



LOVECRAFT



AMERICA'S
DEMONS
EXPOSED!

COUNTRY

EPISODE #106
"MEET ME IN DAEGU"

WRITTEN BY
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and
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BASED ON THE NOVEL BY
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PRODUCTION DRAFT 05/12/19
BLUE REVISION 12/09/19

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SCRIPT REVISION HISTORY

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CAST LIST

ATTICUS FREEMAN

MONTROSE FREEMAN

JI-AH MOON

SOON-HEE MOON

BYUNG-HO

CHUN-JA

HWA-JA

IN-SOOK

YOUNG-HA

MUDANG

SUNG

AMERICAN SOLDIER

ANNOUNCER

BASE SOLDIER

INJURED AMERICAN SOLDIER

KOREAN SOLDIER

NURSING INSTRUCTOR

SERGEANT

MEE-TING DATE

SECOND MEE-TING DATE

THIRD MEE-TING DATE

TRIAGE NURSE

AMERICAN NURSE

BLACK WOMAN

*BYUNG-HO'S TODDLER DAUGHTER (formerly DAUGHTER)

BYUNG-HO'S WIFE

PRE-TEEN ATTICUS

YOUNG ATTICUS

*ONE-YEAR-OLD BYUNG-HO

*SIX-YEAR-OLD ATTICUS

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SET LIST

INTERIORS

Daegu, South Korea
HOF Tavern
KNU Hospital
*(Hallway - OMIT)
Cafeteria
Movie Theater
Hanok
Abattoir
Bedroom
Central Living Space
Kyungpook National University
Cafeteria
Classroom
U.S. Army Base
Bunker

EXTERIORS

South Korea
Ancestral Village
Outcrop
Daegu Road
Around the Corner
Korean Mountain Summit
KNU Hospital
Courtyard
Mountain Road
Movie Theater
Hanok
Terrace
U.S. Army Base
Security Gate

VEHICLES

U.S. Army Jeeps (2)
U.S. Army Medium Tank

*"Clang! Clang! Clang! Goes the trolley... Ding! Ding!
Ding! Goes the bell..."*

THE TROLLEY SONG scene from **"MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS" (1944)** fills the screen. The iconic JUDY GARLAND moves through a lively street car packed with happy-go-lucky passengers singing this insanely catchy show tune.

This very American musical is accompanied by KOREAN SUBTITLES. WIDEN to find...

1 **INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAEGU, SOUTH KOREA - DAY**

1

...the movie plays to a NEAR-EMPTY AUDIENCE. A familiar WOMAN sits alone, dead center in the best seat in the house.

It's MEEH JI-AH (19).

She's a far cry from the half-alien hybrid in Atticus's dream from 101 or the gun-toting mercenary he fought in 102. She's shy. Unassuming. Watching the screen with INTENSE FOCUS.

*
*

CHYRON: FALL, 1949

A MAKING OUT COUPLE a few rows ahead rise to leave. Ji-ah keeps her eyes glued to the screen. Her expression BLANK. PUSH IN on her as she cycles through a MONTAGE of EMOTION --

*
*
*

1) LAUGHING hysterically...

*

2) RAGING manically...

*

2) CRYING profusely...

*

4) And finally overwhelmed with JOY as she bursts out in song with Judy Garland --

*
*

NOTE: Dialogue in ITALICS is spoken in ENGLISH.

JI-AH
(singing:)
*With my high starched-collar and my
high-topped shoes and my hair piled
high upon my head...*

She POPS out of her seat. DANCES and twirls down the aisle --

JI-AH (CONT'D)
(singing:)
*I went to lose a jolly hour on the
trolley and lost my heart instead...*

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

With the movie screen as the back drop to her stage, she prances back and forth like a Broadway performer as she mimics every single one of Judy's moves. Uninhibited. Free.

SUDDENLY -- we're back to reality. Ji-ah sitting. Focused on the screen. Committing Judy Garland's every ebb of emotion to memory...

*
*
*

SMASH TO TITLES IN KOREAN:

L O V E C R A F T C O U N T R Y

2 **EXT. TERRACE - HANOK - DAY**

2

Winter frost is just around the corner as SMOKE bellows from a wood-burning stove heating the small and well-worn hanok.

