

A scenic view of palm trees lining a street at sunset or sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow and long shadows. The sky is a clear, pale blue. In the foreground, several tall palm trees stand in a row, their fronds silhouetted against the bright sky. A few other trees and bushes are visible in the background.

LOVE LIES



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**STATS:** ~10M Views

# ***Love Lies***

STORY: Setbyul Park ART: GGuyo

- *Fake dating Korea's hottest star*

Being the manager of a popular actress is not very fun. Hyojung is stuck on the sidelines running errands for Yeonkyung, the popular actress who also happens to be Hyojung's cousin. But Yeonkyung makes an interesting proposal: "Help me date Seungyun, Korea's hottest star." What will happen when Hyojung and Seungyoon begin a fake relationship to get back at Yeonkyung? They're just faking it, no emotions involved... right?

GENRE:  
**ROMANCE**

COMPLETED  
**COMIC**

83  
**CHAPTERS**

PERFECT FOR A:  
**DRAMA SERIES**

TONE:  
**QUIRKY**

ADULTS  
**18-34**

RIGHTS  
**MANTA/RIDI**

COMPS  
*America's Sweethearts, The Devil Wears Prada*

A woman with curly brown hair, wearing a black dress, sits on a wicker chair, smiling warmly at the camera. She has red lipstick and a ring on her finger. The background is a dark room with a red curtain and a blue wall.

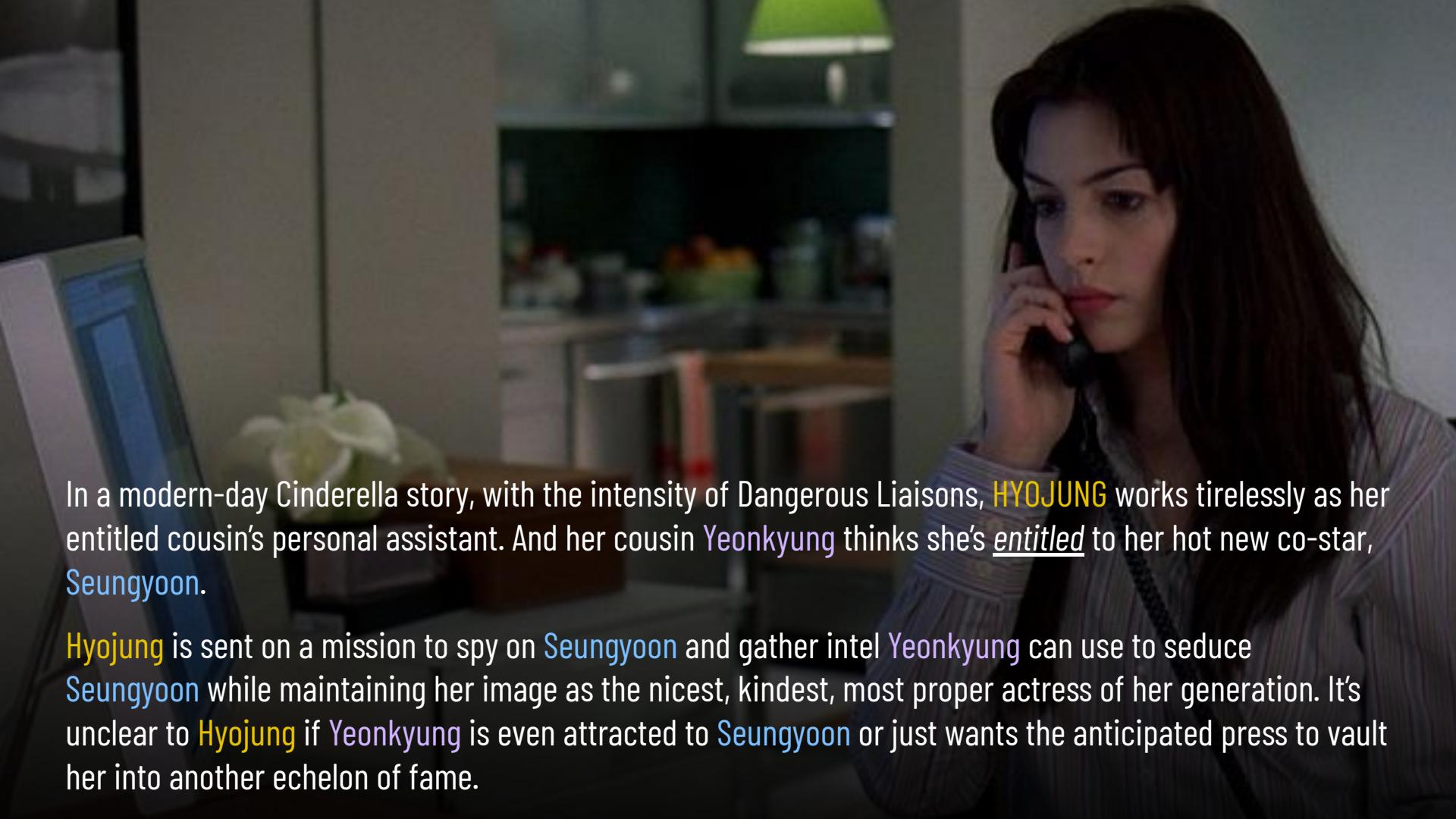
She's a fast-rising star, recently cast in a hotly anticipated TV show.

Her talent is only matched by her kindness.

She's even gave a job to her cousin, an emotionally troubled orphan.



Only it's all a lie.



In a modern-day Cinderella story, with the intensity of Dangerous Liaisons, **HYOJUNG** works tirelessly as her entitled cousin's personal assistant. And her cousin **Yeonkyung** thinks she's entitled to her hot new co-star, **Seungyoon**.

**Hyojung** is sent on a mission to spy on **Seungyoon** and gather intel **Yeonkyung** can use to seduce **Seungyoon** while maintaining her image as the nicest, kindest, most proper actress of her generation. It's unclear to **Hyojung** if **Yeonkyung** is even attracted to **Seungyoon** or just wants the anticipated press to vault her into another echelon of fame.



All of this would be par for the course, **Hyojung** doing something sketchy to further her cousin's selfish agenda in a way that keeps her cousin smelling like a rose...

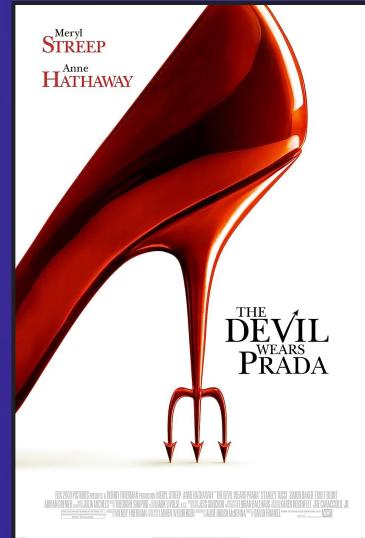
...except, in doing recon, **Hyojung** shows **Seungyoon** the real her (the first time she's ever stepped outside her cousin's shadow), and **Seungyoon** very inconveniently falls in love with **Hyojung** and not **Yeonkyung**, as planned! Oops!



For the first time, **Hyojung**  
has a chance to make her  
own dreams come true,  
but her cousin won't take  
this "disloyalty" lying down!  
Only **Hyojung** fully  
understands how  
conniving and vindictive  
her cousin actually is!

