KNOW, WE'VE BEEN PRACTICING SOME CHOREOGRAPHIES RECENTLY, AND WE'VE DECIDED IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO JOIN THE FUN!

WHAT?!! THIS MAKES NO SENSE, UNNIE! I... I DON'T KNOW HOW TO DANCE!

DON'T WORRY YOUR PRETTY LITTLE HEAD ABOUT THAT, NABI-YA. WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU.

B-BUT...

JUST THINK ABOUT IT, SILLY. PEOPLE WILL START TO FIND IT SUSPICIOUS IF YOU NEVER LEAVE THE HOUSE. IT'LL LOOK LIKE YOU'RE RUNNING AWAY OR HIDING FROM SOMEONE. BESIDES, WE NEED TO CREATE A PERSONALITY FOR YOU. A BELIEVABLE PERSONALITY – SOMETHING THAT COULD FOOL MRS. GOMEZ OR ANYONE ELSE SPYING ON YOU.

SO NOW, FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, YOUR BIGGEST DREAM IS TO BE A DANCER AND PERFORMER. THAT'S WHAT YOU'LL TELL ANYONE WHO ASKS. NO ONE WILL SUSPECT ANYTHING SINCE WE ALL HERE LOVE TO DANCE. PERFECT, RIGHT?

GOSH, THIS JUST COULDN'T GET MORE HUMILIATING! NOW THEY WANT ME TO NOT ONLY LOOK BUT ALSO DANCE LIKE A SISSY! I NEED TO FIND A WAY TO GET RID OF THE GANG THAT'S AFTER ME. UNTIL THEN, I'M COMPLETELY STUCK. I MEAN, IF THEY FIND OUT WHO I REALLY AM, I'M A DEAD GIRL...

DID I SAY DEAD GIRL?! WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH ME? MAN, I'D BE A DEAD MAN!

LET'S START WARMING UP, NABI-YA.
JUST FOLLOW MY MOVES, OKAY?





FUCK...

FIVE MINUTES LATER...

OKAY, GIRLS, WE'VE STRETCHED ENOUGH. NOW LET'S LINE UP IN FRONT OF THE MIRROR.

LET'S START WITH SOMETHING BASIC, JUST SO YOU CAN GET THE HANG OF IT, NABI-YA. PUT YOUR HANDS ON YOUR HIPS AND KEEP YOUR LEGS SLIGHTLY APART.

LIKE THIS?

YEAH, THAT'S GOOD!

NOW WATCH ME AND TRY TO MEMORIZE MY MOVES. FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT...

ONE, TWO...


THREE, FOUR...

FIVE, SIX...


SEVEN, EIGHT...

PRETTY EASY, HUH?
NOW IT'S YOUR TURN.

I... I DON'T THINK
I CAN DO THIS, UNNIE.

DON'T BE SILLY, DEAR.
I HAVE FULL CONFIDENCE
IN YOU!

TWENTY TRIES LATER...



NO, NO AND NO! AREN'T YOU LISTENING TO WHAT I'M SAYING, NABI-YA? YOU NEED TO WALK WITH GRACE AND ELEGANCE. NOT LIKE A LUMBERJACK!


I'M TRYING MY BEST, UNNIE. I TOLD YOU THIS WASN'T A GOOD IDEA. I'M NOT MADE FOR DANCING!

OH, NOT SO FAST CLEVER GIRL!
I HAVE AN IDEA TO MAKE YOU
WALK THE WAY I WANT.


WHERE'S THE SHOEBOX, GIRLS?



C'MON, GIRLS...

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!
DO YOU REALLY EXPECT ME
TO WALK ON THESE THINGS?

YOU REALLY HAVE A THING FOR BEING A DRAMA QUEEN, DON'T YOU, NABI-YA? I GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE SINCE YOU'RE OUR MAKNAE.

MAKNAE?

THE YOUNGEST IN THE GROUP, SILLY.

I'M NOT YOUNGER THAN YOU GIRLS!

WE'VE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT IT, DOLL.

NICK WAS OLDER THAN US, BUT YOU, MINJI, IS ONLY NINETEEN, SO YOU'RE OUR SWEETIE MAKNAE! IT MEANS YOU NEED TO OBEY AND BE GOOD TO YOUR UNNIES. YOU KNOW HOW IMPORTANT RESPECTING YOUR ELDERS IS IN KOREA, RIGHT?

YOU'LL BE A GOOD GIRL WHILE WE TEACH YOU HOW TO WALK ON HEELS. OTHERWISE YOU WILL BE PUNISHED, UNDERSTOOD?

FORTY MINUTES AND MANY ACCIDENTS LATER...


THAT'S BETTER, NABI-YA!

YOU'RE FINALLY GETTING THE HANG OF IT. ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER, KEEP YOUR FISTS LOOSE AND MOVE YOUR SHOULDERS AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE, LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD, CHEST OUT, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, DON'T FORGET TO MOVE YOUR HIPS!

FUCK, THIS JUST GETS MORE AND MORE HUMILIATING! WHAT WOULD MY BAND THINK IF THEY SAW ME NOW, WEARING HEELS AND WALKING LIKE A SISSY? MY FEET ARE KILLING ME BECAUSE OF THESE DAMN SHOES! I FEEL LIKE I'M TRYING TO WALK ON STILTS.

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED SEEING HOT CHICKS WEARING HEELS BUT IT'S DIFFERENT WHEN I'M THE ONE WEARING THEM! I NEVER THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE SO DAMN HARD!

YOU SEE HOW YOU CAN DO IT WHEN YOU TRY HARD AND LISTEN TO YOUR UNNIES, NABI-YA? I HOPE YOU HAVE LEARNED YOUR LESSON AND WILL BE A GOOD MAKNAE FROM NOW ON.

UNFORTUNATELY, THOUGH, YOU DROPPED THE BOOK EIGHT TIMES, AND I TOLD YOU THAT YOU WOULD BE PUNISHED IF THAT HAPPENED. HERE'S YOUR PENALTY: TWO DAYS IN HEELS PRETTY MUCH ALL THE TIME FOR EVERY TIME YOU DROPPED THE BOOK. I THINK AFTER SIXTEEN DAYS YOU'LL DEFINITELY BE A MASTER AT WALKING IN HIGH HEELS, GIRL!

WHAT?!!

FOCUS, DEAR, YOU DON'T WANT TO DROP THE BOOK YET AGAIN, DO YOU?

니콥오빠가 정말 여자가 되길 원하고,
그것도 한국 여자가 되길 원한다는
생각이 미쳤지 않아, 은주야?*

*ISN'T IT CRAZY TO THINK THAT NICK-OPPA ACTUALLY WANTS TO BE A GIRL, AND A KOREAN ONE, EUNJOO-YA?

닉이라고 부르지 마세요, 언니. 그녀는 나비야에요.
민지언니가 우리에게 나비야가 항상 여자가 되길 원했다는
확실한 증거를 보여줬잖아요, 맞죠? 그런데 왜 그녀는 아직
우리에게 이것을 고백하기를 부끄러워하는지 이해가 안 가요.
그녀는 심지어 갱단에 쫓기고 있다는 이야기를 날린
적도 있어요.*

*DON'T CALL HER NICK, UNNIE. SHE'S NABI-YA.
MINJI-UNNIE SHOWED US UNDENIABLE PROOFS
THAT NABI-YA HAS ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A GIRL,
RIGHT? I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY SHE'S STILL
EMBARRASSED TO ADMIT THIS TO US. SHE EVEN
MADE UP A STORY THAT SHE'S BEING CHASED
BY A GANG OR SOMETHING.

어쨌든, 우리가 할 수 있는 최소한은
그녀를 지원하는 거에요.*

*ANYWAY, THE LEAST WE CAN
DO IS TO SUPPORT HER!

Chapter Eight
Confused

TWO WEEKS LATER...

EVEN YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THIS IS TOO MUCH, UNNIE!

PADLOCKS ON MY SHOES?
REALLY?!!

THIS IS YOUR OWN FAULT, NABI-YA.

IT WAS YOU WHO TRIED TO CHEAT AND TAKE OFF YOUR HEELS WHEN YOU THOUGHT NO ONE WAS WATCHING. YOU REMEMBER YOUR PUNISHMENT, RIGHT? YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO WEAR HEELS ALL THE TIME FOR SIXTEEN DAYS, NO EXCEPTION!

B-BUT YOU CAN'T BLAME ME! MY FEET WERE KILLING ME AFTER WEARING HEELS FOR SO LONG. I NEEDED AT LEAST TEN MINUTES OF REST!

THAT WASN'T THE DEAL, SILLY. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU THAT YOU NEED TO BE A GOOD MAKNAE?

FINE! BUT ANYWAY, I'VE BEEN WEARING STUPID HEELS FOR TWO WEEKS NOW. THE PUNISHMENT ENDS THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW, RIGHT?

I DON'T THINK SO, DOLL.

WHAT? WHY NOT?

SINCE YOU TRIED TO CHEAT, THE HEELS WILL STAY FOR A LITTLE LONGER. HOW MUCH LONGER? THAT'S UP TO YOU. THE MORE YOU COMPLAIN, THE WORSE IT'LL BE FOR YOU. AT LEAST YOU CAN'T TAKE YOUR SHOES OFF NOW, RIGHT? THANKS FOR THE LOCKS.

NOW THAT THIS MATTER IS OUT OF THE WAY, LET'S TALK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE. I LEFT THIS KEYBOARD HERE A FEW DAYS AGO, BUT I HAVEN'T HEARD YOU PLAY IT... NOT EVEN ONCE. DON'T YOU MISS PRACTICING MUSIC?

HOW CAN I PLAY WITH NAILS THIS LONG? IF YOU LET ME CUT THEM A LITTLE BIT...

DON'T TRY TO TRICK ME, NABI-YA. HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT I'M A MUSICIAN, TOO? YOU DON'T NEED YOUR NAILS TO BE SHORT TO PLAY THE KEYBOARD. THAT WOULD BE DIFFERENT IF WE WERE TALKING ABOUT GUITAR, BUT WHY WOULD A DELICATE GIRL LIKE YOU WANT TO PLAY GUITAR, HUH?


I HAVE AN IDEA TO CHEER YOU UP. WHY DON'T WE WRITE SOME SONGS TOGETHER? DOESN'T THAT SOUND FUN?

WHAT KIND OF SONGS? KPOP STUFF? YOU'VE ALREADY BEEN FORCING ME TO LEARN HOW TO DANCE LIKE A GIRL, AND NOW YOU WANT ME TO WRITE GIRLY SONGS WITH YOU? WHAT IS THIS ABOUT? DO YOU WANT TO TURN ME INTO AN IDOL OR SOMETHING?

HA! IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WISH, I COULD HELP YOU, SWEETIE...

VERY FUNNY, UNNIE! I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? I'M NOT IN THE MOOD TO WRITE SONGS.

C'MON, NABI-YA, DON'T BE SO GRUMPY! LISTEN, I KNOW THAT BEING A GIRL HAS BEEN HARD FOR YOU, BUT WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE NOW. YOU DON'T WANT TO DIE, DO YOU? THERE ARE DANGEROUS PEOPLE AFTER YOU.

I GOT AN IDEA! I THOUGHT OF A PROPOSAL THAT MIGHT CHEER YOU UP.

YOU ARE, WHEN YOU DON'T TRY TO CHEAT, WEARING HIGH HEELS ALL THE TIME EXCEPT TO SLEEP AND SHOWER, RIGHT?

RIGHT.

IF YOU AGREE TO WORK WITH ME,
WE CAN CUT IT DOWN TO, LET'S SAY,
SIX HOURS PER DAY?

SIX HOURS?! OH, GOD,
IT SOUNDS AMAZING!

I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M CELEBRATING HAVING TO WEAR HEELS SIX HOURS A DAY, BUT GIVEN THE CURRENT SITUATION, THAT'S ACTUALLY GOOD NEWS!


BUT HOW STUPID AM I? I SHOULD HAVE BARGAINED MORE BEFORE ACCEPTING MINJI-UNNIE'S DEAL!

NOT SO FAST, MISSY.
FOR US TO CLOSE THE DEAL,
THERE'S ONE CONDITION.

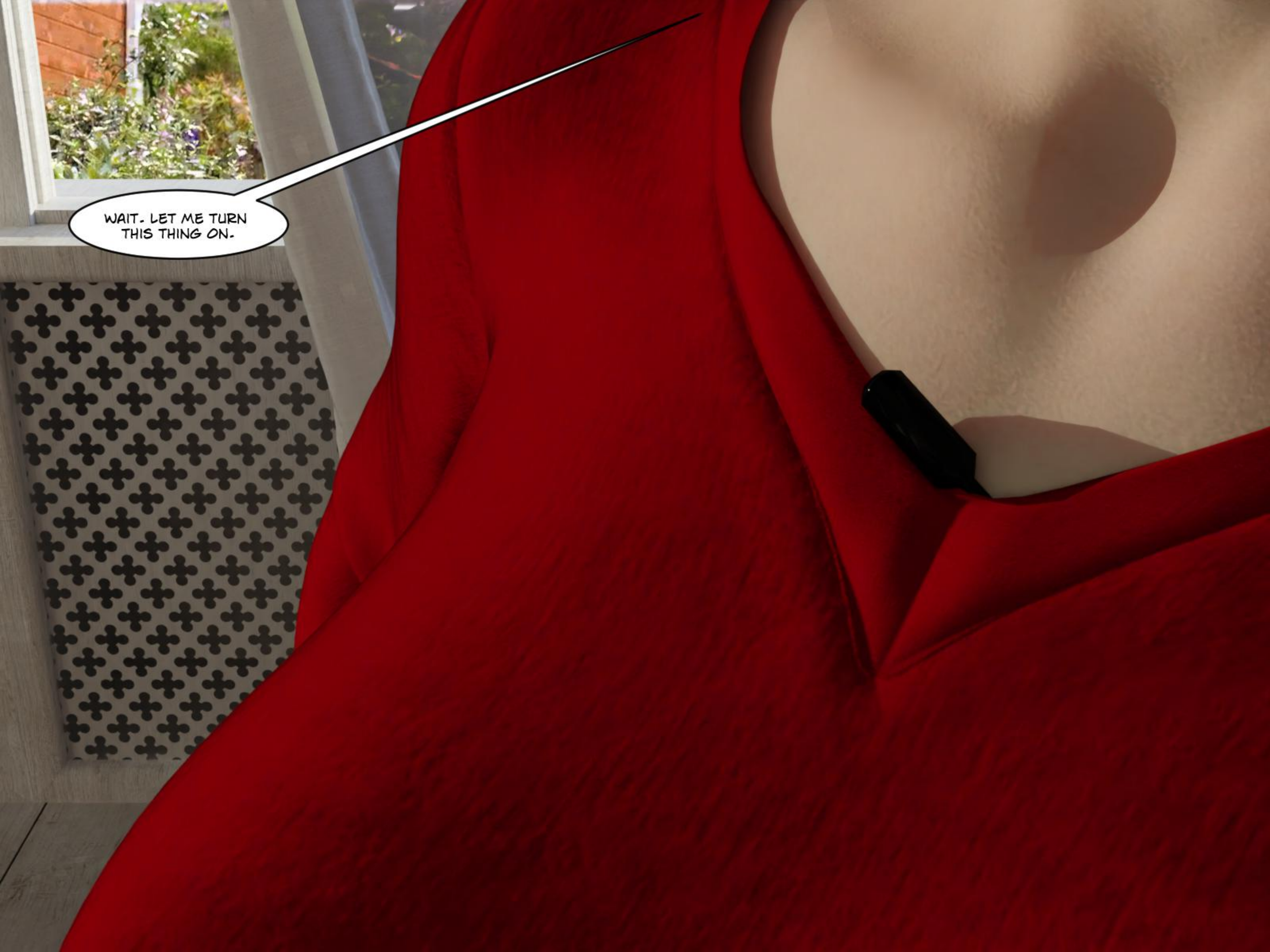
CONDITION? WHAT
CONDITION?


YOU'LL SEE.

FIVE MINUTES LATER...

HUH?


I CAN'T HEAR ANYTHING!


WAIT. LET ME TURN THIS THING ON.

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

YES. YOU'RE USING A MICROPHONE, AREN'T YOU? WHY CAN'T I REMOVE THESE IN-EARS? I'VE NEVER USED ANYTHING AS GOOD AS THESE IN THE STUDIO. THEY TOTALLY DROWNS OUT ANY AMBIENT SOUNDS!

STOP TRYING TO TAKE THEM OFF, YOU SILLY GIRL, UNLESS YOU WANT TO HURT YOURSELF! I'VE USED A SEALANT TO SECURE THE IN-EARS IN PLACE.


YOU WHAT?! WHY?

BECAUSE YOU'LL KEEP WEARING THEM FOR THE TIME BEING. THAT'S WHAT YOU'LL HAVE TO DO IN EXCHANGE FOR BEING ABLE TO WEAR HEELS ONLY SIX HOURS A DAY.

I'VE BEEN TRYING FOR WEEKS TO CONVINCE YOU TO STUDY KOREAN SERIOUSLY, BUT YOU HAVE BEEN LAZY AND DISOBEDIENT. IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU KNOW MORE THAN JUST A FEW WORDS IN KOREAN IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN YOUR COVER.

NOW WITH IN-EARS YOU HAVE NO CHOICE.
FROM NOW ON, I'LL ONLY SPEAK TO YOU
IN KOREAN. AND IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE
IGNORED, YOU'LL NEED TO DO THE SAME.
A GOOD LANGUAGE IMMERSION,
DON'T YOU THINK?

Chapter Nine

Be Natural

SOME DAYS LATER...



SIGH
I REALLY HATE THIS!

I'VE BEEN WEARING HIGH HEELS
SO MUCH THAT EVEN WHEN I'M BAREFOOT
I FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO WALK PROPERLY!
WHEN I TRY TO PUT MY HEELS ON THE FLOOR,
IT'S LIKE I HAVE NEEDLES STICKING
INTO MY FEET!


THIS SITUATION IS MORE AND MORE OUT OF CONTROL...

MINJI-UNNIE HAS FULL POWER OVER ME!
I CAN NO LONGER WALK OR TALK LIKE A MAN,
AND AS IF THAT WEREN'T ENOUGH...

