

(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)

A/N: If I had a nickel for every time a chapter of this fic started with Celine waking up, I'd have two nickels. Which isn't much but... eh, you guys get the joke.

-x-X-x-

Celine wakes up alone. On the one hand, that's good. That's how it should be. On the other hand, she has no issues remembering what happened last night. What she initiated. What she'd done.

A low, rattling breath leaves her lips as she stares at the other side of the bed, empty now but very clearly slept in. To say nothing of certain sensations all across her body that make it clear what happened the previous night was no dream, no fantasy. No, it was very real. She and Bobby had sex.

... It was for the best that he'd left before she could wake up. Perhaps they could pretend like it never happened. If that was what he wanted, then Celine would gladly follow his cue. Honestly, she didn't know what she was thinking. It was a moment of weakness, something she already regretted dragging him into immensely. So if all he wanted was for them to never speak about it again then-

Celine twitches as her honed senses pick up the sound of someone moving around in the common area of the apartment, just outside of the bedroom door. Atrophied as her training might be, she is still a hunter at the end of the day.

For the briefest of moments, Celine tells herself that it's a demon come to finish her off. That would almost be preferable to... what she suspects is actually happening out there.

After the noises, it's the smell reaches her next. The smell of breakfast cooking. Against her will, Celine's nostrils flare and take it in. Simple fare from the scent, but then simple fare had always been Celine's favorite and it's what would have been stored in the apartment refrigerator for her to eat.

Letting out another rattling breath, Celine flops onto her back and stares up at the ceiling. If Mi-yeong and Jia could see her now, they would be so disappointed in her. Forty-six years old and seducing a man a decade her junior into bed with her? And not just any man... no, she'd just had to do it to HUNTR/X's manager.

Bobby didn't deserve this. He didn't deserve to have to put up with her. Alas, Celine is going to have to tell him herself from the sound of things. Starting with telling him he doesn't have to make her breakfast, nor should he blame himself for what happened between them in any way. With a grunt, Celine pulls back the blankets and rises to her feet.

Fuck, she's sore. So old and out of shape that a simple roll in the sheets is enough to leave her all achy and creaky. Snorting in dry amusement at her own weakness, Celine shakes her head and puts on some damn clothes. Not a nightgown. The nightgown last night had been a mistake, clearly. Too... easy to do away with.

She puts on a loose shirt and some sweatpants instead, and then a robe to cover it all up. A glance in the mirror shows her she looks awful. Good. No more seduction, intentional or otherwise.

Finally, Celine leaves the bedroom. The expectation is Bobby with shoulders hunched, anxiety on his face, and a tremor in his hands as he prepares breakfast for her as though he's trying to placate a dragon. After all, Celine knows what she's like. And she knows how other people see her. Plus, she knows Bobby.

Or rather... she thought she did. Celine stops dead in her tracks upon seeing Bobby... humming to himself? With a smile on his face and a bit of a bounce to his shoulders, the HUNTR/X manager looks to be lost in his own little world.

He IS making breakfast as Celine thought he was, but not as some panicked idea of an apology. No, from the look of things, he's having fun with it. Moving about the kitchen, working four different pans, plating half a dozen different

dishes. All made with the simple fare found in her fridge... and perhaps a couple extra ingredients he must have popped over to his own apartment across the hall to grab.

Celine just stands there and stares right up until Bobby finally notices her there out of the corner of his eye. Luckily he's not holding anything important at the time, because the stout man positively jumps out of his skin at the sight of her.

"FUCK! Celine, you are WAY too quiet. Need to put a bell on you or something!"

What.

"Just take a seat and help yourself to what's already ready while I finish the rest."

... What.

Even after seeing her, Bobby's mood doesn't change. If anything, he looks happier to have her up and awake and in the same room as him. How does that even make sense? Celine sits down at the table like she was told to and despite expecting to have no appetite, her mouth waters at some of the early breakfast dishes he's prepared.

Before she knows it she's trying a bit of everything and enjoying it all far too much. Ultimately, she has to stop herself, especially when Bobby comes over and sits down with the last dishes to begin serving himself as well.

Forcing the last bite of food down, Celine clears her throat. She hates that she has to do this. It seems like Bobby thought they were... together now or something. Like he had assumed more from last night's events than she'd expected. And while part of Celine wouldn't actually mind a relationship with the younger man, deep down she knows how bad of an idea it would be. She's not about to lead him on, not even for a second.

"Bobby... last night was a mistake."

“Yeah, probably!”

Celine rears back as if slapped. What?! Then why was he so cheerful? Why was he so... happy?

“I don’t... I’m not sure I understand. You acknowledge it was a mistake, but you’re acting like you don’t regret it.”

Finally, Bobby pauses. He puts down his fork and looks at Celine properly.

“... If I’m being perfectly honest with you, I don’t regret it Celine.”

Celine blushes, gobsmacked, as Bobby continues on in a matter of fact tone.

“Last night was great, at least for me. Sorry if I disappointed on my end but-”

“What?! No, you were fine! I-I mean, more than fine, you were perfectly adequate!”

Oh Honmoon what is she saying? She stops trying after that, even though her correction sounds worse than her initial statement even to Celine’s own ears. Bobby just smiles a wry smile though, not looking particularly offended.

“Appreciate that, Celine. Look, here’s where I’m at. I don’t regret last night... but Rumi is still one hundred percent going to kill me when she finds out. As she damn well should. So since I’m already a dead man walking, I figure I might as well enjoy my last moments on this Earth. Hence having breakfast with a beautiful woman!”

Celine starts to understand now, even as she blushes at the casual compliment. Bobby had already panicked when he first woke up. He’d panicked so hard he’d wrapped right back around to this calm zen-like state he’s currently in. Since he’s already screwed in his own eyes, he clearly figures he might as well just be happy for as long as it lasts.