Imagine a “sisterly” dynamic of America's Sweethearts (2001), in which Catherine Zeta Jones plays a selfish movie star and Julie Roberts her “plain” sister and beleaguered assistant, now being romanced by Zeta Jones’ ex-husband, John Cusack.

Add to this the conniving, plotting, social striving, backstabbing and the unexpected “glow up” of our “mousy” lead, as in The Devil Wears Prada (2006).



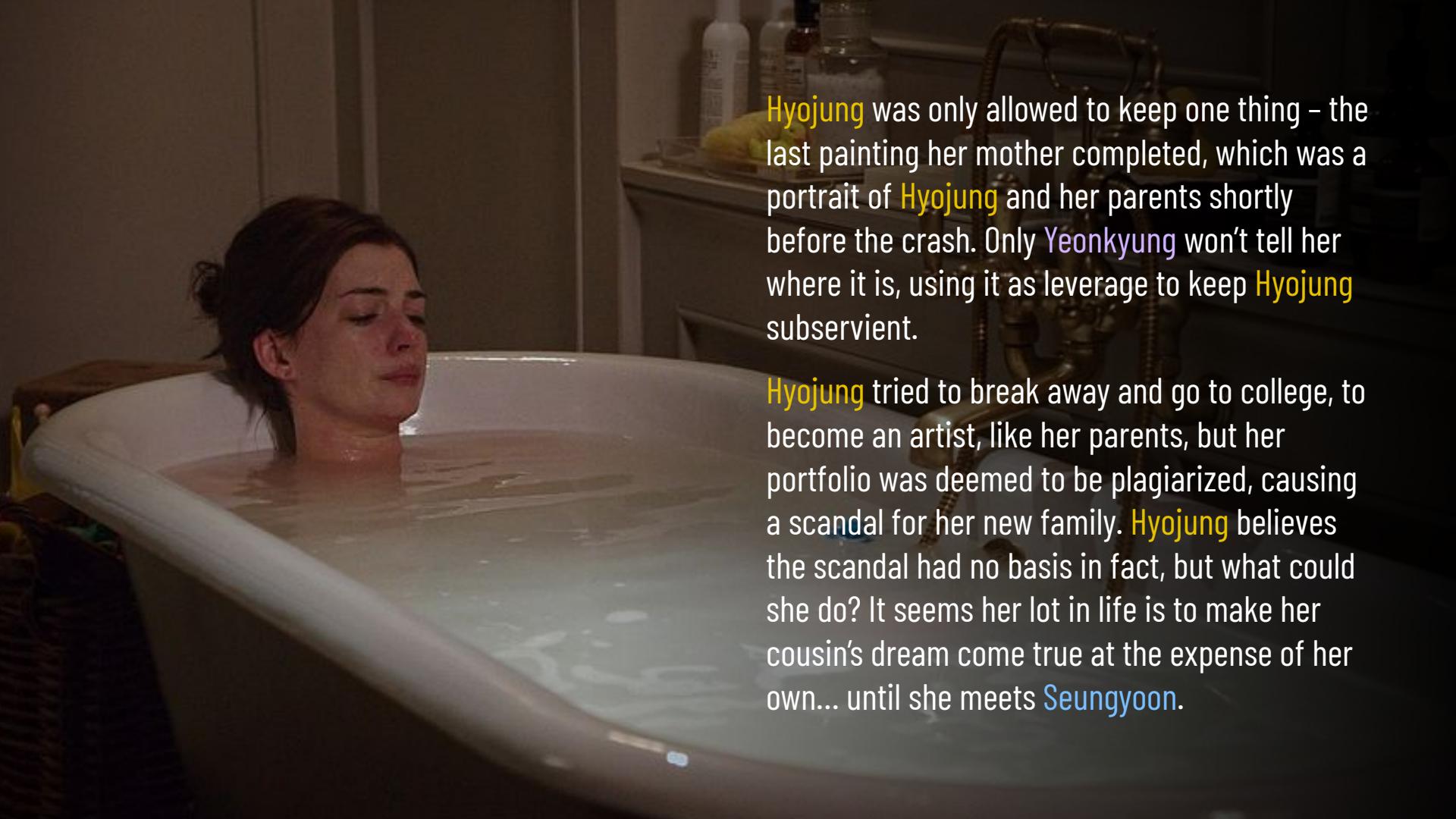
# CHARACTERS





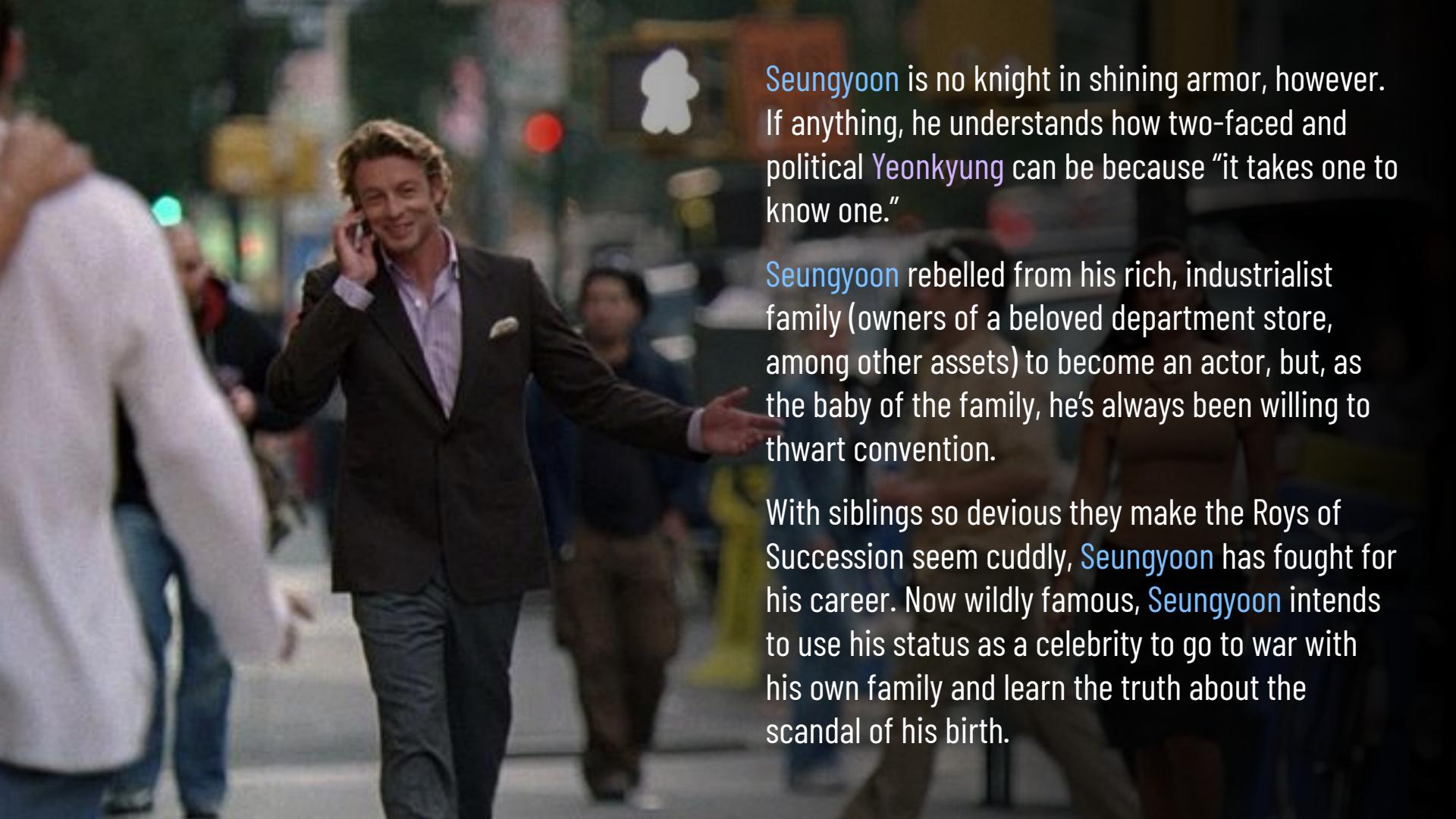
HYOJUNG has never known a moment's peace since her parents, both renowned artists, died in a car crash. Hyojung was in the car, but survived. Sometimes she wishes she hadn't.

