

A twisted tale

External Dormitory Hall – 8.00 PM

Granted by her tutor, Lexi went home earlier than usual. As she was heading to the elevator, a worked up David was waiting for her in the hall.

“Lexi-Ah!” he called her name, catching her attention.

“*Annyeonghaseyo* David-ssi, did you wait for long?” she worried.

“No, I just got here myself” he continued “Can we talk here?”

Lexi had no clue what David wanted to talk about; but whatever it was, it took all of his energy and strength of mind. They took a seat somewhere in the lobby and they engaged in the conversation.

“I have some news that I want to share with you, but first there is something I’ve been meaning to talk to you about for so long and I never got the chance to do it properly” he announced.

“I’m listening” was all Lexi could say in response.

“I don’t know about you Lexi, but I believe that everything happens for a reason. I believe in coincidences, karma and fate. I am not a man of faith, therefore I always looked for a rational explanation within everything and I never settled for ifs and maybes. But things started to pile up and although I tried so hard to fight it, everything made sense eventually. I wasn’t going to give this another try but something that has happened recently convinced me to give it one last chance”.

Lexi tried her best to follow up but David’s words were too ambiguous, even for her “Get to the point”.

“The thing is, Lexi” he paused “I have feelings for you”.

An awkward silence encircled the room. After finishing his confession, David kept looking at his love interest, scanning her for a reaction. Meanwhile, Lexi was thinking of a way to kindly reject the man’s offer without hurting his feelings.

“David-ssi” she initiated “I am truly moved by how you professed your feelings for me. *Hajiman*, I am not sure I can reciprocate ... *Mianhaeyo*”.

David exhaled at her answer as he already predicted it in his head “Well, it was worth a shot”.

“Please don’t feel bad” Lexi justified “You’re a wonderful man and I am sure every girl out there would dream of being with you, but my heart is not ready for love just ...”

“*Hajima*” he interrupted her “Don’t lie to me, *Jebal*. You can deny it all you want, but I’ve seen your eyes sparkle before. I know that your heart is taken”.

This sudden confrontation took Lexi aback. She wasn’t sure how or why he made such speculations, but deep down she knew he was right.

“I heard you call his name in your sleep; in the hospital, in your dorm room. The way you look up to him, talk about him, and the way you overwork yourself in order to please him. You weren’t doing it for yourself, you were doing it to gain his approval” he scorned her “I am not trying to bring you down but ... did you honestly think that you'd stand a chance with him?”

“*Ya David-ssi !*” she snapped “Whatever I decide to do with my heart is my business, you have no right to make delirious assumptions to mend your own broken heart” she gathered her strength “I never asked you to fall for me, I specifically told you that I am here to heal my soul and I never led you on. I too believe in coincidences, karma and fate; but I also believe that we draw our own path and make our own choices, despite what comes our way. Nothing is written in the stars indefinitely”.

“*David-ssi*” she snatched her bag “It’s been good knowing you”.

When she stood up he grabbed her arm, instantly regretting his words “*Lexi-Ah, kajima*. I’m sorry”.

“So am I” she said as she retrieved her arm and walked away.

BIGHIT Recording Studio – 9.03 AM

Last night was infernal. Lexi’s encounter with David ignited her long lost insomnia. She kept turning in her bed numerous times, before she went to the living room and turned on the TV, turning off her brain in the process. David’s words were stuck in her mind, and she was wondering just how much of it is actually accurate. Unable to get some rest, she went to the studio first thing in the morning to get her mind off of things.

Today was her first day as a lyricist. Still owing her coach a few days of training, she started working on her last homework. An hour later, a punctual Namjoon arrived at the building. Spotting the studio door open before he left the elevator, he grinned “Great, now I have competition”.

That morning was dull. Unlike her usual chatty nature, Lexi hasn’t said a word aside from the standard greetings. She was too busy trying to figure out a decent program to adapt for Shinah, and to clear her feelings in the meantime. It took Namjoon a good minute to snap her out of what looked like a deep reflection.

“Earth to Alexandra, do you copy?” he repeated poking her arm.

“Nae?” she finally replied “*Joesonghaeyo*, I must’ve been out of it”.

“So it seems” he teased “What are you working on?”

“I’m trying to find a balance between my schedules and my trainee’s. I don’t want her to miss her classes to keep up with the training” she stated “*Aigoo*, responsibilities are a pain”.

He chuckled “Well, you have one more responsibility on your plate. *Sajang-nim* was wondering if you could help Shinah come up with a stage name”.

