

CHAPTER 18

“Done.” Kwon said, giving his fans one last peace sign before spinning in his heels and marching away. “Now to find Autotune and get out of here.”

“Right. No one can stop us now.”

“Doll. Doll.” The Director called chasing behind them.

“Ugh,” Kwon moaned.

“Be cute.” Sung whispered.

Kwon turned, smiling brightly, and started playing with one of his pigtails. “Director.” he squealed. “Such a pleasant surprise.”

“Yes. Well,” he said, letting his eyes drop to Kwon’s chest, then scan the rest of his body. “It is always a pleasure to see you, doll.”

“Hehehehe.” Kwon said, skin crawling, thinking I wish I could punch him right in his stupid face. “Do you need something, Director?”

“Yes. I need to talk about tomorrow’s shoot.” He slipped his arm around Kwon’s waist. Sung started to follow, but Director said, “You can go.” Why do these men think they can just put their arms around me whenever they want? Kwon thought, feeling gross.

“I’ll see you back at the room, Miss Hanja.” Sung called, feeling concerned. Well, surely Kwon could handle the Director, she thought. He is a grown woman.

The director walked Kwon back to his own room. “You have read the script?” The director said.

“Of course.”

“Well, tomorrow we will shoot the scene where you make lo Jack Action, the boy who saves you from Mr. Tech’s unwanted advances and helps you start your own poodle grooming business.”

“Yes, of—wait. Tomorrow? Love making scene?”

“Yes. We had to rearrange the shooting schedule a bit.”

Director opened his door and put a hand on the small of Kwon's back, guiding him into the room. It was dark, with some candles burning on side tables.

"Candles?"

"Yes," Director said. "It's so stressful on set, I find I need total calm and relaxation in my room. Don't you?"

"I prefer light," Kwon said, forcing a giggle. But, when he reached for the light switch, the director took him by the wrist and led him into the room, past several chairs and to a couch.

"Sit. Please."

"Okay," Kwon said giggling as he tried to slip past Director to one of the chairs, but Director put his hands on Kwon's shoulders and pushed him down on the couch.

"Now, wine?" Director said.

Kwon looked to the door, thinking about bolting. The whole thing seemed quite creepy, but surely he was just imagining things? Director wouldn't be so crude? I feel rude even thinking such thoughts. Kwon decided. I must be polite and professional. "I don't drink alcohol," Kwon said, remembering his role. "It's bad for my skin."

"And such lovely skin," Director said, nevertheless returning with two glasses of wine. He sat on the couch right next to Kwon, their bodies touching.

Kwon giggled and scooted away to the armrest, but the director shifted closer. He handed Kwon the glass of wine, then brushed one of his pigtails back over his shoulder. "Your eyes, Ki. You have the most beautiful eyes."

"Hehehe. Um, did you say you wanted to talk about the scene, Director?" Kwon said, putting the glass of wine down on the table.

"Yes. The scene. You will be offering yourself to a man. Tell me how that feels."

"How, um, what feels?"

"That moment when you surrender," Director said in a low, husky voice. "When you realize that a man is too strong, too powerful, and that you must give in to his desire. You must give your body to him and let him to what he will with it." He put his hand on Kwon's knee and squeezed.



“Oh. Look at the time.” Kwon said, looking at the three watches he wore as bracelets. I have to go and—and--- um--- get my eyebrows plucked.” He started to stand, but Director grabbed him and kissed him right on the mouth.

“Get off me.” Kwon shouted, shoving Director away. He got to his feet and grabbed his purse and swung it, hitting Director on the head. He raced toward the door as fast as he could trot in his stiletto heels, but Director cut him off.

“I need you,” Director said. “I have to taste of your honey.”

“What? Gross.” Kwon tried to run around Director, but Director grabbed him and pushed him against a wall, pinning one of Kwon’s arms above his head. “Stop.” Kwon said, now upset and growing angry and afraid. “You’re disgusting.”

“Please,” Director said, touching Kwon’s face. “Just one kiss.”

“Find some other girl, you perv.”

“I don’t want just any girl,” Director said, pressing his body against Kwon’s. Kwon, with one arm pinned and his body pressed into the wall, had never felt so vulnerable and

afraid. But he kept hearing the phrase Always Be Cute running through his mind, and he couldn't figure a cute way out of the situation. Plus, Director was his boss, and what would happen if he made an enemy of him?

"Let me go?" Kwon said. "Please, Director. There are plenty of other girls for you."

"I only want you," Director said. "It's not just your body. It's the passionate woman I see inside."

"Woman inside?" Kwon shook his head. "I think you are mistaken."

"You showed me a new side of yourself today, and I am now madly in love with you." He moved in for another kiss.

Kwon could easily have used his training to escape. Director had left himself wide open, so to speak, and Kwon imagined kneeing him the balls, karate chopping him on the back and then smashing him face first into the coffee table. But he couldn't. It wasn't cute, and it might get Ki into real trouble. What to do? What to do? Director's puckered lips grew closer and closer...

"I'm on the rag." Kwon said just before their lips touched.

"Whhhhaaaaaar?" Director shrieked, stepping back. "Now who's being gross?"

"Hahaha. Sorry. Yeah. I'm having my period right now. It's a really bad one, too. There are even chunks ----"

"Ahhhhhhhhh. NO details. Go. Please."

"But what about the woman inside me? Don't you want to=="

"Good meeting. I will see you tomorrow."

Kwon hugged his purse to his body, hurried to the door and let himself out. Slamming the door shut behind him, he gasped, putting his fingers to his lips. Pig. Kwon thought, fighting tears. Who does he think he is? He started to go back into the room, punch Director in the face, but then he just wanted to get back to his room and try to forget the whole thing ever happened.

He hurried back to the lobby and waited for an elevator. As the elevator reached the floor, the doors opened and four tall men wearing cowboy hats saw him. Their eyes danced over his body. "I'll wait for the next one." Kwon squeaked, pushing the call button.