Sent to live with her materialistic aunt and uncle, they made her a servant for the "star" of the family, their daughter. Hyojung grows up with the narrative that her parents died carrying huge debts and even selling off all of their paintings and possessions, Hyojung still financially afflicted her new family.

A woman with dark hair tied back is sitting in a white clawfoot bathtub, her head bowed and tears falling into the water. She is wearing a white t-shirt. The background shows a bathroom counter with various toiletries.

Hyojung was only allowed to keep one thing – the last painting her mother completed, which was a portrait of Hyojung and her parents shortly before the crash. Only Yeonkyung won't tell her where it is, using it as leverage to keep Hyojung subservient.

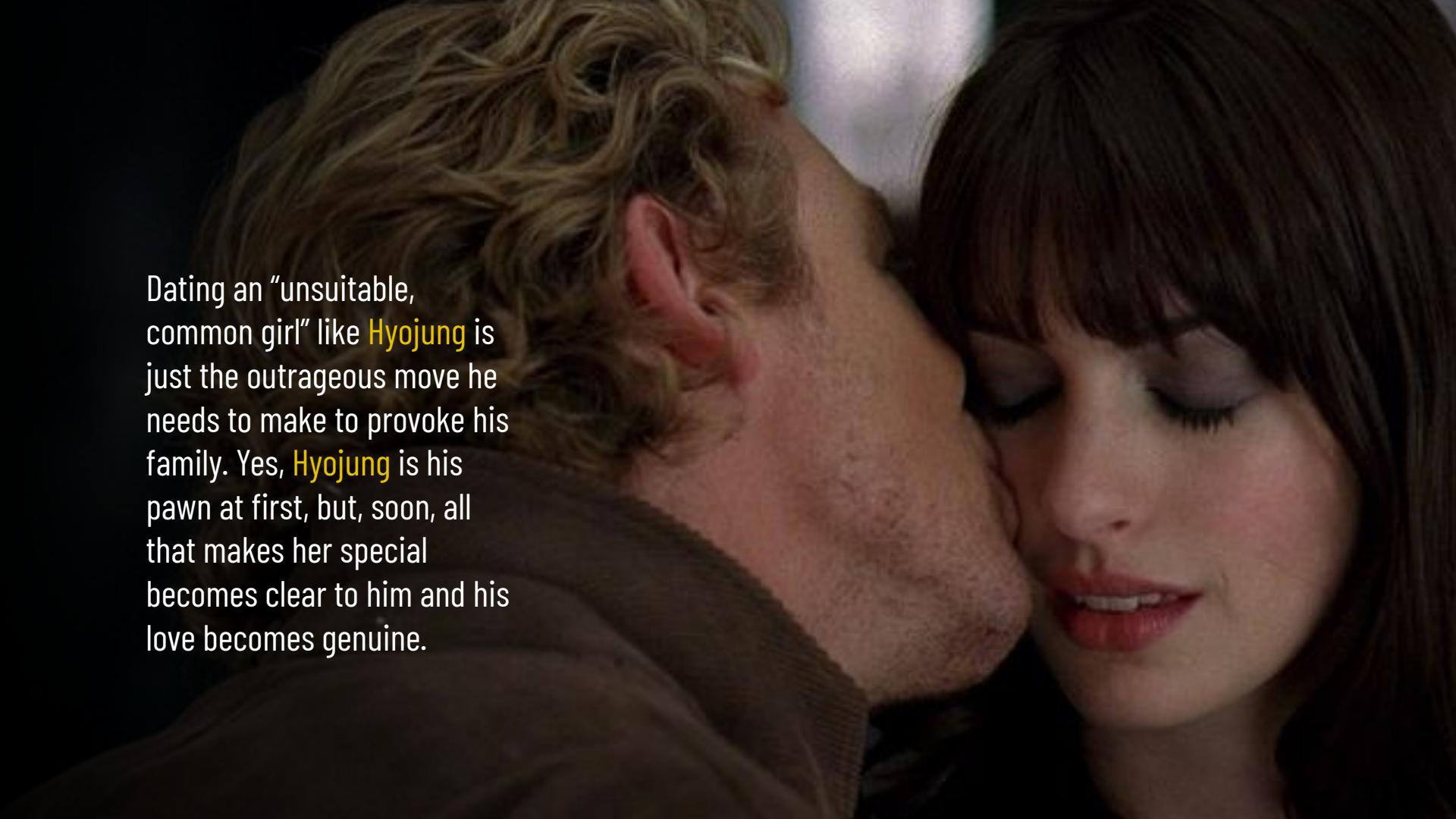
Hyojung tried to break away and go to college, to become an artist, like her parents, but her portfolio was deemed to be plagiarized, causing a scandal for her new family. Hyojung believes the scandal had no basis in fact, but what could she do? It seems her lot in life is to make her cousin's dream come true at the expense of her own... until she meets Seungyoong.