“Well, I don’t mean to be a show off but creating names is kind of my specialty” she bragged.

“Oh really?” he wondered “Do you have a name of your own?”

“Of course! Remember this?” she showed him her right index and took her crown ring off, revealing the engraved name inside “I chose Dextra as my pen name, I’ve had it for as long as I can remember. All of my heartfelt work was written under this name”.

Dextra, Dextra ... the name rang a bell inside Namjoon’s head but he couldn’t get his head around it.

“Well then, you’d better trademark it. You don’t want your pretty insignia to go to waste” he taunted her.

“Nae, coach-nim” she obeyed “I’m hungry, can we take an early break for lunch?”

BIGHIT Cafeteria – 12.30 AM

The cafeteria was deserted. Employees mostly purchased coffee to-go and went back to their desks. At the far end of the venue, the two colleagues sat in silence.

Lexi broke her cookie to little pieces, but couldn't bring herself to eat. She was still confused with David's confession, and no matter how hard she tried to chase the confusion away, it came right back, perplexing her even more than she already was.

"What did our poor Jungkook ever do to you?" he broke the silence with a lame joke. Lexi's eyes met his with puzzlement "Never mind, didn't you say you were hungry?"

"Ah, I did. But for some reason, I can't seem to eat my feelings away" she explained, giving out a little more than she meant to.

"Is it work-related?" he indirectly asked her, trying to read between the lines.

"More like dorm-related. Anyways, it's nothing really, I'll get over it" she assured him.

Namjoon knew that whatever was going on in Lexi's mind was eating her up inside. Not wanting to cross the limits, he changed the subject "Tell me Alexandra, why do you like nicknames so much?"

Hearing his question, Lexi smiled genuinely and grabbed a piece of the cookie "You see, I am just like this cookie".

She explained to him that every alias represented a piece of her. Lexi was her given name throughout her college years, and she grew fond of it as it showed her lively spirit. But when she was writing thoughts down on her journal, a darker version of her immersed and it sounded more fitting to name herself accordingly "Dextra is a latin word. It means skillful, fortunate, proper".

"Confident much?" he commented jestingly.

"To be honest, I took a random name quiz back in high school and I got it as my Latin name" she played with her right hand "But I have got to admit, its meaning gives me strength. That's why it resides within my ring as my good luck charm".

"I see" he surrendered "What about Alexandra?"

The question drew an irritated facial expression on Lexi's face. Namjoon recognized it because he saw it every single time he called her by her name, and he never understood why someone's most prized possession could cause such nuisance.

"Aside from my parents, Jackson was the only one in my entourage to call me by my full name. He was my best friend and first love for six years, and he never called me by any other name. After we went our separate ways, it was agonizing to hear my name being called because it always linked me back to him somehow" she continued "Although I have no lingering feelings for him anymore, but for some reason I am still not over this little detail. I guess that I found so much comfort in being Lexi, that I allowed Alexandra to be a painful memory".

"Alexandra" he called her name "Your name solely belongs to you, no one has the right to hold such power over you. Don't you ever let that happen again".

Appreciative of his pep talk, Lexi thanked him as she finished her last piece of the cookie. On their way back, the rapper stopped mid-way and announced "I just remembered something. You just go ahead and I will catch up with you later".

BTS Dormitory – 3.09 PM

Namjoon headed home in a hurry; something was on his mind and he needed to verify it. As he entered the room, he went through a bunch of papyrus that he kept in his desk's lower drawer. Finally laying eyes on his quest, he fetched an envelope with a birthday card inside and read it again.

Dear Namjoon,

When I came across "Rap Monster" for the first time, I didn't know what to expect. I told myself that, for someone to be called that way, he must be a fine rapper and I was not disappointed.

As a matter of fact, I was blown away, mesmerized by your lyrics, your flow, your attitude, your charisma ... You never fail to amaze me; whether I listen to your BTS verses or to your mixtapes, your music literally levitates me. I truly admire your work.

Knowing that we have the same role models (Epik High and Eminem) made me connect with your music even more. I do some songwriting of my own and I would appreciate it if you could find the time to read some of my work one day.

Looking forward to enjoying all of the music you send ARMY's way.

Your truest fan, Dextra

Namjoon received this note last year on his birthday. He always appreciated reading fan mail but this one particularly caught his attention. The name “Dextra” preoccupied his mind for quite a while, before it got washed away with the abundant rehearsals, concerts and fan meetings. Finally recognizing his mysterious fan, he slid the card back in the drawer and went back to the company.