**San Jose, United States of America, December 21, 2010**

The day of the solstice, a thick snow had started falling in the grey sky, whitening the top of the roofs and the streets.

As usual, a lot of people wandered in the streets, wrapped in heavy jackets and windbreakers, often chasing after those shops whose windows were still opened to buy Christmas gifts last minute or burrowed in the cafeterias to find shelter from the cold.

The kids played in the middle of the road, loudly yelling and throwing snowballs at each other.

The entire city seemed to freeze, both literally and figuratively, into the lulling idleness of the holidays.

Everybody seemed to be happier and more excited than the usual, except for the girl who walked on the sidewalk, heavily clothed with a dark blue jacket and a black woolen cap.

Hyuna was blankly listening to music through her headphones, trying to ignore the searing pangs of pain that hit her back steadily.

Her cracked ribs were still bandaged and every time her mind came back to it, she would think back to the violent fight that she had with Amber.

She was still shocked by the way they had acted impulsively, without thinking to the consequences. The girl kept repeating to herself that it was for a good purpose, but she couldn't get rid of the feeling that Jiyoon would have been happier unaware of all.

Hyuna had witnessed the quarrel between Jiyoon and Minji.

She hated it all... their yells, their insults, and their friendship that came to an end in the worst way ever, and it was all so useless.

Jiyoon had started flirting and dating other girls who were prettier and in a better shape than her again, without even noticing her sorrow.

She breathed a sigh and entered a little café on the street corner. The place was gaudily decorated with dozens of decorations, and there even was a real fir covered with ribbons and Christmas lights.

Recognizing the two girls who sat near the counter, she headed towards them.

Jihyun was busy texting with her phone. Her face looked nervous and her cheeks were already verged to shades of red, a little bit because of the freezing temperatures, a little bit because of the beer she was sipping.

Next to her, Gayoon sat with a slight smile that became brighter when she spotted the newcomer at the entrance.

"Eli, Hyun..." - She called out aloud - "Where have you been all the day, we were worried" - She pouted.

Hyuna took a seat at Gayoon's side, her glance still slightly crestfallen - "I didn't feel like going out..." - She replied in a whisper, rubbing her aching hip with her gloved hands - "I spent a sleepless night because of this stupid bandage..."

"A drink will do the job" - Jihyun chuckled, taking another sip - "It kills the pain..."

"Are you killing your pain too much?" - Hyuna tantalized - "If you get drunk before dinner you will get dumped. And stop texting with him, you don't want to look too desperate, do you?" - She added, pointing at her phone.

"I'm fucking nervous..." - Jihyun whined - "Dani wants to introduce me to his sister"

"What's wrong with it?" - Gayoon asked.

"His sister is awesome, that's it" - The girl shrugged - "She owns an entire editing company and I am a sleazy failure of a singer, don't you think it'd be embarrassing to me if we spent the whole night discussing about my futility?"

"Is she cute too?" - Gayoon tantalized, arousing the anger of the older girl, who playfully slapped her.

"Ok, ok, I was just asking..." - She added - "I know you're awesome too..."

"Swear solemnly that you won't chat her up, will you!?"

Hyuna listened quietly to the two girls who childishly fought and squeaked about the girls and boys, but her mind was thousand miles away as she thought about the only person who could make her heart keep beating.

Her life seemed so useless and frivolous without Jiyoon's image that warmed her up whenever sadness would get the upper hand.

Her mind flew back to the first moths they shared the same house. Jiyoon wasn't the gentlest and sweetest person in the world, and yet they had a special affinity, like two pieces of the same puzzle.

She had fallen in love for the girl since the first time her smile had enlightened her dark-skinned face.

When Amber had overwhelmingly entered in their lives, it was like a sharp knife had destroyed her heart into thousands of pieces. But now they were over, and she finally had the possibility to win her girl's heart.

She was grown up, why wouldn't Jiyoon notice her?

And yet she felt she didn't have enough valor to get such a precious girl. She wasn't brave, at all...

"I kinda don't feel well" - She complained, interrupting the other two girls' argument - "Maybe it'd be better if I went home..."

"What!?" - The girls exclaimed as if they were a single voice - "Come on, you are missing all the fun... how can you be sick the day of the solstice?" - Gayoon added with a note of disappointed.

"Do you want us to walk you home?" - Jihyun proposed, a little bit worried.

"No, I'll be safe, thank you anyway" - Hyuna sighed, standing up to leave - "Have a nice night and don't overdo with the cocktails, ok?" - She advised, hinting a faint smile.

She felt sorry for leaving them in the lurk, but she was way to weary to bear their rants.

It just wasn't the right day to party and she needed some time to spend alone.

Since it was getting late, the streets were getting deserted and the city sank into a deep silence, only broken by the sounds of the night clubs that could be heard into the distance, she decided to walk through the public garden.

Going home was sort of useless, and it wasn't even dinner time. It was way better to take a walk clear her mind.

She reached the wooden bridge on the stream, stepping on the old planks, and stopped in the middle, leaning against the fence that surrounded the sides of the path way.

Looking down, she spotted her image outlining on the clear water of the runlet that was enlightened by the crescent moon.

Hyuna quietly observed her impassible face that returned the gaze. Her reddish hair was messy as usual and her visage was ruined by the bruise on her lips caused by Amber's fist.

A bitter smile formed on her face. It didn't matter if Jiyoon wasn't aware of it, she loved her and she did the right thing.

Turning a blind eye to the problem wouldn't have cradled her into a blissful ignorance, it would have just worsened things and eventually she would have suffered even more.

Looking at the stream again, she noticed another face that returned her gaze from the mirror of the water.

She wasn't bewildered or startled, though, because the face that she saw wasn't just anyone. The girl's dark-skinned face was framed with those charming short hair of the darkest shade of black.

Jiyoon smiled to her.

"I'm sorry if I scared you..." - She said, patting gently her hair - "...but I wanted us to be completely alone"

Hyuna turned towards her, to watch her directly in the eyes. Jiyoon's beauty was breathtaking as always, but something unusual shone in the older girl's face that night.

It wasn't the usual goddess who looked at everyone with her cold eyes. Her expression was warm and relaxed.

"Sometimes I wonder the reason why we always choose to be with the people who make us happy but we never make anything to make them happy" - Jiyoon said, with a sorrowful expression.

"Each time I promised to myself that I would have made a better choice I betrayed myself" - She added, her dark eyes looking at the younger girls' - "But not this time, Hyun... this time I am going to make the right choice"

Hyuna quietly stared at her, unable to utter a word.

"Amber didn't cheat on me. It was me who betrayed her trust and I deserved what she did to me..." - A tear flowed on her cheeks, wetting on her features - "I lost my girlfriend and my best friend because of my mistakes..."

"...but now I have the chance to make it up..." - She said - "Because there's another girl who loves me..."

Hyuna's heart was pounding as she listened to the older girl's word.

"I know that you've been loving me quietly for all this time..." - Jiyoon added - "What you did was just brave, and I think I ended up falling in love with you like I never thought I could fall with anyone..."

"...I am looking for redemption" - She whispered - "Will you accept me, even if I neglected you all this time and if I made you suffer?"

They interlaced their hands and their bodies touched, wrapping into a warm hug.

"Of course I will, you idiot" - Hyuna replied with tears in her eyes - "I'm waiting for this moment since the first time I met you..."

Their faces neared to each other.

And while the water of the stream still flowed in the watercourse, and the crescent moon still shone in the sky, their lips touched, slowly deepening the kiss with fervent passion and endless love.