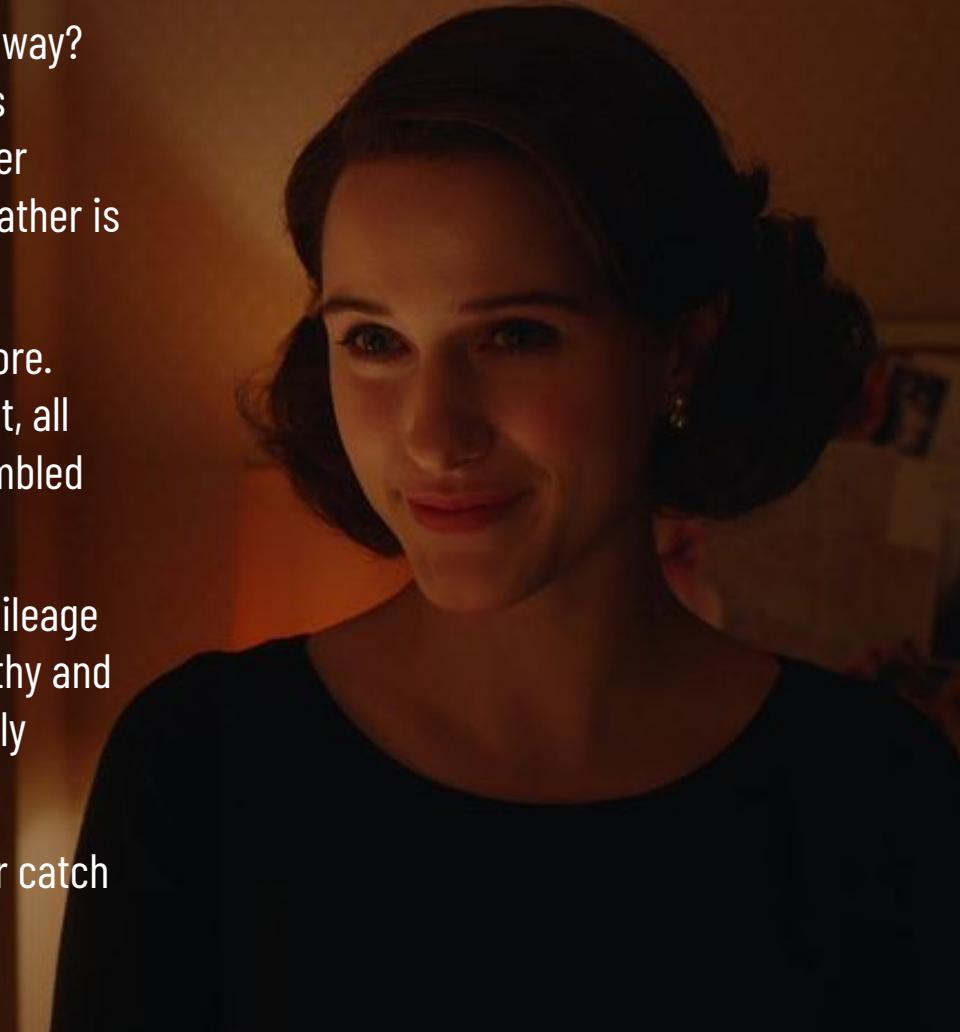
Seungyoon is no knight in shining armor, however. If anything, he understands how two-faced and political Yeonkyung can be because “it takes one to know one.”

Seungyoon rebelled from his rich, industrialist family (owners of a beloved department store, among other assets) to become an actor, but, as the baby of the family, he’s always been willing to thwart convention.

With siblings so devious they make the Roys of Succession seem cuddly, Seungyoon has fought for his career. Now wildly famous, Seungyoon intends to use his status as a celebrity to go to war with his own family and learn the truth about the scandal of his birth.



Dating an “unsuitable, common girl” like **Hyojung** is just the outrageous move he needs to make to provoke his family. Yes, **Hyojung** is his pawn at first, but, soon, all that makes her special becomes clear to him and his love becomes genuine.



Is Yeonkyung evil or was she just raised that way?  
We may never know, but it's clear her parents  
trained her to be graspy and manipulative. Her  
mother is running for state office while her father is  
a financial wizard, running a hedge fund.

Yeonkyung has everything and only wants more.  
Sometimes, when there's nothing new to want, all  
she asks for is that those around her are humbled  
and made to feel small.

Yet, she does this all covertly, even getting mileage  
out of belittling Hyojung, then getting sympathy and  
positive attention for employing her "obviously  
incompetent" cousin, out of pity.

Hyojung has lost hope that the world will ever catch  
on to Yeonkyung's games.

A photograph of a dense forest of tall palm trees silhouetted against a bright sun in a clear blue sky. The sun is positioned in the lower-left corner, casting a warm glow and creating lens flare effects. The palm trees are of various heights and types, some with distinct red or purple fronds. The overall scene is bright and airy.

# THE PLOT



ACT ONE: Seungyoon quickly realizes that Hyojung is stalking him... but has no genuine interest in him or knowledge of his career (she's never even seen the show that made him famous). He realizes Hyojung is "scouting" him for Yeonkyung, something he confirms on a wild night of drinking. The more he pays attention, the more he gets an impression of Yeonkyung's true nature.

He makes a proposal to Hyojung: They pretend to date. Hyojung can thwart her cousin, for once, and he can enrage his family. She agrees on one condition: Seungyoон must save her mother's painting.

Seungyoon buys the painting for an outrageous price through a broker, so Yeonkyung doesn't know he is the buyer.

With her mother's painting safely away from Yeonkyung, Hyojung is free of Yeonkyung's blackmail.

And that means she's free to rub her new "relationship" in Yeonkyung's face!

Meanwhile, Seungyoon's sister-in-law reaches out to Yeonkyung to conspire to matchmake Yeonkyung and Seungyoon, as they are horrified by his interest in this "orphan" Hyojung.



