

Wallace High

By

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***Free*editorial** 

“I couldn’t find anything wrong with your ears, maybe you’re hallucinating because you’re stressed out” said the doctor. I’ve seen tons of doctors’ but all of them said the same thing to me maybe it’s because you’re stressed out. I wouldn’t deny that, I have to memorize scripts and write new songs for my groups’ next album. It isn’t as easy as people think it is to be an actor and an idol. “Thank you for the consultation.” I said to the doctor with a smile. He smiled back and I walked out. “Calling for Mr. Mark? Mr. Mark?” the nurse called. I pulled my face mask over to cover my face as I walked towards the counter. She looked at me and smirked. I paid the consultation fee and left. My manager was in the van across the road about 25 metres away from me. I took out a black cap from my back pocket, put it on and pulled it over my face to avoid people from recognising me. I looked around and saw a group of high school girls pulling out their phones and running towards my direction. Immediately I took off to the opposite side of the street where the van was. It might’ve seemed cold to some people and I did feel bad about doing it but it is extremely difficult to waddle through 50-100 people crowding around you although your destination is only 25 metres away. I regret telling my manager to stay in the car at that time.

I managed to get in safe and sound without any issues. “You looked like you robbed a bank wearing all black. What did the doctor say?” my manager asked as he was pulling out from the parking lot. “Well just like all the others, he said that it could be due to stress but I don’t think so” I replied. “You must be sleepy from writing lyrics all night last night, why don’t you catch up on

some sleep? It's your final scene of this drama", "Ok, I guess I might as well. Could you wake me up when we reach the shoot?" My manager nodded. As soon as I closed my eyes, I could hear the ringing in my ears. It all started when I was 12 years old, at the time I didn't bother much since it was only faint and not frequent, but as I grew older it started getting louder and more frequent. Occasionally it would get so bad until I would have to fall on my knees or I would pass out. It started to get louder, so, I tried plugging my earphones in but that however just made the situation worst. It stopped only when I opened my eyes. "Was it the ringing?", "Huh? Oh umm yeah it was, don't worry about it and continue driving I'm fine." I tossed the other way and finally managed to get some shut eye.

"Stay here I'll come back for you." the voice belonged to a woman. She sounded panicked. I couldn't see anything. It was pitch black. I could hear footsteps around me. Suddenly something cold touched my shoulder. I jumped up and opened my eyes. My manager looked at me as if he saw someone being murdered right before his eyes. I found myself breathing heavily and realised that my managers' hand was on my shoulder. "Are you ok? I didn't mean to startle you." "Oh...don't worry about it. If you wouldn't mind could u get me a glass of water please?" I responded as I combed my hair down. "Sure" as soon as he left I touched my chest and my heart was beating as fast as a cheetah running on full speed. I wouldn't even pant this much when I exercise. My entire body was frozen and in shock. I looked around and I was the only one in the van. We were outside an abandoned building since the scene I was shooting there was a kidnapping scene. I opened the door and put my legs out. The staff members were running around the place with cameras, clothes etc...

My manager came back with a glass of water and I gulped it down, grabbed my bag and walked to the filming set.

The blazing sun outside felt like it was going to burn my baby smooth skin. Looking at the exterior of the building, it was old and run down with vines wrapping themselves all around. Part of the door looked like it got bit off by a monster with extremely powerful jaws since a whole chunk of it was missing though the door was made of metal. The door looked like it would fall off. Its' hinges were old, rusted and weak which made me nervous as I walked through it. I felt as if I had teleported myself somewhere else as soon as I stepped indoors. The interior gave off a dark and eerie feel like in horror movies where the ghost would appear out of nowhere. Though I knew we weren't staying for long, I couldn't help but feel uneasy with the situation. Chills ran down my spine which contributed to the eerie atmosphere. The ceiling was covered in cob webs at every corner and I would imagine a giant black spider with red piercing eyes and blood red stripes on its' back starring at me as if it were about to eat me on the spot. Areas in which were not stepped on were layered with dust particles and all sorts of dead insects which made me feel sick. I didn't think I could eat anything after that sight. The air in the building smelled of a rotting corpse which made the hair on my body stand up as if they were iron attracted to a magnet. The railings by the stairs on the way up were aged and rusted like the rest of the building. They looked like they would collapse if anything were to make contact or gently push it. With close examination, certain corners of each step were covered in moss. Paint on the walls was chipped off and other parts of the wall were covered with graffiti. Blocks of broken wood would be found all around the floor.

I walked up to where the filming was to take place. The strength of the unknown smell was faint but still lingered in my nose. The bright scorching sun shone down from a small quarter of the roof. Probably it collapsed which would make sense since there were blocks of wood at the entrance of the building. Just like the floor below, cobwebs were by every corner of the roof which was a disturbing sight. Although there was less debris up here compared to downstairs probably because the staff cleaned this level of the building. The walls were stained and the paint was peeling. Vines and moss could be seen though they only grew by the sides or corners. Some of the windows had no glass panels but those that did were shattered or scratched. I walked up to one of them to look at the view. The building overlooked a forest with a lake in the middle. It felt like a scene out of a fairy tale but it didn't last for long. There was a slight breeze, strong enough for me to feel. I felt refreshed until it brought a strange horrific scent. It smelled just like the first floor but more intense. I backed away from the window almost slipping on some moss but regained my balance.

"Mark, there you are. We were about to call you, nice timing." said the director. "Can we have Marks' makeup artist please?" she took me to a room where I changed and had my makeup done. I was too look as if I were beat up so I had 'bruises' all over my face and body. I reviewed the script as they were touching up my hair and went to the filming site as soon as they were done. "PLACES!! PLACES EVERYONE!!" yelled the director. I sat in the chair and was tied up, I was worried if I could act this scene well enough since I had to break the chair to free myself and hopefully the ringing sound wouldn't come. "*CLAP* ACTION" As soon as the camera started filming, the ringing started

coming back. I tried to bear it since the filming just started but it was even worse than the one before. This one was louder and higher pitched. It sounded like someone was scratching the surface of a metal and the screeching of car tyres combined. It was as loud as thunder. I attempted to use my strength to free my hands from the ropes but they would only loosen if I broke the chair. I was in a desperate state. I could feel beads of sweat trickling down my spine as well as down the side of my face and my neck. The camera was still rolling and the staff thought that I was acting but I thought I would have died. I jumped up and down with the chair still tied to me in attempt of breaking it. I used all the energy I had and after about 4 tries the chair finally broke. I clutched my ears desperately and fell on my knees, shivering as if I was covered in snow without any warm clothing. The ringing slowly reduced as if it was retreating after a long fight. "CUT!! WELL DONE BUT INSTEAD OF HOLDING ON TO YOUR EARS, HOW ABOUT GETTING UP AND RUNNING? TAKE 2 WILL BE IN 20 MINUTES." said the director. "Why don't you rest I know it was because of the ringing but the others don't, so try not to push yourself too much ok?" my manager said with a sense of worry in his tone while wrapping me in a wool blanket. I nodded and pulled the blanket over myself. My clothes were damp with perspiration. I sat there still trembling when a sudden breeze grazed my skin. I took a deep breath and gathered myself to my feet. I went over to the water table and chugged down some water. I felt revitalized and took my position again on another chair since I broke the previous one.

The rest of the filming went by without any other major complications. I went to the changing room and changed into the clothes I wore earlier and

looked at myself in the mirror. Sweat was dripping down my face and arms as if it were in slow motion. I went out, removed my makeup, gathered my stuff and left for the car as my manager instructed me to. As I was walking down I heard some footsteps behind me. I used the corner of my eye to see who it was and caught a glimpse of someone dressed in complete black behind me. I speed walked in hopes that he would stop following me or maybe I was mistaken. I took the longer way to the van when I heard the footsteps behind me start to get faster. I started to run. I was hoping that I wouldn't trip on a vine or wood or slip on some moss .I was running for at least 10 minutes at full speed when suddenly my arm was grabbed. I turned around ready to punch someone and run when I looked at the persons' face, he looked familiar until I realised that it was my stylist. He gave me the look as if I had gone insane. I was startled and didn't expect it to be him. My facial expression was just blank." You left your wallet in the dressing room." I just continued to stare aimlessly at my stylist when I could finally say "huh? Oh thanks". I smiled awkwardly, took my wallet and speed walked to the van. I felt like an idiot for not looking back at whose face it was.

"You're back? Do you think I could pop over to the convenient store for some ramen?", "Sure why not, make sure to call me if anything happens" I nodded as I went through my bag too look for my necessities. I carried along with me my wallet and phone. Pulling out my cap and face mask to wear, I got out of the van and tucked my hands in my pocket and went on my way. As I walked around with my head down, the ringing came back, though it was only in my right ear this time. Looking around I couldn't stop out in the open so I walked into a small alleyway and stuck my finger in my right ear on my knees.

