

JJAN

By

Julianne Ji Young Han

**Disclaimer: This entire conversation is spoken in Korean. Some phrasing in English may be strange due to differences in structure and tone between the two languages. Some specific words have been romanized.**

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT

OVERLAPPING VOICES

Jjan!

Two SHOT GLASSES of SOJU clink together, their echo twinkling into the sky above them.

KIM MINHYUK (in their 50s) and PARK SEHOON (in their 50s) sit across from each other, an odd number of bottles and plates of anju strewn out between them. Both of them are in SUITS. The pocha is empty. They one-shot their glasses.

MINHYUK

Khuuuuu...

(setting the glass down)

The soju is sweet today.

SEHOON

(nodding)

Sweeter with every bottle.

He sets his glass down on the table. We only see his hands.

SEHOON (CONT'D)

Do you remember the first time we drank together?

MINHYUK

Out of the shoe?

SEHOON

Out of the shoe. Fuck, Gitae sunbae, what an asshole.

Minhyuk pours TERRA into Sehoon's glass.

MINHYUK

Well he was the superstar of the  
biology department. It wasn't so  
bad, we had good times.

SEHOON

Mm, we did.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL BUILDING - FLASHBACK

The aspect ratio changes to 3:4. The color grading goes  
from softer vibrancy to grainier and more film-like. (This  
will be the standard look for all flashbacks going  
forward).

A young Minhyuk and Sehoon are on their knees. Gitae sunbae  
holds a SNEAKER out, it's filled with SOJU. Wincing,  
Minhyuk tips his head back and starts drinking. Sehoon  
turns away. Out of the corner of his eye he catches sight  
of a girl.

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT.)

SEHOON

(beat)

Remember Areum-ie?

MINHYUK

Of course. You were so sure you'd  
win her over.

SEHOON

Haha,

(sipping beer)

I had a better chance than you.

You were one ugly bastard.

MINHYUK

(smiling to himself)

You weren't much better.

SEHOON (CONT'D)

Even uglier without our hair.

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM - FLASHBACK

The flashback flickers in. There's a PHOTOGRAPH laying face up on a DESK. It's Minhyuk and Sehoon in MILITARY UNIFORMS. Their heads are shaved.

MINHYUK (V.O.)

Ugly still got us a wife and kids  
in the end.

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT.)

Minhyuk glances down at Sehoon's WALLET, open on the table. There's a PHOTO of Sehoon with his wife and kids. He smiles.

MINHYUK

We made shaving our heads such a  
big deal only for you to end up a  
baldy.

SEHOON

(picking at anju)

Ah... I miss my hair...

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - FLASHBACK

Sehoon and Minhyuk in their twenties. Minhyuk is leaning against the BATHROOM SINK, Sehoon is holding a RAZOR. They're both looking in the MIRROR.

YOUNG SEHOON

Are you ready?

Minhyuk closes his eyes.

YOUNG MINHYUK

(wincing)

Aish, just get it over with.

The sound of the razor. As Minhyuk closes his eyes we-

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT.)

SEHOON

You were so scared I'd mess it up  
but you ended up with more hair in  
the end anyway.

MINHYUK

(pouring Sehoon a drink)

Of course I was scared, you were  
always the reckless one.

SEHOON

Gaesori,

The glasses clink. Jjang.

SEHOON (CONT'D)

I was only following you around.

Minhyuk laughs, shaking his head. He takes a drink while Sehoon continues.

SEHOON (CONT'D)  
Remember when we were kids, the  
stationery shop? What was his  
name, Mr. Park.

Minhyuk chuckles, he knows where this is going.

SEHOON (CONT'D)  
And when his back was turned you'd  
run in and grab as much straw  
candy as you could.

CUT TO:

EXT. STATIONARY SHOP - FLASHBACK DAY

The storefront with a sign that reads "Park's Stationery".  
From the right frame of the camera we see young Minhyuk  
tiptoe in, glancing into the shop. Beat. He runs in and  
disappears. After a few seconds he comes running out with  
fistfuls of APOLLO STRAW CANDY.