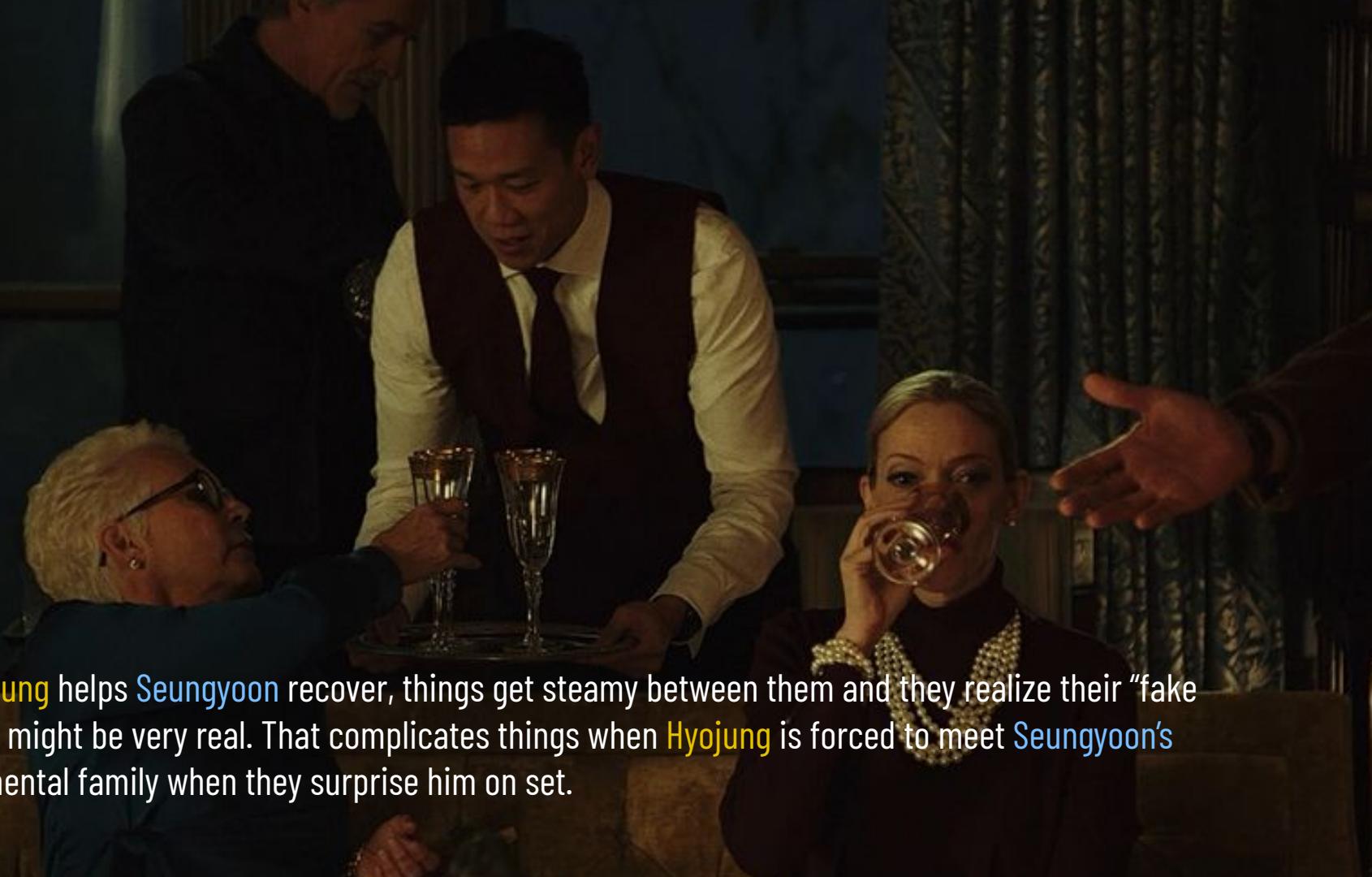


Hyojung and Seungyoon do a great job playing a couple in the initial throes of romance – only it stops being an act for both of them. Neither are willing to admit it to the other, though!

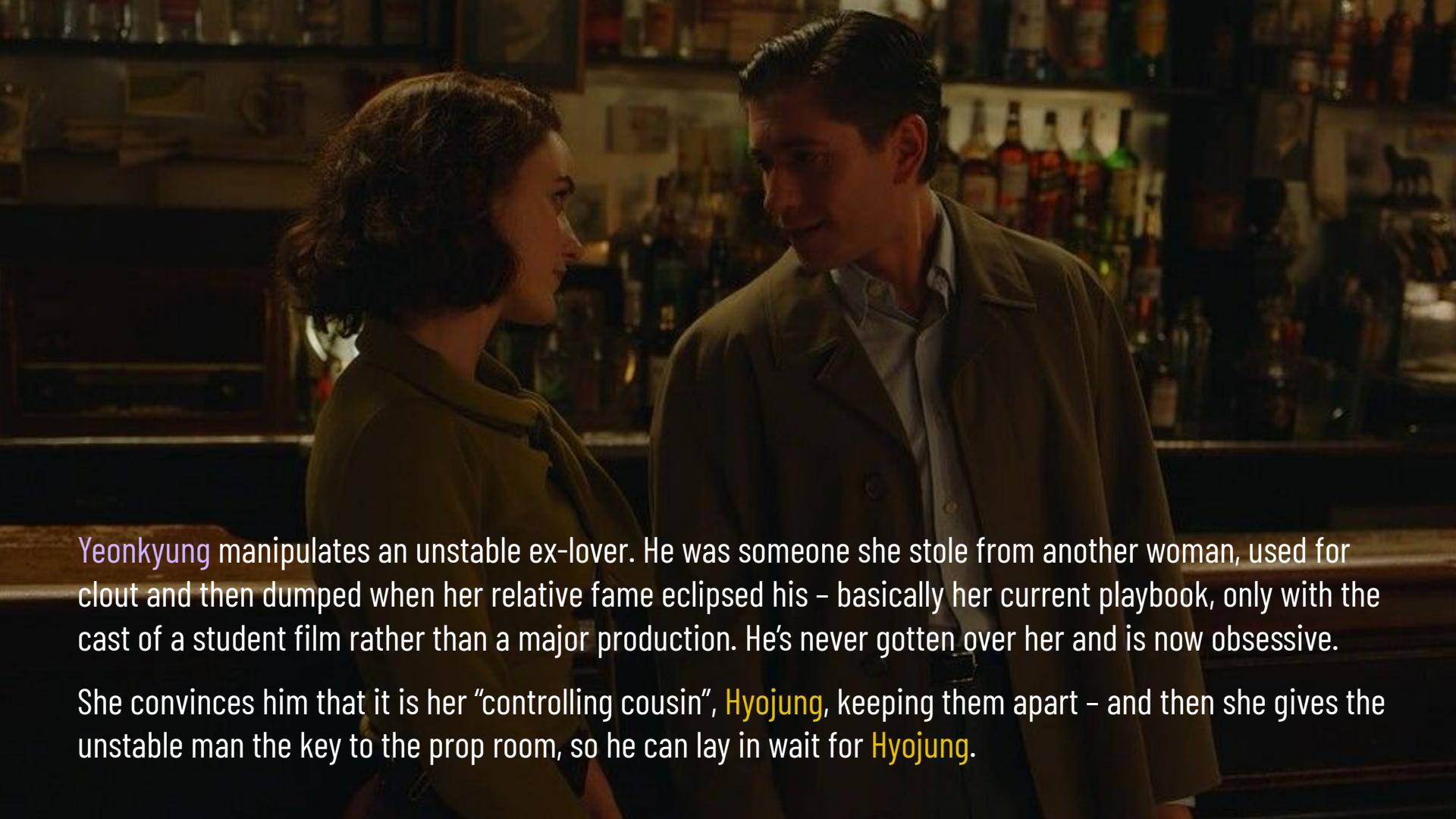
This makes for some very cute rom-com moments, as Hyojung experiences the perks of Seungyoon's world – a penthouse apartment, rides in his sportscar and a dream shopping trip at a major department store... owned by his family.

Their love deepens when Seungyoon deftly deflects Yeonkyung's attempt to frame Hyojung for stealing a valuable ring being used as a prop on set, while Hyojung helps Seungyoon handle a challenging underwater shoot that triggers some unspoken childhood trauma for him and causes him to nearly drown.





As **Hyojung** helps **Seungyoon** recover, things get steamy between them and they realize their "fake dating" might be very real. That complicates things when **Hyojung** is forced to meet **Seungyoon's** judgemental family when they surprise him on set.

