**San Josè, United States of America**

As the nightfall approached, the rain intensified more and more, soaking the few pedestrians who still walked quickly through the streets, increasing their paces to avoid the incoming storm.

Coasting along the street, Amber stepped on the wet asphalt, clutching the hood of her sweatshirt to shelter from the strong wind.

She entered the pub down the corner, wiping the feet on the mat. The local looked like an old fashioned British brewery, with the wooden chair lined in front of the counter and a barrel full of wine in the side.

It was almost empty inside, yet it was heated and warm, giving Amber the possibility to thaw out her hands.

"Hi Amber..." - Behind the bar, a girl with asian features gave her a brief smile, as the girl sat in front of her.

The bartender had very a black hair, way more black than the other girl's brownish short hair, and her eyes were even darker, gleaming the reflecting light as she washed some glasses in the sink.

Amber waved back, distracted by the crowd of thoughts that flowed through her head. - "Give me something strong, Minji..." - She whispered in a puff burying her face in the arms, leaning on the counter.

Minji put down the glasses she was washing and grabbed a small sachet full of small yellowish crushed leaves.

"What is this...? I told you to give me something strong..." - Amber gave the dark-haired girl a questioning stare, as she put the leaves into a flagon of boiling water.

"Tea..." - She replied - "Nothing is stronger than calm".

Coming out from behind the counter, she held Amber's hand and led her to sit on a table. - "Now you will drink it and tell me what's going on... I can't let you go without clearing that pout out of your face..."

A faint smile appeared on the older girl's face. - "You always know how to amaze me, don't you?" - She said, taking a sip from the cup of tea.

"Amaze you?" - Minji replied with a slight chuckle - "You know, these are our market policies... I'm now allowed to sell alcohol to a sexy girl who is awfully tired and sad" - She continued - "Now, go ahead, you know you can always tell me what bothers you..."

"It's Jiyoon..." - Amber stated, looking down. - "You know Jiyoon even better than me; you know how she tries to protect me up to the extreme".

Receiving a slight nod from the dark-haired girl, she continued - "Jiyoon's having a lot of problems but she doesn't want to talk with me about it. Always going out to clubs, getting drunk and... Treating me bad"

"What do you mean?"

Amber sighed - "Lately, I feel like her sex toy. When she comes back home, she kisses me roughly and pushes me on the bed without even saying 'Hi'. It's killing me..." - She wept.

"I know how it feels..." - Minji whispered, seeking for the other one's gaze. - "Listen... would you mind if we speak more calmly about it?" - She awkwardly proposed - "You know... for a dinner?"

"Are you asking me out?" - Amber said, a wide smile on her face.

"Maybe..."

**Home, San Josè, United States of America**

The rain had stopped falling, and the sun was quietly setting in the horizon when Hyuna walked through the driveway, approaching the door of the house.

Hyuna looked tired.

Her body seemed to grow thinner and thinner, and her red hair that she used to wear long was now shorter and messier, even darkening into shades of brownish.

She wore a simple black skirt, the most unobtrusive clothing she was able to find inside of the wardrobe in the morning. It was out of tune with the blue t-shirt, but she really didn't seem to care.

Hyuna took the keys out of her handbag and turned the lock, pushing the door to go in.

Entering the house, the girl overpast the living room and went straight into the kitchen, where the newly cooked dinner gave off a scent of spices and some other food she couldn't really guess.

"Where have you been?" - Jihyun's worried voice came from the table - "I was waiting for you. Tonight it's just you and me".

Hyuna awkwardly took a sit in the almost empty table, sitting opposite to the other girl, who took a pot and two bowls full of hot soup. - "Where are the others?" - She asked.

"Somewhere..." - Jihyun gave her a weak reply, without looking straight into Hyuna's eyes. - "What about you? You're going out a lot lately..." - She said, drawing a smirk.

Hyuna slightly blushed - "You're kinda embarrassing me, you know..." - She shyly replied.

"Come on, kid" - The older complained with a playful slap - "I'm starting to worry about you... you are always either working or studying, you're only given one life to live, you know?"

Hyuna made a face, throwing a bread crumb at her - "Are you trying to say that I'm a loner?"

"I'm trying to say that you are eighteen and you don't even show interest in boys" - Jihyun remarked with a concerned voice - "At your age you should have kissed already"

The younger girl stiffened, nervously toying with the fork.

"I have kissed, already..." - She soughed. - "Just because I didn't tell you it doesn't mean that I didn't..."

Jihyun puffed doubtfully - "Hey, kid..." - She smiled - "I'm sorry, you don't have to do it for me. But, we've always talked about anything with each other, why wouldn't you tell me?"

"Because it was a girl..." -

Hyuna closed her eyes, without daring to raise her gaze to face the other girl, who was shocked. - "Why didn't you tell me?" - She asked - "Do you seriously think I'd be upset for this?"

"It's not about liking girls... I wanted to tell you, but I love someone who I shouldn't be in love with"

"She's not me, is she?" - She laughed, getting a playfully disgusted glare. "Jiyoon...?" - She said, gently caressing the younger girl's hands with hers.

"How did you guess" - Hyuna disconsolately asked.

Jihyun smiled - "I figured out. To be honest, I think I've known it for a long time..." - She admitted - "I'm not against it, anyway..."

"But we're speaking of the person who writes our songs, Jihyun, it can be a problem and it will...”

The older girl shook her head - "You don't have to give up on your dreams just because of convenience or stupid stereotypes... it will just make you sad" - She said, keeping to caress her hands.