Someone came behind me and put their hands on my head and I felt a force rush into it and it relieved my pain. When I turned around to see who it was, I just saw an empty alleyway with newspapers flying around frantically. I was thankful and confused at the same time. That persons' hands were small and delicate like it belonged to a girl but the power that flowed through my head was strong. Getting on my feet, I looked around one more time, and checked my pockets to see if the stranger took anything from me but found my wallet and phone which was all that I carried with me. I thought maybe I was hallucinating and didn't think much about it. I went on my way to the convenience store bought my ramen, cooked it and walked back to the car to eat it there. "Where are we going after this? Home?" I asked mixing my ramen around in the cup. "Yea, home it is." I finished my ramen and looked out the window. It started to drizzle when I looked out though the sun was out. If only I had my notepad and a pen it would have been the best atmosphere to write a sappy love song. I continued to stare outside the window until we got home. "I'll pick you up later around 7.30pm" "ok".

I lived alone in an apartment nothing fancy. Occasionally, the other members would come over to my house since I always had junk food stored. It was nothing much though, just an apartment with two rooms, a toilet, kitchen and living room. One of the rooms was for my stage outfits and the other my bedroom. My bedroom wasn't especially large, just a desk in one corner, my bed on the opposite end, another door connecting to the toilet and a mirror next to my wardrobe by the entrance. That wardrobe was for everyday clothes; normal shirts, jeans and sweatpants and shoes.

I jumped on my bed and starred at the ceiling and thought to myself about

what people saw in me. Did they just like me for my acting? Or maybe my voice? Did they actually like my personality? I always wondered what I looked like in other people's view. I got up and walked over to the long mirror by my wardrobe. Looking at myself, I started examining myself from head to toe. I had thick half bleached hair; the ends were a hazelnut colour. The roots of my hair were a dark brown almost black in the dark. I had a bowl haircut which was often messed up. I didn't have a long forehead neither did I have a short one, either way my hair would've covered it. My eyebrows were thick and had the same colour as my hair roots. I had natural double eyelids and the colour of my eyes was a deep brown colour. My nose was in between sharp and flat, just an average nose. My lips were rather thin. Considering the fact that I'm a guy, I had a fairly good skin complexion; clear, smooth and white but not a sickly white. I turned my head to the side to admire my jaw line; it was sharp and obvious, one of my favourite features. On to my upper body, I had a broad chest alongside broad shoulders. I wore a necklace with a pendent. It was a diamond shape with the letter 'L' in the centre. There was a small crystal jewel on it though it wasn't really noticeable. The rest of the material in which it was made out of was wood. I didn't know where I got the necklace but, I've always had it. This was the only object I had as a memory of my hard past in the orphanage. I continued my examination from where I stopped; my arms drooped until half way down my thighs. My hands were larger in comparison to those smaller than me. I didn't have bulging muscular neither was I impotent but I had a lean body. Though my legs were thin, they were considered pretty strong. Looking down at my feet, they were pretty big since I was approximately 185cm tall. I turned around and tried looking at my back,

my back muscles could be seen but they weren't that obvious when I was wearing a shirt. Scanning downwards, I looked at the scar on my left arm. Apparently it was a burn mark that I had gotten when I was younger. I looked down at my stomach and pinched it. I wondered how much I weighed. The last time I weighed myself I was approximately 69 or 70 kilos but that was last month so it's inaccurate now.

I had a sudden burst of wanting to go jogging after looking at my figure which I wasn't that proud of. I grabbed my sweat pants, changed and went downstairs. I walked out of the apartment and felt an immediate need to retreat and snuggle up in my blanket but, in order to get fit I decided to ignore that feeling. I ran around the building at least 4 or 5 times I lost track after half of my first round. It felt good to go out and get some fresh air rather than rotting in my room upstairs. I turned on the air conditioning as soon as I got in. I was completely drenched in sweat. I took a hot bath and changed in to my white top and black skinny jeans. Since I was going to the company this late at night, I packed spare clothes in case if I had to stay overnight there. I packed with me my toothbrush and toothpaste, sports shoes, grey shirt and distressed jeans. I put on my cap, face mask and my black high cut converse.

Before I went to the company, I went to grab dinner at the convenient store just 2 onigiris'. I packed one in my bag for my midnight snack and the other I ate as I walked to the bus stop to wait for my manager. I stuffed the last bit of it into my mouth and swallowed. All of a sudden, the ringing came back and it was intense I pulled myself together and waddled a few more steps into a small corner. I pushed my forehead against the wall while plugging my ears with my two index fingers. Again I felt someone touch my head and a source

of power flowed from their hands into my head. Once again the pain left my ears. As soon as I felt the pain leave my ears, the person removed their hands but I grabbed it without turning around. The person pulled their hand out of mine “Come to Wallace high”. Immediately I knew that it was a female, her voice was strong but gentle and her tone filled with confidence. I turned around to look but she disappeared. Once again, she left without a trace. I was definitely not hallucinating. This happened a second time and she even spoke to me. “Wallace high?” I said to myself. What did that mean? I assumed it must’ve been a place since she said come...but where? I pulled out my phone and searched for it. No results pulled up, it took me a while to realise a piece of paper with an address next to me. She must’ve left it here for me. I picked it up and shoved it in to my pocket. I looked at the time and it was 7.20pm. I sprinted to the busstop to find my manager waiting for me.

A couple of days had passed since that weird incident with that girl. The ringing still kept coming back and going away like usual. I had the whole week to myself, but, I didn’t have anything in particular to do. I continued to lay in my bed and stare at the ceiling of my room. Soon I heard a faint grumble sound coming from my stomach which told me to get up and look for food. I checked the time and it was already 3.00 in the afternoon, the perfect time to have a late brunch. I cleaned myself up and changed into a plain black top, black skinny jeans and black shoes. I stuck my hand in my pocket to find myself pulling out a scrunched up piece of paper. I smoothed out the piece of paper and there was an address written on it and at the very bottom there was the words “Wallace High”. Instinctively, I knew what I was going to do on my week off. I packed some clothes and money in a backpack, shoved my phone

in my pocket and had a quick breakfast of instant rice and 2 soft boiled eggs that I bought at the convenient store. I hauled over a taxi and showed him the address. He turned around and looked at me and said “Are you sure you got the right address?” I looked at him and nodded unsurely. Was it somewhere abandoned? Was it dangerous? Would that girl be there? I didn’t know, but, I was looking for answers. At one point, I looked out the window to admire the view when I came to realise that we were going to the mountain side. I was dropped off somewhere in the forest and paid the taxi driver. It was about an hour or two of driving and my butt was sore from sitting down for too long. “Was this why he asked me if I was sure? Probably he thinks I’m insane” I said to myself.

As I was about to wonder around, I heard the sound of leaves being crushed behind me. I turned around and there was a girl. She wore a grey hat, black shirt, a checked button up shirt round her waist, distressed jeans and black sports shoes. “I was expecting you” she said. I looked at her sceptically and said “Do I know you?” “You seem to have forgotten me already though it has only been a couple of days.” she replied. I looked at her and scrunched my eyebrows. She started strutting towards me with her eyes fixed on me. Soon there was only a meter distance between us and she said “Recognise me now?” I lifted my eyebrow but when a sudden thought hit me that I knew that voice, that confident tone... “YOU’RE THAT GIRL! THE ONE THAT HELPED ME!” I observed her facial features as I would say they were pretty nice. She had big, light brown eyes with double eyelids, average eyebrows, a high but blunt nose and thin lips. Her hair was a light brown, slightly darker than her eyes and her skin was pale almost similar to mine but I was still

fairer. She smirked at me as if I were a fool, lifted her hand and shoved me. I fell backwards and rolled down the small hill. I looked at her in surprise.

“What was that for?!?!? Sorry I didn’t recognise you but that hurt.” she stared at me with a sassy attitude and said folding her arms “Look behind you.” I turned around and saw a small cave like tunnel big enough for me to squeeze myself through. I walked out the other end and found my jaw opened. “I’m Lauren Lim, 24, call me Laur and welcome to Wallace high” she said as she walked up and stood next to me. Was this even a school? It looked like something out of a fairy tale. The school looked like a castle with high walls surrounding the school. The entrance was grand and had a walk way. An old tree grew in the centre. The school was made out of concrete and stones like any other castles. It looked magical. I pinched myself to pray and hope that I wasn’t dreaming which obviously I wasn’t. “What do you think?” asked Laur. She continued to walk straight down the walk way when I noticed a crowd not more than 20 people were standing in front of the big tree in the centre. But one man, he stood in the centre and starred at me as if I was in trouble. He was well built, had broad shoulders and wore a suit with his hands in his pocket. I assumed that he was the principle of the school, looking at his attire. He tilted his head sideways and continued to stare at me with an aura which was indescribably strong.

