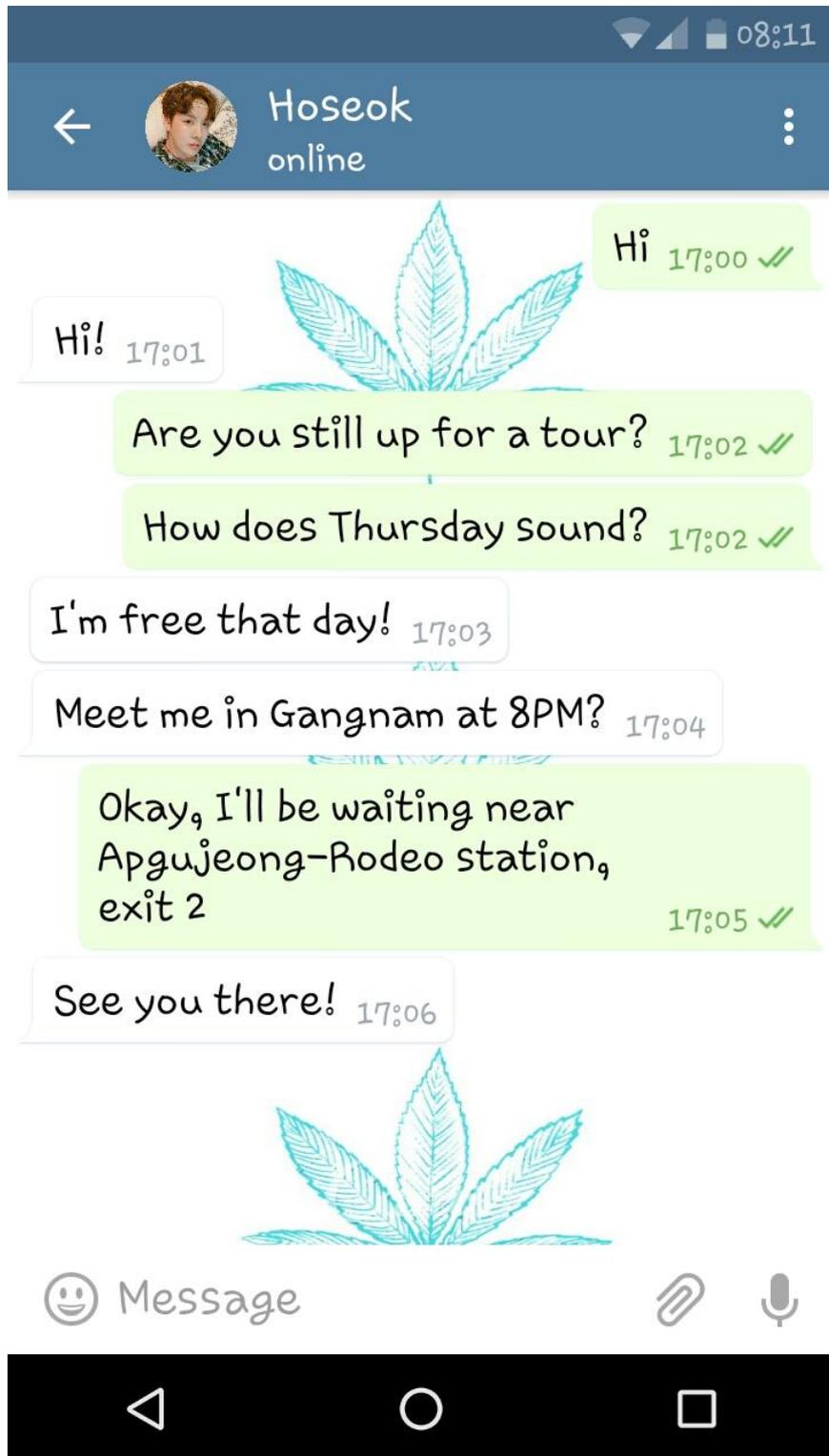


The lively one



Lilah knew that the only reason she would ever set foot in Gangnam was because of the Hallyu perks around the area. For that matter, she was hoping Hoseok would make a decent tour guide. She waited near the exit, dressed in a dark green long sleeve skater dress and a pair of black flats.

“Lilah?” a cheerful voice in a light beige sweater, knee-ripped jeans and white sneakers called out her name.

“Hi, you must be Hoseok! Nice to meet you!” she waved at him.

“Likewise,” he met her with a beaming smile, “Shall we?”

The meeting point was a perfect start for the tour, as the K-star road initiated from there. Along the famous road, many Gangnamdols were found, representing various K-pop groups that have been taking the music scene by storm.

“So, do you listen to K-pop often?” Hoseok initiated.

“Sure, I’m an avid fan,” Lilah hesitated at first, not knowing whether she should expose her enthusiasm at once, or keep it on the down low.

“Do you like BTS? EXO? BLACKPINK?” he flooded her with questions.

“I like a little bit of everything,” she tried to tame herself, “But I’m mostly a BTS and Epik High fan.”

