

Arpeggio on the Surface of the Sea

WRITING & ILLUSTRATION WABEC
ASSISTANCE AO, YANGMEL



Arpeggio on the Surface of the Sea

STORY & ART: Wabec

- *College Romance*
- *Light and romantic*

After developing stage fright, pianist Suyeon Cha seeks comfort in the arms of strangers. One such stranger is Haesu Shin, whom he becomes partners with for a group project. Haesu is sweet, cheerful, and makes no secret of his feelings for Suyeon, which Suyeon returns, but is also overwhelmed by...

GENRE:
LGBTQ+ ROMANCE

ONGOING COMIC

64 CHAPTERS

PERFECT FOR A:
DRAMA SERIES

TONE:
DRAMATIC SOAPY

ADULTS
18-34

RIGHTS
MANTA/RIDI

CLICK TO
READ ON

Manta

STATS: ~1M Views

COMPS

Heartstopper, Love, Victor

A romantic nighttime soap about an LGBTQ+ couple.





A moving, deeply felt love story about two men, who's passion push each of them to greatness, but who's secrets threaten to tear them each down.

Haesu is a champion swimmer, on pace to qualify for the Olympics, dreaming of gold medals.



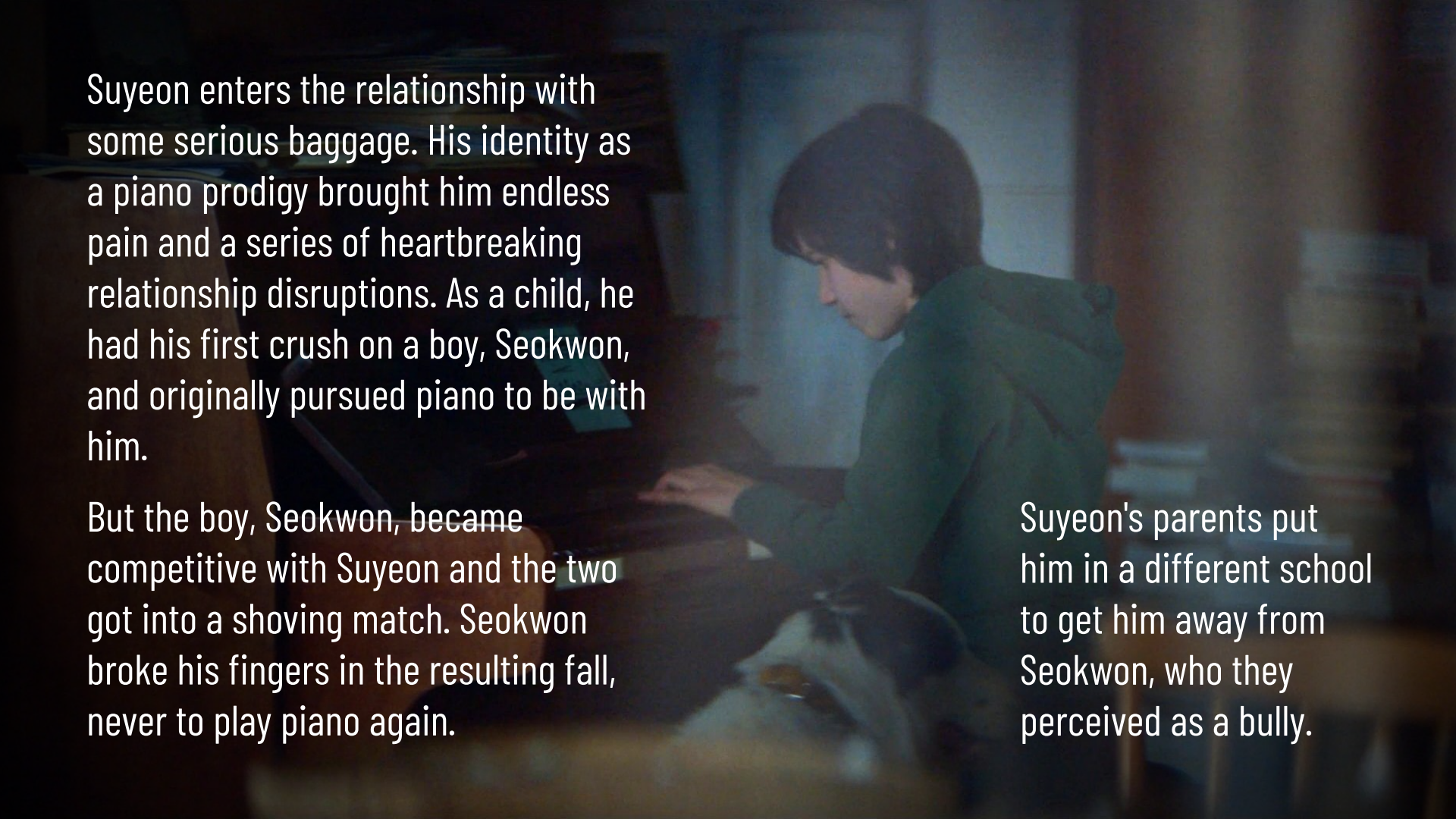
Suyeon was once a phenom concert pianist who publicly froze during a giant media event, derailing his once-promising career.