He brought me to his office. “Have a seat. I’m Mr. Lim.” he said as he sat down. I sat down awkwardly while looking around. His office was like a library, filled with various books. There was a desk at the end of the room and behind the desk was an image of a tiger with its jaws opened, in the centre of its mouth, there was the letter ‘W’ AND ‘H’ side by side which was most

likely to stand for 'Wallace High'. "What brought you here? Did you accidentally stumble upon this place?" he asked. He had a deep voice but spoke clearly. "Um... No sir. Lauren told me about this place." I replied trying to sound confident. "Laur? If that's so there must be an explanation." he replied with an astonished tone as he lifted his eyebrow and stared at me. I explained to him about the ringing in my ears and my encounter with Laur when we were complete strangers. "Give me your hand." I looked at him questionably but still reached out to him. He closed his eyes and tilted his head slightly as he opened them, he let go of my hand and sat closer towards me. "Do you know anything about this school? Anything at all?" "No sir." "Let me explain to you about what we do here at Wallace. We teach our students how to fight and maintain peace at the same time as well as teach them different skills in various fields.". My eyes widened as he told me. "Do you think you can do this? Here at Wallace we don't separate you by age, we separate you by your skills." he looked at me doubtingly. "How long will I have to stay? Will it make the ringing disappear" I asked. "Well, you could leave anytime you want but you would have to keep this place a secret and for the ringing, you would have to find that out for yourself. Will you stay or leave?" he smiled at me, waiting for my answer. I thought long and hard when I had finally come to a conclusion. I walked out of the office and found Laur by the door waiting anxiously. "Would you direct me to my room please?" I asked her in a playful tone. "Doesn't that mean you're staying?!" she responded with overwhelming joy, I nodded my head and she dragged me by my arm and directed me to the room. In front of the room door she turned to me. I looked at my arm and she did to. Her eyes widened and she immediately let go of me. "Here's your

dorm. I'm off now see you tomorrow." she said quickly out of embarrassment. I smirked as I watched her walk off.

I opened the door to my room and there was a bed by the window and a wardrobe in front of it. Majority of the room was made up of wood; the floor, bed frame, wardrobe, desk, chair, shelves and doors. "It's a woody room" I said and smiled at my own joke knowing how terrible it was. I placed my bag on the bed and pulled out my phone. It was surprising that though I was somewhere in the forest, there was still reception here. I called up my manager and told him that I was going to go overseas since I've found a doctor treatment for my ears and it might take at least a year. "I would take you to the airport but I'm not in town" he said sounding disappointed. "Its fine, I've taken care of accommodation and air ticket, all you have to do is tell our group and the 'boss'." He chuckled at my description and hung up. I looked out the window and saw that the school overlooked the rest of the forest. I unpacked my clothes and went to the toilet to wash up. This place was like a hotel, there were toiletries in the toilet as well as towels. I took a shower and brushed my teeth, it was a tiring long journey on the way here. Just as I finished changing, I jumped on my bed when someone came in and said "Classes start tomorrow at 7.30 so don't be late since it's your first day. I'm Mr. Tee. See you tomorrow." I nodded my head and he went out of my room leaving me alone again. I brushed my hand against the bed covers and blankets and they were silky smooth. The bed was nice and cushiony and the pillow was soft and fluffy. Though it was only about 8.30p.m, I went to sleep. "When was the last time I had to wake up early for school?" I said to myself while looking up at the ceiling.

It was the next morning and I woke up at around 6:30. I cleaned up and changed into clean clothes. I walked out of my room to find Laur by my door. "Morning, you seem rather awake?" she asked tilting her head and looking at my dress code. I wore a white top with my black jacket over it, grey sweats and my same old black sports shoes. "I slept pretty early last night since it's my first day." I responded without much expression. "That's true... anyways lets' go have breakfast." I nodded and smiled. We walked together to the canteen, got our food and sat down. "Nice...it's curry today. Yum!" Laur exclaimed with a hint of cuteness. I smirked at her and dug in. A couple of students walked in, grabbed their food and sat next to us. "I'm Jen" the first one said. "I'm Harry" the second. "I'm Ma-" "Mark Lee, yes I think we all know that; the leader in dynamite if I'm not mistaken. I'm Ryan" the last one said as he pulled out his chair and placed his tray beside me. Everyone else at the table started giggling and I didn't know how to react but to laugh it off. After breakfast, we had to do our own dishes. We pretty much had to do everything ourselves. Jen, Harry and Ryan went to class first as they finished washing their dishes before me but, Laur waited for me to finish. There was an awkward silence between us until my curiosity broke it. "Are you and Mr.Lim close?" I asked without expecting much. "He's my uncle." She responded with a calm look. I put my plate on the drying rack and turned to her. "What about your parents?" I asked getting more and more curious. She looked down at her watch and said to me "It's time for class, let's go" ignoring my previous question. I probably touched a sensitive topic and decided to stop asking. "Oh, yea sure" I responded feeling flustered. She walked ahead of me until we reached the door to our class. She turned around facing me and finally said

“Our first class is all about fighting. Do you know anything about that?”. “No?” I responded questionably. “Well then, you’d probably go to the beginners’ class. Don’t worry too much since Harry will be there with you, though they might test you first.” She said and then entered the room before I could say anything more. Just like my room, majority of the class was made of wood; the staircase by the corner which lead to the head masters’ office, the flooring and the racks which held the equipment. The walls were made up of concrete and stone though. In the centre of the floor, there was an enlarged imprint of the tiger logo I saw in Mr. Lim’s office.

“8.30, right on time Lauren and Mark.” said Mr. Tee. “If you don’t already know, we have a new student, Mark Lee.” Mr. Tee said to the class. Everyone turned to look in my direction and I just gave a light bow and said “Nice to meet you all.” “Let’s see your ability to fight. Harry, you’re up” said Mr. Tee, motioning me to stand in the centre. I walked up uneasily and stood face to face with Harry. “Sorry, this might hurt” he apologised in advance. Before I could respond, Mr. Tee had blown the whistle. We walked around in a circle still facing each other. Harry started towards me at the speed of light and I felt a large impact to my chest. I stumbled backwards, still on my feet and stood frozen in shock. My heart was throbbing insanely fast. I attempted to throw a few punches but Harry just dodged them easily as if it were a normal thing for him. When I threw my last punch, he grabbed my hand and threw me over his shoulder as if I were a piece of paper. I just laid on the ground as everyone continued to just stare at the two of us. Harry walked towards me and offered his hand. I felt numb all over but reached out to him. He helped me up and we faced Mr. Tee. “Well, without a doubt you belong to the beginners’ class.” He

said with a disappointed expression. I nodded my head and lined up in my original place. Laur standing still next to me covered her mouth as she giggled “wow... Impressive.” “I told you I couldn’t fight” I hissed at her “You really can’t” she said trying to contain her laughter. I gave her the death stare and she said “I can teach you if you want?” “Please do” I said, trying not to sound desperate. “Beginner on my right and advance on my left.” Mr Tee said. I walked over to the right end of the room with Harry next to me. “What do we do now?” I asked Harry. “Well we practice, that’s what we always do. Just use any of the equipment and practice with it. Mr. Tee is here in case if we have any trouble then he will help us. I’ll teach you some moves to help you get along well.” Harry responded. “Thanks” I said. “What would you like to start with?” Harry asked me with his hands tucked in his pockets. I picked up one of the wooden sticks that were on one of the racks and lifted it towards Harry “what about this?” I only recognised it from those ‘kung fu’ movies. They looked really cool when they fought with it. Harry looked uneasy with my choice but went with it.

Harry picked one up and told me to lift mine up towards him. “This my friend, is called a bowstaff” he said with the teacher voice. I was acting like a little kid that gets easily amused. He thought me how to spin it and how to attack with it. It took me about a million tries to finally spin it properly. It wasn’t as easy as it looked on TV. Harry and I took a break. It doesn’t look tiring at all but when you actually do it, it’s exhausting. “I’ve seen you do fight scenes in some of your dramas. I expected you to be excellent fighter though?” Harry said trying to make a conversation with me. “It’s different then actually fighting since the moves we do on TV are rehearsed over and over again to

make it look real.” I replied with slight embarrassment. “I see” He sounded disappointed as if expecting something more. “But, we actually do learn some real moves if it’s necessary.” Harry got up and said “come on, enough chit chat, we’ve probably got at least half an hour left.” I got up, picked up my bowstaff and walked over to where Harry was. “Shall we have a mini match?” Harry proposed with a delightful tone. “I accept your challenge, don’t cry if I win” I said, mocking Harry. He laughed and said “I think I should say that to you.” I smirked at him, shook his hand and walked to the opposite side of him. We lifted out bowstaffs’ ready to attack or defend. We circled around like our first match until I attacked first. He blocked it with ease. The sound it made was hard and loud. He pushed me away but I spun easily to regain my balance “Not bad” Harry complimented me. “I’m just getting started” I said and chuckled. Harry came at me this time. I blocked it and twisted his bowstaff so that I had the upper hand. He tried to push back but I applied more pressure and pushed him. He fell backwards and lost his bowstaff and as he was about to grab it, I put my bowstaff in front of him symbolizing that I won. He backed down and lifted his hands and in a joking voice he said “ok ok you win” and sat down on the ground. I offered my hand and pulled him up.

