

*This is a memory scene. It is Heewon's last encounter with her favorite daughter in her dorm room. A few days after this scene Vo commits self-immolation in her dorm room. Heewon is telling the story to her older daughter Mo.*

HEEWON

Ay-goo, cham nah!

HEEWON

*To Vo*

Why didn't you call me when this happen?

HEEWON

Why you wait until too late!

*Beat*

HEEWON

Your neck still?

VO

Yes, I think so. I don't know. I can't move.

HEEWON

Ay goo!

*HeeWon smooths Victoria's hair and caresses her head.*

HEEWON

Here. Eat this.

*HeeWon spoons imaginary soup into Victoria's mouth.*

HEEWON

Chan chan ae, chan chan ae. You can't sit up at all?

VO

No.

HEEWON

Too many painkiller! You have to be more careful!

VO

I know.

HEEWON

Ay-yuh. Well here. Try this.

*HeeWon takes a straw from the box in her apron pocket. She notices that it is not a "bendy" straw. She finds a bendy straw in her pocket and puts it into the soup. She holds the straw and soup as close as she can to Victoria's face, so that Victoria can sip easily from the bowl without sitting up or moving at all.*

HEEWON

It's good?

VO

Yes. It's fine.

HEEWON

Good, good.

*Pause*

HEEWON

So how happen?

VO

I don't know. I woke up yesterday, and I felt this pain up my neck.

HEEWON

You going to emergency room?

VO

This morning.

HEEWON

What doctor say?

VO

He thought it was a virus.

HEEWON

Ay, these American doctors. They know nothing. We should go to Dr. Huh. Next time you call me right away, okay?

VO

Okay

*Winces, holding her neck*

Could you...could you just rub it?

HEEWON

Ay goo, haji ma haji ma. Here.

*HeeWon very tenderly rubs her daughter's neck and back.*

HEEWON

Here honey, just relax. You are too tense. You always so tense and work so hard.

VO

*Closing her eyes*

Don't worry. I'm fine.

HEEWON

I know, I know. You "fine," always "fine." Going to be big success. I always telling everybody, Vicky, she going to be fine success.

VO

How is everybody?

HEEWON

*Soothing, as if she is telling a bedtime story*

Oh fine, fine. I just talked to Mrs. Bai yesterday. She so stuck up, just because her Kenny in law school at Dartmouth. Can you believe? What is that, Dartmouth. Sounds so ugly - like monster! (Scarily) Dart-mouth. She still so jealous because Moran went to Yale.

VO

Yeah.

HEEWON

That woman is crazy. You know she's head surgical nurse now, working at big hospital? Making so much money. They just bought million dollar house in Barrington.

VO

What does her husband do again?

HEEWON

I don't know, he so stupid. Chon - nom - like a country boy. He so stupid, and he still making more money than your daddy ever did.

HEEWON

I think he selling insurance or something. Anyway, they buying big house in Barrington, and she telling me she bought brand new fifty-thousand dollar car. So I tell her pick me up for church joint meeting so I can see, and you know what? It's a truck! Like farmer! Can you be-lieve?

VO

What, like an SUV?

HEEWON

I don't know, just big ugly truck! So anyway, I say, this so crazy! Why you need big truck like this in Barrington? And she telling me this ri-dic-ulous story.

VO

*Happy to hear story*

What happened?

HEEWON

Well. Mrs. Bai driving home one night from hospital, and you know roads in Barrington have no lights. Always so dark when I drive over there, I hating it. Anyway, she driving home, and all of a sudden, boom! She hitting something! Something big! So she stopping the car, and she get out, and she hit a deer! A big huge deer! Can you believe! So right away, she getting her car phone, but instead of calling police, she calling her husband.

VO

Why?

HEEWON

So he could take deer home!

VO

No way!

HEEWON

Her husband asking her to come get him so they can take one car, but she doesn't want to leave because she afraid someone stealing the deer!

VO

Did he come?

*During the ensuing monologue, Mrs. Bai walks past in a butcher's apron, covered in deer blood, hacking away at an imaginary deer carcass with ineffective surgical tools.*

HEEWON

He come and he helping her put big dead deer in car, and they driving it home and put in garage. Then she telling him to cut up deer. And he refuse! Grown man, and he scared like chicken. Ay-goo, chon-nom. So, Mrs. Bai put on surgical gloves and gets knife and saw and cutting up deer all night long. Can you be-lieve? In the middle of Barrington! She finishing at six o'clock in the morning, covered in blood! Crazy, crazy woman!

VO

Did they eat it?

HEEWON

Oh yah, they eating it all.

VO

Yuck!

HEEWON

Yuck? What yuck. We eat like that all the time in Seoul. Anyway. This is why she buying big truck. So next time, if she hit animal, she better prepared.

*Vicky laughs a little too hard, and winces.*

HEEWON

*Soothing*

Ghaen cha nae, ghaen cha nae. It is okay.

VO

*To her mother*

You're not leaving, are you?

HEEWON

*Soothing, relaxing*

No no. I'm right here.