“Oh Epik High, that’s awesome! So you’re into Korean hip hop?” her taste in music caught his attention.

“Yes,” she relaxed a bit, “Like I said, I like a little bit of everything.”

“So, you’re familiar with AOMG?” he anticipated her response.

“Of course! The whole company is bomb. My current jam is Hoody’s Hangang, do you know it?”

Hoseok felt trapped, “I know Hoody, but I haven’t heard her song yet.”

Sensing his nervousness, she chuckled, “It’s okay. The song only came out a few days ago.”

“That must be why,” he tried to excuse himself.

As their conversation hit a slump, they found themselves standing by BTS’s gangnamdol. Lilah immediately started scanning the statue, and was saddened to see that the boys’ signature has washed away. Only a faded signature of Suga could be spotted.

“Do you want to take a picture?” He offered.

“Oh- Sure,” she grabbed her phone and flipped the camera to take a selfie with Hoseok.

“Oh, haha no that’s not what I meant,” Hoseok nervously chuckled, “I meant if you wanted to take a picture with the Bangtan doll.”

At this point, Lilah’s heart was beating so fast out of embarrassment. She wished time would stop and that she would find herself back in her room, without having to face the humiliating situation she just put herself in. Trying to save what was left of her self-esteem, she still took her phone and posed in front of the statue, “Alrighty then, don’t mind if I do.”

The air cleared quickly after the sudden miscommunication, but the weather decided otherwise. The seasonal rainfall seemed to accompany Lilah in all of her dates so far; but this time, it was rather gentle and not bothersome at all.

“It’s raining,” Hoseok noticed, “Maybe we should take cover just in case it decides to go wild?”

“Do you have somewhere specific in mind?” Lilah wondered.

Hoseok looked like he already had a plan, “You must be thirsty after all the walking we’ve done so far, do you want to go for a drink? I know just the place.”

A few minutes later, Lilah found herself at the entrance of the next place on her bucket list: The Min’s. The coffeeshop belongs to Lee Changmin, BTS’ sunbae, and from the decoration, the boys seemed to be regulars.

“Do you mind if I order for the both of us?” Hoseok suggested.

“Not at all,” she smiled, “Make it memorable.”

Once they found a seat, Hoseok headed to the counter, “Good evening Ahjumma, can I get a couple of 5-Berry juice and a waffle?”

“Two 5-Berry juices and a waffle coming right up!” the Ahjumma responded.

Hoseok came back to their table, and found an almost sleepy Lilah admiring the various autographs hung on the walls. “Your order is here, I hope you like it!”

Lilah instantly took a sip of her drink, “Ouh, this juice is delicious!”

"I know, right?" he replied, "It's Bangtan's favorite drink, they order it every time they're around. The Ahjumma always recommends it to BTS fans that come by."

"How nice of her!" she commented before noticing that there is a waffle on the table, "Wait, I thought we were coming for drinks. What's the waffle doing here?"

Hoseok smiled as he pushed the waffle plate towards her. "When we were walking earlier, I noticed that you were shaking, so I thought a nutritious boost might come handy."

"Oh," his attentiveness caught her by surprise, "Thank you so much, I can definitely use the sugar rush."

"By the way," he suddenly asked, "Who's your favorite BTS member?"

"RM," Lilah didn't spare a breath to answer.

"Interesting," he further inquired, "Is there a particular reason why you like him?"

"His intellect, I relate to a lot of the content that he shares through his music," she admirably replied before asking Hoseok the same thing.

"Jin," he blurted out, "I don't know how to explain it, but he is truly hypnotizing. He's a really handsome fella."

"That he is," she replied as they both chuckled.

Upon checking the time, Lilah suddenly jumped. "It's getting late, we should probably go."

"I know a little shortcut that will get us to the nearest subway station," Hoseok led the way.

The alley was dark and narrow, but Lilah felt safe in Hoseok's presence. However, his breathing was getting shorter and quicker by the second, which did not go unnoticed by her.

"Aren't you afraid of the dark?" he tried to distract himself.

"Why would I? I got you by my side, don't I?" she wittily replied.

"Well, I'm afraid," he eventually admitted.

"Oh," surprised by his honesty, she smiled at him, "Well then, you got me by your side."

"Ha, thank you," Hoseok appreciated her candid gesture.

"If you don't mind me asking, why are you afraid of the dark?" she wondered.

“I was left with bad memories from the time I served in the military, so I’ve been avoiding dark places ever since,” Hoseok shared.

Hearing this made Lilah feel bad for reminding him of it further. In response, she just smiled at him and nodded her head. Soon enough, both of them made it to the station exit.

Lilah was about to take a step forward when she almost lost her balance. Luckily for her, Hoseok was swift to hold her from behind.

“Are you okay? You look unwell,” Hoseok worried at her sudden collapse.

“I’ll be fine, I probably just need to sleep it off.” She assured him as she waved him goodbye.

“Take care of yourself Lilah, I hope I’ll get to see you again,” Hoseok sent her off and watched her go down the stairs.

a few hours earlier