After the match, I needed to go to the toilet and as I was walking, the ringing came back. I stopped to plug my ear when my head was touched and the ringing stopped. This person’s power was stronger than Laurs’. I turned around to see who it was and Mr. Lim was standing behind me. I was speechless and didn’t know how to respond. “It’s something you can and must control” after saying that he walked off like nothing happened. My eyes followed him but my body was stiff and my mind was confused. I went to the

toilet still thinking about what he said. "It's something you can and must control." What on earth did that mean? I quickly finished my business in the toilet and went out after washing my hands. I walked back to the gym, and saw everyone leaving. Laur was still there punching the punching bag. "Slow down girl... Where did everyone else go?" I asked her tapping her shoulder. She gave a hard last punch and looked my way "Meditation class and what took you so long?!" she glared at me. "You were waiting for me?" I asked which was probably a pretty stupid question. "Who else is supposed to show you where the classes are? Lets' go" she said grabbing her jacket from the rack. She led the way and I just followed behind her trying to memorise my way around the school.

We had to change into different garments and remove our shoes. Boys wore a loose maroon coloured shirt and black oversized shorts and the girls wore a loose dull yellow shirt with black oversized shorts. I walked into the room and it was pin drop silent. Everyone was seated cross-legged on their own individual pillows with their eyes closed. I took a seat cross-legged like the others in the centre row in between Laur and Ryan. I closed my eyes as the others did. "I'm Ms. Ting and I teach meditation. Ok so now close your eyes, breath and let your thoughts run free.". I did as I was told and felt extremely calm until my thoughts ran a little too wild. I could hear the sound of a fire starting. There was nothing but black all around me. I saw flames rising. I felt immense heat almost burning me alive. I heard someone call me. It was faint, and the ringing started to kick in. The sound gradually got louder and louder until I opened my eyes. I looked around to find everyone else staring at me. I was covered in sweat though I didn't do anything. I touched my chest and felt

my heart beating rapidly. I was panting and my vision was blurry. “Mr. Lee let your thoughts flow. It gets worse the more you resist. Try again.” Ms. Ting said. I closed my eyes again and went back to the fire. “What can you see, feel, hear and smell?” Ms. Ting asked. “I see fire in the car. A child was stuck in the back seat. His mother was limping out of it. She took him with her and ran as fast as he legs would go. Blood was dripping down her face.” I scrunched my eyebrows at the sight. I started to hear ringing again. “Well done.” Ms Ling said with a pleasant tone. I opened my eyes and my heart palpitated like that of a bullet train. I wiped the sweat from my forehead. I turned to my right and saw Laur staring at me. She took out a packet of tissues from her pockets and handed it to me “Are you ok?” she asked with the concerned look on her face. “Yea, I am just a bit flustered.” I smiled at her and took out a tissue from the packet and wiped down my sweat.

Soon after meditation class was up and it was time for lunch. I changed back in to my white shirt, sweat pants, jacket and sports shoes. I tied my jacket around my waist as I was still sweating from earlier. I waited outside the girls’locker room for Laur. As soon as she came out, I looked at her and smiled, she looked worried as she walked out towards me. “Are you really ok? You’re still sweating from earlier.” “It’s ok if you want to rest.” I shook my head “I’m fine. I was just shocked don’t worry. Lets’ go grab lunch, I’m starving.” I said as I looked down at my stomach and rubbed it. Laur looked unimpressed as she snickered at me. “Come on then” I smiled at her and trotted by her side doing all sorts of weird things to keep her from worrying. “Don’t you have to tell your manager about your whereabouts?” Laur asked raising her eyebrow. “I told him that I went overseas for a check up that way

he won't contact me. After all, we won't be having another come back until later this year." I responded sounding enthusiastic about the situation. "Ah... I see" she said emotionlessly.

Soon we reached the canteen and picked up our tray of food and sat down by Ryan, Jen and Harry. "What happened during meditation class?" Ryan asked. "You were sweating like crazy, practically dripping." added Jen. "Oh that I guess I might've felt like I was actually in the fire as well." I said jokingly. The others giggled a little and continued their meal and small chit chat. Soon enough lunch was over and we had the rest of the evening to ourselves. I walked back to my room to take a shower but as I was about to go to the toilet, there was a knock on the door. I opened the door and found Laur standing at the entrance with her arms folded. "What are you -" I got cut off before I could've finished my sentence. "Didn't you say you wanted me to teach you how to fight? Well, move your butt to the training room this instance! Training starts today!" She said trying to shove me out of my room. "But I'm so tire-" once again I was interrupted. This time, she nearly kicked my head and stopped half an inch before it and said "There's no time to be tired". My eyes widened and my body started to harden. "You even have slow reflexes. Not off to a good start." She said ever so calmly bringing her leg down from my head. "Look at that, we just wasted 5 minutes of our precious training time just arguing." She was at most only 165cm tall which is 20cm shorter than I am. I didn't know whether to be more shocked at the fact that she nearly kicked me or the fact that her leg could reach my head. I continued to stand still like a statue staring at Laur. "What are you doing? Lets' go" she exclaimed with enthusiasm. She grabbed me by my wrist and dragged me

along with her to the training room also known as, 'Welcome to Hell with Laur'.

"Let's start off with the punching bag" Laur suggested with sparkles in her eyes, "it's my specialty." After hearing those words 'it's my specialty' I knew that I was going to wake up tomorrow with cramps all over my body. I stretched my arms and bent down to stretch my legs for a good 20 minutes to stall when Laur caught on, "Stop warming up and let's get down to business. I'm not a fool you know." She said as she turned towards the punching bag, "Well you can't be too sure about that." I whispered too myself. "I'm not deaf either." She said still facing the punching bag. "Come here, we'll practice a little on this and then spar each other." she said as she smirked. I walked over towards her and stopped right behind her having a bad feeling. She turned around and attempted to punch me but I dodged it clumsily falling to the ground. "Well, I guess that's better than standing without any reaction, still terrible though" she said staring down at me. I got to my feet and argued saying "you're so unexpected." She walked behind me and pushed me to the punching bag. "Try it." She said crossing her arms like a coach. "You mean punching it?" I asked turning around to face her. "If not what are you going to do? Hug it?" she said sarcastically. She sounded like a completely different person from when she was worried about me. I turned to the punching bag and she walked to my right observing me attempt to hit it. "Go on. It doesn't bite" she said. I ignored that remark and lifted my hands. I punched it averagely hard but Laur didn't look impressed she just shook her head and said "Harder. I know you can." I took a deep breath and a step backwards to breathe. I shook my hands first, took a step closer towards the punching bag, tightened my fists

and lifted them. Using full force, I gave a hard blow to the punching bag. A loud sound came from it and even gave me a shock. Even Laur was pretty amazed. The only sounds that could be heard were the ringing of the chain in which the punching bag hung from. I turned to Laur and said “Hard enough?” grasping my fist because of the impact. “You’ve got strength, I’ll give you that but you lack skill. I’ll show you some” she said facing the punching bag. She taught me how to dodge, defend and attack, though it was only a few moves it was exhausting.

