Jiyoon kept motionless, holding the gaze away from those eyes who watched her persistently.

Her mother, who used to ensure safety and positive feelings, now had the eyes filled with loathing and disgust. The way her daughter dressed, her lack hair kept short and messy symbolized a defeat for her.

"You know you can't be a maladjusted forever..." - The woman ascertained with a stern voice - "...you can't just withdraw into yourself and refuse the world you live in. You will have to marry sooner or later..."

She didn't like being scolded about what she could and what she couldn't do. As the seconds passed, she felt more and more judged, in a way she couldn't deal with.

"If you don't make progress, I will be forced to send you to the military service..."

The girl's tear started falling on the cheeks, slowly, relentless. - "I'd rather be a soldier than live my life here..."

**2007, Panmunjeom, North Korea**

Some people say the more you walk, the more you will able to.

Encouraged by these words, Jiyoon stepped in the brushwood quite quickly under the scorching sun. Beads of sweat covered her forehead as she walked further, but she didn't mind as long as she moved away from the school.

She needed rest. The training sessions were exhausting and the lessons worsened the situation by adding two unneeded hours of study a day, even if often skipped by the black-haired girl.

She kept walking forward.

The trail the girl was passing trough led very far from the school, and Jiyoon knew about it, but she couldn't care less.

At the end of the beaten path, the tall grass resumed covering the whole valley, except for a little railing that bordered an overgrown lawn full of marble stones lying in the middle.

A more in-depth look revealed they were tombstones.

She was about to go ahead the enclosure, when she caught some voices behind one of the biggest stones.

"Did you bring it?" - A familiar voice spoke.

Quickly, Jiyoon lowered to hide in the grass. Watching trough the blades, she recognised the sandy-haired girl together with another woman, who had darker eyes and hair.

"I'm not just anyone, Gayoon, please..." - The stranger said, moving closer.

The girl approached and tried to lean a kiss on Gayoon, who rejected. - "We broke up, Hyunjung, deal with it. I'm here because I need you. Did you bring it?" - She repeated.

Reluctantly, the girl opened a package she had taken from the backpack and a syringe.

From the hiding place, Jiyoon couldn't recognize the drugs, but judging from the shape, they had to be painkillers.

"It shouldn't have ended like this between us..." - Hyunjung said forlornly, before walking away towards the opposite side of the cemetery.

Jiyoon waited there, still unsure whether walk away or stay. The other girl was gone, but the sandy-haired girl didn't seem willing to leave. Instead, she sat leaning against the tombstone.

"Ehi, she's gone, you can get up!"

The dark-haired girl lurched.

Watching through the railing, she spotted Gayoon watching towards the point she lay on, a smirk painted on the face. Wiping the hands from the soil, Jiyoon stood up and overcomed the banister.

She was a little bit awkward, but she sat near her, the back leaned on the cold marble.

"I won't..." - She began - "I won't tell anyone about the drugs".

Gayoon just gave a slight nod, her smirk turned into a bitterswet smile.

"Don't judge me, babygirl" - She replied. - "We are all busy pretending to be strong people enough that we often forget about the pain. Sometimes it's just unbearable, and I can't help about it..."

Something, hidden in the girl's eyes, told Jiyoon it was not a matter of physical pain. There was far more than a soldier who takes drugs to perform better behind that gaze.

She felt they shared something, in their lives.

"Do you have a family somewhere...?" - She shyly asked.

Gayoon looked impressed by the unusual question she was being asked. Nobody had ever cared about her, least of all her family situation.

There was something special about her. Looking from afar she was just a nosey girl who wandered in the fields to skip lessons.

But the sandy-haired was taught to give people a closer look, and the more she deepened the gaze the more she grew unknown feelings towards the girl. She had wanted to protect her from the beginning, after all.

"Yes, I have a sister somewhere..." - She finally replied the question. - "Social services took me away from her when I was fourteen; they said she was ill..."

The shaky voice left no doubts.

"She abused you? I mean... sexually"

Once again, Gayoon could tell the girl had a special way to read through her mind. A way that buffled her, yet gave a warm feeling of safety and comfortation.

The reply was left implied. Instead, a question popped into her mind.

"Babygirl, do you believe in love?"

Jiyoon's memories flew back to the last days at home.

...You can't refuse the world you live in... You will have to marry sooner or later...

"No, I don't" - She firmly replied.

The other girl turned the head to watch those black eyes better. She took a slow breath and closened the face to Jiyoon's.

Their lips were about to touch, when the younger girl pushed away the sandy-haird girl, turning to leave.

"I think..." - She babbled - "I think I have to go, sorry..."