Ji-ah kneels before a mound of SALTED CABBAGE HEADS halved down the stem. BANGS on a KIMCHIDOK with a LADLE as she whistles *THE TROLLEY SONG*. Gimjang in mid-progress.

CLANG! CLANG! CL-- Ji-ah drops her whistling, quickly sets the ladle down as her MOTHER (MEEH SOON-HEE, 40s) emerges from the hanok carrying a LARGE BOWL OF SOK --

SOON-HEE

I'm trying pumpkin broth this year to keep the kimchi from souring as quickly. What do you think?

Soon-hee holds a spoonful out to her daughter. Smiles in anticipation. Expecting to hear her kimchi sauce is perfect. Ji-ah tastes it, playfully pours in more PEPPER POWDER --

SOON-HEE (CONT'D)

Ji-ah! You're ruining our only batch!

Soon-hee pulls the bowl away. Feigns offense as Ji-ah LAUGHS --

JI-AH

Once I graduate we'll be able to afford so much cabbage we'll make all the kimchi you want.

SOON-HEE

But you're still in school. If it comes out too spicy we'll have nothing to eat this winter.

JI-AH

We can ask the neighbors for some --

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

Ji-ah realizes her mistake as Soon-hee's expression SOURS.
This is a deep wound for her mother --

SOON-HEE

We haven't been invited to gimjang
in years. Not since my husband's
death...

Soon-hee unconsciously separates from her daughter. Stuffs
cabbage with sok. Burying her feelings under the task at
hand. Whatever this is about, the GUILT weighs on --

JI-AH

My degree will bring respect back to
our family. They'll see us in a new
light.

Soon-hee meets Ji-ah's eyes with an incredulous gaze --

SOON-HEE

The only way for this family to be
whole again is for you to bring home
men.

A beat. A silent understanding between mother and daughter.
Ji-ah lowers her eyes, acquiescing --

JI-AH

Yes, Umma.

3 **INT. CLASSROOM - KYUNGPOOK NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (KNU) - DAY**

3

A SPLAYED MALE CADAVER on an examination table. Ji-ah studies
it curiously. Transfixed by the look of horror on its face.

She's dressed in a NURSING STUDENT'S UNIFORM and flanked by
THREE NURSING STUDENTS (HWA-JA, CHUN-JA and IN-SOOK, all
19). A NURSING INSTRUCTOR holds up numbered push-pin flags --

NURSING INSTRUCTOR

Each number corresponds to an internal
organ on your sheet. You have thirty
minutes to identify them. Good luck.

Once she disappears, Ji-ah picks up a flag, but the Girls
flock to another exam table, surrounding the MOST POPULAR
GIRL (YOUNG-JA, 20) in class. She's the embodiment of a
confident woman, not unlike Judy Garland in the movies.

HWA-JA

I heard a rumor that Young-ja Unni
may not be joining us for the Mee-
ting tonight. She's in love.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

Ji-ah remains at her cadaver on task, but the mention of love has more than piqued her interest. Young-Ja sends the Girls a coy smile as Chun-Ja's expression registers SURPRISE --

CHUN-JA

Since when?

IN-SOOK

Oh, you didn't hear? She went out with Hyun-tae last night. Alone...

CHUN-JA

What happened?

Young-ja exhales as if she's bored of telling this story --

YOUNG-JA

He asked if we could speak in banmal.

Ji-ah quietly mimicks Young-ja's body language -- posture, coy smile, gesticulations -- as the other Girls GASP --

CHUN-JA

How rude! He barely knows you.

IN-SOOK

I knew he had a poor upbringing.

HWA-JA

I think it's a great sign.

IN-SOOK

Banmal on a first date?

Ji-ah notices that Young-ja has rolled her socks down to beneath her ankles. A subtle but suggestive touch. Young-ja glances Ji-ah's way. She quickly adverts her eyes.

HWA-JA

He's already decided to move beyond the polite formalities of speaking in jondaemal and become casual and intimate. Young-ja Unni may not have to finish school after all --

YOUNG-JA

Don't be foolish, Hwa-ja. I am not limiting my options.