"Come on in, darling," one of the men said with a tip of his hat. "We won't bite."

Kwon felt that same gross feeling. He just really couldn't deal with men right now. "No, thanks."

The men just laughed, exchanging glances, and getting in their last looks at Kwon in his jeans and tank top.

"Ugh." Kwon thought. It had been a long day of being a woman and finally giving into his pent-up frustration and rage he turned and punched the wall opposite the elevator, smashing a hole in it. His bracelets got stuck in the plaster, and when he pulled his hand out they ripped more wall out, leaving a gaping hole. "Oh, no." Kwon thought, seeing that the clasps on one of his pretty bracelets had broken.

The doors to the elevator opened once more. A family—husband, wife and two boys—stood, looked at the hole in the wall, at Kwon picking junks of plaster out of his bracelet, back at the hole.

"Haha. I had a long day." Kwon said, getting onto the elevator.

The little boys looked up at him, wide-eyed. "Are you Wonder Woman?" One of the asked.

Kwon handed the boy a little chunk of plaster.

"Yes," Kwon said, looking at his reflection in the mirror and reflecting on what he'd faced that day. "I **am** Wonder Woman."



CHAPTER 19

When Kwon got back to the room, he found Sung there with the laptop. “I have identified the lair of the Autotune Killer.” She announced excitedly.

Kwon’s calves barked and begged him to rest for the night, but thinking of the love making scene facing him the next day, he pumped his fist and said, “Let’s get him.” He turned to the door.

“There’s something we need to do first,” Sung said, going to the closet.

“I am not changing outfits again.” Kwon whined, stomping one of his little, booted feet. “I’m not. I’m not.”

Sung came out of the closet carrying a metal weapons case. “Don’t lose your panties. We just need to arm ourselves.” She opened the case and quickly assembled a pistol, which she shoved into the waistband of her pants, pulling her shirt over it. Then she retrieved throwing stars, a knife and a boomerang, all of which she concealed around her body.

“Where’s my gun?” Kwon said, feeling suddenly inadequate.

“The sweet, adorable Miss Ki Hanja does not believe in violence.” Sung teased, digging down deeper into the weapons case. “For you, we have these.” She held out a pink, heart shaped lipstick and a panda bear on a key chain.

“Very funny,” Kwon said. “Now, where’s my gun?”

Sung smiled. “This cute lipstick is actually mace.” She said. “And this adorable teddy bear? When you press his tummy---“

“He turns into a gun?” Kwon said.

“No, silly girl. He makes an alarm so big, strong men can come and save you.”

Kwon crossed his arms and slit his eyes. “So even when I’m attacked, I’m expected to be cute?”

“Of course, sweetie pie. Now, put these in your purse and let’s go catch a killer.”

“I wish I had a gun.” Kwon said, putting the items into his purse.

“Oh, how sweet.” Sung touched his soft cheek. “Pistol Envy.”

CHAPTER 20

Sung had printed out a map that showed where the coverage areas of the two short range devices overlapped. They primarily covered an area of the kitchen. They made their way into the kitchen, which this late at night was only modestly busy and staffed. Stainless steel appliances covered all the walls, and the air smelled of broiling meat and sweet, sugary baked goods.

The staff was too busy to bother with them, so they moved around the kitchen, checking all the side doors, but finding only closets and pantries.

“Nothing.” Kwon said, frustrated.

“Wait.” Sung said, looking at her map. “Perhaps it is in a room below this one?”

“Hmmmnnnn,” Kwon said.

“Pardon me,” a gruff voice called. “Guests are not permitted in—“

Kwon turned, put a hand on his hip and thrust it to the side, favoring the man with the brightest, prettiest smile. “Can you tell us what’s beneath this room, please?” He chirped out in his extra-tea-kettle voice.

“Um, of course,” the man said, instantly softening at the sight of the pretty young woman. “It’s a storage space, but I don’t know that anyone has used it in years. We don’t need it now that we can have everything delivered same day by our suppliers.”

“Oooooohhhhhh.” Kwon squealed, clapping. “I am a -- um--- Abandoned Spacetonst. I adore abandoned rooms. Can I please go down and take some pictures?”

“I don’t know—“

“Pleasepleasepleaseplease.” Kwon sang, making himself small.

“Okay,” the man finally said, his will crushed by the power of Kwon’s cute. “What could be the harm?” He led them to a door down a hall off the kitchen where there were a couple bathrooms, and he pulled out a ring of keys and opened it.

Thank you so much.” Kwon giggled as he and Sung made their way through the door and started down a long, steep, narrow stair. It was dark, with just a single light bulb at the bottom of the stairs, and they moved as quietly as they could, creeping down the steps.

Sung crept quickly down, moving easily in her sneakers, while Kwon clung to the handrail, taking dainty, cautious steps in his stiletto heels, both because he didn't trust his balance and because he worried his heels might click against the stairs. "Wait for me." Kwon whispered when Sung got to the bottom of the stairs, but she took a peak around the corner and then moved away into the darkness.

Kwon cursed whoever had invented high heels, and Amiga for trapping him in them. He heard movement down below, then clicking and clacking. His heart started to race. He wanted in on the action. There were lights starting to flash, and then a thumping music heavy on base, and then Sung shouted, "Ahhhhhhh."

"What is it?" Kwon called in a high voice filled with pretty, feminine concern. "What's happened?"

He reached the bottom of the stairs and scurried around the corner, stopping, frozen, his mouth falling open as he stared at hundreds of flat tops all around the room, all with pictures of his pretty face—Ki's face – but all with the initials DOA written across them.

Sitting in a chair in front of a control panel was a stuffed hedgehog with a cigar in its mouth. "Why did you scream?" Kwon asked, seeing Sung standing in the center of the room.

"I am terrified of hedgehogs," she answered.

"Let's search the room," Kwon said.

"Yeah, but let me get rid of these pictures first. I don't like seeing you threatened."