MINHYUK (V.O.)  
I was young, you had as much of it  
as I did. Even though you were too  
scared to steal any yourself.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLAYGROUND LOT - FLASHBACK DAY

The CANDY is spilled onto the ground, Minhyuk and Sehoon  
leaning excitedly over it. They bicker inaudibly over the  
different colored straws.

The two of them sit together at a park and eat them,  
running around chasing each other.

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT.)

SEHOON

I bought ddakji there all the time, I couldn't risk getting caught.

MINHYUK

(nodding)

You had enough ddakji-you were always winning everyone's anyway. You just liked to show off.

CUT TO:

EXT. OPEN LOT - FLASHBACK DAY

Kid Sehoon and a NEIGHBORHOOD KID have a ddakji face off. Sehoon readies himself, throws his ddakji down, the other flips. He celebrates, kid Minhyuk stands in the background and laughs.

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT.)

SEHOON

I was good at it.

Beat. Sehoon's shot glass taps the table. Minhyuk smiles at the memory.

MINHYUK

That's why America was perfect for you.

SEHOON

What, being good at ddakji?

MINHYUK

Showing off.

SEHOON

You're right, I should have been a  
Hollywood star.

MINHYUK

Too bad you don't have any hair  
left.

They chuckle. Beat. Sehoon's fingers trace his cup.

SEHOON

You could have come with me.

MINHYUK

(laughing)

And done what?

Minhyuk takes a shot.

MINHYUK (CONT'D)

(gesturing around them)

I have everything I need. I don't  
need Hollywood. It's comfortable  
here.

Sehoon smiles wryly.

SEHOON

It's not like Hollywood. The one  
we knew.

Minhyuk leans back. Lights a cigarette. Listens.

SEHOON (CONT'D)

When I got there... things were so  
violent.

MINHYUK

(exhaling, matter-of-factly)

Americans.



SEHOON

Yeah but I just got there you know? I didn't think it would be perfect but. It was, just, completely different from what we imagined.

He fiddles with the shot glass.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATER - FLASHBACK NIGHT

Minhyuk and Sehoon sitting in theater seats, the glare of the screen reflecting off of their GLASSES. The sounds of a HOLLYWOOD MOVIE are muffled in the background.

They are enamored.

Slowly, the sound of gunshots emerge from the muffled audio. We-

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF KOREATOWN, LOS ANGELES - DAY

A bullet whizzes by, Sehoon ducks into a convenience store breathing hard. He glances upward; on the rooftops of buildings people are standing with guns strapped across them.

From the corner of his eye, he catches a TELEVISION SCREEN playing above the CASH REGISTER.

Text scrolls horizontally across the screen.

It reads: LA RIOTS RAGE ON IN FACE OF RODNEY KING TRIALS

Videos of buildings burning, people running, and police sweeps flash across the screen. The sounds of the broadcast are muffled. Sehoon stares, the screen glinting off his glasses.

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT.)

Clink. Minhyuk's shot glass hits the table. It seems the drinks are endless.

MINHYUK

But you enjoyed life there, didn't you? All the letters you wrote me- the girls, the weather.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING FLASHBACK

A grad school-aged Minhyuk reading letters from Sehoon by a window, the light streaming in against his glasses. A woman (his future wife) comes up behind him and he sets the letter down.

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT.)

Minhyuk stares at the table with a look in his eye.

MINHYUK

I was always happy to hear you doing well.

SEHOON

Yes, it was nice. I did miss it here though.

CUT TO:

EXT. KOREA - MONTAGE SEQUENCE NIGHT

We listen to the sounds of the city...in a slow series of shots...the subway rolls by...people are laughing and drinking outdoors...couples sit together by the Han River...a father comes home to his kids...a woman stares out the window in a taxi...a young man busks in Hongdae.

MINHYUK

Well you never came back.

SEHOON

I wanted to, I was just...busy. It was expensive.

(hesitating)

I didn't think I would be staying for so long.

MINHYUK

(nodding)

Two years became five, then eight, then ten...