We sat on the wooden staircase while drinking water and resting. I’ve never sweat so much in one day. Soon enough I could qualify as a waterfall. “You’re a fast learner” complimented Laur. I smiled a little until she said as she stood up “Get up, lets’ spar. There’s a chance you might beat me with strength but not skill” I cleared my throat and said “Well we’ll see about that won’t we.” I said as I grinned at her. I got up and walked to the centre of the room and looked over at Laur and motioned towards her as if mentally saying ‘bring it on’. She laughed at me and walked towards me with confidence in her posture. To be completely honest I was afraid of her with every step she took coming closer to me. We stood parallel to each other, our bodies facing the right but our eyes staring right at each other. We lifted our fists and waited for someone to attack first. Impatiently, I moved closer and closer to her first. I threw a light punch at her and of course she easily dodged it. She threw a few punches at me but I defended and dodged them. She stopped and stared at me I let my guard down and said “What’s wrong?” she started towards me with multiple kicks to my upper body. I dodged them by walking backwards continuously, lost my footing and fell down. She knelt down by my side and had her fist in

the air. I used my hands to cover my face but there was no impact. I removed my hands and saw her just staring, "You cheated!" I exclaimed. "There were no rules to begin with." She said as she helped me to my feet. "But that was uncalled for" I continued to complain. "If that were a real fight with someone from the real world, do you think he would play by the rules? Another point you should let your opponent attack first and realise their pattern" she said calmly, it was amazing that she didn't even break a sweat, she casually walked towards the staircase and picked up her bottle and said "We'll continue tomorrow. Get some rest, it's been a long day." She turned to me smiled and left. The room was filled with only my panting sounds. I walked over to the punching bag and hit it a few times. I started practising my kicks over and over again. Soon enough this became my daily routine, classes in the morning and training with Laur in the evenings every day. After immense trainings, I would take a shower, change and look out the window at night before I went to bed. The ringing in my ears was less often ever since I came here which was a good thing. My body started to become buff and I was more flexible compared to before.

A couple of weeks have passed and it was now mid-autumn. I entered this school in the middle of summer. I managed to master the bowstaff in my time of studying here. I was also good at sparring but my bowstaff skills were the best amongst the rest. A notice was put up on the bulletin board about a week ago saying that exams would be anytime soon. I walked around outside the school in a sleeveless top and my sweatpants for some fresh air since I've been too busy preparing myself that I hadn't had time to breathe. As I was walking back in to go for class, I bumped in to Mr. Lim. He walked with his arms

behind his back and a smile on his face. “Nice day out isn’t it?” he said as he approached me in a calm manner. “Sure is.” I said with confidence. “How’s everything?” he asked. “Getting better since I came here” “I’ve seen you during your meditation class, what you see then is normally what happened in your past or maybe a dream.” He said. “I guess that’s for me to figure out then. I should get to class now.” I said trying to avoid that topic. “Ah sure, carry on.” He said tilting his body. I bowed and went on my way to class leaving him behind.

I walked into the training room and sat next to Laur. I thought that she was too busy tying her hair to notice me until I attempted to punch her arm. She moved before I could even slightly touch it. “I’m not you” she said mocking me. “I improved” I said defending my pride. She stuck her tongue out at me and I ruffled her hair to annoy her. “I just tied it!!” she exclaimed and retied it. Just as she was about to punch me, Mr. Tee walked in “Settle down, settle down” he said waving his hands up and down. “You got lucky” she said with a revengeful face. I tiptoed then looked down at her and she stepped on my foot. I was so close to screaming ‘OUWWWW’ when I had to clamp my own mouth shut. “Today will be your exam for fighting. You will be up against people from your own group. You can pick your own equipment as well.” Mr. Tee said. I looked at Laur with a crumpled face “You’d better win. I’ve trained with you every day for this. If not I’m going to kill you.” She said in a joking manner trying to calm me down. “You can do this. Think of it as you life depends on it.” Trying encouraging me but it didn’t exactly do that. I looked at her “If I win, you have to win too. Promise?” I said sticking out my pinky finger. “What do you take me for?” she said as she wrapped her pinky around

mine. We'll start with the beginner group first. Your opponents are on the board that I'm about to put up." I stood up looked back at Laur and she mouthed to me 'Good Luck' I smiled at her and nodded my head and walked to the board alongside the others. I was up against Harry again. It was time for me to beat him with skill. When we fought for the first time, he won and when we fought the second time, I beat him with sheer luck. We were given time to warm up before the match. We were the last to compete.

An hour or so passed and it was finally my time to shine. "Harry and Mark." called Mr. Tee. I picked up a bowstaff and so did Harry. I didn't expect him to do so though. We got into our positions and the whistle was blown. I gripped my bowstaff tightly holding it in front of me. I started recalling everything that I learned. 'Let your opponent attack first. There are no rules in a real fight'. Nothing happened for the first 2 minutes until Harry charged towards me. I blocked his blow. I could feel that he put in a lot of strength in his first attack, though it wasn't strong enough to blow me away. I looked at him in the eyes and charged at him multiple times like how Laur does when she fights. I made light but quick movements to confuse him, though he managed to block it. I could feel that everyone was watching anxiously which was slightly uncomfortable, but pushed it out of my way. I looked at Harry and saw that he was already worn out from my multiple attacks. He started towards me and our bowstaffs' met and we were both putting in so much strength. He managed to hit my shoulder with it which started throbbing. I attempted to use a few skills which Laur taught me but my bowstaff was pinned down. I released it lightly and Harry was shocked and removed the pressure from his. Immediately I attacked him and pushed him to the ground. I pushed my

bowstaff about an inch away from his face. His eyes were shut closed and I just stared at him until he opened his eyes. The whistle blew and I pulled Harry to his feet. As soon as we turned to face the others, they started to applaud. I looked at Laur and she gave me two thumbs up and smiled from ear to ear. I laughed while looking at her expression. "How did you do that?" Harry asked as he turned to me. "Just one answer, Practice" I said, bowed, put my bowstaff back and walked to my seat next to Laur. She lifted her hand for a high 5 but I simply just ruffled her hair and sat down. She tried to reach for my head but I tilted to the opposite side so she resolved to punching my arm. We both stared at each other and chuckled. I looked over at Mr. Tee who was marking out fighting skills. He looked pleased as he wrote on the clipboard.

"That was a good fight put up by the beginner class. It's time for the advanced class to fight now." Mr. Tee said after putting up the board. I squinted my eyes to look at the board since it was so far. I saw Laurs' name at the very top. "Look!! You're first!!" I said with excitement as I turned to her. She wasn't looking at me. She was looking at another girl that was staring right back at her. They both sat there staring at each other with no movement. "Who's that?" I asked with my curiosity kicking in. "Sam. My opponent for this exam again" she said as she turned to me. "How would you know? You didn't even check the board." I disagreed. "It's been like that ever since she first came." She said starring at me, her eyes filled with fire. "How come I've never noticed her?" I asked her. "Well that's a pretty dumb question. I'm more advanced and prettier than her that's why." she said flipping her hair over her shoulder. I stared at her in disbelief and pretended to gag. "I'll get you back for that" she said making a fist at me. I chuckled as she got up and walked

over to the opposite side of the room. My eyes continued to follow Laur as she walked over to her side. I looked over at her opponent who started warming up with stretches. It looked like they were going to fight to kill. "Laur and Sam" Mr. Tee called. They walked up to each other with no weapon in hand and bowed. "The both of you are going to fight with no weapons this year?" Mr. Tee asked the both of them with a worried expression on his face. They both nodded still facing each other. "Ok then, places." He said nervously. Laur looked at me and I lifted my pinky in front of my face. She smiled a little, nodded and went back to staring at her opponent with a stern face. I've actually never seen Laur this way except for when she trained by herself.

The whistle was blown and all hell was about to break loose. They walked around in a circle still facing each other but maintaining their pace. They raised their fists and waited. Silence filled the air as everyone watched anxiously; even I couldn't help but feel afraid for Laur. Soon Sam attacked first after a long wait. She threw light jabs at Laur but Laur dodged them without breaking a sweat. Laur smirked at her and probably said something to her which provoked her causing her to kick harder and punch harder. The sound of the wind as she swung her arm increased every time Laur said something to her. I didn't know she could annoy someone to the point where they were so angry. Sam just lashed out at Laur but she just defended her attacks. They were strong and her arms were starting to get bruised badly. It's been 15 minutes in to the match and Laur hasn't attacked yet. Soon she noticed that Sam started to lose energy, she saw an advantage since she wasn't as alert as when the first match started. Her side was not guarded and Laur took advantage of that. Laur jabbed a few times right to her face without

actually hitting her, Sam then brought her arms higher to protect her face but forgetting about her stomach. Laur didn't waste a second and kicked her straight in the stomach. Sam stumbled backwards and gently touched her injured stomach and said something to Laur though, she didn't have any reaction. She came charging at Laur but she just dodged it like a piece of cake. Sam looked over at Laur, jabbed and gave her a high kick. Her leg hit the right side of Laur's face. Laur looked shocked as she wobbled to the side. Everyone was holding their breaths watching this match. Laur tightened her fists looking furious and started attacking Sam from left, right, up, down, every direction possible. Sam dodged them and said something which aggravated Laur even more. Laur charged at her with more power and attacked with multiple kicks. Sam got surprise and waddled backwards until she lost her footing and got hit by Laur's gigantic impact on her right arm and fell backwards. As Laur was about to attack her with the final blow, she got up and defended it. They stayed like that as they conversed for a while which made the both of them more annoyed. Laur wiped away the blood that was dripping down the side of her mouth and Sam massaged her arm. It was bruised pretty badly but that kick wasn't as hard as the one to her stomach. They both looked at each other and charge at the same time. The final result was that Laur had won by luck. As they both charged, Sam slipped and fell leaving Laur with the upper hand. Her hand was less than an inch away from Sam's face as she blocked it with her hands. The whistle blew after 5 seconds. They both backed away from each other and there was a loud applause.