...NOW SHE EVEN CONTROLS WHAT I CAN HEAR, THANKS TO THESE THINGS STUCK IN MY EARS!


SHE'S BEEN SPEAKING TO ME ONLY IN KOREAN MOST OF THE TIME, AND THE LESSONS HAVE BEEN LONG AND DEMANDING!

IT SEEMS LIKE SHE'S TOTALLY DETERMINED TO MAKE ME FLUENT IN KOREAN IN NO TIME! SOMETIMES SHE CONNECTS THESE THINGS TO THE TV OR CELL PHONE, BUT ALL SHE LETS ME LISTEN TO IS KPOP AND I CAN ONLY WATCH DORAMA!

AND I CAN'T FORGET ABOUT THE SILLY "FEMININITY" LESSONS! MINJI-UNNIE IS COMPLETELY OBSESSED WITH THEM THESE DAYS!





YOU SHOULD STOP BEING SO DISOBEDIENT, NABI-YA. YOU KNOW THIS NEVER ENDS WELL FOR YOU!

B-BUT I'M DOING EVERYTHING YOU ASK ME TO DO, UNNIE!

THAT'S NOT TRUE, GIRL. I ALREADY TOLD YOU HOW I WANT YOU TO THINK AND GESTURE FROM NOW ON, BUT YOU'RE NOT TAKING IT SERIOUSLY! TRY IT AGAIN, OKAY? TO MAKE IT EASIER, I WILL LET YOU TALK IN ENGLISH THIS TIME AROUND. BUT KEEP IN MIND THAT SOON YOU'LL ONLY SPEAK KOREAN!


HUMPH
FINE!

OH, UNNIE! I LOVE BEING NABI SO MUCH! THIS IS A DREAM COME TRUE FOR ME!

I MEAN, WHAT WOULD BE BETTER THAN LOOKING PRETTY AND WEARING CUTE SKIRTS AND HEELS ALL THE TIME?

I FEEL LIKE THE GIRLIEST GIRL EVER!

PLEASE, SOMEONE SHOOT ME!

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE BECOMING, NABI-YA! NOW WHY DON'T YOU PRACTICE WALKING A LITTLE BIT?


WHAT A PRETTY, DOLL! YOU SEE, NABI-YA, YOUR EFFORT IS PAYING OFF!
T-THANKS, UNNIE!

AND THAT'S HOW MY DAYS HAVE BEEN... ACTING LIKE A SISSY, LEARNING KOREAN AND WRITING STUPID SONGS WITH UNNIE AS A HOBBY!

I WONDER IF ALL THIS WILL HAVE ANY PERMANENT EFFECT ON ME... I MEAN, I CAN'T NOTICE IT, BUT IS IT POSSIBLE THAT I AM GESTURING, WALKING AND SITTING LIKE A GIRL EVEN WHEN UNNIE'S EYES AREN'T ON ME?

NAH, I DON'T THINK SO. I'M STILL THE OLD ME WHEN I'M ALONE! I... I HAVE TO BELIEVE SO! BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY I'M ACCEPTING THIS BULLSHIT. I USED TO BE A TOUGH GUY. I WASN'T AFRAID TO TELL ANYONE TO FUCK OFF, BUT LOOK AT ME NOW!

I HAVE CRAZY MOOD SWINGS AND PRETTY OFTEN I FEEL LIKE CRYING. I CAN'T ARGUE WITH ANYONE, LET ALONE UNNIE! GOSH, WHY AM I CALLING HER UNNIE EVEN IN MY THOUGHTS?

TOMORROW WE'LL FINALLY SEE MY DOCTOR. I DON'T KNOW HOW, BUT THAT BITCH HAS TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY BODY AND MY MIND. OR MAYBE THIS IS MINJI-UNNIE? WHY, THOUGH? AGAIN, WHAT WOULD SHE HAVE TO GAIN FROM THIS? ANYWAY, ONCE I FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON TOMORROW – ONE WAY OR ANOTHER – I'M GOING BACK TO MY OLD SELF. I DON'T CARE IF THERE'S A GANG AFTER ME. I WILL FACE THEM LIKE A MAN! 'COS THAT'S WHAT I AM, A REAL MAN... RIGHT?


BUT AS UNNIE SAID,
DO MEN HAVE BOOBS?

GOSH, MY CHEST IS GETTING MORE AND MORE SWOLLEN! THE DOCTOR BETTER HAVE A REALLY GOOD EXPLANATION FOR ME TOMORROW!

MY NIPPLES ARE SO SENSITIVE...


AHHHH---!

MEANWHILE IN THE LIVING ROOM...

SO, GIRLS, DID YOU WANT TO TALK TO ME?

YOU SEE, UNNIE, WE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT NABI-YA... WELL, TO START WITH, YOU KNOW THAT NABI ISN'T EVEN A NAME, RIGHT?

OF COURSE I KNOW, DASOM-A. NABI IS HER NICKNAME. HER NAME IS ACTUALLY MINAH.

THAT'S THE THING, UNNIE. MINAH IS A KOREAN NAME. WE UNDERSTAND SHE'S A TRANS GIRL. SOMETHING LIKE THIS IS STILL A BIG TABOO IN KOREA, BUT WE'VE BEEN AROUND PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD SINCE WE WENT TO COLLEGE, RIGHT? THE POINT IS, DON'T YOU AGREE IT'S WEIRD THAT NABI... OR MINAH... WANTS TO BE A KOREAN GIRL?

WHAT DO YOU THINK, EUNJOO-YA?

I PERSONALLY THINK THIS IS A LOT OF FUN!

I MEAN, ISN'T IT ADORABLE THAT SOMEONE WANT TO TURN INTO ONE OF US? A AMERICAN GUY BECOMING A KOREAN GIRL... THAT'S CURIOUS FOR SURE! HIS LIFE AS A WHITE MAN WOULD BE SO MUCH EASIER, BUT HE STILL WANTS TO BE AN ASIAN CHICK. I FIND IT KIND OF EXCITING!

I KNOW YOU HAVE A TENDENCY TO SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THINGS, BUT DON'T YOU FIND IT WEIRD, EUNJOO-YA? NOT EVEN A BIT?

C'MON, UNNIE, I...


LISTEN, GIRLS, THERE'S SOMETHING YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND...

AS YOU KNOW VERY WELL, I'M MAJORING IN PSYCHOLOGY, AND NABI'S CASE IS VERY INTERESTING TO ME. AFTER TALKING TO A FEW PROFESSORS AND DOING SOME RESEARCH, I CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT NABI-YA HAS SOME DEGREE OF DISSOCIATIVE DISORDER. YOU TWO REMEMBER WHEN WE FIRST TALKED TO HER, AND SHE MENTIONED SHE ALWAYS HAD ISSUES BEING ACCEPTED BY HER FAMILY?

A TRAUMA OF THIS NATURE, COMBINED WITH GENDER DYSPHORIA, MAY HAVE TRIGGERED HER CURRENT CONDITION, WITH HER BELIEVING THAT IN ORDER TO BE ACCEPTED SHE NEEDS A COMPLETELY NEW IDENTITY.

WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS THAT I BELIEVE THIS IS A TEMPORARY SITUATION. I WANTED TO PRESERVE NABI-YA'S PRIVACY, BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT SHE'S ALREADY SEEING A PSYCHOLOGIST... ONE OF MY PROFESSORS AT COLLEGE.

I THINK THAT SOON NABI-YA WILL ACCEPT HERSELF AS THE TRANS WOMAN SHE'S SUPPOSED TO BE, AND WILL NO LONGER HAVE THE NEED TO BE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON TO ESCAPE HER TRAUMAS.

THAT'S BETTER THEN, RIGHT? YOU THINK THIS IS JUST A PHASE... LISTEN, UNNIE, YOU KNOW I'M YOUR FRIEND... ARE YOU SURE THIS ISN'T LIKE WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN YOU AND JIHOO, OUR MAIN VOCALIST BACK WHEN WE WERE TRAINEES, ALL OVER AGAIN?

THIS SITUATION IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT, DASOM-A. DON'T TALK NONSENSE! NABI-YA IS A TRANS WOMAN, AND SHE'S HAPPY TO FINALLY BE LIVING AS A FEMALE. THAT'S WHAT WE SHOULD FOCUS ON.




FUCK...

I HATE THIS CAGE SO MUCH!
I HATE PRETENDING TO BE
A GIRL!

I'M SO TURNED ON... ALL I WANTED WAS TO CUM, FOR GOD'S SAKE! BUT THAT'S JUST IMPOSSIBLE WITH THIS DAMN CAGE! THAT'S IT... TOMORROW... I'LL PUT AN END TO THIS ONCE AND FOR ALL, AND I'LL BE A MAN AGAIN! I SWEAR!



Chapter Ten
Pretty Girl

THE NEXT MORNING...




HUH?

GOSH...


HOW CAN A GIRL SLEEP WITH THE SUN ON HER FACE?


WAIT A MINUTE... SUN?!

WHAT TIME IS IT?


OH NO...
9:43

I'M TOTALLY SCREWED!

9:43

Czech conversatio

MY APPOINTMENT WAS AT 9:30! BUT OF COURSE I COULDN'T HEAR THE ALARM WITH THESE THINGS STUCK IN MY EARS!

OH, THERE'S A MESSAGE FROM UNNIE. THIS IS FROM LAST NIGHT. I SHOULD HAVE CHECKED THE PHONE BEFORE GOING TO SLEEP!

"NABI-YA, THE SOLVENT FOR YOUR IN-EARS IS IN THE BATHROOM. REMOVE THEM TONIGHT. I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE HOME EARLY TOMORROW, BUT I'LL MEET YOU AT THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE. DON'T BE LATE! REMEMBER, IT IS NOT EASY TO GET AN APPOINTMENT WITH DR. WHITE!"

WELL, I'LL LEAVE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. I DON'T THINK I HAVE TIME TO REMOVE THESE DAMN THINGS FROM MY EARS! I'M ALREADY ALMOST TWENTY MINUTES LATE, AND IT'S GOING TO TAKE ME AT LEAST HALF AN HOUR TO GET TO THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE. I'M JUST GOING TO PUT THE FIRST OUTFIT I CAN GET MY HANDS ON AND GET OUT OF HERE!

SOME TIME LATER...

GOSH, I SHOULDN'T HAVE CHOSEN SUCH HIGH HEELS! IT'S PRETTY HARD TO WALK FAST ON THEM, NO MATTER HOW MUCH PRACTICE I HAVE! THIS HAS TO BE THE TALLEST PAIR IN MY WARDROBE, AND I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO FALL OVER AT ANY MOMENT!

BUT I'M SO LATE THAT I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO THINK ABOUT WHAT I WAS DOING. I DIDN'T EVEN DO MY MAKEUP! AT LEAST I PUT ON SOME LIP GLOSS WHILE I WAS IN THE UBER.

나비야, 너 진짜 왜 그래?
왜 이렇게 늦었어?

죄송해요, 언니. 저는...

*NABI-YA, WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU? WHY ARE YOU SO LATE?

*I'M SORRY, UNNIE, I CAN'T...

화장은 왜 안했어 이 기집애야?

*WHY AREN'T YOU WEARING MAKEUP, YOU SLOPPY GIRL?

내가 설명합니다! 나는 너의
말을 들을 수가 없고...

*IT'S LIKE I'M TRYING TO EXPLAIN! I CAN'T HEAR YOU AND...

잠깐... 지금 이어폰 끼고 있는 거야?
오늘 정말 내 인내심을 시험하는구나!

나는...

*WAIT A MINUTE... ARE YOU USING YOUR IN-EARS? GIRL, YOU ARE REALLY TRYING MY PATIENCE TODAY!

*I...

어쨌든! 마이크가 내 지갑에 있었으니 다행이지.
이걸 켜면 내 말이 들릴거야. 직원과 얘기하고 올게.
이렇게 늦었어도 선생님이 만나 주셔야 할텐데. 면담 동안에도
나 혼자만 얘기해야겠네, 안그래? 정말 너를 어떻게 해야
할지 모르겠어, 아가씨

*OH, WHATEVER! BE GLAD THE MICROPHONE IS IN MY PURSE SO YOU WILL BE ABLE TO HEAR ME ONCE I TURN IT ON. LET ME TALK TO THE SECRETARY. YOU'LL BE LUCKY IF THE DOCTOR AGREES TO SEE YOU CONSIDERING HOW LATE YOU ARRIVED. I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO DO ALL THE TALKING DURING THE APPOINTMENT TOO, RIGHT? I REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH YOU, GIRL!

NOT LONG AFTER...

SO, FROM WHAT I UNDERSTOOD, YOU DIDN'T TAKE THE PILLS I PRESCRIBED FOR YOU BECAUSE YOU WANT TO SLOW DOWN YOUR TRANSITION A BIT IN ORDER TO HAVE TIME TO GET USED TO YOUR NEW LIFE. STILL, EVEN WITHOUT THE PILLS, YOU NOTICED DRASTIC CHANGES IN YOUR BODY, IS THAT CORRECT?

OKAY, MS. KIM, I HAVE TO EXAMINE YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHAT'S HAPPENING. I KNOW THIS ISN'T THE MOST COMFORTABLE SITUATION IN THE WORLD, BUT I NEED YOU TO UNDRESS, PLEASE.

의사가 무슨 말을 하고
계세요, 언니?

그는 너한테 옷을 벗으라고 해.
그래서 네 몸을 보려고 해.

*WHAT'S THE DOCTOR SAYING, UNNIE?

*HE NEEDS YOU TO TAKE YOUR CLOTHES OFF SO HE CAN TAKE A BETTER LOOK AT YOU.

이것이 정말 필요한가요?

*WHAT? IS THIS REALLY NECESSARY, UNNIE?

와, 여자야, 고집 부리지 마. 너는 그가 네가 무슨 문제가 있는지 알아내길 원하잖아, 그치?

*C'MON, GIRL, DON'T BE STUBBORN. YOU WANT HIM TO FIND OUT WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, DON'T YOU?

I HATE THIS, BUT I GUESS I HAVE NO CHOICE! I DEFINITELY WANT A GOOD EXPLANATION OF WHY I'M GROWING BOOBS!



알겠어, 준비됐어요!

*O-OKAY... I'M READY!

ALRIGHT, MS. KIM, SIT IN THE CHAIR, PLEASE. I PROMISE THIS WILL BE QUICK.


THIS HAS TO BE THE MOST HUMILIATING DAY OF MY LIFE!

LOOK AT ME, WEARING JUST MY PINK PANTIES IN FRONT OF ANOTHER MAN, WITH MY BOOBS TOTALLY ON DISPLAY. HOW COULD THIS GET ANY WORSE?

I SEE YOU WEREN'T LYING, MS. KIM. NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I NEED TO GET CLOSER, OKAY?

지금 어떻게 해야 하죠, 언니?

깊게 숨을 쉬어. 그러면 그가 검사를 할 거야.

*WHAT IS HE SAYING NOW, UNNIE?

*JUST TAKE A DEEP BREATH SO HE CAN PERFORM THE EXAM.

그러나...

짜증나지 마, 나비야.
금방 끝날 거야!

*BUT...

*STOP BEING ANNOYING, NABI-YA.
BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, IT'LL BE OVER!


OH GOD...




AHHH...

WHAT THE FUCK! I CAN'T BELIEVE I JUST GOT TURNED ON BY A MAN PLAYING WITH MY BOOBS! AND I COULDN'T EVEN HIDE IT! I SEE THERE IS NO LIMIT TO HOW BAD AND HUMILIATING THIS SITUATION CAN BE...

YES, IT IS CLEAR THAT IN ADDITION TO BEING SWOLLEN, YOUR CHEST IS VERY SENSITIVE TO TOUCH.

THAT SHE CANNOT DENY, CAN YOU, NABI-YA?

ALRIGHT, LET'S CUT THE CRAP, GIRL! OF COURSE HE DIDN'T NEED ANY PILLS TO DEVELOP BREASTS. NOT AFTER THE IMPLANT YOU FORCED ME TO PUT IN HIM! NOW THE QUESTION IS, ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO KEEP DOING THIS TO THIS POOR GUY?

YES, I'M ABSOLUTELY SURE, DOC, THANKS FOR ASKING, THOUGH!

DON'T YOU THINK ABOUT THE RISKS? I TOLD YOU THIS DRUG IS IN THE EARLY STAGES OF TESTING. LOOK HOW MUCH HE HAS CHANGED IN SUCH A SHORT TIME!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TRICK YOU USED TO MAKE HIM LOOK COMPLETELY FLAT IN THE GROIN AREA, BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT IF WE DON'T STOP THIS MADNESS RIGHT NOW, HIS GENITALIA AND TESTICLES WILL ATROPHY AND BECOME HOPELESSLY DYSFUNCTIONAL VERY SOON. I BET HE'S ALREADY INFERTILE AT THIS POINT!

THAT'S A PRICE I'M WILLING TO PAY, DOC.

YOU STUPID, SELFISH BITCH!
YOU'RE NOT ONLY RUINING THIS GUY'S LIFE, BUT PROBABLY MINE TOO! IF PEOPLE FIND OUT ABOUT MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS SCHEME, NOT ONLY WILL I LOSE MY MEDICAL LICENSE... I'LL ALSO GO TO JAIL, DAMMIT!