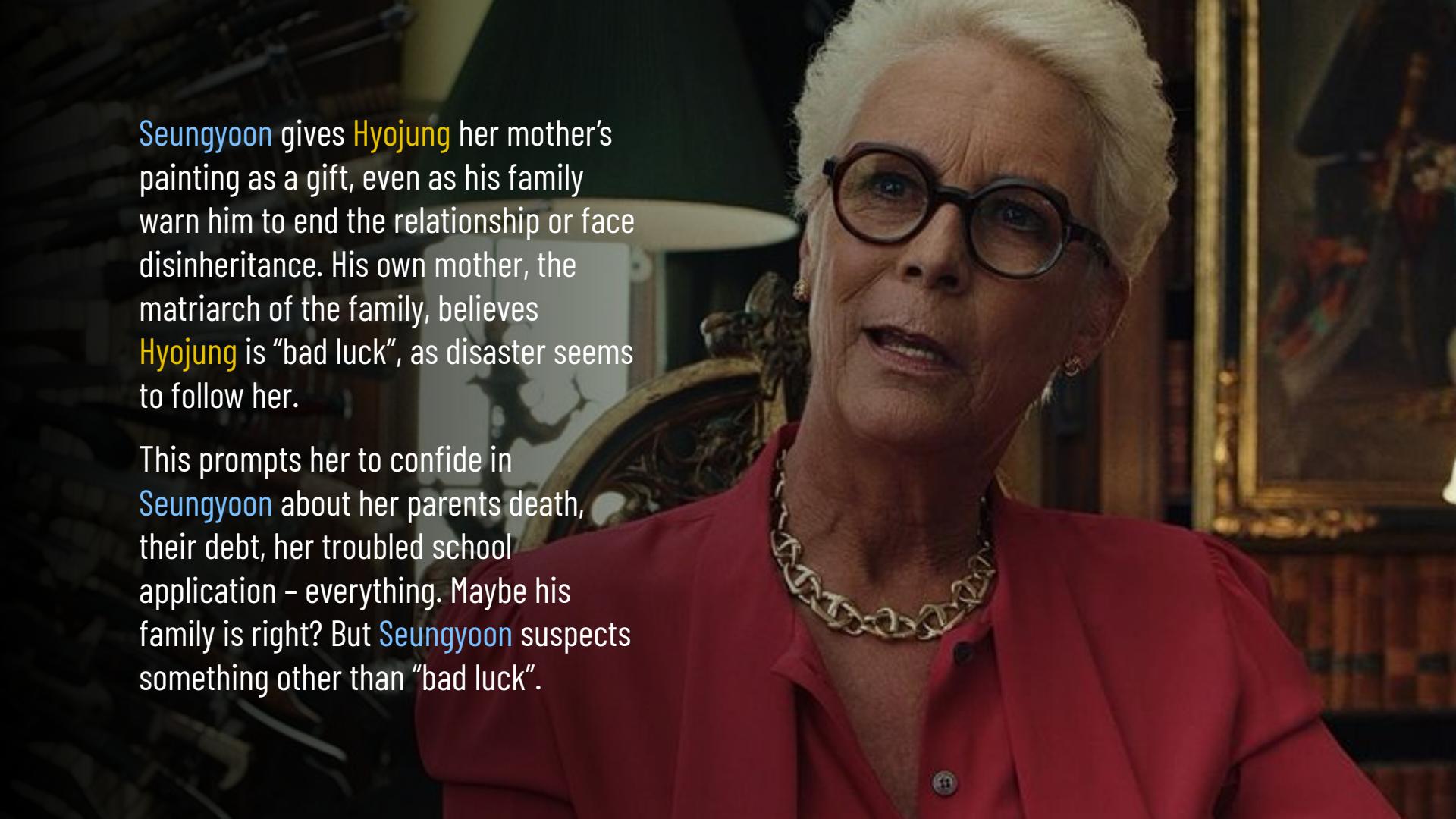


Yeonkyung manipulates an unstable ex-lover. He was someone she stole from another woman, used for clout and then dumped when her relative fame eclipsed his – basically her current playbook, only with the cast of a student film rather than a major production. He's never gotten over her and is now obsessive.

She convinces him that it is her “controlling cousin”, Hyojung, keeping them apart – and then she gives the unstable man the key to the prop room, so he can lay in wait for Hyojung.

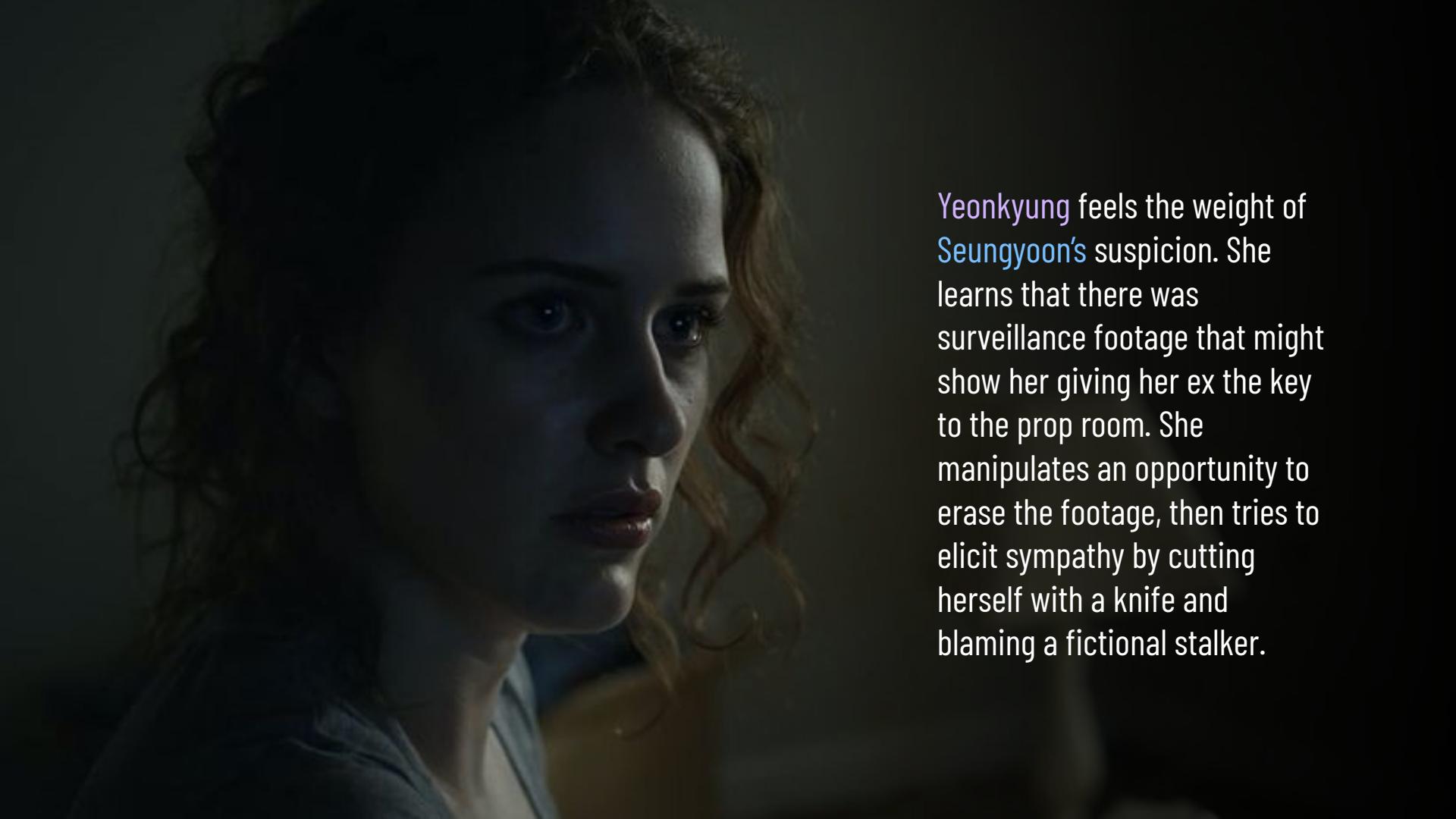


Yeonkyung's ex lights the prop room on fire and traps Hyojung inside. She nearly dies. Seungyoon braves the flames and saves her. The ex is arrested as a stalker, and his ravings that this was all Yeonkyung's idea are dismissed.



Seungyoon gives Hyojung her mother's painting as a gift, even as his family warn him to end the relationship or face disinheritance. His own mother, the matriarch of the family, believes Hyojung is "bad luck", as disaster seems to follow her.

This prompts her to confide in Seungyoon about her parents death, their debt, her troubled school application – everything. Maybe his family is right? But Seungyoon suspects something other than "bad luck".