The Girls REACT. Young-ja is too cool. And she knows it as she just casually continues to label body parts.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

IN-SOOK

Tell us, Young-ja Unni. What did
you say to make him fall so in love
with you so quickly?

Ji-ah leans in as Young-ja smiles to her cohorts --

YOUNG-JA

All I said was...

4 **INT. CAFETERIA - KNU - NIGHT**

4

A BANNER hanging in the background reads, "*WELCOME!
ENGINEERING & NURSING STUDENTS!*" Ji-ah sits at a cafeteria
table batting her eyes in an awkward, unnatural manner --

JI-AH

...Oppa, you're real attractive.

She has the number "31" pinned to her uniform as she continues
to poorly imitate Young-ja's casual cool --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

Not because of your looks. But
because of your sexy brain.

A MEE-TING DATE (20) sits opposite her. Nods politely. Not
sure what to make of Ji-ah's odd demeanor. He smiles as he
crosses her number off of his card...

POP TO:

Ji-ah imitates Judy Garland from her movie "THE PIRATE" (1948) --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

Underneath this prim exterior, there
are depths of emotion, romantic
longings...

Her SECOND MEE-TING DATE (20) stares at her blankly, picks
up his pencil to cross off her number. She tries desperately
to salvage the situation --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

That was a line from one of my
favorite American movies --

SECOND MEE-TING DATE

The Japanese spent fifty years
eradicating our traditions and culture
and you spend your time consuming
American propaganda?

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

Ji-ah sighs. That really did not go over well...

POP TO:

Ji-ah, earnest now, confides in her THIRD MEE-TING DATE (20) --

JI-AH

For once in my life, I just want to feel.
To be hit by that bolt of lightning.
Like how Judy Garland felt when she saw her neighbor for the first time in "Meet Me in St. Louis".

Her Date looks up, his soft brown eyes connecting with hers --

THIRD MEE-TING DATE

I saw that twice. I love Judy Garland.

Ji-ah melts, overjoyed by this potential connection --

JI-AH

What's your favorite song from the movie? I love them all but if I had to decide it'd have to be "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" --

THIRD MEE-TING DATE

The scene where Judy sings it to her little sister Tootie is heartbreaking.

BRRRING! A TIMER goes off. An ANNOUNCER addresses the room --

ANNOUNCER

Check each others' cards. Pair off. Congratulations to all the matches!

Ji-ah locks eyes with her Date. Hopeful. He smiles back --

THIRD MEE-TING DATE

Best of luck to you.

Ji-ah's heart sinks as he gets up and beelines towards the woman he's actually interested in -- Young-ja. Of course.

JI-AH

Fuck.

She watches forlorn as the cafeteria-turned-speed-dating arena empties out with COUPLES pairing off.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

YOUNG-JA (O.S.)

Ji-ah...

Ji-ah's eyes snap to Young-ja standing behind her, her Third Mee-ting Date waiting by the door --

YOUNG-JA (CONT'D)

Come join us for a coffee.

Ji-ah's caught off guard. More nervous around Young-ja than any of her dates --

JI-AH

No, I'd just be in the way.

Young-ja leans in like they're the best of friends --

YOUNG-JA

You'd be doing me a favor. He's dull as ditchwater. But he sure is something to look at. Come enjoy the view with me.

Ji-ah mulls the offer over, but --

JI-AH

My mother's expecting me to bring home a man tonight...

YOUNG-JA

From a Mee-ting? She's asking for a miracle if she thinks you'd hit it off with these engineering nerds.

JI-AH

She's not asking. She's demanding.

Young-ja squeezes Ji-ah's hand. Ji-ah's taken aback, not sure what to make of this gesture. This feeling of INTIMACY.

YOUNG-JA

Sometimes mothers want what's best for them. Not what's best for us.

Young-Ja watches that sink in for Ji-ah, then --

YOUNG-JA (CONT'D)

We'll be at the dabang if you change your mind. Please change your mind.

As she turns to go, something catches her eye. She grins --

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (3)

4

YOUNG-JA (CONT'D)

Nice socks.