As a result, he's developed crippling stage-fright, practicing piano alone.





Chance brought them together, but what makes them work as a couple is that, despite their differences and challenges, each finds a way to selflessly inspire the other to be the best version of themselves.



Suyeon enters the relationship with some serious baggage. His identity as a piano prodigy brought him endless pain and a series of heartbreaking relationship disruptions. As a child, he had his first crush on a boy, Seokwon, and originally pursued piano to be with him.

But the boy, Seokwon, became competitive with Suyeon and the two got into a shoving match. Seokwon broke his fingers in the resulting fall, never to play piano again.

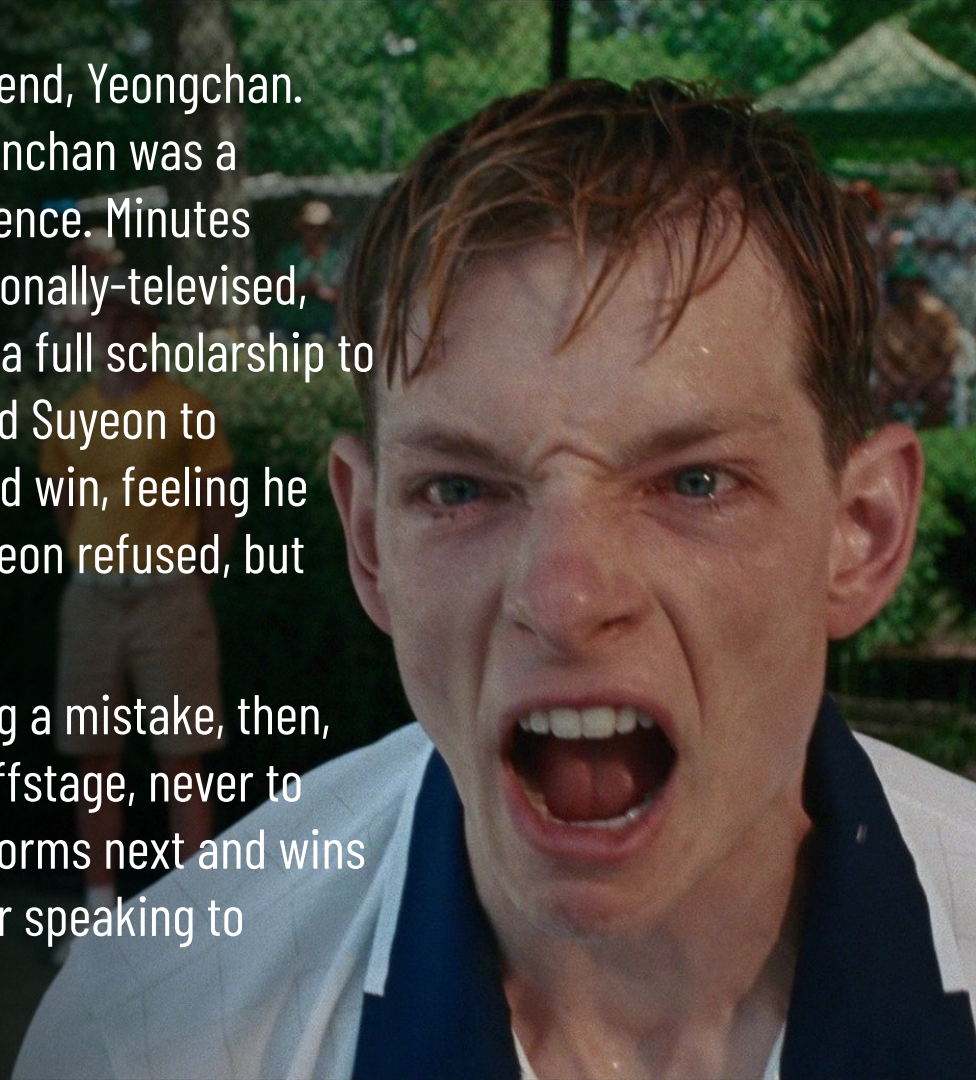
Suyeon's parents put him in a different school to get him away from Seokwon, who they perceived as a bully.