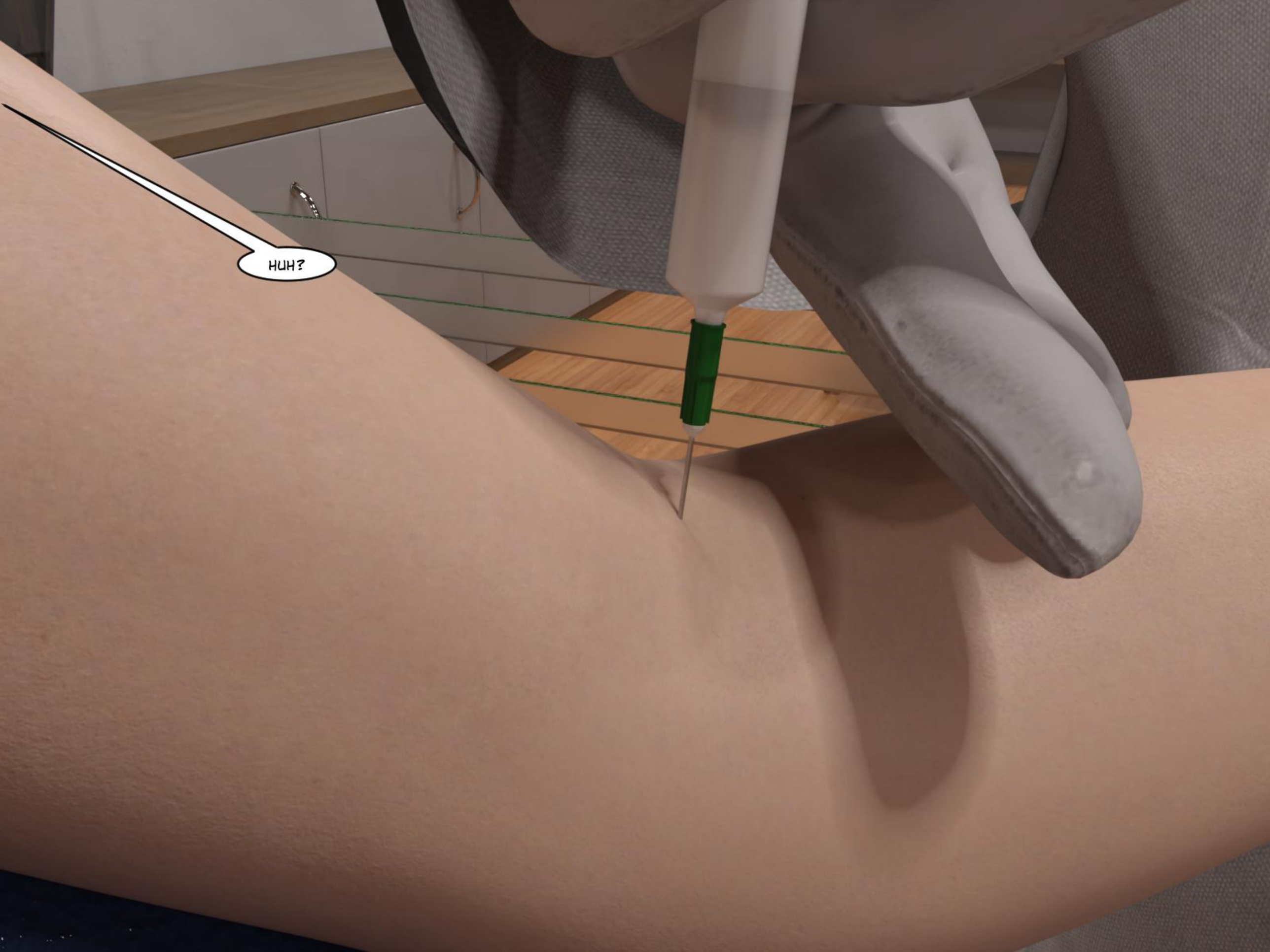
BE GLAD YOU'RE NOT IN JAIL ALREADY, DEAR DR. WHITE, AND BE CAREFUL WHO YOU CALL A BITCH! HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT I KNOW ABOUT YOU? DO AS I SAY OR... NOW!

왜 그렇게 싸우는 건가요?

걱정하지 마, 여자야. 의사랑 나는
그냥 작은 불화 중이야. 어차피 너는
이런 거 하나도 기억 못 할 거야!

*WHY ARE YOU GUYS FIGHTING?

*DON'T WORRY, GIRL. THE DOCTOR AND
I ARE JUST HAVING A LITTLE DISAGREEMENT.
YOU WON'T REMEMBER ANY OF THIS, ANYWAY!


HUH?

언니, 무슨 일이 일어나고 있나요? 저...
저 지금 어지러운 기분이에요...

*WHAT'S GOING ON, UNNIE?
I... I'M FEELING DIZZY...

그냥 편하게 해, 인형아. 이쁜 잠 잘 때
마음 편하게 해. 깨면, 모든 게 완전히 달라질 거야.
기타도 안 치고 남자 같은 척하는 건 없을 거야. 네 삶은 애교,
귀여운 미니스커트, 예쁜 하이힐, 화장, 높은 목소리 노래로
가득할 거야. 이건 꿈 같지 않니? 너는 영원히 예쁜 여자로
살 거야, 나비야!

JUST RELAX AND ENJOY YOUR BEAUTY SLEEP, DOLL. WHEN YOU WAKE UP, THINGS ARE GOING TO BE QUITE DIFFERENT. NO MORE GUITARS AND PRETENDING TO BE A GUY FOR YOU. YOUR LIFE WILL BE FULL OF AEGYO, CUTE MINISKIRTS, PRETTY HEELS, MAKEUP AND HIGH PITCHED SONGS. THIS TIME FOR REAL! DOESN'T THIS SOUND LIKE A DREAM? YOU'RE GOING TO BE A PRETTY GIRL, NABI-YA... FOREVER!



Chapter Eleven

Rough

ONE MONTH LATER...

IS THIS THE RIGHT ROOM, LEE SIWOO-SUNBAE?


JUDGING BY HER CONDITION, I'D SAY SO.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO HER, SUNBAE?

I DON'T RECALL ALL THE DETAILS, BUT SHE WAS YET ANOTHER VICTIM OF AMERICAN DEGENERATION.

SOME JUNKIE LOSER OWED MONEY TO A GANG. DURING A CHASE, THIS GIRL - WHO HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE STORY - WAS RUN OVER BY THE GUY, AND HERE SHE IS. AT LEAST SHE DIDN'T SUFFER THE SAME FATE AS THE JUNKIE. HE'S IN A COFFIN NOW.

POOR GIRL...

EVEN SWOLLEN AND BRUISED, SHE STILL LOOKS SO PRETTY! I HOPE SHE DOESN'T GET ANY AFTER-EFFECTS OR SCARS!

IF THAT'S THE CASE, ANY PLASTIC SURGEON CAN FIX HER BACK IN KOREA. THOSE IDOL GIRLS ARE ALL FAKE BARBIE DOLLS, ANYWAY. ANOTHER DEGENERATION OF THIS COUNTRY. ONE THAT WE HAVE IMPORTED, UNFORTUNATELY.

YOU SHOULDN'T BE SO RUDE, SUNBAE! YOU REMEMBER T-PANDA-SAJANGNIM SAID THE COMPANY'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON THIS GIRL'S VOICE, RIGHT? HE EVEN GAVE UP ON THE CONTEST PLANS AND DECIDED TO SIMPLY DEBUT HER GROUP INSTEAD!

IT'S YOU WHO'S BEING RUDE, PARK JISU-YANG! YOU NEED TO SHOW MORE RESPECT NOT ONLY TO ME FOR BEING YOUR SENIOR, BUT ESPECIALLY TO BONHWA YANG-SAJANGNIM. STOP CALLING HIM T-PANDA IN FRONT OF ME!

BUT THAT USED TO BE HIS STAGE NAME, RIGHT? AND HE INSISTS THAT EVERYONE CALLS HIM THIS WAY.

SOMETIMES BONHWA YANG-SAJANGNIM DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR TRADITIONS, WHICH IS SAD. IT DOESN'T MAKE HIM ANY LESS CAPABLE, THOUGH. I'VE BEEN HIS PERSONAL ASSISTANT SINCE LONG BEFORE HE OPENED HIS OWN COMPANY, WHEN HE WAS STILL JUST A SINGER. YOU HAVE NO IDEA THE THINGS I'VE SEEN HIM DOING!

DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT THE FUTURE OF HIS COMPANY IS IN THIS GIRL'S HANDS? ANYONE CAN SING STUPID SONGS. RUNNING A BUSINESS AND BEING SUCCESSFUL IS ANOTHER THING!


SO YOU THINK BEING AN IDOL IS ALL ABOUT SINGING "STUPID SONGS"?
NO, THERE'S ALSO THE "GIGGLING AND WINKING LIKE AN IDIOT" PART. MY POINT IS, YOU CAN FIND DOZENS OF GIRLS WHO CAN DO THIS ON EVERY CORNER OF SEOUL THESE DAYS. I DON'T KNOW WHY SAJANGNIM THINKS THIS ONE IS SO SPECIAL. BUT HE DEFINITELY DOESN'T DEPEND ON HER FOR ANYTHING!

WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, SUNBAE, IF YOU HAVE SUCH A CONTEMPT FOR IDOLS, I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU WORK FOR AND SHOW SO MUCH ADMIRATION FOR T-PANDA... SORRY, BONHWA YANG-SAJANGNIM. YOU KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE THAT HE USED TO BE AN IDOL HIMSELF, AND IS VERY PROUD OF IT!

MY MOTIVATIONS ARE NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS. NOW LET'S GET OUT OF HERE. WE'VE ALREADY SEEN THAT THE GIRL WILL SURVIVE, AND THAT'S ENOUGH FOR NOW.

Try new things
BE HAPPY
Show compassion
BE GRATEFUL
DREAM BIG
Respect one another
LAUGH OUT LOUD

WAIT, SUNBAE...


...I THINK SHE'S WAKING UP!

SO WHAT? WE CAN TELL THAT TO A NURSE ON OUR WAY OUT OR SOMETHING. WE STILL NEED TO SEE THE OTHER GIRLS AND MAKE SURE WE GET THEM ALL ON A PLANE BACK TO KOREA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE INFLUENCE OF THIS PLACE IS NOT DOING YOU ANY GOOD.

DON'T MIND HIM, KIM MINAH-SHI. ARE YOU AN UNNIE? I STILL DON'T KNOW. TAKE CARE, OKAY? I SEE YOU VERY SOON. I FEEL YOU'LL BE ADORED IN KOREA!


HUH?

A FEW MORE WEEKS LATER...





ARGH...

WHA'S GOIN' ON?
WHERE I AM?

OUCH, MY FROAT HURTS REAL BAD AN' MY BOICE SOUNDS FUNNY...


WAIT... WHY CAN'T I PU-RO-NOUNCE DE WORDS RIGHT?

WHAT ABOUT MY SKIN? IT LOOKS SO MUCH WHITER AND PINKISH AND MY ARMS ARE SO DELICATE...


JUST LIKE MY WHOLE BODY!


WHAT THE HELL DID THEY DO TO ME? IS THIS A NIGHTMARE?

MY FACE SEEMS WEIRD, TOO.
IT FEELS SO SMALL AND SMOOTH!

I NEED A MIRROR NOW! THERE MUST BE A BATHROOM AROUND HERE!



OH NO...

DIS CAN'T BE TU-RUE...


HOW CAN DIS BE ME?!

FROM WHAT I REMEMBER, I WAS AT THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE JUST NOW COMPLAINING THAT I WAS GROWING BOOBS, AND INSTEAD OF A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM NOW I HAVE THE FACE OF A FREAKING ASIAN GIRL?!


IF THEY DID THIS TO MY FACE,
HOW EXTENSIVE IS THE DAMAGE
TO MY BODY?

MY CHEST LOOKS THE SAME, I GUESS?
BUT MY SKIN IS JUST LIKE PORCELAIN AND
MY NECK IS SO SLENDER AND FEMININE,
WITH NO TRACE OF MY ADAM'S APPLE...

GOD, WHAT ABOUT DOWN THERE? COULD IT POSSIBLE THAT... NO, THEY WOULDN'T BE SO SICK... RIGHT?




SIGH

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS REALLY ME!

JUST LOOK AT MY BODY...

THEY CERTAINLY DID SOMETHING TO MY WAISTLINE TOO!


WELL, AS SCARY AS IT IS,
IT'S TIME TO FACE THE TRUTH...


I NEED TO TAKE MY PANTIES OFF.




WHA'?!!


LOOK HOW TINY MY COCK IS!

AND MY BALLS ARE GONE!
I NO LONGER HAVE MY
FUCKING BALLS!

I... I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO THROW UP... WHY IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME? WHY ME?

I'VE NEVER DONE ANY HARM TO ANYONE.
WHY DID THEY MUTILATE ME LIKE THIS?
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO NOW?
I'M COMPLETELY RUINED!


I SEE OUR SLEEPING BEAUTY HAS FINALLY DECIDED TO WAKE UP!

YOU! I TU-RU-SU-TE' YOU! LOO' WHA' YOU LE' DEM DO TO ME!

I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE WHINING A BABY. YOU LOOK PRETTIER THAN EVER! GOSH, THAT'S AMAZING! YOU LOOK MORE ASIAN THAN I DO! YOU EVEN SOUND LIKE A KOREAN GIRL WHO CAN BARELY SPEAK ENGLISH. I LOVE IT!

YOU LOBE IT?! LOO' A' MY BODY!
LOO' WHA'S LEF' OF MY COCK! WHY ARE
YOU SMILIN'? THA' WAS YOU, WASN'T IT?
I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT YOU WERE DE ONE
WHO TOL' DE DOCTOR TO DO DIS TO ME!

WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR DRAMA, GIRL.
I KNEW YOU WOULD WAKE UP TODAY BECAUSE
THE DOCTOR WAS GOING TO CUT OFF THE SEDATIVES.
WE HAVE AN IMPORTANT APPOINTMENT. GO PUT ON
THE CLOTHES I BROUGHT YOU... NOW.

I'M NOT GOIN' ANYWHERE WIF YOU, YOU CU-RA-JY BITCHY! GE' OU' OF MY WAY. I'M CALLIN' THE COP-SU, AND YOU WON'T STO' ME!

OUCH, YOU'RE HURTIN' ME!

WEREN'T YOU THE ONE SAYING I COULDN'T STOP YOU, YOU LITTLE FREAK?

THAT WAS THE LAST TIME YOU DISRESPECTED ME, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

SLAP!

NOW GO PUT ON YOUR DAMN CLOTHES UNLESS YOU WANT TO BE DRAGGED OUT OF THE HOSPITAL NAKED FOR EVERYONE TO SEE HOW RIDICULOUS THAT PATHETIC TINY THING BETWEEN YOUR LEGS LOOK, YOU STUPID SISSY!



Chapter Twelve

Psycho

HOURS LATER...

CA BLDG.



W-WHA' ARE WE DOIN' HERE?


NABI-YA...

YOU KNOW YOU SOUND RIDICULOUS TRYING TO SPEAK ENGLISH, RIGHT? WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO STOP THIS NONSENSE? YOU SHOULD FOCUS ON WHAT YOU'RE GOOD AT, GIRL!

NOW, IF I UNDERSTAND CORRECTLY, YOU ASKED WHAT WE ARE DOING HERE. WELL, EVEN YOU, WHO ARE DEFINITELY NOT THE MOST BRILLIANT PERSON IN THE WORLD, ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION.

PU-LISE, DON'T MAK' ME DO DIS. ANYTHIN' BU' DIS. I BEG YOU!

YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE DEALS YOU PROPOSE, NABI-YA.

BUT I CAN'T ACCEPT YOUR OFFER... NOT THIS TIME.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

THAT WE GOT YOU ALL DOLLED UP FOR NOTHING?

REALLY?

NO, THE WORLD NEEDS TO SEE YOU!

...SEE HOW PRETTY AND FEMININE YOU LOOK!

BECAUSE THIS IS YOUR LIFE NOW.

NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU THAN LOOKING LIKE A GIRLY, CUTE DOLL.


THIS IS WHO YOU WILL BE FOREVER!

DON'T YOU SEE IT?


DON'T YOU SEE THAT I HAVE TOTAL CONTROL OVER YOU AND YOUR LIFE?


CA BLDG
THINK ABOUT WHAT I'VE ALREADY DONE TO YOU. IF YOU THINK THIS IS BAD, KEEP IN MIND THAT I CAN TURN YOUR LIFE INTO A LIVING HELL! AND WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? STAMP YOUR FEET AND WHINE LIKE A LITTLE GIRL?
THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO WARN YOU ONE LAST TIME, STOP COMPLAINING AND START BEHAVING. THINGS CAN GET TERRIBLE FOR YOU TONIGHT!

IS THAT IT? DO I REALLY HAVE NO WAY OUT? WHY CAN'T I FIGHT BACK? I MUST BE IN SHOCK OR SOMETHING... WHO WOULDN'T BE IN MY PLACE? OR MAYBE... MAYBE SHE'S RIGHT... MAYBE I WAS NEVER A REAL MAN.

EXIT

RESTROOMS

WAI'---



ARE THOSE ROY AN' SAM?
IS DAT MY BAN'?

EXIT

RESTROO

YOUR BAND? NOT ANYMORE, DOLL.

IT SEEMS THEY HAVE A REAL MAN AS THEIR SINGER NOW!

AND I HAVE TO SAY...

JUDGING BY THE CROWD'S EXCITEMENT...

THE BAND IS DOING A LOT BETTER WITHOUT YOU. AND TODAY IS ONLY WEDNESDAY! YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW BUSY THIS PLACE HAS BEEN OVER THE WEEKENDS. IT'S A SHAME YOU WON'T HAVE A CHANCE TO SEE IT WITH YOUR OWN EYES...

EXIT

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR LAST CONCERT... IF WE CAN CALL THAT A CONCERT? BESIDES ME, THERE WERE ONLY TWO OR THREE OTHER PEOPLE IN THE AUDIENCE, RIGHT? THAT WAS SO PATHETIC THAT YOU WERE EVEN KICKED OUT OF THE BAND THAT NIGHT!

EXIT

RESTROOMS

DEY... DEY DIDN' KICK ME OU'!
DEY WERE DE ONES WHO LEF'!

OH, REALLY? IT'S FUNNY YOU SAY THAT 'CAUSE THEY'RE PLAYING ON THE STAGE RIGHT NOW WHILE YOU'RE HERE, WHINING IN YOUR PINK DRESS AND PRETTY HEELS!


WHA'S WRON' WIF YOU?
WHY DO YOU KEE' BEIN'
SO MEAN TO ME?

WHAT? ARE YOU GOING TO START CRYING AGAIN? WHAT A DELICATE PRINCESS... AT LEAST YOU'RE WEARING WATERPROOF MAKEUP. SO YOU WON'T RUIN YOUR CUTE LITTLE FACE!

WHA' ELSE DO YOU WAN' FROM ME?! YOU ALRIDY DESU-TU-ROYE' MY LIFE. I'LL NEVE' BE ABLE TO GO BACK TO WHO I WAS! WHA' NOW? DO YOU WAN' ME TO KILL MYSEL' OR SOMETHIN'?