Ji-ah BLUSHES. Her socks are rolled down beneath her ankles. Just like Young-ja's. As the cool girl rejoins her date, Ji-ah tingles at the prospects of a blossoming friendship --

JI-AH

Young-ja Unni! Wait!

5 **INT. HOF TAVERN - NIGHT**

5

This isn't the coffeeshop and Young-ja's nowhere to be seen. Ji-ah kneels alone at a table with a BEER, surrounded by MEN and WOMEN drinking after work. She's DRESSED TO KILL, her hair and make-up styled to look like a NAUGHTY JUDY GARLAND.

Her demeanor has changed. She's cold as ice. And badder for it. She's not looking for love tonight. She scans the bar. Locks eyes with a LONELY MAN (BYUNG-HO, 40s).

He anxiously makes his way over. Kneels next to her. He's polite and formal, speaking in JONDAEMAL --

BYUNG-HO

Pardon me, may I please keep Agassi company until Agassi's friends arrive? I too am waiting. Perhaps time will pass quickly if we waited together.

Ji-ah eyes him up and down. A shark in full command of her waters. Responds in BANMAL --

JI-AH

I'm not waiting for anyone. Just hanging out, Oppa.

Byung-ho is deeply OFFENDED Ji-ah has bypassed formalities --

BYUNG-HO

How old is Agassi, please?

JI-AH

Much younger than you.

He shifts uncomfortably. As turned on as he's turned off --

BYUNG-HO

Have Agassi's parents raised her with ill-manners? I am Agassi's elder. And a stranger. Yet Agassi disrespects me by speaking banmal.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

She drops her eyes, acquiescing like she did with her mother --

JI-AH

I apologize, Ajeossi. I meant no disrespect whatsoever. We can converse in jondaemal if that is Ajeossi's preference...

BYUNG-HO

That is my preference.

JI-AH

But Ajeossi does not lack smarts. And neither do I. We both understand why Ajeossi sat next to me.

She startles Byung-ho by taking his hand. Back to banmal --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

Don't you want to be friends, Oppa?

6 **INT. CENTRAL LIVING SPACE - HANOK - NIGHT**

6

The paper walls glow from the midnight moon, but the hanok is otherwise dark and empty. Ji-ah and Byung-ho stumble in, MAKING OUT furiously. Between kisses, she slides a door open, REVEALING...

7 **INT. ABATTOIR - HANOK - NIGHT**

7

The room is curiously sparse. No windows. No decorations. Just a raised ALTAR-LIKE BED draped in silk, fit for royalty.

Ji-ah breaks away from Byung-ho as she slides the door shut casting the room into moonlit darkness. He's momentarily alarmed, then --

A MATCH STRIKES, illuminating -- the bare back of a now NAKED Ji-ah. Byung-ho excitedly strips off his clothes as she lights candles, her shadow falling onto the barren walls.

BYUNG-HO

You are so pretty...

Ji-ah lays herself down onto the bed as an eager Byung-ho wastes no time thrusting inside of her. Ji-ah lies still deriving no pleasure from this as Byung-ho CLIMAXES, the sensations PULSATING through his body.

He MOANS. His orgasm is unbelievable. And it keeps going. And going. AND GOING. Until his moans turn into GUTTURAL SCREAMS, and --

*

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

It's Ji-ah's turn to CLIMAX.

Her body clenches as Byung-ho RISES INTO THE AIR. And then we see it like a SHADOW PUPPET SHOW through the PAPER WALL -- a TAIL-LIKE TENTACLE emerges from Ji-ah's vagina, tunnels itself into Byung-ho's penis, and hoists him above her body!

SIX OTHER TAILS come out of Ji-ah's EARS, NOSE, MOUTH and yes, her ANUS too, and PENETRATE themselves into Byung-ho's matching orifices. *

The tails VIBRATE in hypnotic symmetry with Byung-ho's UNDULATING body -- his LIFE FORCE is being sucked dry!