There's just one problem with his assertions and she makes sure to spell it out for him, even as he goes back to the food.

"Why would Rumi blame you for this? I am the one who initiated things, Bobby. I am the one who seduced you and selfishly tricked you into satisfying my needs last night. You did nothing but follow my lead. And given the distinct power imbalance between us, my actions are all the more reprehensible. I am your employer, after all."

Bobby chews through the latest bite of food, swallows, and then points his fork at her.

"Eh... no you're not. Not really. Let's be honest about that much at least. Sure, you're the CEO of Sunlight Entertainment. On paper, you're my boss. But my employers are and will always be the girls and nobody else. If you or anyone else at SE tried to fire me without a very good reason, the girls would revolt. And if I did anything to make the girls want me gone, I'd be gone in a heartbeat. So let's not kid ourselves here... you have no real power over me Celine. You haven't since we built Rumi and her girls a fucking skyscraper in the middle of goddamn Seoul."

... Damn. Why was his matter of fact tone a little bit of a turn on?

Shrugging as he takes another bite and chews and swallows while she just sits there staring at him, Bobby chuckles like a man cheerfully heading for his own execution.

"Of course, once Rumi finds out I banged her mom, my ass is grass anyways. So like I said, enjoying my final moments. Food is good at least, right? I'm loving it anyways."

Celine flinches at the word 'mom'.

"That's not... I'm not her..."

But Bobby isn't having that either. He stabs his fork in her direction again.

“You are. Maybe you and Rumi don’t use the words, but you are Celine.”

“But Mi-yeong-!”

“Mi-yeong was her mother. She carried her in her belly for nine months. She gave birth to her. And Rumi should never forget that. But you raised her Celine. You were her *mom*.”

Since when was Bobby this assertive? Oh yes, because he’d fully gone around the bend and thought his days were numbered so he had nothing left to lose. But then, that meant he fully believed everything he was saying right now. That meant he wasn’t sugarcoating anything anymore.

Celine barely realizes that his words have sucked the air out of her lungs. She tries to breathe in, but it’s a struggle. Belatedly, she recognizes she’s starting to hyperventilate. How embarrassing, it’s been so long since she had a full blown panic attack in front of someone else.

Even back on Jeju with Bobby and then the girls, she’d been too drunk to experience the full effects of a nervous breakdown. But there was no alcohol here to lean on at this point. Just her and the effects of her poor decision making.

“Shit!”

Bobby’s hand is suddenly in hers, just like the night before. Except unlike the night before, his other hand is on her face, specifically on her chin, making sure she’s looking him right in the eyes.

“Just breathe, Celine. You hear me? In and out. Let’s do it together. In and out.”

He breathes... and Celine breathes with him. Slowly, in fits and starts at first, but eventually she manages it. Until she’s matching his breathing and her racing heart finally starts to calm down. As soon as she’s in a better place, Bobby lets go of her chin and rubs the back of his head, letting out a sheepish laugh.

“Sorry about that. I shouldn’t have spoken out of turn, I-mmph!”

Celine can’t believe her audacity, but she cuts him off... with another damn kiss. Just a quick one this time. She doesn’t go for seconds. But when they pull apart, he looks flummoxed all the same.

“What was that?!”

Did she have to spell it out for him?

“I’d say we’re both screwed, Bobby. So it’s like you said... we might as well enjoy ourselves before the end.”

“Uhhh...”

Celine smirks. The brash, assertive man who had been making her feel a certain way is suddenly nowhere to be seen. One might expect her to start to feel differently because of that, but no... no, she still feels the same even when Bobby is staring at her rather dumbly.

That said...

“However, I do think we should wait to confess our misdeeds.”

Bobby jerks as if slapped that that suggestion, immediately frowning.

“What? No, I can’t lie to Rumi. She’d see right through me and know something was wrong immediately.”

Celine shakes her head though.

“We don’t have to wait for too long. Just... until after the Idol Awards are over. Let the girls focus on winning their Sixth Year in a row. I’ve already done enough to distract Rumi these past few days. But now that the Honmoon is Rainbow,

now that things are finally settling down... they deserve a chance to make it a six-peat, don't you think?"

Considering that for a long moment, Bobby slowly nods.

"I think... yeah, I think you're right. She doesn't need this distraction right now, even if she is probably going to just fire me in the end."

Celine wasn't going to let that happen. Not if she could help it. She wouldn't let Bobby pay for her mistake like that. But she also didn't think Rumi would blame him either way. She was the one with all the power, after all. This was her fault... and it might just be the final straw to get Rumi to cut Celine out of her life once and for all. So that she could finally be happy without the extra weight like an albatross around her neck.

Of course, if she really wanted to make sure Rumi got rid of her...

"That's right. We'll wait till they've won the Idol Awards and let them celebrate. Then we'll tell Rumi what's happened. Let her decide what to do with us then. In the meantime..."

She should have won the nightgown after all, Celine reflects, even as she rises from the breakfast table and shucks off her robe. Bobby's eyes widen as she goes a step further, beginning to remove the rest of her clothes as well.

"Celine? What are you doing?"

"We're going to have to eventually face the music, there's no denying that. But if we have this last bit of time together, I figure we might as well enjoy that time... together."

"I'm not sure that's a very good idea. It was one thing to be enjoying my last moments on Earth when I thought I'd be telling Rumi within the hour. But doing this behind her back... it feels wrong!"

"Are you saying you're not interested?"

"I... I didn't say that."

Celine smirks. If she was going to convince Rumi to cut her away like the toxic tumor she was... well, she might as well enjoy the process, no?

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A/N: Guys no. Bobby, Celine, c'mon this is toxic. Oh they aren't listening to me anymore. Great...

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