"Aw," Kwon said, tugging on one of his pigtails. Could she still care for me? Even like this? He looked down at the swelling of his very womanly chest. They began to search the room, and as they looked they suddenly heard footsteps. They froze, just as one of the sections of the wall swung open, and they saw the silhouette of a man outlined in the light from the tunnel behind him.

He froze, seeing the screens on, the two of them, and then he spun and ran. Sung sprang after him, Kwon scampering behind as fast as he could in his heels, which was not fast at all. He had no choice but to run behind as best he could, clicking away, his soft body bouncing.

Sung soon vanished from sight. The hallway flashed as a gun went off, and Kwon heard a scream. "Oh, my. What's happening?" He scurried along, his purse bouncing on his hip, racing along the winding, twisting tunnel until he finally came to a new set of stairs, which he hurried up, his legs aching, pushing open a door to find himself in a back alley and looking down the alley, he saw Sung run out onto the street.

Kwon still found it hard to breath, and pausing to gasp for breath, he put a hand to his side, grimaced and then quick walked in the direction Sung had gone, before stopping, stomping a little foot in feminine frustration. I'm useless. He thought. Useless. He felt the sudden urge to cry, then realized he had a cellphone. He could at least call for—

He heard a rustling and then turned to see a tall man slip out from behind a dumpster and run off down the alley in the opposite direction Sung had gone. He knew he could never catch the man, so reaching into his purse he took out the Panda Bear and pressed its belly, a loud alarm sounding. Kwon tossed his pigtails and stood there with his purse on his hip, which had been thrown out to one side.

"I can't believe I have been reduced to this," he thought, standing there in the alley clutching his purse, pressing a panda's belly and waiting for help. I used to be the best agent in the Tiger Legion!



Eye burning. Back against wall. Vision blurring. Tears well up over eyes and pour down cheeks. Mascara running. Sliding down wall. Vision blurred. Hugging purse to chest. Somewhere in the distance, a siren howls, a car horn blares. Fingertips to lips as body shakes with sobs.

Sung soon reappeared to find Kwon sitting on the ground, hugging his knees, crying. “What happened?” She asked. “Did he hurt you?”

“No,” Kwon said, shaking his head, wiping his tears. “He just ran off that way.” He pointed, the bracelets in his slender wrist flashing in the street lights.

“He hid here, saw you here alone and didn’t attack? Curious.” Sung muttered, kneeling next to Kwon, hugging him. “So, you are unharmed?”

Kwon nodded.

“Oh, thank goodness. I would hate it if any harm came to you. Now, where had he hidden?”

Kwon told her, and Sung emerged from the location a moment later with a plastic bag, and inside a test tube and a cotton swab.

Kwon wiped his tears and smiled. “DNA?”

“DNA.” Sung said, smiling. “DNA.”

CHAPTER 21

Sung sent the DNA off to the Tiger Legion lab while Kwon took his makeup off, undid his pigtails and started to brush out his long, silky hair.

Sung flopped onto the bed on her side and watched Kwon brushing his hair. “I’m so jealous of your long, shiny hair. It’s so pretty.”

“It’s so much work. I never realized. And it’s heavier than it looks, and it keeps getting in my face.”

“But it’s pretty. I’m jealous I tell you.”

“But couldn’t you grow yours out?” Kwon asked, pausing to work out a tangle.

“I’m a field agent,” Sung said. “I don’t have the time to deal with long hair, and, besides, it gets in the way during combat.”

“Tell me about it.”

“Anyway, I think I look good with short hair.”

“You look delectable. You’re gorgeous.”

“Oh, you’re just saying that. I’m nowhere as pretty as you.”

“No. I love your bright eyes. And that little whatever it’s called haircut with the way the bangs sweep down over your eyes.”

Sung got up and walked over to Kwon. She took the brush from his hands and kissed him on the head, then started to brush out his hair for him. “I can do it.”

“Let me. I like taking care of you, Miss Hanja.”

Kwon felt that tingling and melting feeling coming over him again. He glanced in the mirror at Sung as she ran her slender hands through his long hair, sweeping the brush through the inky black strands. He put his hands in his lap, and smiled as his eyes went soft. “You are so good to me. You saved my life today, and you took care of me when I got upset in the alley. I just—I don’t know if I can find the right words to tell you how much I appreciate you.”

Sung met Kwon's eyes in the mirror. She felt her heart flip. The emotion in his little voice, that soft unfocused look in his eyes. She struggled to find words herself, to find some way to tell him that she loved him, but it scared her. Surely, he would reject her. What kind of girl falls for a man living as a beautiful woman? She opened her mouth, and cringe as she spoke the following words: "I was thinking a bun for bedtime?"

Kwon felt his heart, which had been so full, sink. He looked at himself in the mirror, and saw he still wore the torn, pink tank top, could still see the bra straps across his shoulders. I am a fool. Of course, she can't love me like this, sitting here like a beauty queen while she brushes my hair. "A bun is fine," he said in a cold, small voice, his eyes dropping.

You idiot. Sung thought, seeing his reaction. High bun? That's the most romantic thing you can think of to say? You repulse him. You're gross. Arrghhhhh. But she kept all that hidden, smiling as she gathered Kwon's hair up and began to pile it in a bun on his head.

Once they were finished, Kwon put on his Panda pajamas and crawled into bed. Sung did a security check, and then said, "Goodnight, Miss Hanja."

"Goodnight," Kwon called back, his voice already growing sleepy. When the door closed, he whispered, "I think I love you."

CHAPTER 22

Kwon tossed and turned all night. It would take 24 hours for the DNA tests to be run, so he would have to do the much-dreaded love making scene. He kept picturing himself back at headquarters, and he would ask some girl to come back to his room, and she would start laughing and he would look down to see himself wearing a short dress, high heels. Or, he would imagine walking into the cafeteria, and all the guys laughing about how sexy he'd been in the movie, and how much fun it seemed he'd been having being in bed with a man.