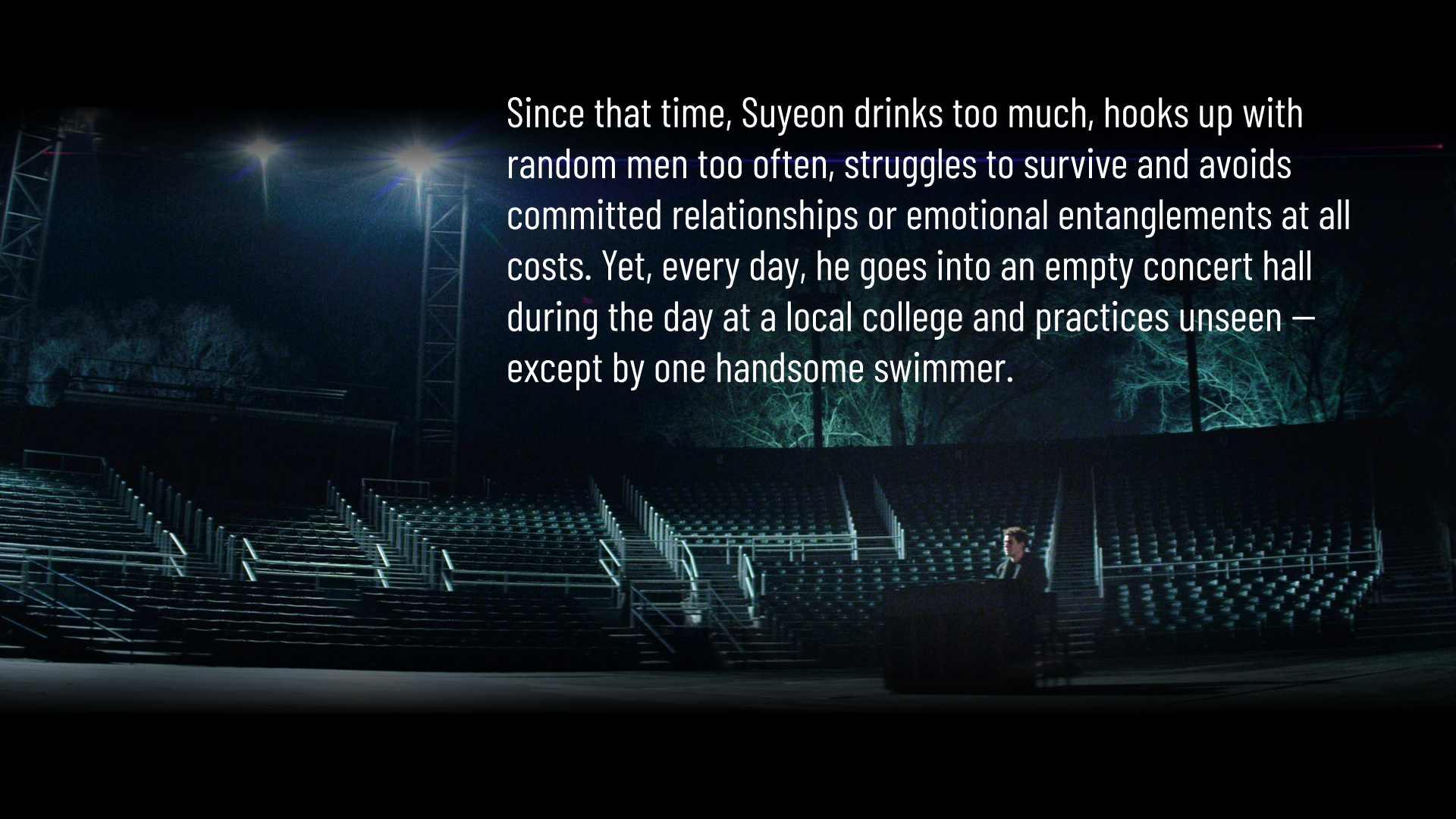
Suyeon's older sister felt the move proved that her parents cared more about Suyeon than her, and she stopped talking to Suyeon. As soon as she left for college, she never spoke to the family again.

