

Interlude: U

Ward T – Day time :

Embracing her lonesomeness in the vacant ward, Lucy found herself struggling yet again to fight another dilemma that was added to her previous ones: Identity crisis.

As she watered her pet plant and pondered over the solid piece of advice she received a while back, she wondered if what she was doing was worth this amount of pain and confusion.

Doctor X's office – Day time:

Since she couldn't handle change well, Lucy was permitted additional individual assessments whenever her living conditions were affected. To her discontent, these sessions were more burdensome than therapeutic. She always left the office perplexed, troubled, and anxious.

This is the individual assessment of Patient Lucy J., Registration Number W1507, February log.

Please be seated and face the one-way mirror, your assessment will begin shortly.

You will be put under hypnosis to allow the evaluation to go smoothly.

Feel free to talk about your feelings and condition according to your current situation.

You may remain silent if you do not wish to share.

"I thought I started to get used to how things work in the asylum; but every time a patient leaves, a piece of me follows and another burden adds to my shoulder.

"I'm starting to lose myself in this mess. I don't know who I am or what I am anymore, I even tend to forget why I came here in the first place. I don't know if I can survive being someone I'm not, I don't know if I can redeem myself.

"I want to keep smiling for them, but I can't push myself into being someone I'm not. I am wounded, lost, and I can't seem to put back the broken pieces together. I think I'm failing my purpose with every passing minute, but I don't want to disappoint my family, I can't disappoint my family. They are counting on me to get better even if they don't know it yet and I bet they're tired of seeing me in this state, like an empty shell, useless. I have to overcome this, I owe it to them, I owe it to myself.

"I can do it, I'm not alone. I'm never alone."

Leisure room – Night time:

Whenever she felt that she has hit rock bottom, Lucy's new routine has become a form of solace every now and then. Although being fully aware that she wasn't allowed to leave her room after curfew, the restless lady couldn't help but follow her inner feeling.

The out of order yet functional piano was proudly standing in the middle of the room. Nobody came near it ever since Yoongi left. She gently caressed its top, careful not to touch the keyboard and alert the staff. Yet somehow, the instrument's compelling aura called her name.

While she was debating her other self whether she should break the rules for once and give it a go, she found herself already seated in front of the piano keys in an effort to remember a piece that Yoongi taught her some time ago. That specific piece was unlike the usual tunes he performed daily. She often wondered whether that piano lesson was actually Agust's doing, since he was playful and enjoyed teasing her often. After an endless argument inside her head, Lucy rested her hands on the keyboard and started playing note by note until the melody took shape.

Needless to say that her impulsive action echoed all through the corridors, which alarmed the whole staff who stormed into the room instantly. The residents even thought for a second that, perhaps, Yoongi came back to pay them a piercing visit in this silent night.

The staff surrounded her in awe, mesmerized by the soothing music and wondering amongst themselves whether they should intervene anytime soon or just let her be until she has finished on her own. A nod from Nurse Abby put an end to the other nurses' confusion and as Lucy hit the last note, the caring nurse put her hand on the girl's shoulder.

"Child, are you having trouble sleeping again?" Nurse Abby worried.

Lucy sighed and lifted her gaze to meet the nurse's, "I'll be fine, eventually. Can I please visit one more place before I go back to my room?"

Her words didn't say much, but her eyes said it all: Four gone and four to go. Yet, the issue wasn't about how many were left, but rather who would be the last one to leave.

Healing room – Night time:

"This is nice," Lucy initiated. "The calm, it feels nice".

Giving her space, Nurse Abby stayed at the doorstep, "Do you miss them?"

“Every day, all day. I try to convince myself to stay strong for them, to redeem them. I often think to myself that all of this happened because of me, you know?” Lucy confessed.

Nurse Abby pitied the young girl, “You cannot go on like this Lucy, you need to be at peace with yourself for others to find it within you. You are your own weakness and strength at once.”

“An old friend used to tell me that,” Lucy chuckled nervously. “Thank you for the reminder.”

The nurse and her patient stood in utter silence afterwards. Lucy then pushed away the now-permanent empty seats and shaped the remaining cushions into a closer circle. “Perfect, now you’ll see me.”