Maybe I can pretend I'm sick. But no. He had a mission, and he had to do his job no matter the risk of embarrassment. Then, he considered doing something as he performed to signal everyone watching that he wasn't into it, but that, too, had to be rejected. He would not damage Ki's reputation.

So, he finally got up and made some tea with valerian root and other herbs, sipped it and slipped off to sleep, hoping that he would not have bags under his eyes. He knew the most important thing he had to be was pretty.

In the morning, Sung was all business. Kwon swallowed and shook his head when she showed him the negligee he would be wearing. "The boys on the set will be drooling all over the floor." Kwon said, shaking his head. "Can't I just wear my Panda pajamas?"

"It's a romance, not a comedy."

Kwon slipped out of his Panda pajamas and took a quick shower, coming out of the bathroom with the towel wrapped around his body like any woman. Sung handed him the hanger holding the frilly scraps he would wear, and he went into the walk-in closet to change. He defiantly did not want her to see him naked. Sung had given him a baby doll, which seemed to Kwon like a bra attached to some transparent material. He slipped into it as well as the matching underwear and came out of the closet feeling worse than naked.

Sung handed him a copy of Mademoiselle magazine and went to work on his hair, then did his face up in smoky, sexy, bedroom colors. When she finished, Kwon looked at the mirror and saw the way his eyes smoldered beneath the dark, eyeshadow, the long, mascara drenched eyelashes, the wet, glossy red lips, and he looked at Sung, the words bursting out, "I'm scared."

Sung squeezed his shoulder. "I understand," she said. "It's your first time."

"I don't know what I am supposed to do, or how I should act, and I am ashamed to have everyone see me like this, and do... that."

"If you did not feel this way, you wouldn't be human. I am proud of you for being so brave." She took Kwon's hand and said, "Let's go. You can do this."

Kwon stood, and he looked right into Sung's eyes. She stared back. Kwon tilted his head to the side. Sung tilted her head in the opposite direction. Kwon put his hands on Sung's hips, and she put hers on his, pulling him to her, pressing her body into his.

"Sung," Kwon said, batting his eyes. "I---"

"Shhhssss," Sung said, leaning in for the—

"You bitches be crazy." Ki shouted, busting into the room.

Kwon and Sung stepped away from each other, gasping.

"Wha? Don't stop," Ki said, grabbing at the groin of her pants. "Girls kissing totally turns me on."

"Ki. She's getting ready for a big scene so---"

"Big scene with me you mean." Ki swaggered up to Kwon. "I'm playing Jack Action, aight? How about that? I am my own love interest. Yo."

"You?" Kwon said, his voice rising into that extra tea-kettle range. He was still crushing on Ki and knowing that it would be the beautiful actress pretending to be a guy pretending to make love to him, he felt his heart flutter. "That's so great." He squealed.

"I know," Ki said. "I'll walk you down to the set, doll. We can start to get that chemistry going, know what I sayin.?"

"Hehehehe." Kwon giggled, tossing his hair. "Just a sec." He minced across the room, conscious of Ki's eyes on him, feeling his skin tingle, then slipped into his stiletto pumps.

Once Kwon had gotten his shoes on, Ki gave him the once over and said, "My, my, you are one fine woman."

Ki giggled and did a little shoulder raise.

Ki turned to Sung. "She's really nailing the whole cute thing, wouldn't you say?"

“Oh, yes,” Sung said sourly, slitting her eyes at Kwon as he giggled and flipped his hair, putting on a show for the girl dressed as a guy he had a crush on. “She is most certainly cute.”

Ki slipped his arm around Kwon’s waist and ushered him toward the door. This time Kwon found he didn’t mind, and willingly let himself be guided along by Ki, who grunted and belched and then farted. “Being a guy is great,” she said, scratching her stubbled chin. “You should try it some time.”

“Oh, I don’t know if I could ever be a boy,” Kwon said, giggling. “You’re so--- tough and rough.”

“Yeah, that’s true. You’re not butch at all. More like a stuffed animal or something.”

Kwon just giggled in response.

Down on set, Kwon just let the eyes of all the men pass over him, finally getting used to it. He got onto the bed and the Assistant Director had him lay in a certain position, then arranged his hair on the pillow. “Would I still be wearing my shoes in bed?” Kwon asked.

The men all laughed.

“Oh, you would be wearing those heels in the shower, honey.” Director howled, slapping his knee. “Let’s get some establishing shots of her.”

“What should I do?” Kwon said as the cameras moved in.

“Just lay there and look sexy.”

Kwon lay there as the camera moved in and out, ran up the length of his legs, his arms, lingered on his face. “Got it.” Director said.

“Now, doll, we need a shot of you seeing your man come into the room. He rescued you from Dong, you love him, and you want nothing more than for him to make love to you, so when you see him enter, we need to see all that in your eyes.”

“Got it.”

Kwon thought of when Sung rescued him, when she came and found him crying in the alley.

“Got it. Wow. Great.”

“Jack Action, you are on.”

Ki came in and climbed into bed with Kwon. Why is he wearing all his clothes while I am nearly naked? Kwon thought. Arrrghhhh.



Jack took a position on top of Kwon. “Action.” Jack kissed Kwon, then almost cupped his face, being careful not to smear Kwon’s makeup. They kissed again. Then they did some shots of Jack slipping one of the little silk straps off Kwon’s shoulder, then of his hand sliding along Kwon’s thigh.

“Great. Amazing. You’re the best.” Ki pumped her fists and walked off.

That’s all she has to do? Kwon thought, starting to get up.

“Stay. Places.” Director said.

“What?”

“We need some more shots of you. Get a close up on her face. Now, babe, doll, sweetheart, give us some really good moans.”

“Moans?”

“Yeah, like you’re making love with this great guy, and you moan.”

Kwon glanced at Sung. She gave him a thumbs up. He made an ugly face, then got back into position on the bed.

‘Okay, and ACTION....’

Kwon thought about the sounds girls had made when he’d been making out with them, then swallowed his pride and started to mimic them, moaning and sighing, throwing his head back. The director had him go again and again, until finally he shouted, “Got it. Moving on.”