Yeonkyung feels the weight of Seungyoon's suspicion. She learns that there was surveillance footage that might show her giving her ex the key to the prop room. She manipulates an opportunity to erase the footage, then tries to elicit sympathy by cutting herself with a knife and blaming a fictional stalker.

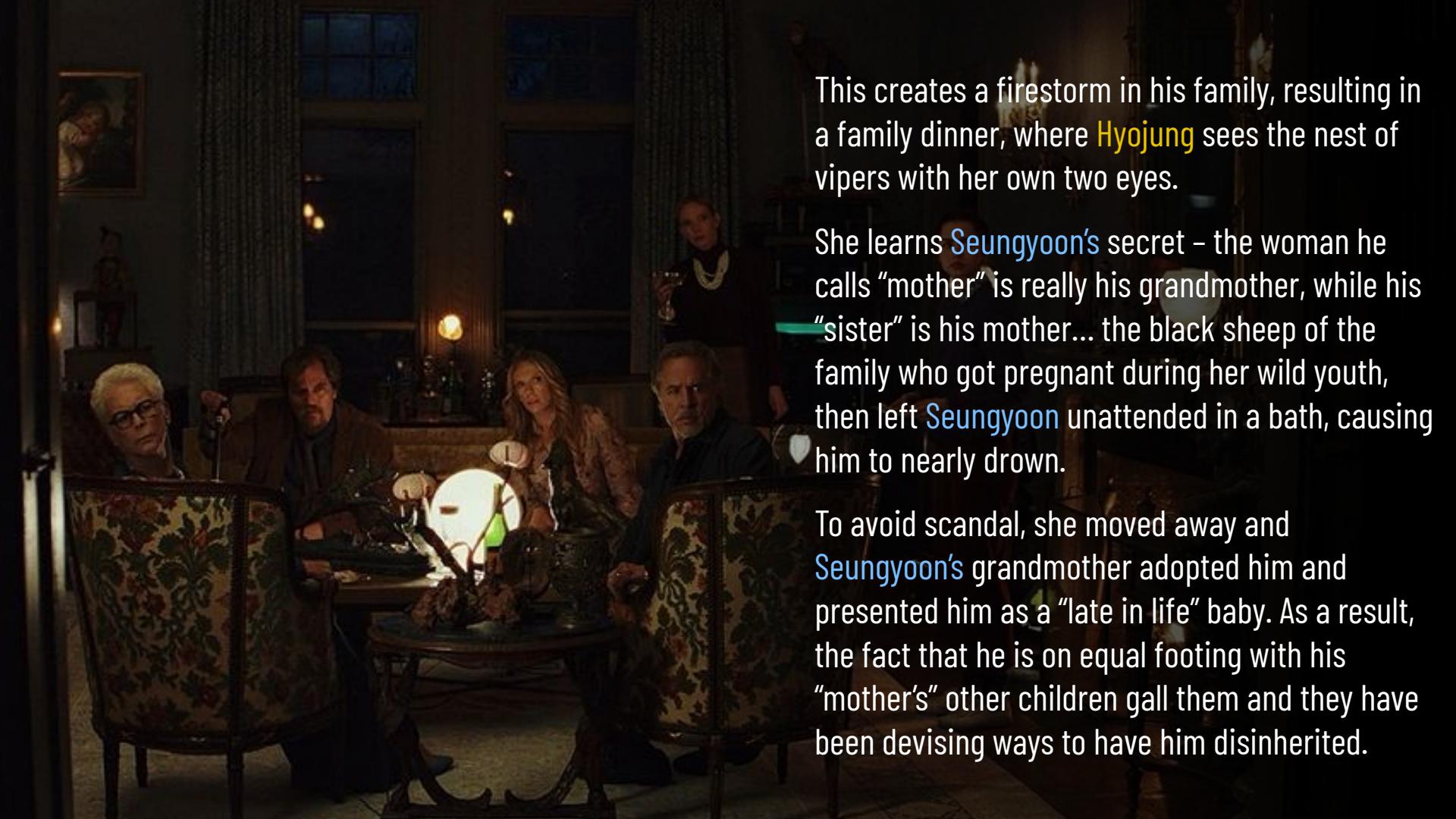


Hyojung learns of Yeonkyung's injury and her first thought is to check on her, making Seungyoon love her all the more... even as he continues to suspect Yeonkyung of inflicting the wound on herself.

However, when Hyojung check on her at their family home, they get into a fight. Finally finding her own power, Hyojung quits and moves out of the house.

Seungyoon offers to let her move in with him.



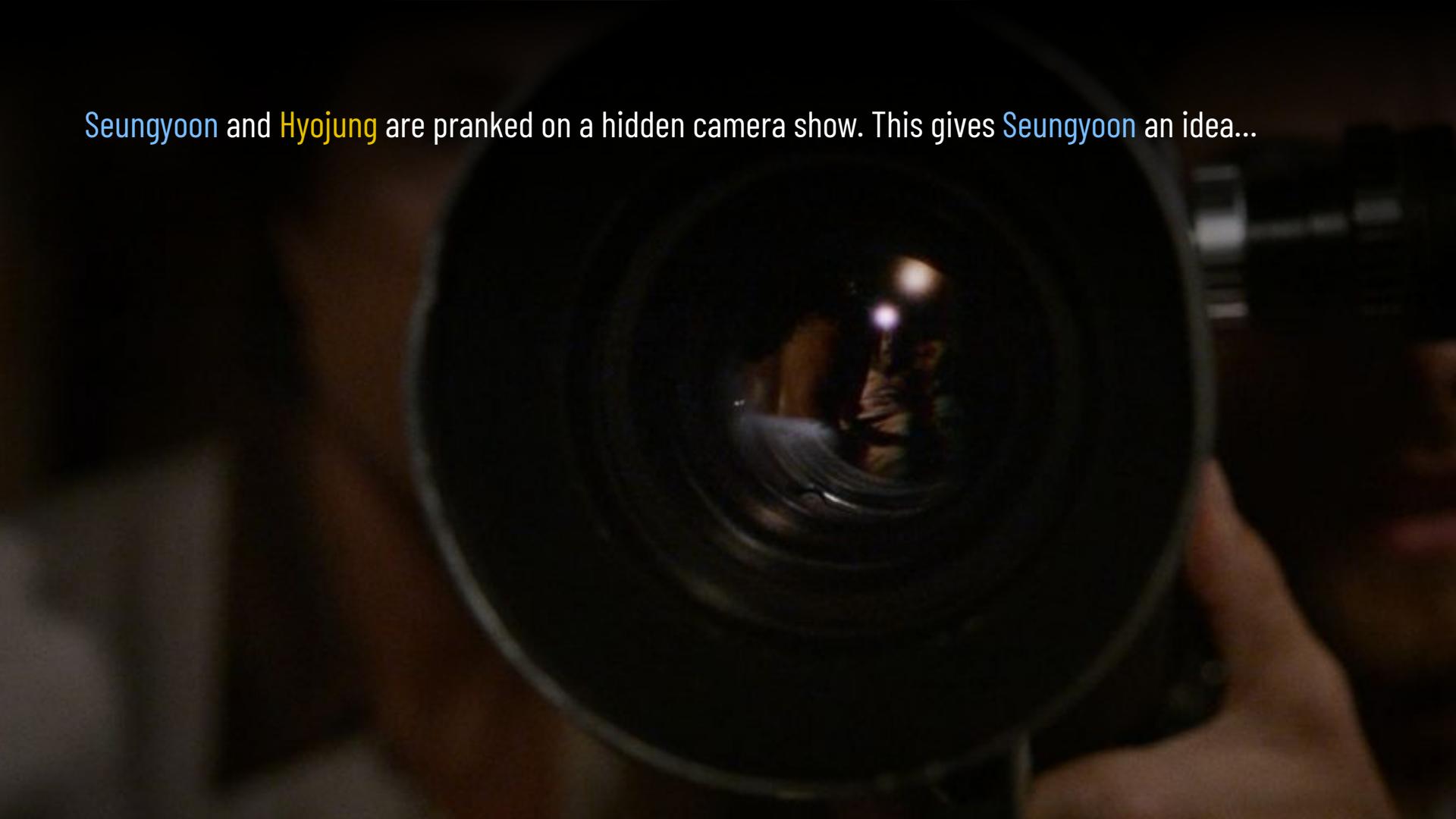


This creates a firestorm in his family, resulting in a family dinner, where **Hyojung** sees the nest of vipers with her own two eyes.

