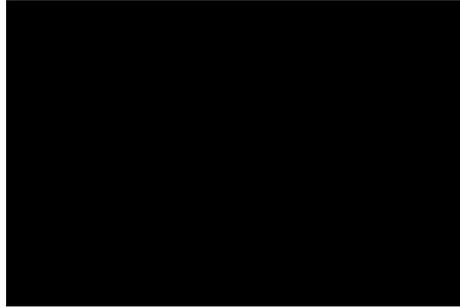


“U & I”

Part 1



<https://youtu.be/7u8ocOMyaMk>

(Song By: BTOB)

Everyday my girl, everything my girl.

If it's you, I'll give you my everything.

Listen to me girl baby, baby-girl, I like you.

(Lyrics Sung By: BTOB)



MAY 2007 - 11:15 A.M. – ‘SM ENTERTAINMENT’ – L.A. CA

THE elevator opened at the top floor. Following a group of business suits through the door, Jang HyeSu cringed at the smell of newly waxed furniture, and slick tile beneath her feet.

It didn't matter where the Chairman (her father) summoned her, here or in Seoul . . . each time she made the trek through the forest of Executive Penthouse Offices she became more and more determined never to fall into the trap of becoming an ‘SM’ robot. *Damn they all looked alike, only one thing separating the sexes . . . a short skirt and high heels.*

Breaking from the group as they veered left down the hall (like a herd of cattle) she moved straight ahead, turning to the young woman behind the curved counter.

“Good morning. May I help you?” the Receptionist asked. Giving HyeSu a less than friendly smile she flipped her long black pony-tail dabbing the sweat glistening on her high forehead, (despite the air-conditioning).

“Annyeonghaseyo . . . YoonWa?” Noting the gold printed name tag, HyeSu nodded her head respectfully, “you must be new here.” *This corporate bimbo was NOT the kind, older lady who always asked if she wanted water or a soda when she visited.* “I’m here to see Chairman Jang.”

Meeting her eye-to-eye clearly the dark-headed teenager dressed in tennis shoes and sweat pants, wasn’t asking to meet the Chairman to discuss a business deal. “I’m sorry, he’s not taking visitors. Do you have an appointment?” the girl asked skeptically.

“Ahhh, no. But, he called me yesterday. I’m his daughter IlSe . . . ummm . . . Jang HyeSu.” Plastering on a fake smile about to say ‘IlSeok Wu’ her lips clamped together instantly. *Damn, seeing a new face means continuing this ridiculous lie about parentage. I hate this double standard when he comes around.* “Can you at least tell him I’m here.”

Waiting while the girl picked up the phone, HyeSu leaned both elbows on the marble counter top picking mindlessly at the tiny kernels of sand stuck beneath her short cut fingernails. Looking in boredom around the deserted reception area, why was seeing her Father after six (glorious) months, suddenly making her mildly nervous?

“Miss Jang, I’ll have to ask you to take a seat please. There’s a meeting in progress. It might be awhile.”

Fidgeting outwardly, IlSeok sat down, leaning back into the comfort of the soft leather chair, clasping both hands around her knees. *Lunch with him wasn’t the worst thing in the world. But, what in God’s name had she done to be summoned like this, only a short time before Keis’s arrival? Shouldn’t he be home worrying about her?*

A slow fifteen minutes later, the tall, graceful YoonWae stood stretching, politely covering her mouth with one hand while she yawned. Apologizing for leaving IlSeok to her own defenses, she begged off having to clock out for lunch herself or suffer the Chairman’s wrath. Solicitously disappearing down the hallway, the sound of her high-heels clacking loudly against the tile, finally dissipated into the confines of the elevator.

Now what? IlSeok rose as well, pacing back and forth across the brightly patterned area rug. She should've told Daddy Wu she was coming. He would be furious to know she'd begged off her volunteer work with Mommy to appease the one man in her life she utterly despised. Maybe she should leave. Nooo . . . Blowing out her cheeks in anticipation of the unknown she faced the closed door.

“Don't let him intimidate you Seok,” she encouraged herself. “You haven't done anything wrong. It's just lunch for God's sake. Maybe he just wants to connect and ask me how everyone's doing.”

But, why would he care, really? For sure he didn't care about Daddy Wu, or Mommy for that matter. His previous business trips had only been to meet with the upper echelon of 'SM', get what he needed, and high-tail it back to Seoul. What made today any different? Maybe the fact that SHE was feeling a different vibe in the air.

Taking a deep breath, she roused all her courage, rapping quietly before sticking her head through the crack in the door, stepping boldly into the unknown.



MET with the silence of what seemed to be an empty office, HyeSu frowned, blinking about the spacious room. There didn't seem to be any meetings taking place. Had the receptionist been mistaken? She hadn't seen anyone come in OR out of the only office at the end of the hallway.

It seemed the only indication the Chairman had even been present was a still smoking cigar butt, leaning precariously against a large pewter ashtray.

“Father? I'm here.” Her voice loud but timid belied her need to turn tail and run, dismissing any further questions about lunch. A sandwich at home sounded more and more appetizing the longer she lingered.



Without realizing she was about to be cornered like a mouse, (without the opportunity to defend itself and flee), the large leather desk chair swung around deliberately, revealing the man she hated (only second to the Chairman, himself). Kim SungWoo.

Sitting behind the mahogany desk, a tight-lipped sneer permanently etched on his face, her arch enemy stood, licking his lips, bowing to the girl who represented all the power and position he was entitled to. How unfortunate he hadn't seen the little bitch in years. Just as homely, skinny and flat-chested as she'd always been, getting her under his control even in her own backyard would be the highlight of his day.