YOU SAID I DESTROYED YOUR LIFE? IT'S REALLY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND YOUR BROKEN ENGLISH. BUT THE TRUTH IS, YOU SHOULD THANK ME! YOUR LIFE WAS A FAILURE IN EVERY SINGLE ASPECT. THERE WASN'T A SINGLE PERSON WHO CARED ABOUT YOU!

T-THA'S NO' TU-RUE...

YOU SURE? LET ME TELL YOU A LITTLE STORY THEN. YOU, OR RATHER, NICK IS OFFICIALLY DEAD. YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT NEVER BEING HIM AGAIN! DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE WENT TO YOUR FUNERAL? NONE! NOT EVEN YOUR FUCKING MOTHER!

YOU DON'T HAVE A TOMBSTONE BECAUSE NO ONE CARED ENOUGH TO PROVIDE ONE. DON'T YOU BELIEVE ME? LOOK FOR THE NEWS ABOUT NICK'S DEATH. AND HERE ARE YOUR SO-CALLED FRIENDS, PLAYING WITH ANOTHER GUY, AND NO ONE GIVES A SHIT THAT YOU'RE GONE!

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME? WHY ME?


BECAUSE I WANT TO GIVE YOU
A CHANCE TO BE SOMEONE WORTHWHILE.
SOMEONE PEOPLE CARE ABOUT, NABI-YA.
WOULDN'T IT BE NICE? WOUDLN'T YOU LIKE
BEING LOVED AT LEAST ONCE?

SOME TIME LATER...


HERE WE ARE, NABI-YA.

YOU KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO CONGRATULATE A BAND AFTER A CONCERT!


EXIT
ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU KNOW THE MEMBERS, DON'T YOU THINK?


EXIT

LOOK OVER THERE, GUYS.


EXIT
IT SEEMS WE HAVE COMPANY!

WOW, AND THE BEST KIND OF COMPANY, I'D SAY!

WELCOME TO OUR DRESSING ROOM, LADIES! NOT THE BEST IN THE WORLD, I ADMIT, BUT IT ALREADY LOOKS A THOUSAND TIMES BETTER NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE!


WHY THANK YOU! I HOPE WE'RE NOT BOTHERING YOU GUYS!


NOT AT ALL... BUT TELL ME, RED DRESS, HAVEN'T I SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE?

WELL...

I'VE BEEN TO THIS PUB BEFORE, AND YOU GUYS WERE PLAYING THAT NIGHT TOO. BUT YOU HAD ANOTHER VOCALIST BACK THEN. WHAT WAS HIS NAME AGAIN? PETER, WASN'T IT? I'M MINJI, BY THE WAY.

EXIT


THE BASTARD'S NAME WAS NICK. AND I HAVE TO SAY, WE'RE MUCH BETTER OFF NOW WITHOUT HIM!

C'MON, MAN, HE WASN'T THAT BAD!
I MEAN, HE **WAS BAD**, BUT STILL...

GOING EASY ON HIM JUST BECAUSE THE MOTHERFUCKER GOT HIMSELF KILLED, BUDDY? FROM WHAT I REMEMBER, YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SAID YOU'D RATHER RIP YOUR EARDRUMS OUT THAN HAVING TO LISTEN TO ONE OF HIS SHITTY SONGS AGAIN!

hahahaha

hahahaha

hahahaha

hahahaha

hahahaha

LOOKS LIKE UNNIE WAS RIGHT.
THEY DON'T GIVE A SHIT THAT I'M SUPPOSEDLY DEAD.
ALL THOSE YEARS PLAYING TOGETHER... AND NOW THIS? THEY LAUGH AT MY SONGS... THEY DIDN'T EVEN GO TO MY FUCKING FUNERAL!

EXIT


THAT'S ENOUGH, GUYS. THE GIRLS WILL START TO THINK WE'RE NOT GENTLEMEN! TELL ME MINJI, YOUR PRETTY FRIEND IS VERY SHY, ISN'T SHE? SHE HASN'T SAID A WORD YET!

HER NAME'S KIM MINAH, BUT SHE PREFERS TO BE CALLED NABI. SHE JUST ARRIVED FROM KOREA, AND BARELY SPEAKS ENGLISH. ALSO, SHE'S QUITE SHY FOR SURE, ESPECIALLY AROUND CUTE GUYS, RIGHT, NABI-YA?


C-CUTE GUYS?!

WHA' YOU TALKIN' ABOU', UNNIE? I NEBE...

THAT'S OKAY SWEETIE. NOBODY IS JUDGING YOU!

SHE LIKES TO SING TOO, YOU KNOW? AND EVEN THOUGH SHE'S ACTING LIKE A SCARED KITTEN RIGHT NOW, SHE WAS TELLING ME NOT LONG AGO HOW MUCH SHE LOVED YOUR VOICE!

OH, REALLY? BESIDES BEING SO BEAUTIFUL, YOU ARE ALSO A SINGER, NABI? LOOKS LIKE I'VE FOUND THE PERFECT WOMAN FOR ME! DO YOU LIKE GUITARS? MINE IS STILL ON STAGE. WHY DON'T WE HOP OVER THERE SO YOU CAN TAKE A LOOK?

I... I DON' FIN-KU DAT A GU-DU IDEA!

EXIT

C'MON, DOLL, HE'S JUST BEING NICE. YOU DON'T WANT HIM TO THINK YOU'RE A RUDE GIRL, DO YOU?




WE'RE NO' GOIN' TO DE STAGE!
YOU BU-ROUGH' ME OU' OF DE PU-BU,
DIDN' YOU?

WE CAN GO THERE LATER, NABI.
BUT I WAS THINKING...

WHY DON'T WE TAKE A MOMENT TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER? I'M JOSH, IN CASE YOU DIDN'T HEAR MY NAME DURING THE CONCERT.

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS REALLY HAPPENING! THIS GUY IS ACTING EXACTLY LIKE I USED TO WHEN I WANTED TO MAKE OUT WITH SOME GIRL AT THE END OF ONE OF OUR CONCERTS. BUT I'M IN THE GIRL'S SHOES NOW! AND BY SHOES, I'M REFERRING TO PINK HEELS WITH BUTTERFLIES ON THE BACK!


THIS IS SO DAMN HUMILIATING! I NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE! WHY DOES UNNIE KEEP MAKING ME MORE AND MORE MISERABLE? WHY DO I KEEP CALLING THAT BITCH UNNIE IN MY MIND?


SO, TELL ME, NABI, ARE YOU ENJOYING YOUR STAY IN AMERICA?


WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY NOW? THINK FAST, GIRL! YOU HAVE TO GET RID OF HIM SOMEHOW!

I--- I FINK---


I SEE YOU'RE STILL NERVOUS, BABE...


LET ME HELP YOU RELAX.
HUH?


OH MY GOSH!


HE'S KISSING ME!
I'M BEING KISSED
BY A GUY!

WAI', JOSH, I...

HUH...?!



OH, GOD!

HE'S FRENCH-KISSING ME! I CAN'T BELIEVE ANOTHER GUY'S TONGUE IS INSIDE MY MOUTH!






WHAT THE... IS HE GRABBING MY ASS?!

DAT'S ENOUF, O-KAY?

C'MON, NABI, WE'RE JUST HAVING FUN! I WON'T DO ANYTHING YOU DON'T WANT, OF COURSE, BUT YOU CAN'T DENY YOU WERE ENJOYING THE KISS, CAN YOU?

I THINK SHE ALREADY MADE HER ANSWER CLEAR.

EH?

WEREN'T YOU TALKING TO ROY AND SAM? WHY DON'T YOU GIVE US A MINUTE ALONE?

THE THING IS... YOU LIED TO ME.
YOU SAID YOU WOULD TAKE NABI-YA TO SEE YOUR GUITAR ON STAGE, NOT THAT YOU WOULD BRING HER TO A DARK ALLEY.
SO THERE IS SOMETHING I NEED TO MAKE CLEAR NOW.

kick


BLDG.
AHHHHH!!!


WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, YOU BITCH?

BE GLAD I JUST KICKED YOU IN THE BALLS. NEXT TIME YOU LAY A FINGER ON NABI-YA, I'LL CUT THEM OFF AND MAKE YOU SWALLOW THEM!

WHAT THE HECK JUST HAPPENED HERE?

C'MON, NABI-YA, WE'VE WASTED ENOUGH TIME ON THIS LOSER!

Chapter Thirteen

Into the New World

A FEW DAYS LATER...



THIS IS CRAZY...

I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M ACTUALLY ON A PLANE HEADING TO KOREA!




YAWN...

EH?


Pretty

THE SUN IS RISING. DON'T TELL ME YOU STAYED UP ALL NIGHT, NABI-YA!

*FROM NOW ON, THE CHARACTERS WILL ALWAYS BE SPEAKING IN KOREAN UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE.

I DOZED OFF A FEW TIMES, UNNIE, BUT NOT FOR LONG.

WHY? ARE YOU THAT AFRAID OF FLYING?

NO, FLYING IS OKAY FOR ME.
IT'S JUST THAT LATELY I HAVEN'T
BEEN ABLE TO GET SOMETHING
OFF MY MIND.


YOU SAID I DESTROYED YOUR LIFE? IT'S REALLY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND YOUR BROKEN ENGLISH. BUT THE TRUTH IS, YOU SHOULD THANK ME! YOUR LIFE WAS A FAILURE IN EVERY SINGLE ASPECT. THERE WASN'T A SINGLE PERSON WHO CARED ABOUT YOU!


T-THA'S NO' TU-RUE...

YOU SURE? LET ME TELL YOU A LITTLE STORY THEN. YOU, OR RATHER, NICK IS OFFICIALLY DEAD. YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT NEVER BEING HIM AGAIN! DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE WENT TO YOUR FUNERAL? NONE! NOT EVEN YOUR FUCKING MOTHER!

YOU DON'T HAVE A TOMBSTONE BECAUSE NO ONE CARED ENOUGH TO PROVIDE ONE. DON'T YOU BELIEVE ME? LOOK FOR THE NEWS ABOUT NICK'S DEATH. AND HERE ARE YOUR SO-CALLED FRIENDS, PLAYING WITH ANOTHER GUY, AND NO ONE GIVES A SHIT THAT YOU'RE GONE!

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME? WHY ME?


BECAUSE I WANT TO GIVE YOU
A CHANCE TO BE SOMEONE WORTHWHILE.
SOMEONE PEOPLE CARE ABOUT, NABI-YA.
WOULDN'T IT BE NICE? WOUDLN'T YOU LIKE
BEING LOVED AT LEAST ONCE?

EXIT

NONE OF DIS MAKES ANY SENSE!

DO YOU REMEMBER T-PANDA
AND THE CONTEST HE WAS PROMOTING?
WE TALKED ABOUT IT AT THE STUDIO
YOU USED TO OWN.

I'M NOT AN EXPERT ON POP MUSIC, BUT I FOUND THE SONG YOU GIRLS RECORDED... INTERESTING! FROM WHAT I UNDERSTOOD, YOU WERE ONCE TRAINEES AT A RECORD LABEL IN KOREA, RIGHT?

THAT'S RIGHT. WE TRAINED TOGETHER FOR LIKE FOUR YEARS, BUT THEN, SADLY, THE COMPANY WENT BANKRUPT BEFORE WE COULD DEBUT. AS YOU CAN GUESS, WE WERE HEARTBROKEN!

LIKE IN YOUR FAMILY, MY PARENTS WEREN'T TOO KEEN ON MY MUSIC CAREER EITHER, AND FOR A FEW YEARS I PUT THAT IDEA ASIDE AND WENT TO COLLEGE. JUST RECENTLY I GOT BACK TO WRITING SONGS, AND DASOM, EUNJOO AND I STARTED PRACTICING SOME CHOREOGRAPHIES AGAIN. IT WAS A GREAT LUCK THAT WE WERE CHOSEN IN THIS EXCHANGE PROGRAM TOGETHER. WE'RE STILL VERY CLOSE TO THIS DAY.

AT FIRST, WE WERE JUST DOING IT JUST FOR FUN, BUT THEN AN OPPORTUNITY AROSE...

YEAH... FROM WHAT YOU GIRLS TOLD ME, IT'S ALL ABOUT THAT T-PANDA GUY, RIGHT? I REMEMBER HIM EVEN THOUGH I'VE NEVER BEEN INTO K-POP. THAT FUNNY SONG HE WROTE BLEW UP ALL OVER THE WORLD A FEW YEARS AGO, AND WHEREVER YOU WENT IT WAS PLAYING NONSTOP!

EXACTLY. AND T-PANDA HAD ENOUGH OF THE IDOL LIFE AND DECIDED TO START HIS OWN RECORD LABEL. BUT THE THING IS, HE'S TRYING TO DO THINGS A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY THAN THE NORM IN KOREA. INSTEAD OF TRAINING IDOLS FOR YEARS AND YEARS ON END, HE IS LOOKING FOR "AMATEUR" GROUPS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN DEBUTING.

HE JUST ANNOUNCED A CONTEST TO CHOOSE THE COMPANY'S FIRST GROUP. SORT OF LIKE "THE VOICE", YOU KNOW? WITH GROUPS BEING VOTED ON WITHOUT PEOPLE SEEING THE MEMBERS' FACES.

I SENT THE SONG WE RECORDED TO T-PANDA AND HE REALLY LIKED IT. IN FACT, HE LOVED IT SO MUCH THAT HE GAVE UP ON THE CONTEST IDEA AND DECIDED TO SIMPLY DEBUT OUR GROUP INSTEAD, WITHOUT EVEN SEEING US IN PERSON!

HOWEVER, WHAT CAUGHT HIS ATTENTION THE MOST WAS NOT THE SONG ITSELF, BUT THE LEAD SINGER'S VOICE. AND YOU REMEMBER WHO SANG LEAD THAT DAY, DON'T YOU, NABI-YA?

HE... HE LIKE' MY BOICE?

SO DAT'S YOUR PLAN? YOU WAN' ME TO DEBU' WITH YOU GUYS? DAT... DAT'S INSANE!

YEAH, HE REALLY LOVED YOUR VOICE. AND WHY WOULD IT BE INSANE FOR YOU TO DEBUT WITH US? YOU'RE A PRETTY KOREAN GIRL, AFTER ALL. AND THAT'S WHO YOU GOING TO BE FOREVER!

WOULD THAT BE SO BAD? YOU CAN BE A FAMOUS SINGER, NABI-YA. ISN'T THAT YOUR BIGGEST DREAM?




LISTEN, NABI-YA...



I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE NERVOUS. BUT KEEP IN MIND THAT WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU. WE'RE A TEAM NOW, AND YOU'RE OUR MAKNAE. IT'S OUR DUTY TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU.

MAKNAE... THAT'S WHAT KOREANS CALL THE YOUNGEST IN A GROUP. THIS IS SO FRUSTRATING! I'M OLDER THAN THE GIRLS, BUT NOW THEY'RE TREATING AS IF I REALLY WERE A NINETEEN YEARS OLD GIRL. A DELICATE AND DAINTY YOUNG SISTER!




I'M BACK, GIRLS!

WE'RE ALMOST IN SEOUL, FINALLY! IT WAS LOVELY GOING TO AMERICA FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, BUT GOSH, WHAT A LONG TRIP! I CAN'T WAIT TO GET OFF THE PLANE. ARE YOU GIRLS EXCITED?


WE SURELY ARE! THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR US, AFTER ALL! BUT WE'RE A LITTLE AFRAID TOO, YOU KNOW?

I THINK ONLY NOW I'M REALIZING HOW REAL THIS IS. I'M ABOUT TO LAND IN KOREA, A COUNTRY WHERE I DON'T KNOW ANYONE OTHER THAN MY "BANDMATES".

I LOOK LIKE A KOREAN GIRL AND I CAN BARELY SPEAK ENGLISH. EVEN MY PASSPORT SAYS I'M A KOREAN! WHAT AM I DOING? WHY DID I GET ON THIS PLANE?


YOU GIRLS HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. SURE, THE IDOL LIFE CAN BE TOUGH AT TIMES, BUT EVERYONE IN THE COMPANY, ESPECIALLY T-PANDA, IS DETERMINED TO MAKE THINGS AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE FOR YOU GIRLS.


lavatory
AND WHAT IS IT LIKE WORKING WITH T-PANDA? OF COURSE, WE ALL KNOW HIM AS AN IDOL SINCE HE BECAME FAMOUS WORLDWIDE, BUT WHAT ABOUT IN PERSON?
OH, HE'S GREAT! HONESTLY, I COULDN'T WISH FOR A NICER, MORE UNDERSTANDING BOSS. HOWEVER, HE CAN BE... ECCENTRIC AT TIMES. IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN.

ANYWAY, EVER SINCE HE HEARD THE DEMO FROM YOU GUYS, HE'S BEEN TALKING ABOUT NABI-YA'S VOICE NONSTOP! I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SO OBSESSED ABOUT SOMETHING! AND I HAVE TO SAY THAT I AGREE WITH HIM. YOU SOUND LIKE AN ANGEL, NABI-YA!

YOU SEE, LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE ALREADY THE BOSS'S PET! *TEE-HEE* AND DON'T BE RUDE, GIRL. WHAT SHOULD YOU SAY NOW?

T-THANK YOU VERY MUCH, UNNIE. IT'S VERY KIND OF YOU TO SAY THAT ABOUT MY VOICE. YOU MAKE ME SO HAPPY!

GOSH, JUST LOOK AT ME. AGAIN, I USED TO BE A REBEL, A ROCKER MAN... NOW I'M OBEYING ALL MY UNNIES LIKE THE SWEETEST GIRL EVER. WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? I MUST STILL BE IN SHOCK. WAS IT WORTH SELLING MY SOUL TO THE DEVIL?

HALF AN HOUR LATER...

A380 AIRBUS

A380




THERE'S SEOUL. THE CITY LOOKS LOVELY FROM UP HERE! I GUESS WE'LL BE LANDING ANY MINUTE NOW.


A380
A380 AIRBUS


A380
AIRBUS

THAT'S IT... I'M ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, WITH NO MONEY AND NO WAY TO PROVE MY TRUE IDENTITY. MY LEGS ARE SHAKING SO BAD... WILL I ACTUALLY BE ABLE TO GET OUT OF MY SEAT?



