

**December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014**

**T**HE weather reports were nearly the same. Harsh snowstorms slamming the central and northern states, dropping foot after foot of snow in the Chicago area, wreaking havoc in its wake and grinding the large metropolitan city to a standstill. While, California's west coast was being battered with harsh, unforgiving thunderstorms and rain, carving out a path of destruction along L.A.'s coastal waters and up into the San Diego area.

Two young women . . . strangers to each other, suffering on either side of the continent, their lives tossed about like the raging winter winds were about to become connected by the unforeseen death of a loved one. The owner of the 'Cup of Hotness Café', Gangnum, S. Korea.

This is their story. How the 'Cup of Hotness Café' becomes the unpredictable roller coaster ride that threatens to whirl them into an unsuspecting collision with not only each other, but true love.

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**S**AFFRON Ryu stood hugging the massive old television set her mom had unwillingly given in to the year she had turned fifteen. Back then, she had hugged it over the Backstreet Boys. Now . . . her object of affection was someone much more attractive. Korean actor and idol, Kim Hyun Joong. With her ice cream covered lips pressed close to the 2-D lips of her new obsession she muttered incoherently to herself . . . "Just been dumped, lost the guy, lost the job, lost the dog, lost the place to live and now . . . obsessed with some pretty Korean 'flower boy' (whatever the hell that is!). I think it's time for a change. Korea sounds like a fun place to live."

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**S**AFFIRE Ryu perched at the foot of her bed, squinting to see the TV without her contacts or glasses. “Why? Why now?” When it seemed as if finally everything she had worked so hard for in her life was coming together? What had she done to deserve this? She had not only misread the man . . . she had lost her virginity, self-esteem, self-respect and ultimately the free furnished apartment in prestigious downtown Hollywood.

“Get out of my way JJ, dammit! I can’t see my Oppa Junsu . . . you’re so freaking annoying!” Junsu and ‘DBSK’ along with their angelic rendition of ‘One’ still flooded the room with soothing music. Humpf! She snorted, they were like everything else in her life . . . broken . . . and scattered. The 100<sup>th</sup> view didn’t heal any better than the first had! Looking down at the cell beside her in the bed, her text message to ‘Oppa’ Junsu had so far gone unanswered. ‘Oppa, if I move to Korea will you help me find work?’

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**T**HE three Korean idols, Kim Hyun Joong, Kim JaeJoong, and Kim Junsu huddled around the small round table of the ‘Cup of Hotness Café’, nursing not only their cold bodies, with hot coffee, but their less than palatable lives on a cold December day.

“Ahhhh, my favorite sons . . .” Uncle Ryu cooed, slipping gingerly between a despondent Hyun Joong and Junsu setting a plate of specially baked holiday cakes before the three. “Why the long faces? The holidays are upon us. Be happy, and eat well!” Smacking both boys on the back, he smiled faintly. “Whatever it is . . . love and zest for life will overcome it!” Without waiting for an answer, he ruffled JaeJoongs perfectly colored blonde hair and clucking his tongue at them turned his back, wiping his hands on the front of his white apron as he walked away.

“He’s right you know.” JaeJoong agreed wholeheartedly, staring greedily at the plate of cakes. “Don’t know why we should be complaining. Look at him. Always

smiling, always happy and giving, even though he doesn't know when he'll take his last breath. I envy him, I think.”

Hyun Joong sighed in agreement. What would their lives had been over the past years without the wisdom and love of ‘Uncle Ryu’, and the hospitality of the Cup of Hotness Café. They had shared many secrets, listened and laughed to many stories, even shedding a few tears within the walls of the small exclusive coffee house.

Junsu's phone buzzed loudly, breaking the silent contemplation of the idols, mulling over their own lives. All three heads bent down seeing the message pop up, reading ‘Oppa, if I move to Korea will you help me find work?’

“Oppa?” JaeJoong barked excitedly. “You're somebodies Oppa? Aishhhh, hyung. Wae you insist on keeping me in the dark?”

Junsu snatched the phone up close to his chest, covering the message protectively.

“YAH!” He shouted loudly, “Private.”

“Not anymore.” Hyun Joong chuckled. “Now she belongs to us all . . .”