But most troubling was Suyeon's first boyfriend, Yeongchan. The relationship was all consuming, but Yeonchan was a narcissist, who eroded Suyeon's self-confidence. Minutes before Suyeon was to go on stage for a Nationally-televised, competitive recital, with the winner getting a full scholarship to a prestigious music college. Yeonchan asked Suyeon to intentionally take a "dive", so Yeonchan could win, feeling he was more deserving of the scholarship. Suyeon refused, but the conflict devastates him.

As a result, he freezes on stage after making a mistake, then, absorbing the reaction of the crowd, runs offstage, never to play publicly again. Gallingly, Yeonchan performs next and wins the competition. He leaves for college, never speaking to Suyeon again.



Since that time, Suyeon drinks too much, hooks up with random men too often, struggles to survive and avoids committed relationships or emotional entanglements at all costs. Yet, every day, he goes into an empty concert hall during the day at a local college and practices unseen — except by one handsome swimmer.

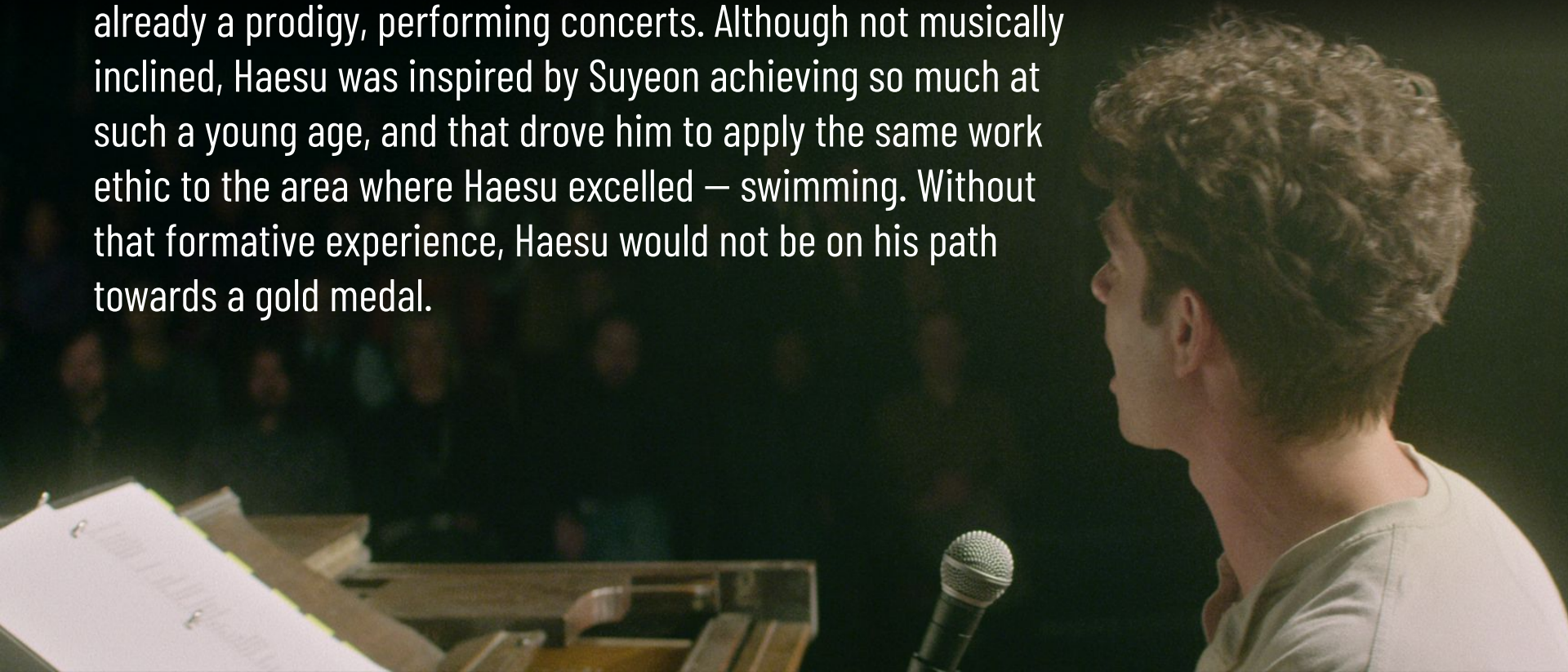


Haesu's challenges include a controlling (and homophobic) manager who orchestrates his public image and keeps him in the closet, a sister who's a little too involved in his life and the rigors and stresses of being an athlete of international stature.



NIKE SWIM - ZERO RESISTANCE

Haesu is also keeping some big secrets from Suyeon. First, he saw Suyeon perform live when both were boys. Suyeon was already a prodigy, performing concerts. Although not musically inclined, Haesu was inspired by Suyeon achieving so much at such a young age, and that drove him to apply the same work ethic to the area where Haesu excelled — swimming. Without that formative experience, Haesu would not be on his path towards a gold medal.