WHISPER YOU SEEM A LITTLE NERVOUS, NABI-YA. HOLD ON TO MY ARM, OKAY? I'M HERE WITH YOU.



NO WONDER I'M NERVOUS! THIS IS TRULY HAPPENING. I'M IN KOREA, AND WHOEVER WHO LOOKS AT ME WILL JUST SEE A CUTE KOREAN GIRL. IF I TOLD ANYONE AROUND HERE THAT I ACTUALLY AM AN AMERICAN GUY, THEY WOULD LAUGH IN MY FACE.

THIS FEELS SO OVERWHELMING... AGAIN, I CAN'T EVEN SPEAK MY MOTHER TONGUE PROPERLY ANYMORE! I'M STUCK IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY WITH NO WAY TO GET BACK TO MY OLD SELF. HAS ANYONE EVER EXPERIENCED ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE?

WE ARRIVED SO EARLY IN THE MORNING THAT THE AIRPORT IS KIND OF EMPTY, RIGHT? BUT IF ALL GOES WELL... CAN YOU IMAGINE HOW COOL IT WILL BE TO HAVE FANS WAITING FOR US WHENEVER WE GET OFF A PLANE, GIRLS?


STOP THIS NONSENSE RIGHT NOW!

YOU HAVEN'T EVEN STARTED YOUR TRAINING YET,
AND YOU'RE ALREADY TALKING ABOUT HAVING FANS?
YOU WON'T GET FAR WITH THAT MINDSET,
YOU STUPID GIRL!

OH, GIVE HER A BREAK, LEE SIWOO-SUNBAE! THESE GIRLS HAVE DREAMED OF BEING IDOLS THEIR ENTIRE LIVES, AND THEY'RE ABOUT TO BEGIN SOME VERY DEMANDING TRAINING. LET THEM BE HAPPY AT LEAST FOR A MOMENT!

PEOPLE KEEP TALKING ABOUT THIS IDOL TRAINING AS IF WE WERE GOING TO THE ARMY OR SOMETHING. HOW BAD CAN IT REALLY BE? I KNOW BASICALLY NOTHING ABOUT KPOP, BUT I'M STARTING TO GET EVEN MORE WORRIED.

AND WHAT ABOUT LEE SIWOO-SUNBAE? WHY DOES HE HAVE TO BE SO RUDE TO US? IN THE PAST, I WOULD JUST TELL HIM TO FUCK OFF FOR BEING SUCH AN ASSHOLE, BUT NOW I FEEL SO HELPLESS AND VULNERABLE AROUND HIM. I SIMPLY CAN'T CONFRONT HIM, JUST LIKE I COULDN'T CONFRONT THAT GUY WHO STOLE MY POSITION IN MY OLD BAND, WHEN HE TRIED TO KISS ME. THIS IS SO FRUSTRATING AND HUMILIATING!

WATCH OUT HOW YOU TALK TO ME, PARK JISU-YANG! I'M YOUR SUPERIOR, AND WE'RE BACK IN KOREA. AS I FEARED, THE TIME IN AMERICA WAS VERY BAD FOR YOU!

NOW LISTEN TO ME ALL OF YOU. I NEED TO MAKE A PHONE CALL. IN THE MEANTIME, COLLECT YOUR LUGGAGE AND RETURN HERE. THEN I'LL TAKE YOU STRAIGHT TO YOUR NEW DORM.

HMM... I'D LIKE TO BUY SOME FOOD FIRST, SUNBAENIM.

ABSOLUTELY NOT! FROM NOW ON, YOU GIRLS DON'T EAT ANYTHING WITHOUT THE COMPANY'S PERMISSION! YOU NEED TO START TAKING CARE OF YOUR FIGURES. JUST DO AS I SAID. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.


HEY, PUNK!

HUH?


ARE YOU DONE HERE?
GET OUT!

WHO THE HELL YOU...

GET OUT NOW, UNLESS YOU WANT ME TO KICK YOUR ASS! RESPECT YOUR ELDERS!

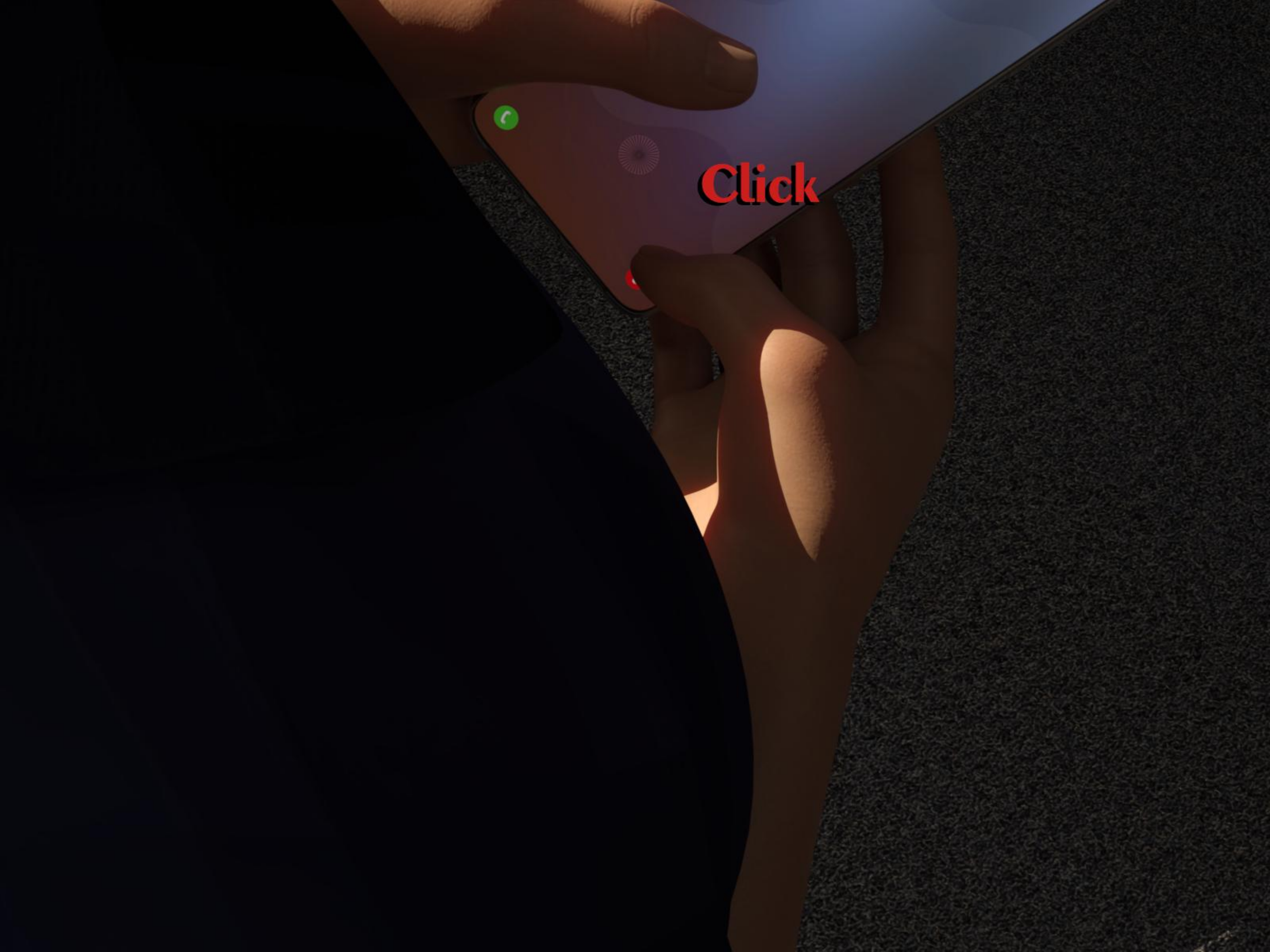

WHAT A JERK...



HELLO? YES, IT'S ME. WE JUST LANDED IN KOREA.
I WANTED TO CALL BONHWA YANG-SAJANGNIM DIRECTLY
TO LET HIM KNOW ABOUT OUR ARRIVAL, BUT HE TEXTED ME
THAT HE WOULDN'T BE AVAILABLE THIS MORNING,
AND TOLD ME TO CALL YOU INSTEAD.

I ALREADY TOLD YOU. I DON'T LIKE THOSE GIRLS AT ALL! I DON'T CARE IF YOU ARE THE COMPANY'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THE TRUTH IS THAT THEY LACK DISCIPLINE AND MANNERS, TO SAY THE LEAST! THE ONE SAJANGNIM THINKS IS SO SPECIAL, KIM MINAH, IS THE WORST OF THEM ALL...

SHE DOESN'T TALK MUCH, WHICH IS A GOOD QUALITY FOR A WOMAN, BUT I KNOW THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG ABOUT HER. SHE'S HIDING SOMETHING VERY SERIOUS. IN THE FUTURE, DON'T SAY I DIDN'T WARN YOU.


Click


OH, LEE SIWOO, YOU FOOL. IF YOU KNEW WHAT KIM MINAH IS HIDING, YOU WOULD HAVE THE SHOCK OF YOUR LIFE...

Chapter Fourteen

Liar Liar

IN THE AFTERNOON...

SO HERE WE ARE...


WELCOME TO THE T-ENTERTAINMENT HEADQUARTERS, GIRLS!

IT'S WONDERFUL TO FINALLY BE HERE! THIS IS A DREAM COME TRUE!

ABSOLUTELY...

I HOPE YOU GIRLS WERE ABLE TO GET SOME REST DURING THE MORNING. CROSSING THE WORLD CAN BE REALLY EXHAUSTING, RIGHT?

WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR DORM?

OH, IT'S SO MUCH BETTER THAN WE COULD HAVE WISHED FOR, ISN'T IT, NABI-YA?

SO TRUE! THANK YOU FOR TAKING GOOD CARE OF US, UNNIE!


YOU GIRLS ARE MORE THAN WELCOME!


WE'RE THRILLED TO HAVE YOU ALL HERE. JUST WAIT UNTIL YOU TALK TO T-PANDA!

GOOD AFTERNOON, PARK JISU-SUNBAENIM. ARE THOSE THE NEW GIRLS?

YES, CHANG SUBIN-ANNAEWON, THESE ARE SUH MINJI, PARK DASOM, HWANG EUNJOO AND KIM MINAH-SSI. GIRLS, THIS IS CHANG SUBIN-ANNAEWON, OUR KIND AND EFFICIENT RECEPTIONIST!

NICE TO MEET YOU. WELCOME TO T-ENTERTAINMENT!

WOW, YOU GIRLS LOOK SO BEAUTIFUL! I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU IN ACTION. I'M SURE YOU'LL BE LOVED BY EVERYONE!

IS T-PANDA AVAILABLE TO MEET THEM NOW?

HE'LL BE THERE IN TEN MINUTES.
IN THE MEANTIME, YUN JUNGHO-SUNBAENIM SAID HE WANTED TO TALK TO KIM MINAH-SSI ALONE FOR A MINUTE.


TALK TO ME ALONE? WHY?

WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, I DON'T THINK THIS IS A GOOD IDEA. UNNIES AND I HAVE ALREADY BEEN TRAINERS BEFORE, BUT THIS IS ALL NEW TO NABI-YA. SHE'S SCARED LIKE A KITTEN IN A NEW HOME. WE'D LIKE TO KEEP HER AROUND, AT LEAST FOR TODAY.

IT'S SO NICE TO SEE YOU GIRLS PROTECTING YOUR MAKNAE, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY. YUN JUNGHO-SUNBAENIM ISN'T AS... SEVERE AS LEE SIWOO SUNBAENIM. AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, HE PROBABLY JUST WANTS TO MAKE SURE SHE'S OKAY AFTER HER ACCIDENT. WE'RE ALL WORRIED, AFTER ALL.

THAT'S OKAY, UNNIE. I... I CAN TALK TO HIM. IT'LL BE ALRIGHT.

YOU SURE? *SIGH* FINE, THEN! JUST SHOW HIM A GOOD IMAGE, OKAY? WE TRUST YOU, NABI-YA, HWAITING!

knock!
Knock!

COME IN.



THAT'S SO EMBARRASSING...

I STILL FEEL SO VULNERABLE AND AWKWARD PARADING AROUND IN MY MINI SKIRT AND HIGH HEELS. IT'S ESPECIALLY HUMILIATING WHEN I HAVE TO FACE A MAN.

WHY ISN'T HE SAYING ANYTHING? PARK JISU-UNNIE SAID HE WASN'T AS BAD AS LEE SIWOO-SUNBAENIM, BUT HE LOOKS SO ANGRY FOR SOME REASON... WHAT SHOULD I DO? MAYBE ACTING CUTE WOULD DO THE TRICK?

HI, SIR, I'M KIM MINAH! DID YOU WANT TO SEE ME?


GRRR...

SPIN AROUND!

E-EXCUSE ME?

DO AS I SAY, GIRL! NOW!

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE?

DOES HE WANT TO CHECK OUT MY ASS OR SOMETHING? COULD THIS GET ANY MORE HUMILIATING?

THEY REALLY DID A GREAT JOB ON YOU. YOU LOOK LIKE A PERFECT KOREAN DOLL FROM HEAD TO TOE. HOWEVER...

YOU DIDN'T BOW, DIDN'T USE THE PROPER HONORIFIC WHEN ADDRESSING ME, AND YOUR KOREAN IS LAUGHABLE, TO PUT IT MILDLY. EVEN IF I DIDN'T KNOW ANY BETTER ABOUT YOU, IT WOULD BE REALLY HARD TO BELIEVE THAT YOU ACTUALLY ARE A KOREAN GIRL.

SO WHAT I TRULY WANT TO KNOW IS WHY THERE'S AN AMERICAN GUY IN FRONT OF ME PRETENDING TO BE A FEMALE IDOL TRAINEE. ARE YOU A PERVERT? BEING ASIAN IS A JOKE TO YOU?

OH GOD, HE KNOWS I'M GUY!

SO... WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER ME? ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP ME WAITING ALL DAY LONG?


I'M SO S-SORRY...

I NEVER WANTED ANY OF THIS...
YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE ME!

I... I CAN JUST GO AWAY AND...

GO... AWAY?!

I'M NOT SURE WHETHER YOU'RE TRYING TO MOCK ME OR NOT, BUT LET ME MAKE SOMETHING VERY CLEAR - YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE... NOT FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

THEN STOP BEING SO DUMB AND LISTEN.

CONTRARY TO WHAT YOU MAY THINK, WHAT WE DO HERE, AT THIS COMPANY, IS NOT A JOKE.

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE TERM *HALLYU*, OR "THE KOREAN WAVE"? NO? I THOUGHT SO. THIS IS THE NAME GIVEN TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR ARTISTIC PRODUCTIONS AROUND THE WORLD, WHICH IS A SOURCE OF NATIONAL PRIDE. PEOPLE TAKE THIS VERY SERIOUSLY, AND WHEN I SAY PEOPLE, I ALSO MEAN THOSE IN GOVERNMENT.

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A BILLION-DOLLAR INDUSTRY, AFTER ALL. AN INDUSTRY THAT PORTRAYS A GOOD IMAGE OF THE COUNTRY WORLDWIDE.

AND THIS GLOBAL SUCCESS STARTED RIGHT HERE...

GANGNAM-GU... THIS IS THE DISTRICT THAT INSPIRED T-PANDA TO WRITE KOREA'S FIRST GLOBAL HIT, WHICH PAVED THE WAY FOR ALL OTHERS.

I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND T-PANDA'S OBSESSION WITH YOUR VOICE, BUT HE'S THE GENIUS HERE, NOT ME.

HE HAS HIS ECCENTRICITIES, QUIRKS AND SUPERSTITIONS - MANY OF THEM, BUT THINGS USUALLY WORK OUT WHEN HE HAS AN IDEA IN MIND. HE WANTS YOU IN THE GROUP, SO YOU'LL BE IN THE GROUP. SIMPLE AS THAT.

ACCORDING TO HIM, YOU'LL BE THE NATION'S NEXT "IT GIRL". YOU, WHO ISN'T EVEN A GIRL! ISN'T THAT IRONIC?

NOW LET ME ASK SOMETHING, DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW SCREWED YOU WOULD BE IF THE TRUTH ABOUT YOU CAME TO LIGHT? I'VE ALREADY EXPLAINED TO YOU THAT THIS IS NOT ONLY A BILLION-DOLLAR INDUSTRY, BUT ALSO A SOURCE OF PRIDE FOR THE COUNTRY.

YOU WOULD GO TO JAIL, FOR SURE. HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT HOW MANY CRIMES YOU HAVE COMMITTED ALREADY? YOU SAY YOU DIDN'T WANT THIS, BUT HOW WOULD A PROPER MAN END UP IN YOUR SITUATION? IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO DEAL WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR ACTIONS.

YOU DON'T WANT TO BE SCREWED FOR LIFE, RIGHT, NICK? I'M THE ONLY ONE HERE WHO KNOWS YOUR REAL NAME, AND WE'RE GOING TO KEEP IT THIS WAY. YOU'RE GOING TO DO YOUR BEST TO MAKE THIS WORK, OR BELIEVE ME, YOU'RE GOING TO DEEPLY REGRET IT.

AS I SAID BEFORE, YOU DO LOOK LIKE A PRETTY KOREAN GIRL.

YES...

THERE IS NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT.

BUT THIS IS STILL JUST A GROTESQUE DISGUISE.
IN YOUR MIND AND IN YOUR HEART YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED AT ALL... YET. I'LL HELP YOU WITH THAT, AND WHEN WE'RE DONE, YOU'LL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO ACT, SPEAK OR EVEN THINK LIKE ANYONE OTHER THAN KIM MINAH, A SWEET, DAINTY KOREAN GIRL. THIS WILL BE YOUR REAL IDENTITY. YOUR PAST WILL SEEM LIKE A FEVER DREAM.

NOW LET'S MEET THE BOSS. FOR NOW, JUST DON'T TALK TOO MUCH, AND KEEP UP THE NAIVE GIRL ACT. SOON IT WILL BE PART OF YOUR PERSONALITY, ANYWAY.

MEANWHILE IN THE NEXT OFFICE...