She learns **Seungyoon**'s secret – the woman he calls “mother” is really his grandmother, while his “sister” is his mother... the black sheep of the family who got pregnant during her wild youth, then left **Seungyoon** unattended in a bath, causing him to nearly drown.

To avoid scandal, she moved away and **Seungyoon**'s grandmother adopted him and presented him as a “late in life” baby. As a result, the fact that he is on equal footing with his “mother’s” other children gall them and they have been devising ways to have him disinherited.

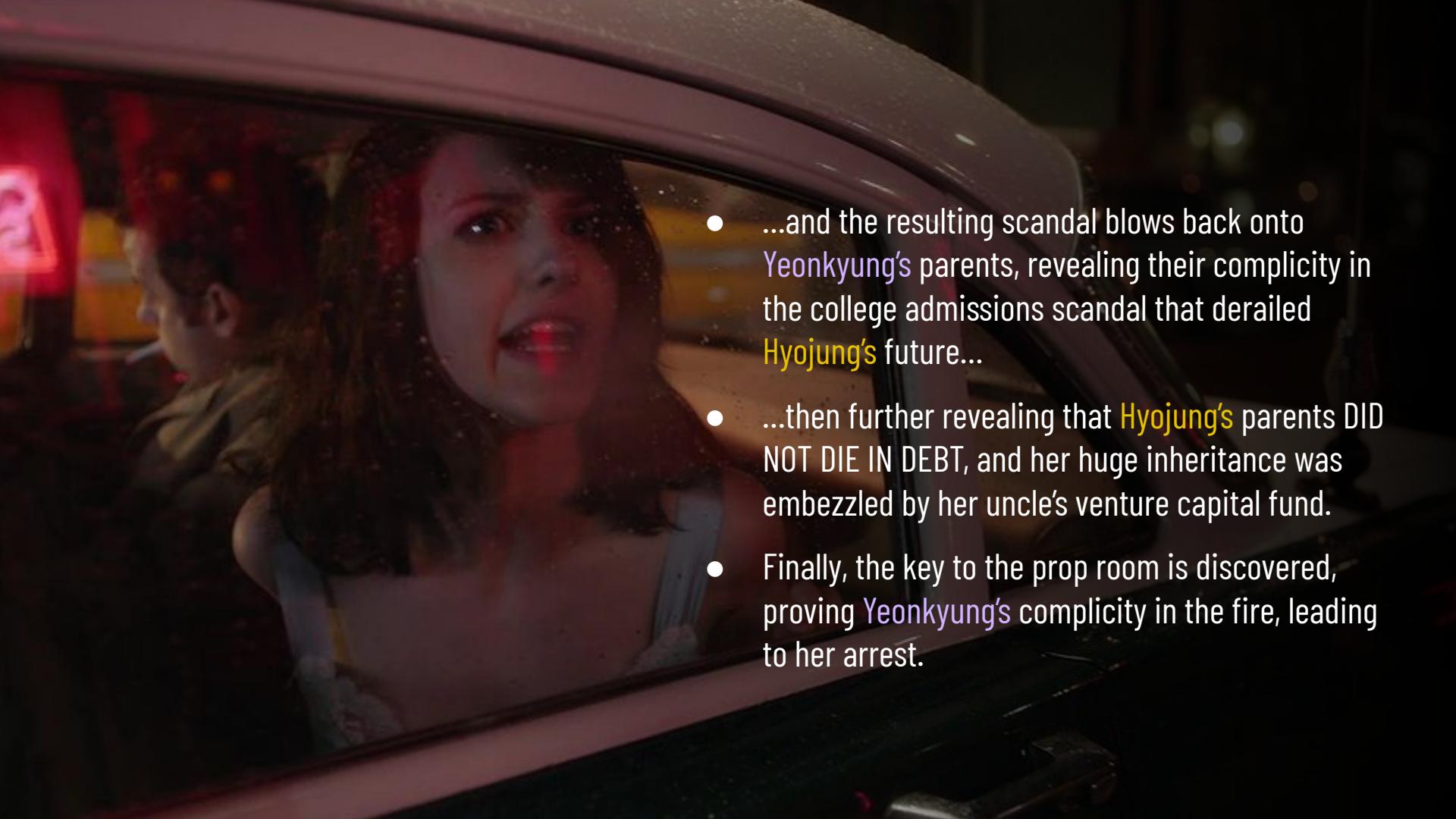
Seungyoon and Hyojung are pranked on a hidden camera show. This gives Seungyoon an idea...



In an ingenious chain of cause-and-effect that allows **Hyojung** to finally be both strong AND empathetic and **Seungyoon** to be strategic AND vulnerable:

- a hidden camera crew paid to get compelling “behind the scenes” footage captures Yeonkyung threatening **Hyojung**, ruining Yeonkyung’s squeaky clean image
- **Hyojung** stands up to BOTH of **Seungyoon’s** mothers – biological and adopted, and wins their respect and their blessing to be with **Seungyoon**.
- **Seungyoon’s** siblings’ attempt to sabotage him is revealed, leaving them scandalized...



- 
- A woman with long dark hair is looking out of a car window at night. She has a surprised or shocked expression on her face. The interior of the car is visible, and through the window, a city street with neon signs and blurred lights can be seen.
- ...and the resulting scandal blows back onto Yeonkyung's parents, revealing their complicity in the college admissions scandal that derailed Hyojung's future...
  - ...then further revealing that Hyojung's parents DID NOT DIE IN DEBT, and her huge inheritance was embezzled by her uncle's venture capital fund.
  - Finally, the key to the prop room is discovered, proving Yeonkyung's complicity in the fire, leading to her arrest.

A close-up, low-angle shot of a man and a woman sharing a kiss. The woman has long brown hair and is wearing a dark jacket. The man has curly hair and is wearing a dark sweater over a collared shirt. They are positioned in front of a dark background with numerous small, glowing yellow and white circular lights, possibly from a string of Christmas lights or a similar decorative display. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on their faces and hair against the dark background.

Hyojung and Seungyoon finally admit their love for each other.

In a flash-forward, they are an established couple, with Seungyoon starring in global tentpole movies, while Hyojung has become a respected graphic designer, carrying on her family's artistic tradition.



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# LOVE LIES

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Stories worth the binge

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