Once more the crew cheered, and he flushed with embarrassment wondering how many of them would be replaying his little female performance in their minds that night.

But then his thoughts were interrupted by Sung, who threw her arms around him and pulled him in for a body crushing hug. “You were great.”

“This is something I do not want to be great at,” Kwon said, feeling his cheeks burning with shame.

“All the more impressive, then, that you did it so well.”

“Doll,” Ki said, wandering up. “You did me proud. We should go dancing or something. Celebrate. You really steamed up the joint.”

“Thanks,” Kwon said, adding “You were great, too,” then thinking, though they barely made you do anything. He should have to sit there grunting for an hour.

“I am great,” Ki said, slipping her arms around Kwon and giving him a kiss on the cheek. “You’re lucky you get to be me, you know?”

Kwon clenched his fists. Sung shook her head. “So lucky,” Kwon said, tilting his head to the side, plastering a big smile on his face. “Um, what are you doing now? Want to come back to the room and hang out?” Kwon added a giggle and a hair toss.

“Yeah, babe. I really can’t. Da has arranged for me to meet some New York industry folks out in Greenpoint, Brooklyn at the old Dominos Sugar warehouse. I might do a whole movie as Jack Action.” She struck a martial arts pose. “I’ll text you up about dancing tonight,” Ki said, then slapped Kwon on the butt and walked away.

Kwon’s mouth dropped open. “Did you see that? He just—”

“All just part of being a pretty girl.” Sung said, taking Kwon’s hand. “Let’s get you changed so you will be ready to pounce when we get the DNA tests back.”

Sung held Kwon's hand and led him away from the set. He glanced over his shoulder back at Ki, who had stopped to eat some energy bars at the craft table, talking loudly with some of the sound guys. Do I still love her? Kwon wondered. Or, am I really, truly in love with Sung? His soft hand was in Sung's, and he felt a tingle coming right up his arm. I should tell her, he thought, slipping his thumb under the little silk strap of his teddy and pulling it back up on his shoulder. I should just be a man and tell her.

CHAPTER 23

When they got back to the room, Sung went and picked out some clothes for Kwon to wear while he sat down at his make-up table and started to clean off his make-up. “I almost hate to take this off.” Kwon said as he wiped the blush and foundation from his cheeks. “I look so hot.”

“It’s not a daytime look,” Sung said, “and—”

“It’s for the cameras. I know, but I’m just saying, you did a really good job.”

“Oh, thanks,” Sung said emerging from the closet holding a denim mini-skirt with sunflowers embroidered on the back as well as a sleeveless blouse and a yellow vest. “You’ll look really cute in this.”

“Whatever you think is best,” Kwon said, one eye closed as he wiped off his eyeshadow.

After Sung had done his make-up and hair, Kwon slipped on the platform sandals she’d selected for him, and she fussed with his clothes, tugging on his skirt, his blouse. “It’s now or never,” Kwon decided as Sung stood and started fussing with his hair, which poured down over his shoulders freely today.

He put his hands on Sung’s hips. “I need to tell you something.”

“What?” Sung said, her eyes wide with surprise. The serious tone of Kwon’s voice caught her off guard.

“Over these last few days, I have realized something. It’s something that’s been true since the day I met you, but which I only realized now, after we have spent so much time together.” He paused, staring into Sung’s eyes, trying to read her reaction so far, his heart started to race, and he felt afraid, becoming aware of the shape of his body, the cool air against his bare thighs.

“What is it?” Sung said, thinking. Oh, please say what I think you are going to say.” Without thinking, she ran her finger along a strand of hair that had fallen across Kwon’s eyes and hooked it behind his ear.

The gesture reminded Kwon more fully of his shape, his femininity, and he swallowed. “I’m sorry,” he said. “I don’t know what got into me.” He started to step away, but now Sung put her hands on his hips and pulled him closer.

“Then I have something to tell you, Miss Kwon, and I am afraid to say it, and I am worried you will think I am a freak, but—”

“The results.” Amiga shouted as he barged into the room, then froze. “Don’t stop on my account.” He chuckled. “I love watching girls kiss. There’s a channel on You Tube and—”

“Shut up.” Kwon screamed. “You idiot. You ruin everything, and you’re a pervert.”

“I know,” Amiga said. “But, would you please just kiss a little for me?”

Sung stomped over and grabbed the report from Amiga’s hands, then scanned it, her mouth dropping open. Kwon hurried to her side and looked over her shoulder, his own mouth dropping open. ‘I can’t believe it.” He said.

Then, he and Sung looked at each other and in unison they chimed, “Duh, it was Da.”

“So unexpected,” Amiga said. “Maybe the tests are wrong?”

“But it makes perfect sense.” Sung said.

“Explain it to me,” Amiga said. “I really feel a need for exposition.”

“When he had me in the alley alone, he didn’t try to kill me because he knew I wasn’t the real Ki Hanja.”

“The other attempts must have been meant to throw us off his scent,” Sung said.

“That sneaky little sneaky sneak.” Kwon said, biting his pinky finger.

“Well, let’s go arrest Da,” Sung said. “Though it’s a shame you won’t get to go out and show off your cute outfit.”

“Not so much—wait. Ki?”

“What is it?”

“He told me he was going to Brooklyn for a meeting Da set up for him. That meeting—”

Once more he and Sung looked at each other and chimed in unison, “It’s a trap.”

“Star Wars Reference. Omigod, you like Star Wars?” Kwon said, tossing his hair.

“Love it.”

“We should cuddle and watch all of them like a marathon.”

“I would love that.” Sung said.

“Um, girls? Don’t you need to rescue Ki?”

“Oh, yeah, right.” Kwon headed toward the door.

“Miss Kwon?” Amiga said.

‘What?’

“Don’t forgot your purse.”

“Like I’m gonna need my purse to fight a bad guy,” Kwon huffed, though he grabbed his purse thinking, “I may need to touch up my lipstick.”