Ji-ah moans as she CLIMAXES, her EYE TAILS connecting to Byung-ho's terrified eyes, and -- a STREAM OF IMAGES flash on screen like a FIRST-PERSON A.D.D's drug induced dream -- *

1) ONE-YEAR-OLD BYUNG-HO celebrates his dol at NIGHT wearing with TRADITIONAL accoutrement -- ceremonial wardrobe, rice or money, bow and arrow, pen or pencil, etc... *

2) BYUNG-HO sitting in a courtyard for Korean marriage rites during the DAY with his YOUNG WIFE... *

3) BYUNG-HO in BUSINESS ATTIRE cradling his TODDLER DAUGHTER at NIGHT... *

4) BYUNG-HO reaching the summit of a mountain and yelling at the top of his lungs -- *

BYUNG-HO (CONT'D)

Yaaahooo!

Which is the EXACT SAME PHRASE Ji-ah now yells as her mouth tails retract -- *

JI-AH

Yaahooo!!!

Her tails RETRACT, and -- PLOP! Byung-ho's body SPLATTERS like an over-filled water balloon, covering Ji-ah and the entire room in BLOOD.

A beat. Another. Because that was WILD AS FUCK. Ji-ah exhales, thoroughly satiated as the door slides open --

It's Soon-hee. Oh shit, she's caught!

But her mother calmly looks at the room. Calculating. Not shocked or grossed out at all --

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2) 7

SOON-HEE

Ten more.

JI-AH

Yes, Umma.

8 **INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAEGU, SOUTH KOREA - DAY** 8

An animated pro-American, anti-communist PROPAGANDA TRAILER plays -- a furious mob circles a snake-oil salesman hocking bottles of "ISM" as in commun-ism.

Ji-ah watches among a packed AUDIENCE as the mob violently chases the salesman out of town. TROUBLED by something. And this trailer is not the escape she's looking for. Thankfully it comes to an end. *

The title card of IRVING BERLIN'S "**EASTER PARADE**" (1948) lights up the screen and Ji-ah's expression. She silently CHEERS as Judy Garland's name graces the screen, but -- *

A RUMBLING causes the projector to sputter on and off. She looks around as the entire theater VIOLENTLY SHAKES. *Is it an earthquake?*

As the Audience PANICS, fleeing for the exit around Ji-ah...

9 **EXT. MOVIE THEATER - DAEGU, SOUTH KOREA - DAY** 9

Ji-ah arrives outside, STUNNED to find the source of the shaking -- a LINE OF AMERICAN TANKS thunder down the street.

CHYRON: SUMMER, 1950

An AMERICAN SOLDIER riding atop one of the tanks, raises a BULLHORN. Addresses the tense CROWD lining the streets underneath the sweltering sun --

AMERICAN SOLDIER

*Do not be alarmed. There is nothing
to fear. America is here to fight
for your freedom.*

He passes the bullhorn to a KOREAN SOLDIER who translates --

KOREAN SOLDIER

*Do not be alarmed. There is nothing
to fear. America is here to fight
for your freedom.*

Soldiers throw LEAFLETS from the tanks as Ji-ah senses the crowd growing uneasy. War is on their doorstep. She picks up a Leaflet. It's more PRO-AMERICAN PROPAGANDA...

10 **INT. CENTRAL LIVING SPACE - HANOK - DAY**

10

BURLAP SACKS filled with PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS sit next to the wood-burning stove where a pile of wood should be. Ji-ah, in a NURSING UNIFORM, tosses a handful of Leaflets into the firebox, kindling the flames. Times are lean.

Soon-hee ladles RICE CAKE SOUP from a boiling pot into a bowl. Presents it to Ji-ah as she kneels at the table --

JI-AH

Umma, you made tteokguk? But it's not New Year.

SOON-HEE

It's your birthday.

A blank stare from Ji-ah. It seems she's forgotten her own birthday. But seeing her mother's joy, she covers --

JI-AH

Of course.

She eats a spoonful. Grimaces. Put off by the taste.

SOON-HEE

You don't like it.

JI-AH

It's delicious. The anchovy surprised me. That's all.

SOON-HEE

Beef is scarce. I needed something to flavor the broth.

Ji-ah swallows another spoonful. It doesn't go down easy --

SOON-HEE (CONT'D)

Something is wrong. Tell me.