SEHOON

(under his breath)

Twenty three years...

MINHYUK

Maybe America is more your home than Korea now.

SEHOON

No, it won't ever be.

They pour more drinks between the two of them.

MINHYUK

Do you ever wish you'd stayed?

SEHOON

Of course.

(beat)

But that's where I found my wife, my kids...

Did you ever wonder if there was a life for you in America?

MINHYUK

(nodding)

Of course.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING FLASHBACK

An older Minhyuk sits in a DINING ROOM at home. A letter from Sehoon lays opened on the KITCHEN TABLE. BANCHAN and SOUP with RICE are laid out across the rest of it. Minhyuk stares at the letter.

He looks up ticket prices to America. Scrolling absently across the page on a BOXY computer. We hear a voice offscreen.

WIFE (O.S.)

*Yeobo!*

Minkyuk snaps back up.

MINHYUK

Eung? What's wrong?

The letter falls to the floor.

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT.)

MINHYUK

Of course I did... but things happen.

Sehoon nods.

SEHOON

I'm sorry I didn't come back.

(beat)

When your mother passed.

Minhyuk pauses. His fingers slide over the shot glass.

MINHYUK

There's no need for sorrys between us. I wish I could've made it to your wedding.

(half-hearted laugh)

Bad timing, huh?

He looks down at the shot glass.

MINHYUK (CONT'D)

I want to meet them. Your wife and your kids. Your wife, can she cook Korean food?

SEHOON

She can cook it better than me. Her Chinese food is even better. It's not like ours, here. How long have you been with your wife? Six? Seven years?

MINHYUK

Ten years.

SEHOON

Damn. Who's the showoff now?

Sehoon pours two shots.

SEHOON

Congratulations.

MINHYUK

Only ten years late.

SEHOON

Let's not dwell on it.

MINHYUK

How old are your kids?

SEHOON

The youngest is four, the oldest  
is six.

Minhyuk eyes the family photo in Sehoon's wallet.

SEHOON

Aigoo. They're little monsters.

MINHYUK

They're beautiful.

SEHOON

I wish they'd study harder. Do you  
remember how hard we studied?

MINHYUK

Mhm... class president.

SEHOON

(laughing)

I was a little bit of a show off.

(beat)

My kids, they do the pledge of  
allegiance every day at school... I  
don't think they even know the  
word for "Korea" in Korean. Your  
kids, how old are they?

MINHYUK

Kid. He's nine. He's going to be a  
doctor, I think.

SEHOON

Here?

MINHYUK

Who knows.

(he takes a drag of a  
cigarette)

Not sure if I should send him  
away. I mean, look at how you  
turned out.

SEHOON

I had a good time.

MINHYUK

Maybe too good of a time. He needs  
to study hard. Besides,

(beat)  
we're family.

Sehoon falls silent.

SEHOON

You're right.

MINHYUK

Mm.

SEHOON

How are they, do you know?

MINHYUK

(shakes his head)

They don't look too well. But your  
sister has been taking care of  
them. They miss you, you bastard.

SEHOON

(spacily)

I almost didn't recognize noona.  
Her hair is so long now. She  
finally looks like a girl.

MINHYUK  
(shudders)  
Yeah, still scary though.

CUT TO:

INT. SEHOON CHILDHOOD HOME - FLASHBACK MIDDAY

Footsteps, someone is running from something or someone.  
Two pairs of feet race across the floor.

JAYOUNG, Sehoon's older sister, comes charging after them.  
Her hair is cut extremely short. She's wearing a T-SHIRT  
and EXERCISE SHORTS.

JAYOUNG  
YAH! GET BACK HERE! YOU'RE NOT  
COMING BACK? GET BACK HERE RIGHT  
NOW!

Young Minhyuk and Sehoon hurriedly slip into their shoes,  
practically pushing each other out the door. In Sehoon's  
hands, a fistful of coins and one 1,000 KRW bill.

SEHOON  
Run, run, RUN!

The two scurry out the door, Jayoung stopping at the front  
door, yelling after them.