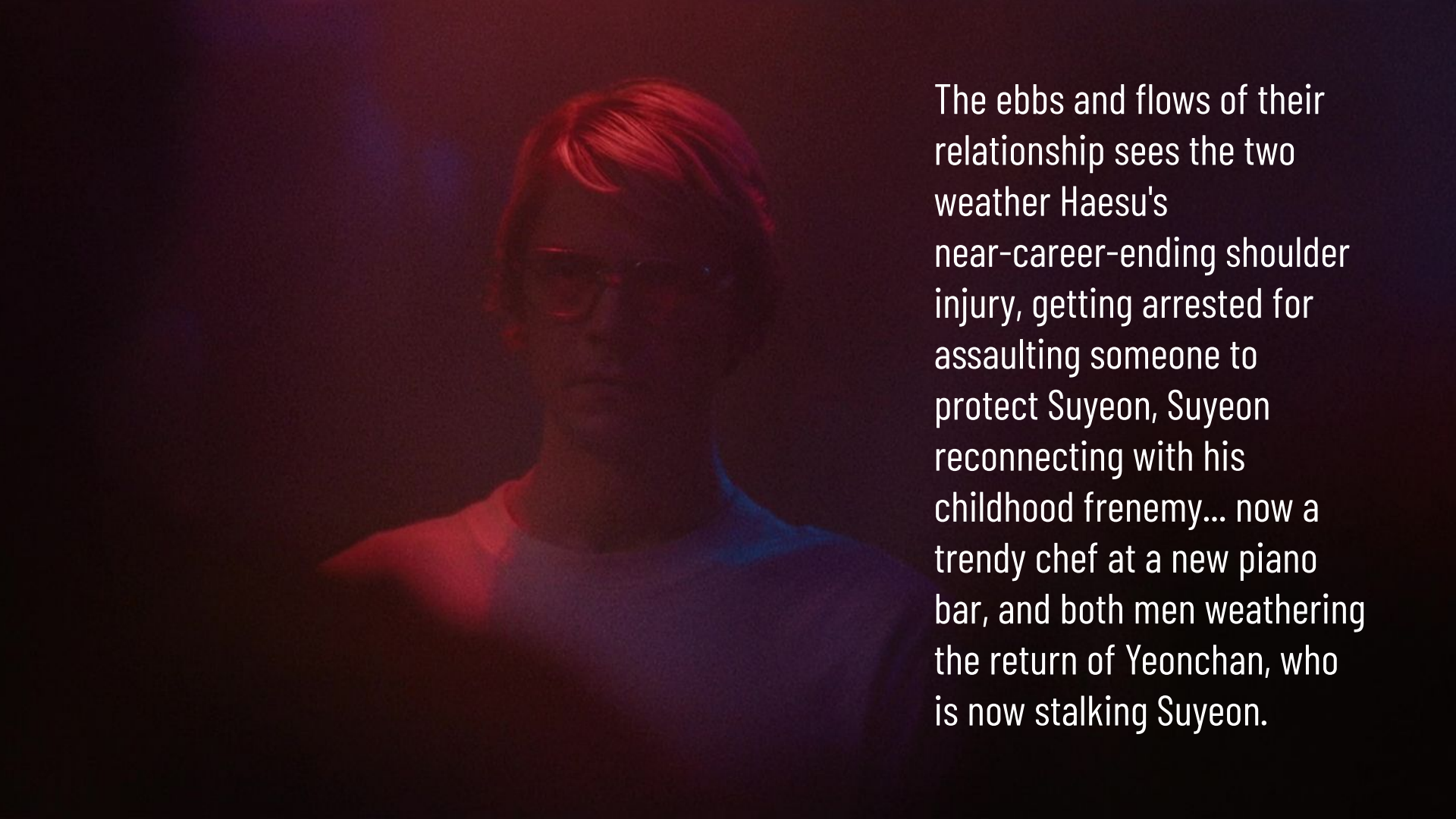


The next secret is that Haesu was one of Suyeon's drunken, meaningless one-night-stands — but the experience was hardly meaningless for Haesu, as this was his first experience with a man and confirmation that he was gay. However, even when they met again, Suyeon didn't remember that they had previous "met".

