

## Embracing life

Numerous weeks have passed. Immersed in her recent agenda, Lexi's new schedule consisted of studying for exams and engaging in her new training program. Eating and sleeping were optional.

### **BIGHIT Recording Studio – 2.18 PM**

Every day, for eight continuous hours, Lexi would take on her training routine, starting with freestyling exercises as soon as she set foot in the studio. To help her work on her lyrical flow, Namjoon made her listen to a single instrumental track on repeat for a whole hour before giving her the cue to start writing. Furthermore, in order to improve her storytelling, he would assign her with a specific topic, allowing her to brainstorm accordingly. The most important lesson was diction: she had to work on her pronunciation when writing a compilation of fast verses without missing a single word.

The sofa was Lexi's work zone. Scattering all her papers on the coffee table, she put on her earphones, played her favorite piece "**Auditory Hallucination**", and started her homework instantly. Had it not been for Namjoon who constantly reminded her to take a break, she'd often forget to feed herself. At times, she even used her lunchtime to study a bit for her exams; which made her coach drag her out of the room and lock her outside, forcing her to rest. When her training session ended, she would immediately grab her English books to study for a couple of hours before going back home, since she was unable to resist sleep once she spotted her bed.

During training, Namjoon was charismatic. He conveyed his lessons in a smooth and appealing way, making it more fun than actual labor. His English accent was music to her ears, and she would often find herself out of focus, bedazzled by his presence. But once they left the studio, he was a completely different person: his charisma faded away, leaving its spot for a mysterious and unreadable persona. Lexi wasn't affected by the sudden behavioral change as much as she was irritated when he called her by her original name, which she strongly disliked. Although her objection to it was obvious, it wouldn't make Namjoon call her otherwise.

As her mid-term finals were due, time was definitely not on Lexi's side. As if her sleeping hours weren't short enough, she cut them to a couple of hours per night, sometimes pulling all-nighters to fully go through her lessons. Her training wasn't any easier; she mostly fell asleep while listening to the assigned instrumental, literally serenading herself to sleep.

Although she put her sunglasses on to hide from her boss during nap time, she did not go unnoticed by Namjoon who, while entertained with her failed attempt, acted oblivious to the scene.

### **BIGHIT Entertainment, main floor – 12.09 PM**

Running late because of her last exam, Lexi sprinted inside the building and took the stairs, too impatient to wait for the elevator.

As she reached the studio floor, she was surprised to see the door locked. Racing back to the main floor, she headed towards the front desk inquiring about Namjoon's whereabouts.

"I'm sorry. Access is denied for the studio today, Namjoon-ssi's orders" the secretary informed.

Out of breath, Lexi's heart started pounding. She has never been late from the moment she signed with the label, despite the constraints of her studies and her busy schedule. She hasn't even seen David since she started her training, subsequently giving up on her Korean lessons.

Nine minutes late, that's all it took to throw her hard work out the window. Lexi knew that the rapper had zero tolerance for such conduct, and no matter how much she thought it through, all she could see was pitch black. Finding her way out of the building, she ran into Namjoon at the main entrance.

"Well, it's about time" he declared, mockingly.

She instantly bowed apologetically "I am truly sorry, I had to stay behind as a request from my Professor. I tried my best to get here on time; I promise it won't happen again".

"Good" he watched her, amused "Luckily for you, I just got here".

Lexi looked at him in confusion. But before she could comment, he continued "Today's class is canceled. You look pale, you haven't eaten or slept properly in days, and your writings have been lacking for the past week".

Thrown off by the sudden flow of critics coming her way, Lexi bowed once more "*Joesonghamnida*, I will work hard to get everything in check".

"I'm sure you will" he replied "But for now, let's cross one item off the list. Have you tried the cafeteria food yet?"