

“Um...” Orien looked at the check with confusion. The lady at the desk leaned in.

“Is something wrong, sir?”

“I think you forgot a zero there.” Orien said, pointing to the neat, black print on the right side of his check. It read “\$100.00”. She leaned in closer to the check, inspecting its papery texture more closely.

“Looks right to me.”

“Didn’t the poster for this race say, ‘1st place: \$1000’? And did I *not* win first place?”

The receptionist lady looked at the check’s value once more before her face went blank. Her eyes widened slowly, and her mouth opened slightly.

“Ohh, that.” She mutters. “That was a printing error.”

“A PRINTING ERROR?!” Orien shouted, stumbling backwards at the mere blasphemy that sullied his ears.

“The person who made the fliers made a typo. The prize money was supposed to be \$100 for first, but they must’ve overlooked the extra zero.”

Orien exhaled like a tornado was trapped in his lungs. His breath nearly made the check fly right off the desk. He put his hands on his glistening sweaty head and entangled his fingers into his thick, black oily hair. His fingers were still ticked red from gripping the steering wheel and his legs tingled from sitting in the same position for 30 minutes straight, only moving his foot from gas to brakes.

“Thank you anyway.” Orien sighed in defeat, snatching the check off the desk. He trudged through the sandy dirt road and out of the stadium. Suddenly, he feels a vibration run through his leg, accompanied by a high pitched ringing sound. Digging into his pockets, he pulled out his phone. It was a black flip phone. The phone was now more of a lighter gray than

black, it had scratches staining the outside, and the top screen was beginning to come loose. He put the phone up to his ear.

“Hello, hello~!” Orien sang.

“Ryan? It’s Parker. Grant and I are about to stop by Taco Plaza if you wanna grab a bite with us.”

“Sounds good, I’m starving! See you in ten!” He excitedly announced. He closed the phone and stuffed it back in his pocket.

“So how did the race go?” Parker asked, grabbing a tortilla chip and dipping it in guac. Parker Teagan was a friend of Orien’s from high school. Her father owned a mechanic shop where she works. She was a white girl with rough brown hair and green eyes. Parker could identify any problem with a car and she had the hands to restore many different cars.

“See for yourselves.” Orien slammed the check on the table and slid it toward the middle of the marble table, where Parker and Grant leaned in to take a look.

“Stiffed you again?” Grant asked, curiosity laced in his voice. Grant Kang was a Korean man, pale-skinned and a little chubby. Grant sells things he crafts, so all he has to do for money is to go to places around town and give him their things. Sometimes, they’ll just show up at his house.

“Yep. \$100 barely covers my mom’s newest hospital bill.”

“Whatever happened to that prize money you got from that street race last week?” Grant questioned.

“Made a grand off that. Which was good *until* the cops busted us. My fine was as much as my prize...” Orien sighed, taking a bite out of his burrito.

“How is your mom doing, by the way?” Parker asked. She took a bite of her guacamole-dipped chip.

“Started dialysis last week. It’s been making her tired, but she’s fine. But that’s another \$500 on our plate.”

“Maybe it’s time you get a real job.” Grant snorted.

“That’s rich, coming from you.” Parker chided.

“Don’t get mad at me, Parks. I’m a modern entrepreneur.” He sneered.

“You got lucky selling birdhouses. Unlike you, I work hard, and my net worth shows that.” She taunted, taking a chip with salsa and poking Grant in the nose with it, leaving a drop of salsa on the tip. “I’m a good mechanic.”

“You definitely overcharge like one.” Grant mumbled.

“Ryan can help out at my dad’s auto shop, make some money that way.”

“You just want to see me shock myself with a car battery again, don’t you?”

Parker felt a tiny grin creep on her face. “No,” she snickered, putting a hand over her mouth.