CHAPTER 24

Amiga drove as fast as he could, which since they were trying to get from Manhattan to Brooklyn was not very fast.

Kwon was on his cell, texting and calling Ki, but he got no answer and no little dots to indicate she was responding. “Oh. If he gets killed, this will all have been for nothing. Hurry up. Can’t you get past these slow-moving cars?”

“Beyond the slow-moving cars are more slowmoving cars.” Amiga said.

“Just do something.” Kwon shrieked, slapping him on the back of the head.

“Women.” Amiga shrieked, and then yanked the wheel, pulling the car onto the sidewalk and gunning the engine. Hipsters on old fashioned tricycles shouted in terror, diving into carts of kale as Amiga plowed along the sidewalk, and two guys dressed like Amish farmers shouted, RUDE.” as they dove for cover.

“What are you doing?” Kwon shrieked, his hands to his cheeks.

“Hold on.” Amiga yelled as he fish-tailed around a corner, causing Kwon to slide across the limo seat and right into Sung’s arms. She pulled him tight and their eyes met. He smiled. She smiled, and then they both screamed as Amiga almost side swiped a school bus and then two orthodox rabbis who jumped into the bushes and shook their fists as he passed, shouting, “Not Kosher.”

Then, Kwon and Sung rocked forward in each other’s arms, and the car stopped dead still. “Why did you stop?” Kwon cried out. “Ki’s life is in danger.”

“I stopped,” Amiga said, “because we are here.”

Kwon looked out the window and saw the sign for Dominos Sugar. “Oh,” he said. “Good, then.”

Sung flung the door open, helped Kwon out of the car, and then took his hand, running with him as he scurried as fast as he could in his heels, his legs flashing in the sun. “Let’s go.” she said.

“You run ahead.” Kwon called out in a high, pretty voice. “I can’t keep up in these shoes.”

“I don’t want to leave you alone again.”

“I’ll be fine. Go. Go.”

“Okay, but be careful, okay, honey? I would hate myself forever if you got hurt.”

“I feel the same way.” Kwon said, touching her face. “I’ve been meaning to tell you that—”

They heard a scream form inside the factory. “Girls, we do have a mission.” Amiga said. ‘Maybe you can save all this silly girl stuff for—’

“SHUT UP.” Sung and Kwon chimed in unison. “Go.” Kwon said. ‘I’ll be right behind you.’

Sung and Amiga raced ahead, and as he ran Kwon pulled out his phone and texted the Tiger Legion, asking for backup. Then, he pulled his purse tight against his body, tossed his long hair, and pulled open the door to the factor, ready for trouble.

CHAPTER 25

Kwon hurried down a narrow hall, then turned a corner to come into an open warehouse floor. Light streamed down from the windows that ringed the corrugated steel roof. In the middle of the room, strapped to a table, Ki struggled against the ropes that tied her to a metal table. A hooded figure stood above her, holding a microphone. Seeing that Sung and Amiga had been captured and were being held by a couple of burly thugs wearing Hello, Kitty masks. Kwon stepped back into the shadows where he wouldn't be seen.

"And now the time has come for the curtain to fall." Autotune called out in his warbley, autotuned voice. "On the terrible and annoying life of the most spoiled brat actress this world has ever seen."

"The most spoiled brat?" Ki said. "You've obviously never met Bill Murray."

"Silence." Autotune sang as music began to rumble through the warehouse. "It's my time to take the stage. It's my time to be a star."

Sung and Amiga continued to struggle as the burly, masked thugs held them tight. Kwon snuck around the perimeter of the room, slipping from crate to crate until he was as close as he could get to Autotune. He crouched behind a forklift and focused his chi. This needs to be fast, furious and cute, he thought. Nothing less will achieve greatness.

Meanwhile, Autotune began to perform his choreography and sing, off-beat and off-key so badly even the auto-tune could not save him:

You thought you were too pretty to die
That your smile would keep you alive
But babe I got news for you
That's probably gonna make you feel blue
You're gonna have a
Pretty pretty death death
You look pretty when you die

Pretty pretty death death Cry. Cry. Cry.



Kwon, twirling out from behind the forklift, passing through a single ray of light as his purse arcs out in a perfect circle around him. A single mote of dust drifts down through the light, dancing in the breeze. Guards, distracted, loosening grip. Sung. Elbow. Gut. Kwon twirling across the floor, the golden clasp on his purse flashing in the light. Kwon's hair floats around his face, sparkling in the light.

Amiga, tossing distracted thug. Purse. Autotune. Face. Crash.

“What’s this?” Autotune howled as the force and surprise of Kwon’s purse slamming into his face caused him to stumble back and fall on his butt, the microphone flying from his hand.

“You’re finished.” Kwon squealed, thrusting one fist on the air while raising a knee, Sailor Moon style. “Ahhhhh.”

Autotune kicked Kwon’s legs out from under him and he fell to the ground. Using his training, he quickly sprang to his feet, but unused to platform heels he wobbled and had to brace himself against the table, which gave Autotune time to dig into the pockets of his long, black robe and pull out a gun, which he pointed right at Kwon.

“Watch out.” Sung shouted as she exchanged blows with the Hello, Kitty thug.

Kwon froze, his hair in his face, his chest heaving as he breathed hard. He clutched his purse strap and pondered his options.

“You meddling fool.” Autotune said. “You ruined my song, but you won’t ruin my vengeance. How perfect that I will get to kill not one, but two of the worst clients I ever had.”

“Worse clients?” Ki said, still struggling. “Wait, you mean?”

“Yes.” Da threw back his hood. “It was me the whole time.”

“You’re the worse agent ever.” Ki screamed. “You’re fired.”

“You can’t fire me.” Da laughed. “I put a clause in my contract that expressly denies you the right to fire me in case I try to kill you. Hahahahah.”

“I knew I should have read that contract.” Ki said, straining to break her bonds.

“You should always get a lawyer to look over any legal document before signing.” Sung called while delivering a round house kick to the head of the thug, which knocked his mask off revealing another mask—this time, Ranma?