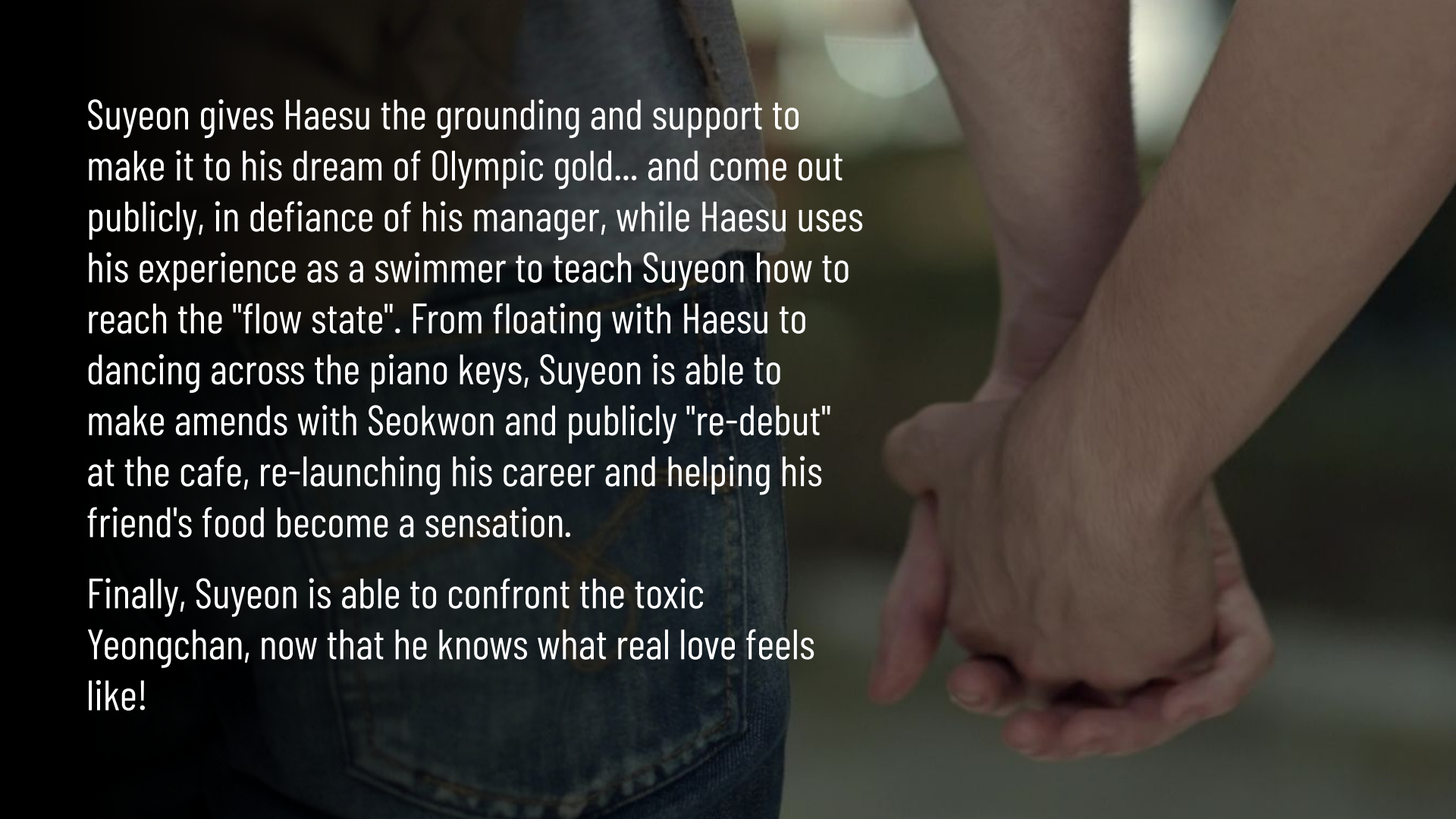


Haesu's biggest secret is perhaps the most explosive: Suyeon has not been practicing alone... because Haesu has been sneaking into the hall and watching from the shadows, intent on helping his hero regain his past glories, with the help of his Haesu's sister (who happens to be a successful music executive).





The ebbs and flows of their relationship sees the two weather Haesu's near-career-ending shoulder injury, getting arrested for assaulting someone to protect Suyeon, Suyeon reconnecting with his childhood frenemy... now a trendy chef at a new piano bar, and both men weathering the return of Yeonchan, who is now stalking Suyeon.



Suyeon gives Haesu the grounding and support to make it to his dream of Olympic gold... and come out publicly, in defiance of his manager, while Haesu uses his experience as a swimmer to teach Suyeon how to reach the "flow state". From floating with Haesu to dancing across the piano keys, Suyeon is able to make amends with Seokwon and publicly "re-debut" at the cafe, re-launching his career and helping his friend's food become a sensation.

Finally, Suyeon is able to confront the toxic Yeongchan, now that he knows what real love feels like!



READ

*Arpeggio on the
Surface of the Sea*

HERE