...AND THEN THE GUY SAID I COULDN'T TAKE A LLAMA THERE, BUT HE HAD NO IDEA HOW MUCH THE POOR ANIMAL NEEDED TO USE THE BATHROOM! WELL, HE REALIZED THIS SOON ENOUGH!

HAHAHAHAHAHAHA

hahahahahaha

hahahahahaha

hahahahahaha

OH, I CAN'T DENY THAT I HAD A LOT OF FUN DURING MY YEARS AS AN IDOL! THERE WAS ALSO A CONCERT WHERE...

KNOCK!

KNOCK!

COME IN!




AHHH---

YOU'RE FINALLY HERE! I THOUGHT YUN JUNGHO WOULD KEEP YOU TO HIMSELF ALL DAY LONG!

HELLO, NICE TO MEET YOU, BONHWA YANG-SAJANGNIM!

OH, THERE'S NO REASON TO BE SO FORMAL!
I KNOW THAT OUR COUNTRY IS STILL VERY ATTACHED
TO THIS SOCIAL HIERARCHY AND HUNDREDS OF HONORIFICS,
BUT YOU CAN THINK OF ME AS AN ANARCHIST...
OR EVEN BETTER, A CRAZY MAN!

JUST CALL ME T-PANDA. THAT'S THE NAME I BUILT MY CAREER WITH AND I'M VERY PROUD OF THAT!

MOREOVER...

IF THERE IS SOMEONE WHO HAS TO BOW DOWN HERE...

...IT'S ME. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BELIEVING IN OUR COMPANY, KIM MINAH. YOU ARE THE BEST SINGER I HAVE HEARD IN A LONG, LONG TIME, AND I FEEL TRULY HONORED TO HAVE YOU HERE.

HUH?

EXCEPT FOR PARK JISU-UNNIE,
EVERYONE HERE HAS BEEN TREATING ME SO
BADLY SINCE I ARRIVED, AND HERE IS T-PANDA,
A MAN FAMOUS ALL OVER THE WORLD,
BOWING DOWN TO ME.

I FEEL... FLATTERED? I'VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF BEING A SINGER, BUT NOBODY, EXCEPT FOR MY LATE UNCLE, HAS EVER BELIEVED IN ME. HOW CAN I NOT BE HAPPY? MAYBE... MAYBE I COULD REALLY TRY HARD TO BE A GREAT IDOL? I MEAN, WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE NOW?

BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT FEELS SO... WEIRD. I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE I'LL BE ON STAGE DANCING HAPPILY IN A MINI SKIRT AND HIGH HEELS. GOSH, WHY COULDN'T I MEET SOMEONE LIKE T-PANDA BEFORE?

Chapter Fifteen
Up & Down



A FEW DAYS LATER, DURING THE GIRLS' FIRST DANCE CLASS...

AHHHHH!!!

PLEASE WAIT, CHO JIA-SEONSAENGNIM!
YOU'RE BREAKING ME IN HALF!

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, SILLY GIRL.
I'M BARELY PUSHING YOU!


HOW DO YOU EXPECT TO BE AN IDOL IF YOU HAVE NO FLEXIBILITY AT ALL? YOU'RE EMBARRASSING YOURSELF AND YOUR MEMBERS!

PARK DASOM-A, SHOW HER HOW TO DO A SPLIT.


Y-YES, SEONSAENGNIM!



YOU SEE, KIM MINAH-YA? THAT'S WHAT I EXPECT YOU TO DO SOON IF YOU DON'T WANT TO DELAY YOUR GROUP'S DEBUT!


THIS WOMAN IS INSANE!

PARK DASOM-UNNIE MUST HAVE TRAINED FOR YEARS, PERHAPS SINCE SHE WAS A LITTLE GIRL, TO BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT! HOW CAN SEONSAENGNIM THINK THAT I...

ENOUGH DAYDREAMING, GIRL!
I'M GOING TO TEACH YOU SOME EXERCISES FOR YOU TO PRACTICE. IF I DON'T SEE PROGRESS IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, BE AWARE THAT NOT ONLY YOU BUT ALSO YOUR MEMBERS WILL BE PUNISHED!




C'MON, YOU CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT!



KEEP YOUR BACK DOWN AND STICK YOUR BUTT UP IN THE AIR! HIGHER!


GASP GASP

PLEASE, LET ME CATCH MY BREATH FOR A MOMENT, SEONSAENGNIM! I FEEL LIKE EVERY MUSCLE IN MY BODY IS ACHING!


ABSOLUTELY NOT!

GO PUT ON YOUR HEELS NOW. I WANT TO SEE YOUR DANCING SKILLS!

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER...

SIGH


LET'S TRY IT A FOURTH TIME, AND NOW YOU GIRLS BETTER PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT YOU'RE DOING!

ESPECIALLY YOU, MINAH-A!

GULP


FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT---

OH NO, I THINK I MESSED UP ONCE AGAIN!


IT'S JUST SO HARD TO FOLLOW THE GIRLS!

NO, NO, NO, THAT'S ALL WRONG, YOU STUPID GIRL! CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING RIGHT? THIS IS THE EASIEST DANCE MOVE IN THE WORLD!

I... I'M T-TRYING MY BEST, SEONSAENGNIM!

THEN I HAVE TO SAY THAT I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE AS TALENTLESS AND DUMB AS YOU! YOU'LL HAVE TO TRAIN A LOT IF YOU REALLY WANT TO DEBUT AS AN IDOL. BUT AT THIS POINT, I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF YOU'RE CAPABLE OF THAT!

GET OUT OF MY SIGHT, ALL OF YOU!
I'M TIRED OF WASTING MY PRECIOUS TIME
FOR NOTHING!




THAT'S OKAY, NABI-YA!

YEAH, YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT WE'VE BEEN TRAINERS BEFORE, WHILE THIS IS ALL NEW TO YOU. TRUST ME, YOU'LL IMPROVE IN NO TIME!

AND WE'LL HELP YOU, OF COURSE!
WE'RE A TEAM NOW. REMEMBER THAT.
EVERYTHING WILL BE ALRIGHT!

THANK YOU SO MUCH, UNNIES!
I... I NEED TO GO TO THE BATHROOM.
YOU CAN GET GOING TO THE LOCKER ROOM.
I'LL BE THERE IN A MINUTE, OKAY?

I DON'T KNOW. YOU LOOK KIND OF...

I JUST WANT TO WASH MY FACE.
PLEASE GIVE ME JUST A MOMENT.


SOBBING

WHY DID SHE HAVE TO BE SO MEAN, SO CRUEL TO ME? WHY DO PEOPLE KEEP TREATING ME LIKE GARBAGE? I WISH I COULD JUST DISAPPEAR AND NEVER HAVE TO LOOK AT HER FACE AGAIN!

I DIDN'T ASK TO BE HERE. I DIDN'T ASK FOR ANYTHING THAT'S HAPPENING TO ME! I WAS JUST A REGULAR GUY PLAYING MY GUITAR. BUT THEN I HAD EVERYTHING RIPPED AWAY FROM ME...

MY HOUSE, MY STUDIO, EVEN MY GENDER AND IDENTITY. MY BODY HAS BEEN MUTILATED AND I SEE A STRANGER EVERY TIME I LOOK IN THE MIRROR. BUT WORST OF ALL...

I WAS REALLY WILLING TO TRY TO BE GOOD AT THIS IDOL THING, EVEN AFTER EVERYTHING THAT WAS TAKEN FROM ME *SOBBING* MAYBE BECAUSE PARK DASOM AND HWANG EUNJOO ARE NOT TO BLAME FOR ANYTHING AND HAVE TREATED ME SO WELL... MAYBE BECAUSE T-PANDA IS THE ONLY PERSON BESIDES MY LATE UNCLE WHO EVER BELIEVED IN ME AS A SINGER...

...OR MAYBE IT'S JUST BECAUSE I HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO. EVEN IF I MANAGED TO ESCAPE KOREA, WITH NO MONEY AND LOOKING LIKE AN ASIAN GIRL, WHAT WOULD I DO NEXT? MY PARENTS COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT ME. MY OLD BANDMATES, WHO I CONSIDERED MY FRIENDS, DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER TO ATTEND MY FAKE FUNERAL. DOES ANYONE CARE IF NICK IS ALIVE OR NOT? ANYONE AT ALL?

WHAT ARE YOU STILL DOING HERE? I TOLD YOU ALL TO GET OUT OF MY SIGHT, DIDN'T I?

YES, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO TELL YOU, SEONSAENGNIM. THIS WILL ONLY TAKE A MINUTE, I PROMISE!

THAT WAS THE FIRST **AND** LAST TIME YOU HUMILIATED NABI-YA LIKE THAT. IT WON'T HAPPEN EVER AGAIN. DO YOU UNDERSTAND, YOU BITCH?

THAT WAS THE FIRST AND LAST TIME YOU HUMILIATED NABI-YA LIKE THAT. IT WON'T HAPPEN EVER AGAIN. DO YOU UNDERSTAND, YOU BITCH?

HUH? WHAT IS MINJI-UNNIE DOING?

I'M ONLY GOING TO SAY THIS ONCE, SO PAY CLOSE ATTENTION.

YOU HAVE FIVE SECONDS TO KNEEL AT MY FEET AND BEG FOR FORGIVENESS. THEN MAYBE... JUST MAYBE I WON'T DESTROY YOUR CAREER AND YOUR WHOLE LIFE.

OH, REALLY? SO NOW YOU PAY CLOSE ATTENTION. I STAND BY WHAT I SAID - YOU'RE A BITCH WHO USES THE LITTLE POWER YOU HOLD TO HUMILIATE OTHERS IN ORDER TO FEEL IMPORTANT AND TRY TO FORGET THE FAILURE YOU HAVE BECOME!

GRRRR...



DON'T YOU EVER TRY TO HIT ME AGAIN.
YOU THINK YOU'RE SCARY? THIS ACT DOESN'T CONVINCE ME.
I KNOW YOU BETTER THAN YOU THINK. I EVEN KNOW WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN YOU AND A CERTAIN TRAINEE THREE YEARS AGO IN BUSAN. YOU WANT TO KEEP IT A SECRET, DON'T YOU?

YOU... HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT?

LET'S JUST SAY I LIKE TO BE WELL INFORMED ABOUT THE PEOPLE I WORK WITH.

THEN NOW YOU'RE BLACKMAILING ME?

YES, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M DOING. SEE? YOU'RE NOT AS STUPID AS YOU LOOK!

AND NOW WHAT? YOU WANT ME NOT TO DO MY JOB? THAT GIRL CAN'T DANCE TO SAVE HER LIFE! DO YOU EXPECT ME TO SIMPLY SMILE WHILE SHE EMBARRASSES EVERYONE? DO YOU WANT YOUR GROUP TO BE MOCKED TO DEATH?

NO, I DON'T WANT TO STOP YOU FROM DOING YOUR JOB. I JUST WANT YOU TO BE BETTER AT IT. DO YOU NEED TO SCOLD SOMEONE WHEN NABI-YA'S DANCING BADLY? SCOLD ME. SHE'S MY RESPONSIBILITY, AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF HER! I'M THE OLDEST AND THE LEADER OF THE GROUP, AFTER ALL.

NABI-YA HAS VERY LITTLE DANCING EXPERIENCE, AND YOUR ATTITUDE ISN'T HELPING AT ALL. I'LL COACH HER, AND YOU'LL SEE WHAT A GREAT DANCER SHE CAN BE! IF SHE FAILS, THIS WILL ACTUALLY BE MY FAULT, SO CURSE ME ALL YOU WANT. ME, NOT HER!

"DO YOU NEED TO SCOLD SOMEONE WHEN NABI-YA'S DANCING BADLY? SCOLD ME. SHE'S MY RESPONSIBILITY, AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF HER."

DID MINJI-UNNIE REALLY SAY THAT?

WASN'T THAT KIND OF... SWEET OF HER? STANDING UP FOR ME WHEN I NEEDED IT MOST?

NO, WHAT AM I EVEN THINKING? HAVE I BECOME A VICTIM OF STOCKHOLM SYNDROME OR SOMETHING? IF I'M IN THIS SITUATION, IT'S MINJI'S FAULT! SHE'S THE ONE WHO DID ALL THIS TO ME!

SHE DOESN'T REALLY LIKE ME... RIGHT?
NO, SHE JUST THINKS SHE NEEDS ME IN ORDER TO DEBUT AS AN IDOL! SHE SEES ME AS A TOOL.
SHE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT MY FEELINGS.

STILL, THAT WAS SWEET OF HER...



Chapter Sixteen

Hush

AT NIGHT---




I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK ANYMORE...


I JUST WISH NONE OF THIS HAD HAPPENED TO ME.

I WOULD GIVE ANYTHING TO WAKE UP AND FIND OUT THAT THIS WHOLE THING ABOUT BEING TURNED INTO A KOREAN GIRL WAS JUST A NIGHTMARE AFTER DRINKING MYSELF INTO OBLIVION.

BUT WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT?
NO ONE CARES IF NICK IS ALIVE OR DEAD.
I HAVE NO ONE. NO ONE AT ALL.

WHAT DO I HAVE NOW, THOUGH?

I CAN'T RECOGNIZE MYSELF ANYMORE. MY BODY, MY FACE... IT FEELS LIKE I'M LOOKING AT A STRANGER IN THE MIRROR. AND PEOPLE EXPECT ME TO ACT NATURALLY AND LIVE A LIFE THAT ISN'T SUPPOSED TO BE MINE!




THIS BODY...

I'VE ALWAYS HAD A THING FOR ASIAN GIRLS, AND THE WAY I LOOK NOW... I'D KILL FOR THE CHANCE TO SPEND A NIGHT WITH A GIRL WHO LOOKED LIKE THIS.

I HAVEN'T TRIED TOUCHING MYSELF SINCE EVERYTHING HAPPENED. IT JUST FEELS... WRONG? LIKE I'M TOUCHING SOMEONE ELSE WITHOUT PERMISSION?

BUT THIS IS MY BODY NOW AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT. YES, I HAVE BOOBS. I HAVE FREAKING BOOBS!




AHHHH---

OH GOD, THIS FEELS KIND OF... GOOD?
IT'S LIKE WHEN I TOUCHED MY COCK IN THE PAST,
BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT IS... COMPLETELY DIFFERENT?
MY NIPPLES ARE SO SENSITIVE... I CAN FEEL THEM
GETTING HARD... IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE
HAD ANY RELIEF...

WHAT IF I PLAY WITH MY COCK,
OR WHAT'S LEFT OF IT, WHILE I TOUCH MY BOOBS?
WOULD THAT WORK? FUCK, IT FEELS SO WEIRD
TO THINK THAT I HAVE REAL BOOBS.


MY DICK IS SO RIDICULOUSLY SMALL NOW THAT I CAN BARELY GRIP IT, EVEN USING JUST TWO FINGERS...

C'MON, GET HARD! I NEED IT SO BAD!

THIS ISN'T WORKING. NO MATTER HOW FRUSTRATED I AM, THIS JUST WON'T WORK. I CAN'T FEEL ANYTHING WHEN I TOUCH MY DICK. IT'S A TINY, DEAD PIECE OF MEAT NOW. IS THAT IT? NO MORE ERECTIONS? WILL I NEVER HAVE AN ORGASM AGAIN?


THIS IS ALL MINJI-UNNIE'S FAULT.


I CAN'T FORGET THAT SHE WAS
THE ONE WHO PUT ME IN THIS SITUATION.
I CAN NEVER FORGET IT!

SHOULDN'T I BE ANGRIER ABOUT THIS, THOUGH?
SHOULDN'T I DO SOMETHING? ANYTHING AT ALL?
EVEN IF IT'S JUST YELLING AT HER?

BUT INSTEAD...

HERE I AM...


DOING MY NIGHTTIME BEAUTY RITUAL TO KEEP MY SKIN SOFT AND FRAGRANT, LIKE A PERFECT GIRLY GIRL.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? WHEN DID I BECOME SO SUBMISSIVE?



GOSH...

our happy place

EUNJOO-UNNIE LOOKS SO HOT TONIGHT.
JUST LOOK AT THAT ASS!

HOW CAN YOU THINK THAT, YOU WEIRD, COWARD SISSY! EUNJOO-UNNIE HAS DONE NOTHING BUT TREAT YOU WITH RESPECT AND CARE. SHE TRULY BELIEVES YOU HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A GIRL, AND SHE'S EVEN BEEN SHARING A ROOM WITH YOU!

SHE HAS NO IDEA THERE'S A PERVERT CHECKING HER OUT WHEN SHE BELIEVES THERE ARE ONLY GIRLS IN THE HOUSE.


BUT IS THIS REALLY POSSIBLE?
COULD IT BE THAT MINJI-UNNIE HAS
MANIPULATED EUNJOO AND DASOM UNNIES
TO THE POINT THAT THEY TRULY
THINK THAT I...

NABI-YA! WHAT A SCARE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE,
STANDING LIKE A GHOST?

I'M S-SO SORRY, UNNIE! I JUST...

THAT'S OKAY, DOLLY. I WAS JUST MESSING WITH YOU. COME HERE.

SHE LOOKS SO SERIOUS... I WONDER IF SHE REALIZED I WAS CHECKING HER OUT?

SHE'S COMING MY WAY.
DOES SHE LOOK ANGRY OR AM
I SEEING THINGS?

LET ME HUG YOU, NABI-YA. WHAT JIA-SEONSAENGNIM DID TO YOU TODAY IN DANCE CLASS WAS UNACCEPTABLE. SHE HAD NO RIGHT TO YELL AT YOU! TRUST ME, YOU WEREN'T DOING ANYTHING THAT WRONG. YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN ME IN MY FIRST DANCE CLASS WHEN I WAS A TRAINER FOR THE FIRST TIME!

BUT LIKE I SAID, REMEMBER WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE. WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER. YOU'RE ONE OF US, AND WE'LL MAKE THIS WORK. *TOGETHER*.

YOU'RE OUR PRETTY MAKNAE, AFTER ALL!

PAT

PAT

IS SHE PATTING MY BUTT?

MINJI AND DASOM UNNIES ARE
OUT TONIGHT, SO IT'S JUST THE TWO OF US.
I HAVE A SURPRISE TO MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER.
BUT FIRST, I NEED TO ASK YOU SOMETHING.
SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT...

WHAT IS IT, UNNIE? WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ASK ME?