“You really should be more careful with your career.” Kwon added, patting her on the forearm. “Shut up. All of you.” Da pulled the hammer back on his gun, and said, “Goodbye, Miss Fake Ki. Your services are no longer needed, and your makeup makes you look like a prostitute.”

“My girlfriend did my makeup, you jerk, and it’s perfect.”

Da pulled the trigger.

A metallic thunk. Gun recoiling. Barking. A bullet explodes from the barrel: steel jacketed death. It spins, the hollow point catches the light. Sung gasps. Ki screams. Amiga calls out Noooooooooooooo his voice sounding like it’s underwater. Kwon, calm, lifts

his purse. Bullet strikes clasp. Ricochets of. Bounces off beam. Strikes Ranma thug in shoulder.

“Impossible.” Da shouted.

“Herpossible.” Kwon chirped back, dropping into combat stance and unleashing a vicious kick right toward Da’s chin—

But, unused to the bombshell dimensions of his new body, all that extra weight up top and in his caboose, plus perched on his platform shoes, he wobbled and lost his balance, squealing as he spun awkwardly, stumbling and falling right into Da’s arms, his long hair all in his face.

“That was so cute.” Ki says. “Well done, dolly.”

Da locked one arm around Kwon’s waist, while the other wedged under his chin and began crushing Kwon’s throat. “Ah.” He peeped, thinking to perform a throw, but Da has lifted him off his feet, and he kicked his little feet helplessly.

“Don’t hurt her.” Ki said, finally breaking the rope’s holding one arm. She started to untie the other.

Sung and Amiga finished off the thugs, but as they approached, Da waved the gun around Kwon’s waist. “Don’t come any closer, or I will kill this ditzy airhead.”

“How dare you call me an airhead.” Ki shouted. “I took all advanced classes in high-school.”

“I was talking about this airhead.” Da shouted back nodding toward Kwon, wiggling in his grip. Da had now reached the loading bay doors. “Nobody moves, or this scatterbrain dingbat gets it.”

Scatterbrained? Dingbat? Kwon stopped struggling to break Da’s grip and instead slipped his hand into his purse, searching around with his long, slender fingers. His vision started to darken, and he felt himself losing consciousness. Come on. Hold on. Just a little longer. He felt his compact? No. Cellphone? No. Brush? No. Hair clip? No. Tissues? No. Something—what is that? I need to clean out my purse. Then, lipstick. Yes. Lipstick. Omigod, yes. Lipstick, I love you so much.

Da started to step through the loading bay door. Kwon pulled his tube of lipstick out of his purse. It was pink and shaped like a heart. “What are you doing?” Da said, seeing the lipstick tube in Kwon’s hands. “You can’t be worrying about your makeup now?”

“I want to look cute when I die,” Kwon answered, then pulled the top off the lipstick and sprayed mace right into Da’s eyes.

“Aaahhhhhhhh.” Dah screamed as his eyes exploded into the most horrible pain he had ever felt. Instinctively, his hands went to his face and Kwon dropped to the ground, his hip in the air as he lay on his side, gasping for breath.

Sung and Amiga ran up and secured Da, while Ki freed herself from the bindings, running up to Kwon, hugging him. “Omigod, are you okay?”

Kwon nodded. He looked up to see Sung standing there watching the two of them, a sad look in her eyes, and he reached a slender little arm toward her and said, “Help me up?” In a small voice.

Sung’s eyes filled with joy, and she took Kwon’s hand and pulled him to his feet, then right into a hug to end all hugs, crushing his soft, curvy body to hers.

“Wait? Are they?” Ki asked.

Amiga shrugged.

Autotune’s music still thumped in the warehouse, and a mischievous look sparkled in Kwon’s eyes as he grabbed Sung’s hand and pulled her back into the warehouse.

“Wait. What ‘re you doing?”

“Just sit here,” Kwon said, sitting her down on one of the crates, then waving to Ki. “Help me out.” He said, dancing over to the middle of the warehouse floor and picking up the microphone that autotuned had dropped.

Ki, catching on, put her fists under her chin and said, “Oh. So romantic.” And then she started clapping her hands above her head, shouting, ‘Come on everybody.”

Sung, giggling, started to clap while Amiga found the DJ set up where the music had been coming from and slipped the earphones on his head, clapping his hands.

CLAP. CLAP. CLAP.

They all looked over in surprise as thunderous clapping echoed throughout the warehouse. The Tiger Legion strike team had arrived. They all clapped now, too, bobbing their heads as they moved into the room and formed a semi-circle around Kwon, who put a hand on his hip, thrust it to the side and bobbing his head from side to side, smiled his prettiest smile and began to sing in his highest tea-kettle voice while staring right into Sung’s eyes:

How can I tell you the things I feel?

How can I say you made me real-

Ize that I really cared? I wanted to tell While you braided my hair, but I then I just felt too darn scared.

Oh, boy, I'm your girl.

Oh, girl, I'm your boy

So, oh girl oh boy oh my I say

I lo-lo-love you.

Sung put her hands to her cheek and shrieked, while Kwon broke out some of the cutest dance moves he could remember seeing in any girl band video.

He flashed a peace sign and shook his shoulders, tossing his hair. Rumors had spread on twitter that Ki Hanja had been seen in Brooklyn and fans now started pouring into the warehouse, clapping and cheering, taking pictures and videos.

How can I tell you I love the way you smile?

The way you do my make-up

How you dress me in cute styles?

Girl, you know, my life you saved

You are so so very brave

Oh, boy, I'm your girl.

Oh, girl, I'm your boy

So, oh girl oh boy oh my I say

I lo-lo- love you.

Everyone shrieked, and Kwon handed the mic
to Ki singing out, “Rap Break.”

“You’re really a guy?” Ki said off mic.

“Yeah?” Kwon giggled, shrugging.

“Could have fooled me.”

Amiga scratched the record and then laid down a thumping rap beat.