“What the hell are you doing here? And, where's the Chairman?” HyeSu barked, backing a safe distance away her heart leaping to her throat. It was no secret he gave her the creeps. Still facing the large ornate desk, she was suddenly grateful she'd chosen to wear sweat pants and not a skirt.

“Ahhh, Jang HyeSu. Or do you prefer IlSeok Wu? This is your home stomping grounds is it not? How kind of you to come at my beckon call. The Chairman's off to meetings. I told him not to worry about lunch, I'd take care of his baby girl for him. You're extremely easy to locate these days. I guess in order to get any personal business taken care of between us, I needed to come straight to the source, arasseo (RIGHT)?”

Startled, HyeSu took a step back, her face still glued to the sadistic, perpetual, leer in his eyes that through the years only served to make him even uglier and more frightening. Exiting the sphere of his existence uppermost on her mind, she swiveled, only managing to make one large stride back toward the still open door before his smooth, oily, voice beckoned her return.

“Come sit aga (BABY). Don't you think while I'm here the Chairman might be interested in knowing what our precious SooMin is up to these days?”



HOW DARE he, call her baby? Having known him all her life, he was a perverted, vile tyrant, terrorizing both HyeSu and her sister growing up. All she saw when she looked at him was a flat-nosed baboon, aimed only at humiliating and threatening them, one way or another.

“WHAT the FUCK do you want? Talk and make it quick, or I'm outta here,” she growled, ignoring the queasy rumbling of her stomach at the mention of SooMin's name.

Folding his hands, SungWoo laid them on top of the desk in front of himself, still smiling.

“Well . . . first off,” he started, “I asked you to take a seat . . . PLEASE.” His enunciation of English almost threatening, he picked a large fat cigar from the desk top clipping the tip casually. “It’s come to my attention (through an anonymous source of course) that you have a boyfriend my dear. And, he’s been around for quite some time, hasn’t he? His name is Sungjae Yook isn’t that right?” Observing her expression closely, he rolled the cigar around between his tongue and teeth. “I REALLY wanted to call and get him here for our little meeting as well, but . . . time constraints, you know. I’m on a tight schedule.”

“YOU ASSHOLE! Not, that he’s any of your damned business . . . but I don’t see how we have anything to do with my sister. Get to the fucking point.” Straight-faced, not blinking, HyeSu knew he was baiting her with SooMin, but she needed to hear him out to find out why.

“Hmmm. You might want to curb your temper ILSEOK. Not sure how you expect me to keep you AND SooMin protected from the Chairman after THIS,” he argued in mock disgust, casually tossing a stack of Polaroid’s across the desk in her direction.

Gauging her reaction, he liked the way her upper lip twitched at the sight of them. A puff of acrid smoke curled up in the air above them as he took a long drawl, his eyebrows creased in sinister amusement. “What do you think now? Should we make a deal?”

Fuck. Why wasn’t she surprised? Tentatively reaching out, HyeSu ran her fingers over the prints. The low-life, son-of-a-bitch had had her and Sungjae tailed. And, not surprisingly, caught them red-handed. Not only were there pictures of them kissing, but some-how he’d gotten them both in the cove . . . on a blanket . . . naked.

Facing him indignantly, without flinching, or blushing, she watched him rub his plump hairy fingers together in satisfaction, a wry smirk crossing his face.

“You’re a sick mother fucker. Get your kicks off these? And, when have you EVER tried to PROTECT us? Shit, that’s a laugh.”

Ignoring her pointed sarcasm, he continued, “Clearly, this brings your virginity into question. I can’t be betrothed to a hooker with a boyfriend, now can I? What do you think your Father would have to say about that? Aishhh, this is so upsetting.” Frowning at her from under bushy

unkempt brows, his eyes suddenly boyish and forlorn, he played the jilted fiancé. “I want to forgive you, but . . . it’s your sisters reputation I’m really concerned about.”

Oh my God I’m going to puke! Blinking her eyes in mortification at having to listen to his bullshit, she lurched forward in the chair. Focused on the scattered photos, she only wanted a pair of scissors, to cut them up and stab him in the heart with, all at the same time.

“So . . .” he continued. “I expect him out of the picture. Quite literally. HA, look at me, haven’t lost my sense of humor now have I? Anyway, do it immediately . . . ‘Cause, if not . . .” Pausing again, he flicked ashes into the tray in front of him. “I’m sure the Chairman will be more than happy to take care you AND the situation. Don’t you think?” Smiling sweetly at the youngest Jang sister, he sat back amused. “Personally, I think it would benefit us ALL if you returned to Seoul. I’ve missed you.”

Unsuspectingly turning on him HyeSu leaned in close, hissing fiercely . . . “YOU FUCKING, SON-OF-A-BITCH! Leave SooMin AND Sungjae alone. And, DON’T forget, I’m capable of killing you a dozen different ways and STILL making it look like an accident.”

“Yahhh, don’t threaten me Jang HyeSu. You seem to have forgotten over the years . . . I have eyes EVERYWHERE.” Muttering under his breath, “And, I am JUST as capable . . .” he mocked her warning, his smile still engaging. “Sooo, let’s make a deal. You get rid of the boyfriend, stay a virgin for me, the Chairman is none the wiser, and as soon as we get married next year, you, your EX, and our precious SooMin will all be safe and sound. PERIOD.”