JAYOUNG (O.S.)  
YAH!

The two of them are already running through the  
neighborhood streets. As they run, they begin to snicker,  
then burst out laughing.

CUT TO:

EXT. SNACK SHOP - FLASHBACK SUNSET (CONT.)



Sehoon and Minhyuk sit outside the snack shop on the flat bench. They're eating popsicles.

MINHYUK

Do you think she's still mad?

SEHOON

She'll be fine.

(he takes a bite)

I think.

MINHYUK

We should have bought her one to make peace.

SEHOON

I'll repay her.

He gets up off the bench, stretches his arms out.

SEHOON (CONT'D)

Minhyuk, I'm going to be rich in the future.

MINHYUK

(rolling his eyes)

Yeah?

SEHOON

I'm going to be class president and go to America and come back with lots of money.

MINHYUK

(boredly)

You can just do that here, you don't need to leave to be able to buy ice cream.

SEHOON

I'm going to live like Hollywood.  
And when I come back, I won't just  
buy ice cream,  
(he turns and points)  
I'll own the snack shop.

MINHYUK

(laughs)

Okay,

He stands, faces Sehoon.

MINHYUK (CONT'D)

Make sure you give me service.

SEHOON

(grinning)

Of course.

The two stand next to each other. The sun is setting over  
the shop. The leftover ice cream in the bag melts.

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT'D)

Minhyuk is smiling softly. He looks back up.

MINHYUK

You've been a bad son.

He says it as a joke. Both of them know it isn't.

SEHOON

(laughs)

I have.

(beat)

There was never enough time, huh.  
When I was over there it really  
felt like I had all the time in  
the world.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK, USA - MORNING FLASHBACK

Flickers of a Chinese woman (Sehoon's wife) laughing as sunlight hits her face at the park. We recognize her from the photo in the wallet.

Sehoon smiles watching her, they laugh over something inaudible.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING FLASHBACK (CONT.)

Sehoon's kids running around the backyard. He runs after them, until he's about to catch them.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT FLASHBACK (CONT.)

Sehoon, his kids, his wife stand in the backyard facing the sky. The shot is framed as a MATCH CUT to Sehoon and Minhyuk during the snack shop flashback.

Beat. Fireworks go up. Red, white, blue. Sehoon's kids exclaim. Sehoon looks up. He takes a sip of beer.

His PHONE lays face down on the table next to him. There's a sticker of the KOREAN FLAG (red/white/blue) on the back of his case. The light of the fireworks illuminates it over and over.

CUT TO:

EXT. POCHA - NIGHT (CONT.)

Sehoon puts down his TERRA.

MINHYUK

Well, I came back home eventually.

Minhyuk pours two glasses of soju for them. He's slower with this pour. They are down to the last shot of their last bottle.

He hands a shot glass to Sehoon.

MINHYUK  
Better late than never.

He raises his glass.

MINHYUK (CONT'D)  
Welcome home, brother.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP. Minhyuk's hand, holding the shot glass.

The shot glass moves to hit the other but nothing comes.  
Minhyuk's hand stays still in mid-air.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT. Minhyuk is sitting alone. Everything is the same as our opening shot. An odd number of bottles, the anju. A full shot glass sits opposite of Minhyuk's seat, where Sehoon would have been sitting.

Minhyuk raises his glass into the air. Takes it in in one shot. He gets up. As he stands, he turns toward the camera to gather his things on the way home. We see TWO WHITE BANDS across his sleeve. Funeral attire.

CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL DISPLAY CASES - NIGHT

CLOSE-UP. An urn. The photo of Sehoon, his wife, and kids is in the glass case along with some straw candy and notes from loved ones.

One reads: "Welcome Home".

Jayoung, her hair long and tied in a ponytail, stands in front of the case.

CUT TO:

EXT. SNACK SHOP - NIGHT

Minhyuk sits on the bench outside the old snack shop. It's been closed for a while now. He looks up at the stars.

We hear the clink of shot glasses. Jjan.

CUT TO:

BLACK.

**FIN.**