DO YOU REGRET IT, NABI-YA? DO YOU REGRET BECOMING KIM MINAH?

I'M AWARE YOU WERE A TRANS GIRL IN THE CLOSET. YOU FIRST CAME OUT TO MINJI-UNNIE, WHO YOU WERE CLOSER WITH FIRST, BUT EVENTUALLY WE ALL FOUND OUT. HOWEVER, EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE FULFILLING YOUR DREAM, THIS IS HAPPENING IN SUCH A DRASTIC WAY!

NOT LONG AGO YOU WERE LIVING AS AN AMERICAN GUY, AND NOW YOU'RE A KOREAN GIRL ABOUT TO BE AN IDOL. AND THE TRUTH IS THAT IDOL TRAINING CAN BE VERY, VERY TOUGH, AS YOU CAN ALREADY SEE.

I'VE BEEN A TRAINEE BEFORE, AND I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE. BELIEVE ME, WE'LL STILL CRY A LOT, AND WE WON'T EVEN KNOW WHEN OUR EFFORT WILL PAY OFF, IF EVER!

STILL, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN WILLING TO DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN BECAUSE THIS IS WHAT I WANTED TO DO SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL. I CAN'T IMAGINE MY LIFE WITHOUT THE HOPE OF BECOMING AN IDOL, AND I KNOW MINJI AND DASOM-UNNIES THINK THE SAME.


SO I ASK YOU AGAIN...


DO YOU REGRET IT?

WHAT CAN I ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION? SHE JUST SAID SHE CAN'T IMAGINE HER LIFE WITHOUT THE HOPE OF BECOMING AN IDOL. AND FROM WHAT I KNOW, T-PANDA'S BIGGEST INTEREST IN OUR GROUP IS MY VOICE. HOW CAN I DESTROY HER DREAM BY SAYING I DON'T WANT ANY OF THAT?

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME? AND ONCE AGAIN I WONDER WHAT MINJI-UNNIE SAID OR SHOWED TO DASOM AND EUNJOO-UNNIES FOR THEM TO BE SO SURE THAT I'M A TRANS GIRL.


LISTEN, UNNIE...

YOU'RE RIGHT. EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED HAS REALLY BEEN A HUGE CULTURE SHOCK. BUT I... I DON'T REGRET IT AT ALL! I MEAN, I... I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE A GIRL, RIGHT?

AND JUST LIKE YOU GUYS, I'M WILLING TO DO ANYTHING TO BECOME A FAMOUS SINGER. SO THIS IS LIKE KILLING TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE? THEN, NO, I DON'T REGRET IT AT ALL!

OH, THAT'S A RELIEF TO HEAR, DOLL!
YOU HAVE NO IDEIA! NOW COME. LIKE I SAID,
I HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU!

SINCE THIS HAS BEEN A TOUGH DAY FOR YOU, THERE'S NOTHING BETTER TO MAKE UP FOR THAT THAN...

DELICIOUS FOOD!

I KNOW YOU'RE NOT A FAN OF KOREAN FOOD,
SO I WENT OUT AND BOUGHT YOU THE BEST BURGER
I COULD FIND! THEY SWORE TO ME THIS IS JUST LIKE
AN AUTHENTIC AMERICAN ONE! WE HAVE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE
OF THE FACT THAT OUR MANAGERS HAVEN'T YET STARTED
CONTROLLING WHAT WE EAT ALL THE TIME.
I FEAR THIS WILL BEGIN SOON...

YOU... BOUGHT THIS FOR ME?

THANK YOU SO MUCH, UNNIE!

WOW, YOU REALLY LIKE BURGERS, DON'T YOU?

THIS ISN'T ABOUT THE BURGER.
IT'S JUST...


SNIFF


IT'S OKAY, NABI-YA. LET'S EAT!

YOU DON'T WANT THE BURGER TO GET COLD, DO YOU?

Chapter Seventeen

Dance The Night Away

A FEW DAYS LATER...

UMM... HI, UNNIE!

AH, YOU'VE FINALLY ARRIVED, NABI-YA. GOOD! LET ME EXPLAIN WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE...

I THINK I HAVE AN IDEA, UNNIE.

YOU DO?

I... I OVERHEARD YOUR CONVERSATION WITH CHO JIA-SEONSAENGNIM AFTER OUR DANCE CLASS EARLIER THIS WEEK. I DIDN'T DO IT ON PURPOSE, THOUGH! I WAS JUST IN THE BATHROOM AND... AND YOU GUYS WERE... WELL, YOU KNOW... TALKING A LITTLE LOUDLY.

SO I'M AWARE OF HOW YOU STOOD UP FOR ME AND TOLD HER TO BLAME YOU IF I FAILED IN THE CLASS.


THAT WAS... HMM...
VERY KIND OF YOU?


SO... THANK YOU, UNNIE!

GOSH, SHE'S SO FREAKING CUTE!
I FEEL LIKE SQUEEZING HER!

THERE SHE IS, BOWING LIKE A SWEET DOLL,
AND SHE SEEMS NERVOUS AS A PUPPY TO ADDRESS ME.
LESS THAN TWO WEEKS IN KOREA, AND SHE'S ALREADY ACTING
ACCORDING TO OUR SOCIAL HIERARCHY. IMAGINE HER IN THREE MONTHS?
NEVER AGAIN WILL SHE BE ABLE TO BEHAVE LIKE ANYONE OTHER THAN
A MEEK KOREAN GIRL. WHO WOULD BELIEVE THAT SHE USED TO BE
A REBELLIOUS, FULL OF HIMSELF AMERICAN GUY NOT LONG AGO?
TRAUMA CAN BE A HELL OF A TEACHER! HER EGO IS DESTROYED.
I ALMOST FEEL BAD FOR HER.

WHAT AM I EVEN THINKING?
STOP BEING WEAK, YOU FOOL! NO ONE FELT SORRY OR HELPED YOU WHEN YOU NEEDED IT MOST. NO ONE IN THE WHOLE WORLD! REMEMBER WHY YOU'RE DOING ALL THIS!

YOU'RE WELCOME, NABI-YA. BUT YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT I'M THE OLDEST IN THE GROUP, SO I ONLY DID MY DUTY BY STAYING BY YOUR SIDE. YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, NEED TO LISTEN TO ME AND FOLLOW MY GUIDANCE.

I'LL HELP YOU PRACTICE THE FUNDAMENTALS YOU'RE STRUGGLING WITH. YOU'LL SEE IT'S NOT THAT DIFFICULT WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE SOMEONE YELLING AT YOU NONSTOP.

LET'S START SLOW, OKAY?
JUST A BIT OF STRETCHING.

O-OKAY, UNNIE.

I STILL DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS REALLY A GOOD IDEA... WHY DOES IT FEEL RIGHT WHEN SHE SAYS SHE'S THE OLDEST AND IT'S HER DUTY TO PROTECT ME? I USED TO BE OLDER THAN HER... I STILL AM, ACTUALLY! AND SINCE WHEN DO I NEED SOMEONE TO PROTECT ME? GOSH, I'M LOSING MYSELF IN THE CHARACTER MORE AND MORE...


THAT'S IT, NABI-YA. KEEP YOUR BACK STRAIGHT AND YOUR KNEES BENT. HOLD THE POSITION.

VERY GOOD! YOU'RE DOING AN AMAZING JOB!

NOW WE'RE GOING TO START PUSHING A LITTLE HARDER, OKAY? YOU CAN DO THIS! HWAITING!


WAIT, UNNIE, I THINK---


CRACK!


AHHHHH! STOP! YOU'RE BREAKING MY FREAKING LEG!

MY SWEET NABI-YA, YOU'RE OUR PRECIOUS MAKNAE. I COULD NEVER DO YOU ANY HARM! BUT REMEMBER WHAT I SAID. I'M HERE TO PROTECT YOU WHILE YOU HAVE TO FOLLOW MY GUIDANCE. I KNOW WHAT'S BEST FOR YOU, OKAY?

AND YOU HEARD WHAT I SAID TO SEONSAENGNIM. IF YOU FAIL, IT WILL ACTUALLY BE MY FAULT, AND I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN. TAKE A DEEP BREATH. I'M GOING TO PUSH YOUR LEG ALL THE WAY NOW.

NO, WAIT! I... AHHHHHH!

JUST A LITTLE MORE, NABI-YA. YOU'RE ALMOST THERE!

YOU KEEP TRYING TO BREAK MY LEG! HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DANCE WITH A BROKEN LEG?

YOU'RE BEING A DRAMA QUEEN AGAIN, SILLY. STOP COMPLAINING AND FOCUS ON WHAT YOU'RE DOING!

I'M NOT YOUR FUCKING DOLL, YOU KNOW? YOU CAN'T KEEP PULLING AND PUSHING ME AROUND LIKE THAT!


YOU COULDN'T BE MORE WRONG, NABI-YA.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU ARE...

MY SWEET, PRETTY DOLL. I MADE YOU, AFTER ALL. YOU BELONG TO ME.

I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU EVEN MORE THAN I HATE CHO JIA-SEONSAENGNIM! YOU'RE THE WORST PERSON I'VE EVER MET! I CAN'T BELIEVE I WAS BOWING DOWN TO YOU JUST NOW!

NOW THIS IS YOUR PUNISHMENT FOR BEING SUCH A NASTY MAKNAE! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU TO RESPECT YOUR ELDERS? WHY CAN'T YOU LEARN, YOU STUPID GIRL? DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT GETTING UP BEFORE I TELL YOU THAT YOU CAN!

AHHHHH!!!!

IT SEEMS LIKE THESE DAYS YOU ONLY CARE ABOUT EUNJOO-YA, RIGHT? YOU TWO SEEM INSEPARABLE. SHE WAS EVEN QUITE PERSISTENT ABOUT BEING YOUR ROOMMATE WHEN WE WERE DECIDING WHERE EVERYONE WOULD SLEEP IN OUR DORM.

WAIT A MINUTE... ARE YOU FUCKING JEALOUS? YOU? DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! YOU'RE INCAPABLE OF FEELING EMOTIONS!

YOU REALLY THINK SO?


THIS ISN'T ABOUT JEALOUSY, NABI-YA.
BUT TELL ME...


DOES EUNJOO-YA DO THIS FOR YOU?


W-WHAT ARE YOU...?

I ALREADY TOLD YOU, NABI-YA...
YOU BELONG TO ME.


YOU WANT THIS, DON'T YOU?
YOU WANT THIS SO BADLY!

BEG ME TO LICK YOUR NIPPLE AND TELL ME YOU'LL BE A GOOD GIRL FROM NOW ON. DO IT NOW!

PLEASE, UNNIE, LICK MY NIPPLE. I... I'LL BE A GOOD GIRL.


OH, GOSH...

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON? I JUST CAN'T HELP IT. I'VE BEEN SO FRUSTRATED... AS HUMILIATING AS THIS SITUATION IS, IT FEELS SO GOOD WHEN SHE SUCKS ON MY BOOBS LIKE THIS...



NOW LET'S GET RID OF THESE SHORTS, SHALL WE? I LEFT THE STUDIO DOOR LOCKED, BUT TRY TO MOAN QUIETLY.


WAIT, UNNIE, I T-THINK...

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE EMBARRASSED BECAUSE OF THAT TINY, USELESS THING BETWEEN YOUR LEGS? YOU LOOK SO FLAT DOWN THERE THAT IT'S LIKE YOU HAVE A VAGINA. HOW CUTE!


BUT DON'T WORRY, NABI-YA. TODAY YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN A NEW WAY TO EXPERIENCE PLEASURE...

NOT LONG AFTER...

OH GOD, THAT'S UNBELIEVABLE...

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME I HAD SEX WITH SOMEONE? I THINK IT WAS WITH THAT REDHEAD WITH THE TATTOO ON HER BACK. SHE WASN'T ASIAN, BUT SHE WAS A REAL HOTTIE! THAT WAS SHORTLY BEFORE MINJI SHOWED UP TO RUIN MY LIFE...


THAT WAS AN AMAZING NIGHT, FOR SURE...


WHY DON'T YOU SHOW ME WHAT YOU HAVE DOWN THERE, HANDSOME?


AS YOU WISH, YOU LITTLE SLUT!

DO YOU LIKE IT?

WOW, YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH!

AHHHH---


FUCK ME HARDER NOW!


FUCK, I'M COMING!

AH, THAT WAS FANTASTIC, BABE!

THIS SEEMS LIKE IT HAPPENED IN ANOTHER LIFETIME.


HOW COULD I LET MINJI-UNNIE CHANGE ME SO MUCH IN SUCH A SHORT TIME?




LISTEN TO ME, NABI-YA.

I WANT YOU TO START LICKING YOUR FINGER. DO IT NOW!


GOOD GIRL...

CIRCLE YOUR FINGER WITH YOUR TONGUE. SLOWLY...

NOW START SUCKING IT. IN AND OUT...
IN AND OUT...


NOW TAKE A DEEP BREATH.
I'M GOING INSIDE YOU.

HUH?

DON'T FIGHT IT, NABI-YA.
JUST RELAX AND ENJOY...


YOU KNOW YOU NEED THIS. SOON YOU'LL FEEL VERY, VERY GOOD...

AM I REALLY GOING TO LET HER DO THIS TO ME? I MEAN...

WHY DID YOU STOP SUCKING YOUR FINGER?
KEEP DOING IT!

I... I'M S-SORRY!


GOOD GIRL! NOW REMEMBER TO RELAX.
THAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING!


THAT'S IT, NABI-YA...

YOU'RE DOING GREAT. I'M MANAGING TO GO DEEPER INSIDE YOU.


OH GOSH, THIS FEELS SO WEIRD,
BUT AT THE SAME TIME...

...I DO FEEL KIND OF FUNNY DOWN THERE.
IT DOESN'T SEEM SO BAD SO FAR...

NOW GET READY BECAUSE I'M GOING TO INSERT A SECOND FINGER!


GOOD GIRL... AS SUBMISSIVE AS PRETTY!

BEG ME TO KEEP GOING, NABI-YA.
BEG ME OR I'LL STOP RIGHT NOW!


SHE NEVER GETS TIRED OF HUMILIATING ME...
BUT I'M SO AROUSED... I NEED SOME RELIEF...
I CAN'T STOP NOW!

PLEASE, UNNIE, DON'T STOP!
I NEED YOU TO... I NEED YOU
TO FUCK MY ASS!

PERFECT. I THINK YOU'RE READY FOR THE NEXT STEP NOW. GET ON ALL FOURS!

A SHORT TIME LATER...


ALRIGHT, NABI-YA...

IT'S TIME.


PRETTY SOON YOU WILL NO LONGER BE A VIRGIN, DOLL...

THAT'S IT... SHE... SHE'S ABOUT TO FUCK ME.
I GUESS THERE'S NO GOING BACK NOW.

AGAIN... JUST RELAX, NABI-YA...

I PROMISE I'LL BE GENTLE, OKAY?
SOON YOU'LL FEEL VERY, VERY GOOD.

I'M GOING IN...

GOOD GIRL...


SHE'S REALLY INSIDE ME.
IT FEELS SO STRANGE!

ALRIGHT, DOLL. TAKE A DEEP BREATH NOW.

W-WHAT? WHY?

AHHHH!!!

YOU'RE DOING GREAT, NABI-YA. NOW I'M GOING TO GO IN AND OUT... SLOWLY...

GREAT INDEED! A FEW MONTHS AGO, WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT I'D BE FUCKING YOUR ASS NOW, NABI-YA? YOU'RE NOT THAT COCKY AMERICAN GUY ANYMORE, ARE YOU? NO, YOU'RE MY PLAYTHING!

NOW I'M GOING TO PUT EVERYTHING INSIDE, GIRL.

EVERYTHING INSIDE?! BUT I THOUGHT YOU ALREADY HAD...


AAAHHHHHHHH!!!!!


BE PROUD OF YOURSELF, YOUR LITTLE SLUT...


Slap!

IT'S ALL INSIDE YOU!


GOSH, THIS IS CRAZY! I'M BEING FUCKED. FUCKED FOR REAL! BUT... ISN'T IT STARTING TO FEEL KIND OF... NICE?!

I SEE YOU'RE REALLY HAVING FUN, AREN'T YOU? ADMIT IT. NOW!

YES, UNNIE! I LOVE IT SO MUCH! PLEASE, DON'T STOP NOW!

YOU SEE, NABI-YA? I TOLD YOU THAT GOOD THINGS HAPPEN TO YOU WHEN YOU OBEY.




OH, GOSH! I... I THINK I'M COMING!

Chapter Eighteen
Hot Sauce

TWO DAYS LATER...

HMMM...


THAT FREAK IS SO LATE! THIS IS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE.



GOSH, GETTING READY AS A GIRL IS SO MUCH WORK!

FIXING MY HAIR, DOING MY MAKEUP, PUTTING TOGETHER AN OUTFIT... IT ALL TAKES SO MUCH TIME! AND IF I GO OUT WITHOUT BEING ALL DOLLED UP, I GET SCOLDED!

THINGS WERE SO MUCH SIMPLER WHEN I WAS A GUY... I FEEL SO EXPOSED IN THIS OUTFIT... IT'S STILL SO UNCOMFORTABLE WALKING IN HIGH HEELS ALL THE TIME... BUT THAT'S WHAT THEY EXPECT FROM ME. NOT ONLY DO I HAVE TO BE IN A KPOP GIRL GROUP, BUT I ALSO HAVE TO BE THE GIRLY, DELICATE MEMBER!

THERE'S YUN JUNGHO-SUNBAENIM.
HE LOOKS SO ANGRY!

H-HELLO, SUNBAENIM! SORRY FOR BEING LATE, I... I...

A-SSI! NOT ONLY DID YOU LEAVE ME WAITING LIKE A FOOL, BUT YOU STILL CAN'T BOW DOWN PROPERLY!

BEND YOUR UPPER BODY FORWARD BY FORTY-FIVE DEGREES. KEEP YOUR BACK AND NECK STRAIGHT. LOOK DOWN AT THE FLOOR, DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT LOOKING AT ME WHILE YOU'RE BOWING! HOLD THE POSITION FOR TWO SECONDS AND THEN RISE SLOWLY. IS THIS SO DIFFICULT?

I... I'M SORRY AGAIN, SUNBAENIM.
I'LL DO BETTER IN THE FUTURE!