Ki moved into the spot light, swaggering and butching it up big time.

I’m Jack Action and this is Ki
together we stopped a murder spree
I did it my with fists most astute
she did it with lipstick very cute
I’m rough and tough as you can see
She’s soft and sweet and so curvy
So, we make a good team
And I’m laying down a lesson
Don’t mess with us or to jail your headin.

The crowd roared, and then Ki tossed the mic back to Kwon, who caught it as a
bunch of the guys from Tiger Legion danced forward and picked him up, carrying him
toward Sung. Amiga brought the chorus back around. Kwon sang it once more as they set
him down in front of Sung, who grabbed the mic and chimed in with him:

Oh, boy, I’m your girl.

Oh, girl, I’m your boy

So, oh girl oh boy oh my I say I lo- lo- love you.

They hugged and stared into each other's eyes. Amiga cued up Hyomin's Gold, the warehouse filling with lush synthesizer chords and her crystalline vocals.

'Kiss. Kiss. Kiss.' Ki started chanting, and then everyone joined in. 'Kiss. Kiss. Kiss.'

Kwon touched Sung's cheek. Sung touched his. 'I think we better kiss,' Kwon said. 'For the fans.'

'Yes,' Sung whispered. 'For the fans.'

Their lips met as the camera's flashed, and Kwon's leg kicked into the air. 'Ooohhhh,' the crowd cooed.

'So adorable.' Ki said, slapping Da on the back of the head and then slipping out the loading bay door, unnoticed.

CHAPTER 26

“Well, Miss Kwon,” Ambush said. “I hope this experience has taught you some valuable lessons.”

“Indeed, Master,” Kwon responded, crossing his long shapely legs while brushing a strand of hair away from his face. “I learned that men are pigs, that it is a lot of work to be a fashionable young woman, and that it is very hard to fight wearing high heels.”

“Hahaha. Important lessons all. But not all men are pigs, honey,” Ambush said.

“Oh?” Kwon said, giving Sung a glance. “Maybe you should spend a few days in a female body suit and find out?”

“Miss Sung,” Ambush said, eager to change the subject. “You also acquitted yourself very well. My congratulations.”

“Thank you, Master Ambush.”

“Well, now that the post mission chit chat is done, I am looking forward to getting back to being a guy.” Kwon said, as Sung took his hand and helped him to his feet.

The door opened. “Producer Bora to see you—”

Bora pushed into the room, and seeing Kwon said, “Oh, good. You haven’t changed back.”

“Wait? Why?”

“What has happened?” Ambush asked.

“Ki has disappeared. She ran off after the warehouse, and no one knows where she is. We can’t shoot the movie and will lose millions-- unless?”

All eyes turned to Kwon, whose face dropped.

He clutched his purse strap and said, “Oh, please. No.”

“Bora is a very valuable friend and ally,”

Ambush said. “Really, I must insist that you continue to fill in until we can find the real Ki.”

“Ahhhhhhh. Oooooohhhhh.” Kwon said, stomping his foot. “I’m tired of being a girl.”

“It’s just until the end of the shoot,” Bora said. “Any anyone everyone has raved about your performances. You are a naturally talented actress.”

“I want to be a guy. Ohhhhh.”

Sung started playing with Kwon’s hair, gave his bare little shoulder a squeeze. “I’ll be there with you. It will be fun.”

“Whhhhhaaaaaa.” Kwon cried out, his fantasies of throwing on a pair of baggy jeans and a t-shirt, running a hand through his short hair and just going out after two minutes of prep fading as he saw himself once more sitting for hours while Sung fixed his long hair.

“I know it’s asking a lot,” Ambush said. “Your dedication will be remembered.”

“Maybe there’s something I can do?” Bora said. “I want you to be happy, Miss Hanja. You’ll do better work. Ask me for anything.”

“Hmmmmmmnnnn....” Kwon said, and then he looked up, a bright smile on his face, mischief dancing in his pretty eyes. “There is something....”

EPILOGUE

“Gentleman,” Director called in a high, pretty voice. “Miss Hanja is about to come on set. Remember, we are professionals, and you must treat her and all the performers with respect.” He tugged at the short skirt on his dress, then slipped a thumb under one of his bra straps to pull it up. Why do these things keep sliding off my shoulders? Who designs bras anyway? They are so uncomfortable they must have been designed by a man.

Miss Hanja came on set wearing a little pair of nylon shorts and tight soccer jersey that hugged her every curve. The crew kept their eyes to themselves. Director soured at the sight of her. He was sure that she had been involved somehow in the whole plot that had ended up with him agreeing to wear this female body suit and direct the rest of the movie as a woman or else be fired and ostracized for sexually harassing actresses.



Miss Hanja walked up to the director and smiled. ‘You look so cute today, Dolly. I love your pretty shoes.’

Dolly Q.T. Pie, the Director thought, humiliated by the name they’d given him as he looked at the impractical open-toed stiletto heels he’d been made to wear. The open toes assured he had to spend time at the salon getting a pedicure, and his toes sparkled with pink polish. Bora was such a jerk. Director pushed all the anger deep inside and smiled. “Omigod. Thanks. You look great today, too, Miss Hanja. As always. So pretty.”

“I’m so happy to work with another woman,” Kwon said. “Girl power.”

“Girl power.” Director said, raising a fist. “Places. Places.” He called out in his pretty little voice.

Kwon walked away, smirking. Girl power, indeed, he thought. Now, just four more weeks and then they could both get back to being guys again. But in the meantime, well, he and Sung were getting to know each other, and it was such fun meeting his fans, and, golly, being a girl was a lot of work, but it was also kind of fun?

Tossing his hair, he giggled, flashed a peace sign to Sung, and then thrust his hip out to the side, finding his mark and taking his place as the most glamorous young woman in the world of K-Drama.

“Action.” Director squeaked.

The lights came on. Cameras rolled. And Kwon smiled, thinking, Always Be Cuteing.



CAN I ASK A FAVOR?

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