After the advanced class finished their fight which took another hour and a half, we went to the canteen to grab lunch. Laur shovelled food in her mouth

as if she hadn't eaten for years. "Slow down, you're going to get indigestion at this rate. When was the last time you ate? My god." I said as I stared at her in awe. "2 years ago. I'm starving!" she said with her cheeks filled with chicken cutlet. "Don't talk with your mouth full" I said as I shoved a tissue in her face as it was disgusting to see. She grabbed the tissue as I let go, chewed and swallowed then said "Well, you asked me." arguing back I said "Ever heard of a rhetorical question?!" "What happens if I say no?" she said mockingly, "This" I got up from my seat and pinched her cheeks. She pushed me and I sat back down in my seat. She stared at me and shoved another piece of chicken cutlet in to her mouth. I looked away from her and went back to eating.

We had at least another 30 minutes to spare before meditation class so we went outside. We sat on the ground in front of the big tree in the centre of the aisle to the school entrance. I placed my head on her lap and said "Let me rest, I'm tired from my first official fight". She looked down at me and pinched my nose. "I think I should say that" teasing me. I pulled her hand away and observed her face. There was a pretty deep cut on her right cheek and her right lip was bruised. There were crumbs above her lip from the chicken cutlet. "What's wrong?" she asked nervously. "Are you 5 or something? How could you still get food on your face? Oh right because you were shoving it in." I said teasing her. She used her arm to wipe her mouth and I noticed that they were pretty bruised up as well. "Gone?" she said staring at me with her big eyes. "You had a hard day right?" I asked seriously. She put down her hands "Ah Nah" she said laughing it off. "What were you guys talking about?" I said curiously and worriedly. "Noth-" she tried to shake off the topic when I cut in. "I know it was something sensitive if not you wouldn't have attacked so

recklessly.” She sighed “I guess we’ve become close enough that I can’t hide anything anymore”. She looked up towards the sky “She first came when we were 15. We got close really fast and told each other almost everything. She started to get stronger than me and was looked up by the teachers. I was happy for her. I worked harder than anyone to become stronger as well. One day, as I was training by myself, she ran in saying that it was all my fault, that I was trying to ruin her for my greed. Apparently, someone told the whole school a part of her terrible past. She became an outcast and blamed it on me though I really didn’t say anything. I got to the bottom of who spread the word and told her but she said I was making up excuses.” she said with disappointment. “Ever since then I’ve been afraid of getting close to people until I met you” she said as she looked down at me. We sat in silence observing each other. “I wonder how many girls would’ve killed to have you on their lap like this” she said jokingly. I sat up and stared at her, shocked “That was so random” I said facing her. “You looked to serious. Lets’ go for class now?” she said as she stood up. “Wasn’t my head as light as a feather?” I asked as I stood up with that annoying smile everyone hates. “Actually it was pretty light, probably because there’s nothing in it.” She said as she turned to walk off. I chased after her, pushed her and she stumbled to the side laughing.

We went into the examination room one by one to sit for our own individual exam. A couple of people went before I did. I went in and sat down. Ms. Ting seated in front of me. “Ok, close your eyes.” I did as I was told and the child scenario came back. I practiced multiple times alone in my room so I got used to it and managed to remain calm because it was always the same scene that replayed over and over. However this scenario that I pictured was

different. The child and his mother were there but there was another man and baby girl. "He might come to you first" she said cradling the baby in her arms. The man was hugging the baby girl and said "I got someone to take care of her, he'll be here in a while. What about you?" he asked with worried eyes. "I'll probably have to leave him in an orphanage. If I'm still alive I'd go back for him" she said as she stared into the eyes of her baby. "Go then. I'll come find you." He said. She got into the car and everything went black. I opened my eyes and Ms. Ting asked "What did you see?" "A man, another child, a baby girl, the same mother and the same baby boy from before. They met somewhere on a mountain. They were conversing. Panicked like they were being chased." I replied. "Everything went black after that." I said as I tilted my head. Ms. Ting nodded and said "Well done. You've improved. You may leave now." I stood up and walked out of the room.

As I was walked out of the changing room, I saw Mr. Lim outside, "Would you come with me or a second?" he asked with an anxious tone. "Ah, sure" I said in response. We walked to his office and sat down. He pulled out a picture from a drawer. "Do you recognise anyone?" he asked. There was a picture of a woman and two men. "Ah yes, at least I think so." I've seen the woman during meditation class holding a baby boy. The man on the right, I've seen him today, during meditation holding a baby girl however, the one in the centre, I've never seen him before." I said as I recalled. "Would you mind telling me what happened in your mind during meditation class?" he asked as he moved closer towards me. I didn't think much about it so I just told him. "Where are your parents?" he asked. I looked down at my necklace. "I don't have any... I grew up in an orphanage" I responded without looking up. "Oh... sorry to hear

that. You said your family name was Lee right?" I looked up at him and nodded my head. "One final question, the ringing started when you were 12 right?" he asked I nodded my head once more. "Ok you may leave now." I stood up bowed and walked out. Why would he ask me those questions? Since when was he ever interested? What was going on? I walked back to my room and laid in my bed pondering on these thoughts. I sat up and crossed my legs, preparing to meditate. Maybe it's all related. I closed my eyes and the vision of the car came back. The lady got out covered in blood and carried her baby out of the car that was on fire. There was a forest and by the side was the road where the car was. There was a car coming down from the mountain. The same man with the girl got out and offered a ride and they drove down the hill. Ever thing became black which frustrated me and there was ringing in my ears to add to it. I opened my eyes and the ringing went away. I looked out the window and realised that it was dark out. I started meditating in the evening. I guess I was too into it. I walked to the training room to release my frustration. No one was there so I practiced with the bowstaff. It wasn't helping me at all so I just put it back and walked over to the punching bag. It felt good to release my frustrations though I still had many questions for Mr. Lim.

The next morning after I finished cleaning up, I walked to the canteen to have breakfast with Laur. As I was on the way there, I saw a bunch of people crowded around the bulletin board. I squeezed my way through and saw that it was our exam results. Laur was 1st and I was the 10th out of 20 people. I gave myself a pat on the back and went to the canteen feeling good. "Good Mo-" "Congrats on getting 10th in less than a year. Wonder who taught you that you picked up so quickly." Laur cut me off while stabbing her bread with her fork.

“I didn’t need any guidance. I’m special” I said joking around with her. “Maybe they reduced the difficulty of the marking scheme for you because there’s nothing in that little brain of yours without me” Laur said still going at her innocent slice of bread. “Thanks for tutoring me, now stop stabbing your food” I said pushing aside her fork from the bread. I quickly gobbled down my breakfast to see Mr.Lim. I had a few questions for him from yesterday. “You’re leaving me, already?” Laur asked with food in her cheeks. “I told you not to talk with your mouth full, plus I’m off to see Mr. Lim.” I said shoving a tissue in her face. She nodded her head and motioned her hand which meant ‘I got it get lost now’. I ruffled her hair then walked to Mr. Lims’ office.