I'M TIRED OF YOUR EMPTY PROMISES.
I EXPECT TO SEE SOME QUICK IMPROVEMENT!
NOW SIT DOWN.

DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU AT OUR FIRST MEETING?

YOU SPOKE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SHOWBIZ INDUSTRY FOR THE COUNTRY, AND THAT I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO BE PART OF THE GROUP NOW.

ALL TRUE, BUT YOU FORGOT THE MOST IMPORTANT PART: I TOLD YOU THAT EVEN THOUGH YOU LOOK LIKE A KOREAN GIRL, THAT ALONE DOESN'T MAKE YOU ONE OF US. TELL ME, HOW ARE YOUR FIRST DAYS AS A TRAINEE GOING?

I'VE ONLY HAD DANCE CLASSES SO FAR, SUNBAENIM, INCLUDING ONE THIS MORNING. THAT'S ACTUALLY WHY I WAS LATE FOR OUR MEETING. AFTER THE CLASS, I HAD TO RUSH TO THE DORM TO GET CHANGED AND...

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR LAME EXCUSES. TALK ABOUT THE CLASSES.

THEY HAVE BEEN REALLY TOUGH, SUNBAENIM. CHO JIA-SEONSAENGNIM CAN BE VERY... DEMANDING. I DON'T HAVE MUCH DANCE EXPERIENCE, BUT MY MEMBERS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTING ME.

ALTHOUGH MINJI-UNNIE'S *SUPPORT* INVOLVED FUCKING MY ASS WITH A DILDO. I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE I LET HER DO THAT. AND WORSE, I CAN'T BELIEVE I LIKED IT, EVEN IF MY ASS STILL HURTS! WHAT WOULD SUNBAENIM THINK IF I TOLD HIM THIS? HE'D BE EVEN MORE CONVINCED THAT I'M A PERV SISSY FOR SURE!

IT'S A GOOD THING THAT YOUR MEMBERS ARE HELPING YOU OUT. YOU ALL NEED TO ACT AS ONE IN ORDER TO SUCCEED, AFTER ALL. BESIDES, YOU'RE THE MAKNAE, SO IT'S THEIR ROLE TO PROTECT AND GUIDE YOU.

HOWEVER, IT'S WRONG FOR YOU TO COMPLAIN THE CLASSES ARE BEING DIFFICULT. YOU ARE BEING RUDE AND UNGRATEFUL TO YOUR SEONSAENGNIM. REMEMBER, NOTHING MAKES A KOREAN PROUDER THAN WORKING HARD, NO MATTER HOW DEMANDING IT IS. ARE YOU LISTENING?

YES, SUNBAENIM. I'M SORRY!

YOU SAID YOUR DANCE CLASS ENDED A LITTLE WHILE AGO. DID YOU HAVE LUNCH?

I DIDN'T HAVE TIME, SUNBAENIM.

YOU SEE, YOU DON'T DESERVE THIS, BUT I'M FEELING GENEROUS TODAY. LET ME ASK TO STAFF TO BRING YOU SOMETHING...

TEN MINUTES LATER...

HEOL!

WHAT'S WRONG, MINAH-YA? DON'T YOU APPROVE OF THIS LAVISH MEAL I ORDERED ESPECIALLY FOR YOU?

I... I'M ACTUALLY VERY GRATEFUL, BUT I'M NOT HUNGRY, SUNBAENIM.

DON'T LIE TO ME. THERE'S NO WAY YOU WOULDN'T BE HUNGRY AFTER A DANCE CLASS THAT YOU YOURSELF SAID WAS VERY TOUGH. WHAT'S GOING ON?

TO BE HONEST, I'M NOT A BIG FAN OF KOREAN FOOD. I'VE ALWAYS HAD TROUBLE EATING VEGETABLES AND DIFFERENT TEXTURES. COULD I JUST EAT THE MEAT AND RICE?

ABSOLUTELY NOT!

YOU'RE ALREADY A BIG GIRL, AREN'T YOU? STOP ACTING LIKE A CHILD. VEGETABLES ARE GREAT FOR YOUR HEALTH. AND YOU'RE FORBIDDEN FROM EATING MEAT UNTIL YOUR GROUP'S DEBUT. DIDN'T YOU WANT TO BE AN IDOL? YOU NEED TO WATCH YOUR FIGURE.

FROM NOW ON, YOU ARE ONLY ALLOWED TO EAT KOREAN FOOD. NO MORE BURGERS OR PIZZA. IN A FEW WEEKS, I EXPECT YOU TO BE ABLE TO CONVINCE ANYONE THAT KIMCHI IS YOUR FAVORITE THING IN THE WORLD. GRAB YOUR JEOTGARAK. NOW!

A-SSI, YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO HOLD THEM! WE HAVE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF WORK TO DO IN ORDER TO TRANSFORM YOU INTO A NATIVE KOREAN GIRL, DON'T WE? YOUR LUCK IS THAT I'M A VERY PATIENT MAN. AND ALSO SO CREATIVE WHEN IT COMES TO PUNISHMENTS AND PENALTIES...

FIRST, THE BOTTOM STICK. ANCHOR IT. IT DOESN'T MOVE. IF IT WOBBLES, YOU'VE ALREADY FAILED. NOW, THE TOP STICK. HOLD IT WITH YOUR THUMB AND INDEX FINGER. LIKE A PEN. THIS IS THE ONLY ONE THAT MOVES. USE YOUR INDEX FINGER TO PUSH IT DOWN, NOT YOUR WHOLE FIST. PRECISION, NOT FORCE.

AND LOOK AT THAT POSTURE. TERRIBLE. SINCE YOU ARE A GIRL, I EXPECT YOU TO HANDLE THESE WITH SOME ACTUAL GRACE. DON'T LOCK YOUR ARM. KEEP YOUR WRIST FLUID. THE MOVEMENT SHOULD BE ALMOST INVISIBLE. YOUR LITTLE FINGER IS FLAILING OUT THERE. TUCK IT IN. A WOMAN'S HAND SHOULD LOOK COMPOSED, NOT CHAOTIC.

L-LIKE THIS?

BETTER, BUT YOU MUST MAKE THEM LOOK WEIGHTLESS. YOUR TOUCH SHOULD BE DELICATE. YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE SINCE YOU'LL BE USING JEOTGARAK IN EVERY MEAL FROM NOW ON.

NOW LET'S EAT. GRAB SOME KIMCHI.

DIRECTOR-NIM, I REALLY THINK...

NOW!

GOSH, I REALLY DON'T LIKE THE WAY IT LOOKS, BUT I GUESS I HAVE NO CHOICE. IT'S BETTER TO JUST GET IT OVER WITH.

Nyam
Nyam

GOOD GIRL. NOW CHEW AT LEAST TWENTY TIMES, AND PUT YOUR HAND IN FRONT OF YOUR FACE WHILE YOU EAT. REMEMBER, YOU'LL NOT ONLY BE AN IDOL, BUT THE GIRLIEST IN THE GROUP. A TRUE FAIRY. ALL YOUR MOVEMENTS SHOULD BE DELICATE AND FEMININE. THAT'S YOUR ROLE.

THE TASTE ISN'T AS BAD AS I THOUGHT,
BUT THE TEXTURE... I REALLY HATE THE TEXTURE.
AND HE EXPECTS ME TO CHEW TWENTY TIMES.
THAT FEELS ALMOST LIKE TORTURE...

SEE? THAT WASN'T SO BAD. NOW, WHERE ARE YOUR MANNERS AGAIN? THANK ME PROPERLY.


THANK YOU FOR THE DELICIOUS FOOD, DIRECTOR-NIM. AND THANK YOU FOR TEACHING ME AND BEING SO PATIENT WITH ME.

BETTER. NOW KEEP EATING. TRY SOME SPINACH.

M-MORE?

YES, UNTIL I TELL YOU TO STOP. WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

HALF AN HOUR LATER...

I'VE BEEN DOING SOME RESEARCH ON YOUR PAST, MINAH-YA. YOU DO HAVE AN INTERESTING STORY. YOU PLAYED GUITAR IN A BUNCH OF FAILED BANDS... NEVER WENT TO COLLEGE... WANNABE PRODUCER. TELL ME, WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT... LET'S SAY... ERIC CLAPTON?

YOU KNOW I WAS A GUITARIST, DIRECTOR-NIM. AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY I DON'T LIKE ERIC CLAPTON?

NO, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO GIGGLE WITH YOUR HAND IN FRONT OF YOUR FACE, TILT YOUR HEAD AND ASK, 'WHO'S ERIC CLAPTON, DIRECTOR-NIM? A WESTERN ACTOR? I'VE NEVER HEARD OF HIM! AND WHAT'S THIS TALK ABOUT ME PLAYING GUITAR? THAT WOULD RUIN MY PRETTY NAILS!'


IS THIS REALLY NECESSARY? AT THIS POINT, IT SEEMS LIKE HE'S JUST BEING EVIL FOR THE SAKE OF BEING EVIL!

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING. YOU'RE VERY EASY TO READ, WHICH IS A TERRIBLE TRAIT FOR SOMEONE WHO'S GOING TO BE AN IDOL. YOU STILL WANT TO REBEL, DON'T YOU? DEEP DOWN, YOU STILL HAVEN'T UNDERSTOOD HOW STUCK YOU ARE. YOU THINK YOU CAN STILL GO BACK TO BEING YOUR OLD SELF.

I STILL DON'T KNOW HOW THAT GIRL, MINJI-YA, MANAGED TO DO ALL THIS TO YOU. YOU MUST BE REALLY STUPID, OR YOU ACTUALLY LIKE BEING TREATED LIKE A GIRL EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE DENYING IT. IN ANY CASE, I JUST DON'T CARE. BUT I'D BETTER KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON HER, RIGHT?

YOU THINK I'M BEING MEAN, BUT ACTUALLY I'M PROTECTING YOU. I ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT YOU'LL END UP IN JAIL FOR MANY, MANY YEARS IF PEOPLE FIND OUT THE TRUTH ABOUT YOU. BELIEVE ME, THAT WOULD BE WORSE THAN LIVING AS AN IDOL.

SO THE NEXT TIME YOU HEAR ABOUT CLAPTON, HENDRIX, OR WHATEVER, YOU'LL PLAY DUMB AND SAY YOU ACTUALLY LIKE GIRLS' GENERATION AND TWICE, AND THAT YOU'VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF BEING LIKE THEM.

GIRLS' GENERATION? TWICE?

AH! YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING!
GIRLS' GENERATION AND TWICE ARE YOUR NEW FAVORITE GROUPS. TWICE MAKES SENSE GIVEN YOUR SUPPOSED AGE, AND GIRLS' GENERATION, SNSD FOR SHORT, IS A CLASSIC. EVERY GIRL GROUP MUST IDOLIZE THEM.

MY PHONE. WHY?

I'M ALSO CONFISCATING YOUR PHONE TODAY.

BECAUSE TRAINEES AREN'T ALLOWED TO HAVE PHONES. IT'S AN UNNECESSARY DISTRACTION. YOU CAN HAVE IT BACK WHEN YOUR GROUP WINS A MUSIC SHOW TROPHY AFTER DEBUT.

BUT I'LL LEAVE A TABLET WITH YOU SO YOU CAN STUDY. YOU'LL ONLY HAVE ACCESS TO WHAT I AUTHORIZE, OF COURSE.

AND NEXT WEEK I EXPECT YOU TO BE ABLE TO SING ALL OF SNSD AND TWICE'S SINGLES BY HEART, OR YOUR ENTIRE GROUP WILL BE PUNISHED. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.



Chapter Nineteen
Paparazzi

TWO WEEKS LATER...

OH MY...

YOU KNOW WHAT?

YOU LOOK LIKE THE CUTEST THING EVER, MINAH-YA!

REALLY, THE CAMERA'S GOING TO LOVE YOU!

I DON'T KNOW, UNNIE. I'M FEELING KIND OF NERVOUS. I'VE NEVER DONE A PHOTOSHOOT BEFORE.

THERE'S NO NEED TO BE NERVOUS, MINAH-YA. REMEMBER, THIS IS JUST A MODELING CLASS. YOU'RE HERE EXACTLY TO LEARN! YOUR MAKEUP LOOKS GREAT AND YOUR OUTFIT IS SO CUTE! YOUR MEMBERS ARE ALREADY IN THE STUDIO. JUST TRUST ME, OKAY?

O-OKAY, UNNIE...

OH, BUT WHERE ARE MY MANNERS?

SORRY I DIDN'T BOW EARLIER, SUNBAENIM. THAT WAS CARELESS OF ME. IT DEFINITELY WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN!

WHAT?! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, MINAH-YA?

COME HERE, GIRL!

WHAT'S ALL THIS? YOU DON'T NEED TO CALL ME SUNBAENIM. UNNIE IS MORE THAN ENOUGH! AND PLEASE DON'T BOW TO ME LIKE THAT. WE'RE FRIENDS!

SORRY, UNNIE. I... I'M JUST AT MY BREAKING POINT. THE LAST COUPLE OF WEEKS HAVE BEEN REALLY TOUGH. I CALLED YOU SUNBAENIM AND BOWED BECAUSE I'VE BEEN TRAINED TO DO THAT WITH EVERYONE. IT'S EASIER TO JUST DO WHAT I'M TOLD.

YOU POOR THING! LISTEN TO ME, MINAH-YA...

I KNOW IT'S HARD. I KNOW YOU'RE DEALING WITH INCREDIBLY STRICT PEOPLE WHO TREAT YOU LIKE YOU'RE THE WORST PERSON IN THE WORLD. BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO SUFFER ALONE. YOU CAN RELY ON ME, JUST LIKE I KNOW YOU CAN RELY ON YOUR MEMBERS.

DON'T TRY TO CARRY ALL THIS WEIGHT BY YOURSELF, MINAH-YA. DON'T FALL INTO THAT TRAP. YOUR MEMBERS WERE TRAINEES ONCE TOO. THEY KNOW HOW THINGS WORK, BUT ALL OF THIS IS NEW TO YOU. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP. YOU'RE NOT WEAK FOR DOING SO.


T-THANK YOU, UNNIE...

YOU'VE ALREADY SUFFERED TOO MUCH, MINAH. GROWING UP WITHOUT YOUR PARENTS, ORPHANED AS A LITTLE GIRL... THEN DEALING WITH SO MANY HEALTH ISSUES THAT YOU COULD HARDLY LEAVE THE HOUSE DURING YOUR CHILDHOOD. AND THEN LOSING THE GRANDMOTHER WHO RAISED YOU. BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO SUFFER ALONE ANYMORE. YOU'RE GOING TO ACHIEVE YOUR DREAM AND BE HAPPY NOW. YOU'RE GOING TO BE AN IDOL, LOVED BY THE WHOLE WORLD, OKAY?

YOU'RE RIGHT, UNNIE.

GREAT, NOW I FEEL LIKE GARBAGE AGAIN. JISU-UNNIE IS COMFORTING ME BASED ON A LIE. I'M NOT AN ORPHAN, I DIDN'T SPEND MY CHILDHOOD SICK, AND I DIDN'T JUST LOSE MY GRANDMOTHER. THAT WAS JUST A FAKE STORY DIRECTOR JUNGHO MADE UP TO EXPLAIN THE LACK OF INFORMATION ABOUT MY PAST. WHAT WOULD UNNIE THINK IF SHE KNEW WHO I REALLY AM?

OKAY, MINAH-YA...

HERE WE ARE!

THE OTHER GIRLS ARE ALREADY TALKING TO THE PHOTOGRAPHER.

WHY DON'T YOU GO OVER THERE AND SAY HI?

OH, THERE'S OUR PRECIOUS MAKNAE! DOESN'T SHE LOOK LIKE THE CUTEST THING EVER? COME OVER HERE, DEAR. DON'T BE SHY!

IT'S AN HONOR TO MEET YOU, SUNBAENIM! I'M KIM MINAH. I PROMISE I'LL WORK HARD TO LEARN AS FAST AS I CAN!

NICE TO MEET YOU, MINAH-SSI. I'M LIM TAEYANG. I'M SURE YOU'LL CATCH ON FAST. JUST DON'T PUT SO MUCH PRESSURE ON YOURSELF.

YOU'RE INCREDIBLY PHOTOGENIC. NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. THE CAMERA IS GOING TO ABSOLUTELY LOVE YOU.

JUST RELAX AND BE YOURSELF, OKAY?

WHAT HE'S TRYING TO SAY IS THAT YOU SHOULD JUST BE YOUR USUAL CUTIE-PIE SELF, NABI-YA!

I--- HMM---

NE, SUMBAENIM! PLEASE TAKE GOOD CARE OF US. I'LL BE SURE TO LISTEN CLOSELY TO EVERYTHING YOU SAY. HWAITING!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I'M ACTUALLY DOING AEGYO AND ACTING ALL CUTE WHEN I'M NERVOUS, AFRAID OF GETTING YELLED AT. IT'S LIKE MY NEW DEFENSE MECHANISM. I DON'T EVEN NEED TO THINK TO DO THIS. THIS... IS NATURAL FOR ME NOW. IT'S CRAZY HOW FAST I'M CHANGING. IS THERE EVEN GOING TO BE ANYTHING LEFT OF THE OLD ME IN A MONTH? WHAT ABOUT A YEAR?

ALRIGHT GIRLS, LET'S START WITH THE SOLO SHOTS FIRST, AND THEN WE'LL MOVE ON TO THE FULL GROUP.

HALF AN HOUR LATER...

GREAT, THAT'S A PERFECT POSE!
NOW, GIVE ME A WINK.

WOW, YOU'RE DOING AN AMAZING JOB!

GOSH, THIS IS SO TERRIFYING...

MINJI, DASOM, AND EUNJOO UNNIES ARE SUCH AMAZING MODELS! IT'S LIKE THE THREE OF THEM WERE BORN FOR THIS. HOW CAN THEY EXPECT ME TO DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT? I'M GOING TO BE A TOTAL LAUGHINGSTOCK. THE PHOTOGRAPHER IS DEFINITELY GOING TO GET MAD AT ME!


VERY GOOD...

YOU'RE ALL DOING SO WELL. GREAT JOB, EVERYONE! MINAH-SSI, NOW IT'S YOUR TURN.


.....
OH, NO...