I knocked on the door and then entered. “Ah yes, Mr. Lee how may I assist you?” he said as he motioned me to sit down. “I’d like to ask you some questions. Do keep this to yourself, I appreciate the privacy.” I said as I walked towards the chair. He look confused as well as concerned on what I was about to ask. “Why did you ask me those questions yesterday? If they revolved around me don’t you think I should know as well?” I asked as I got comfortable in my seat. He looked at me and raised his eyebrow. “What do you mean related to you?” he said. “Maybe that could be the reason why I was an orphan. You know something.” I said staring at him right in the eye. “Well you see, I have a hunch but I can’t exactly confirm it since I wasn’t there exactly. Do you still want to hear it?” he asked making it sound dangerous which made me more curious. “Yes, go ahead” I responded opening my ears. “A long time ago, there was these 3 good friends, 2 boys and 1 girl. They went to school together and had great fighting abilities. One of the boys was my brother. The other 2 were his best friends and those 2 got married so did my

brother to another woman. One day, that other guy discovered a power only he had. That girl was happy but her husband was greedy and wanted more power, he had enough money since he was born into a rich family. There was a box which could help him find that power. They had a son whom was a combination of the two. His father wanted to get his son to help him find that power as soon as he grew up, but his mother found out about it accidentally. She took her son and ran away or should I say attempted to run away. Before she left she met my brother, he had to flee as well because of the same reason however he had a daughter. He asked me to take care of her until he came back but he never did. Back to the woman, as she was driving she met a small accident and the car caught on fire. My brother picked her up and helped her continue her journey and dropped her off somewhere and they both went their own ways. The woman left her son in an orphanage in hopes that it would've been the safest place for him. She assumed that he would have that same power his father had so she hid him. She knew where the box and its' key was but she kept it to herself." He said as he played with his fingers. "What happened to the woman?" I asked with my eyes wide open. "I assumed she never came back. I don't know the exact details as I wasn't exactly part of it." He said then looked at me. "You think I'm that son don't you?" I asked questionably. The more I got to know the more I wanted to ask. Mr. Lim just nodded his head. "That man is now looking for the key to find that box." He said sounding disappointed. "Maybe that ringing in your ears is due to the immense power in your body that you haven't been able to control?" he suggested. I tilted my head in disbelief and said "If all this is true then who is my father?" I asked. "The CEO of Neli. Mr. Josh Lee" My jaw dropped and

my eyes widened. Neli is the biggest company, it's a tech company and is very famous. "We have to beat him. If he gets his hands on too much power then, that could be the end." Mr. Lim said staring at me with fearful eyes. "Can you teach me how to use this power I have and what can I do?" I asked. "Apparently, you can slow down time in your own sight so that you can see your opponents' attacks which increases your chances of winning. Your father was the only person who mastered it and is capable, even I can't do it." I was disappointed when I heard that, "Keep me constantly updated please. Looks like we'll see more of each other. Another thing, did you know my father personally?" I asked as I stood up. "No, only my brother and your mother did." He said as he wrinkled his face trying to remember. I bowed to him then walked out of the office. I thought about it and now it made sense as to why I had that burnt mark.

"Well, you finally came out after making me wait millions of years long didn't you." Said Laur peeking out from a corner. "You're stalking me now?" I said as I pushed her head back with my finger. "HEY!!! I'm your senior here you know?!?!?" pouting as she said so. "But you're still younger than me" I said mocking her. "You make me go insane sometimes!" she said with her pouted face. "I guess I've met my goal then." I said to her and started running to class. "EXCUSE ME?!?!?" she shouted and started chasing after me. As I opened the door everyone was silent and stared at me until Laur came up behind me and awkwardly stopped beside me. "Mr. Lee and Ms. Lim. I understand that the both of you passed your exams with flying colours but you still have to be in class early." Said Mr. Tee "Yes sir..." the two of us said simultaneously. We sat down quietly and continued fighting by nudging each

other. "I will now start announcing the names of those who are in the advance group. Lauren, Sam, Ryan, Harry, Jen and Mark. The rest of you are in the beginner group." I looked at Laur in awe "Did he just call my name? Did I hear wrongly?" I started panicking as I was filled with excitement. "That happiness will only last for a brief moment. Been there, done that" Laur said rolling her eyes. I had my first advance class and I came back all sore which wasn't exciting I understood what Laur meant now. I walked out of class massaging my neck, shoulders and arms. "How do you do this every day?" I stared at Laur like she was a beast. "Want to grab some food?" Laur suggested with a dash of joy in her tone. "Nope, not hungry. I'm going to go out for a bit." I informed. "I'm coming with you then. Not that hungry either." She said as she skipped in front of me. We sat down at the same place we did the last time. "Oh, is your necklace like the special type that shines in the sun or something? The crystal is glowing again." I was confused on what she said when I looked down at it. It wasn't glowing that brightly but enough for one to see. "Again?" I asked as I continued to stare at it. "Yea, it glowed the last time we sat out here." "Ah, really? I never noticed it." I said monotonously. I looked out at the trees when Laur said "Is it weird that I feel safe with you?" she asked me. She put her head on my shoulder. "What?" I asked shocked at her question. "Never mind then." She said and laughed it off.

Suddenly, she sat up straight and turned to me. "What's it" I asked as I stared into her light brown eyes. "What were you and my uncle talking about? Was it about me because I wouldn't tell you about my parents?" she said her eyes started to water. "No, it's not. Don't talk about it. I know you don't want to" I said as I gently pressed her head to my shoulder. "I didn't want you to

look down on me. The one person I can truly trust in the whole school.” She said leaning on my shoulder. “Why would I do that? It wasn’t your fault” I said comforting her. I stood up and pulled her to her feet and hugged her. She grabbed the sides of my shirt and buried her face in my chest. I gently pat her head and stayed still like that for a while until she was fine. She lifted her head looked at me and said “I’m sorry, your shirt’s all crumpled now.” “It’s fine. You always have my shoulder to cry on.” I said with a smile. I grabbed her shoulders and said “You can do this, now lets’ go in before we’re late again.” She nodded her head and walked beside me to class.

Soon the day was over in a blink of an eye and I had just finished training with Laur. I walked outside again just to be alone and sat by the tree. I looked down at my necklace and it started glowing faintly. I took it off and stared at it the whole time. Why was it glowing? Was there a scientific reason? I realised that it only glowed when I was around the tree. Mr. Lim came out and sat beside me. “What’s that you got there?” he asked. “Nothing” I shrugged and put the necklace back on. “Tomorrow I might need to go somewhere in the city. Something related to what we spoke about this morning.” He said tucking his hands in his pocket. “I guess I’ll come along then.” I said to him. There was an awkward pause between us, until when I had to ask him this question. “Does my father know that I’m alive?” I said as I avoided eye contact. “I don’t know about that but possibly. Like I said I don’t know in depth details. He’ll be coming here soon. He found out that the box was somewhere in this school.” He said as he turned around to look at the school. “It’s said that there was 2 keys needed to open the box but, if they were the wrong one, who knows what might happen.” “Then, how would you know if they were the

keys or not?" I asked. "Apparently they were supposed to react when they got closer to the box, maybe vibrate or make sounds? I'm not exactly sure I've never got the chance to hold the key." He said still looking at the school. "How did you know that it was hidden here?" I asked him as I started to get suspicious. "Your mother told my brother and my brother told me so he put me in charge of the school. He didn't say where it was and I didn't bother trying to find it, now your father started to look for it." He said as he turned his head and looked at me. "As far as I know, one of the keys is with your father." He paused and looked down at his feet. "You both don't know where the other one is. Do you?" I said attempting to read his face. "No. It's either that your mother took it with her and hid it somewhere but that wouldn't make sense since our father found your mothers' body and the first key along with her." he said rubbing his chin. "Have you gotten anything since you were a child or something like that." He said as he looked at me. Immediately, I thought of my necklace. "Not that I remember." I lied. "Never mind then, I'll inform your teachers that you won't be in for class. We've got to leave before anyone wakes up." He said as he stood up. "Get some shut eye, it's going to be a long day tomorrow. We'll leave at 4.30a.m." he said looking down at me. I nodded my head and he walked inside. I stayed out a little longer and looked down at my necklace. What was I to do if it was the second key? I couldn't help but feel slightly uneasy around Mr. Lim. I put my necklace in to my shirt, walked back to my dorm, cleaned up and went to sleep.

It was the next morning and I had woken up at 3.30 just to get ready to go out at 4.30. My eyes were still shut as I walked to the toilet. I might've rammed into a couple of things like maybe my table and chair. I walked in

showered, brushed my teeth and came out and changed. I wore my grey shirt, distressed jeans, black shoes, black hat and mask. I walked out of the school and waited for the head master. The sky was still black and I would've mistaken it for night. "Wow, right on time" he said coming from the behind me. I just smiled and scratched the back of my head. "I hope I didn't keep you waiting. Shall we?" He said happily. I nodded my head and walked out beside me. It was the first time in forever since I went back to the city. I was so focused on my studies here that I nearly forgot about my career. We took a taxi back and memories of how busy and insane my schedule was started to kick in. When we got down I saw people were rushing wearing suits and holding briefcases, eating on-the-go food and always on their phone. Back at Wallace I barely even used my phone because of training. Mr. Lim and I barely talked at all except for when we were alone and talked about the box. We walked to a cafe. It wasn't in the busiest area, more in a quiet and relaxing place. We ordered some coffee and sat down. "What does this have to do with us?" I asked as I looked at my coffee. The coffee art on it was pretty. It was a sunset or sunrise I couldn't tell exactly. "A couple of guys will walk in and we'll hear what they have to say." He said stirring his coffee. He then walked around and placed some things' around the plants in the cafe. "What was that?" I asked him as he came back and sat down. We were the only people other than the owner in this cafe. "Microphones. Here plug this in your ear." He said handing me a small black piece of technology. "What's this?" I asked as I turned it around in my fingers. "An ear piece so we can hear their conversation." He put his in and I put mine in as well.

We waited for about 10 minutes when a man dressed in black came in to

the cafe. He kept checking his watch when another man came in after another 10 minutes wearing a suit. He sat down opposite the other man and curled up close to each other and started talking. We could hear everything they said because of the microphones. I thought to myself, this is when I really need my acting skills. "We'll probably attack next week. The school will be closed since they get a short holiday. So far every year, every one of them went back home." The one in the suit said. "Fine, the students may be gone but their head master will still be there. What then?" the one dressed in black asked. "We've got enough men to hold him off as the boss finds the box." The one in the suit said. "Has he found the other key yet?" the one in black said. The other looked in our direction so I said "So when will our families meet? How about next week? My mother asked me to ask you." I asked. Mr. Lim looked surprised at my question and just said "Ah...Sure. I'd love that" he said trying not to sound flustered. I picked up my cup of coffee and sipped from it. The two men went back to their conversation. "Not yet. Its' better that we secure the box first. Besides he can find the box with that one key." The man in the suit replied. "We'll attack next Thursday then." The man dressed in black said. "We'll get what we asked for right?" he asked as confirmation. "You have my word." The man in the suit replied. "May I ask since I might need to know how desperate he is for that box? What does he intend to do with it once he gets that power?" the man in black said. "I don't exactly know either. That's for him to decide." The man in the suit said as he stood up. "I assume that we are done." and walked out of the cafe. The other man stood up and walked out as well.

We sat there quietly and sipped our coffee for another 30 minutes. As we got up he walked over to the plant where he put the microphones on and said.

“Excuse me?” “Yes?” the owner replied. “This plant looks nice what is it called? Is it hard to maintain?” He asked and the owner actually responded. I was so confused at that moment and waited for him to finish then walked out together. “I hope that you will take good care of my baby girl.” He said to me. At that moment I knew that he was acting. “Ah, yes sir.” I said. “She’s been through a lot. Please don’t hurt her.” He said. “Yes, sir” I said as we walked to grab a cab. “Let me take you home, my daughter will be pleased to see you.” he said as he opened the taxi door and let me in. As soon as we went in, he said “Sorry for making things awkward for you. I was afraid if he was still on to us even when we left the cafe.” He told the taxi driver an address and leaned back. We went to a house and stayed there for at least 2 hours before we went back to the school. As soon as we reached the school we walked in to Mr. Lims’ office and sat down. “Those men are assisting my father aren’t they?” I asked as I fidgeted with my hands. He nodded and said “We’ll have to be prepared for next week. We can’t trust their word.” “I’ll stay here with you. I don’t think that the two of us is enough.” I said nervously. “We have the teachers and maybe we can have the advance group staying here. There’s like 5 or 6 of you.” He said. “6. But how will we tell them?” I asked. “We’ll tell them that they have to stay for extra training. The teachers’ know about this situation so I’ll have them prepare you guys.” He said confidently. I nodded my head when a thought hit me and said “I’ll get going as I should start training more intensely.” I bowed and walked out. I walked into Laurs’ room and said “Come on let’s spar.”

We went to the training room and started off. “Kick me with all your might.” I said standing tall. She looked stunned and before she could say

anything I cut in and said “Just do it. I’ll dodge.” She raised her eyebrow and got into position. I closed my eyes and I could feel a cool breeze around me and I could feel power flowing through my veins. I thought of focusing on it then opened my eyes. Laurs’ leg came up towards my chest. I could see it in slow motion for 2 seconds and everything became normal. I got kicked in the chest and fell back. “YOU SAID YOU WOULD DODGE IT!!” she said running to my side. “I’m fine. Again!” I insisted as I stood up. “Why are-” she started worrying “Just do it.” I said. I closed my eyes again and felt the power flowing through my veins again. There was the cool breeze again and the image of the mother and the child or should I say my mother and I. I opened my eyes and saw Laurs’ Leg coming to my stomach. The same thing happened. 2 seconds of slow motion and I got kicked again I stumbled backwards and Laur came rushing again. “What on earth are you trying to do?! Kill yourself?!” she said. I ignored herself and said to myself “They say third time’s the charm” I got up and carried Laur up. “One last time, please. Attack me continuously.” I held her shoulders and looked her in the eyes, they looked afraid when she looked at me. I smiled and walked to the opposite side of her. I closed my eyes again and thought of my mother and I. I felt more power source through my entire body. I opened my eyes and looked at Laur. Her leg coming up to my chest in slow motion. I moved aside. She then attacked with her other leg and I dodged it again, it was in slow motion. She threw a few jabs at me and I managed to avoid them. I saw a chance to attack her. My fist stopped just before her face. Everything went back to normal at that moment. “I did it! I FINALLY DID IT! THIS IS WHAT HE MEANT BY CONTROLLING YOUR POWER!” I was overwhelmed with excitement but

Laur looked at me, confused by my actions. She pushed my fist down and said “What just happened? You reacted at the speed of light?!” “I’ve solved my problem now.” I said as I ran out of the training room. I went back to my room, cleaned up and jumped on my bed with excitement. I got this. I thought to myself.

Day by day the week passed and the day of the fight was coming up. I practiced an insane amount trying to perfect my ability in a week. It was now Monday. I walked outside to the front of the tree and pulled out my necklace. The faint green started to glow again. I knew that this necklace was the second key. “At least I know it’s around here.” I said to myself and walked back inside. The advance group was being trained for our big fight though they didn’t know what was happening, they just did as they were told. The beginner group went back home as they were told. I walked to Mr. Lims’ office, knocked and went in. “Let me deal with my father when the fight comes” I said. “You’ll have to train hard to be his level.” He said as he sighed. He probably understood where I was coming from. I nodded and bowed to him and walked out. Soon enough it was Thursday. We waited the whole day but there was no one. Soon it became dark and I heard footsteps entering the school building. I waited outside the building near the box. About 10 men who were dressed in black ran in to the school. I saw a man who was behind them. He didn’t run in like the others. He walked around the outside of the school with something in his hand like following a compass. I assumed that he was my father and that he was holding the first key. I came out from the shadows and said “Hello, do you remember me?” he looked startled and said “Do I know you?” “It’s sad that you don’t remember your own blood.” I said then

charged at him. He looked shocked but blocked me with ease and his defence was strong. I didn't know whether I could beat him but I had to try. "Clearly, I can see that. You are immensely strong but I think you picked the wrong side." He said and smirked. I ignored him and started attacking him even more. I stopped for a while and stared at him. "You drove my mother to her death. You broke our family!" I said attempting to mock him and annoy him. "I like your passion. It makes me wonder where you got that information." He said trying to confuse me. "I've confirmed the facts. I'm not a little kid who argues with opinions like yourself." I said smirking at him. "You will regret this" he said. He came at me and I sourced my power from my head to my entire body as I have when I sparred with Laur. I saw his attacks and dodged them. They were definitely faster than Laur though. I kept my eye on him and focused without having anything else on my mind. My only goal was to beat him and put him in his place. "You're good" he said as he stopped and stood on the opposite side of me. "You don't even have the second key. What are you going to do without it? Shouldn't you repent for what you've done to your family?!" I tried to stall. "I think I will possess it soon and as for your mother she chose the wrong path and you stupidly followed her." he said. "You're not even curious about what happened to me? All these years!" I said as my sadness slowly changed to anger. His eyes had fire in them. He looked at me as if he wanted to kill me. He started towards me and I towards him, when suddenly he dropped to the ground. I stopped and stared as his body lay there. The blood was dripping down his back and on to the ground. What was I supposed to do? I checked his pockets and found the First key. I looked up to see who had killed him and there was no one there. I didn't feel anything but emptiness. It

happened so quickly. I still had more questions for him. I ran inside the school to look for Mr. Lim. All the guys who ran in were passed out on the floor. Everyone else was fine or slightly bruised. Mr. Lim stood there and looked at me. My hands were covered in my fathers' blood. He looked at my hands then rushed out. He saw my father lay there and his head just hung low.

It's now been a couple of months since the incident and I took over the school because Mr. Lim had to attend to business overseas and at the same time am an idol and actor. Laur's assisting me with the school and is now my favourite girl in the whole universe. We started to inspect the photo books I found as I was cleaning Mr. Lims' office. Laur and I found various pictures of her shovelling food in her mouth. "So you've always been a piggy?" I said as I turned to her. She punched me and said "At least I was cute." We laughed then stopped when we turned to the next page and found a picture of her uncle and my father with their arms' slung over each others' shoulders. They were smiling brightly ear to ear. We looked at each other and knew something was wrong. Her uncle claimed that he didn't know my father personally. So what was this that we found then?



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