A beat. Ji-ah drops her eyes --

JI-AH

Anchovies were your husband's favorite.

Soon-hee TENSES. It takes her a moment to find the words --

SOON-HEE

You remember that?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

Ji-ah knows she's stepping through a field littered with landmines just by bringing it up, but --

JI-AH

I remember everything. When I absorb their souls I see their entire lives before they die. All of his memories are in me.

Let that sit for a beat -- Ji-ah KILLED Soon-hee's husband!

Soon-hee darkens. Goes dead in the eyes --

SOON-HEE

Do not speak of him anymore.

She moves to take the bowl of soup away, but Ji-ah stops her. Squeezes her mother's hand in comfort. She's practiced this gesture so much it's second nature now --

JI-AH

I appreciate you going through all the trouble for me.

Soon-hee pulls her hand away, taking the bowl with her --

SOON-HEE

You haven't brought anyone home in a month.

Ji-ah stiffens. There's no automatic 'Yes Umma...' this time. She's no longer as eager to please her mother --

JI-AH

There's been no time. The hospital's flooded with wounded. We're in the middle of a war --

SOON-HEE

This the perfect time for you. The Americans are just like Japs. They have no conscience. They rape the very women they've sworn to protect --

JI-AH

I've noticed, Umma.

SOON-HEE

Then what's the delay? Two more souls and all those memories you've absorbed will be gone.

This is the first time Ji-ah's hearing this --

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

JI-AH

Is that what the Mudang told you?
When you had her summon me?

SOON-HEE

Yes. If you absorb one-hundred souls,
the kumiho spirit will leave and you
will become human again.

Ji-ah leans in. Eager to know more --

JI-AH

Did the Shaman say anything more --

Soon-hee waves that off --

SOON-HEE

We're so close. What are you waiting
for? Bring a soldier home.

Ji-ah locks defiant eyes with her enlivened mother.
Something's brewing she can't, or won't, articulate yet --

JI-AH

I'm late for work.

11 **INT. CAFETERIA - KNU HOSPITAL - DAY**

11

This once serene training hospital is now under the
jurisdiction of an embattled U.S. Military. Mee-tings are a
distant memory. This space is now a MAKESHIFT TRIAGE WARD.

AMERICAN DOCTORS and NURSES treat horribly injured SOLDIERS
as Ji-ah and Young-ja -- full-fledged nurses now -- haul ass
carrying an INJURED SOLDIER on a stretcher --

INJURED AMERICAN SOLDIER

Get off me, you fuckin' gooks!

They disregard the racial slur as they LIFT him onto a bed.
His leg is broken at an odd angle. SHINBONE protruding.

YOUNG-JA

We need to reset the tibia. Hold
him down --

INJURED AMERICAN SOLDIER

*These zipperhead bitches gonna cut
my leg off! Somebody help me!*

Ji-ah puts her hands on opposite ends of his shin as Young-
ja tries to strap him down.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

But Injured Soldier FLAILS wildly -- GRABS Ji-ah's wrist -- TWISTING it backwards into a forceful hold. She SCREAMS in pain, her arm on the verge of SNAPPING --

INJURED AMERICAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)
*My boys will get the drop on you all
at Inchon. Slaughter you like
communist pigs!*

STAB! Young-ja PLUNGES a MORPHINE SYRINGE into Injured Soldier, knocking him out. He releases his grip as Ji-ah exhales. Young-ja moves towards her friend, concerned --

YOUNG-JA
Let me see.

She inspects Ji-ah's wrist delicately --

JI-AH
I'll be fine. Thank you, Young-ja.

A warm exchange of smiles. Then the CHAOS around them floods back in --

YOUNG-JA
I'll get something to set the leg.

She moves off. Ji-ah readies to snap Injured Soldier's leg back into place, but she pauses. Noticing --

A MALE ORDERLY sidles up to Young-ja at the supply table. He whispers to her. She whispers back. Then slips him a NOTE. And the Orderly quickly moves off.

Ji-ah looks around. No one else clocked this conspiratorial exchange. As she places her hands on Injured Soldier's leg, and swiftly SN--

12 **EXT. DAEGU ROAD - NIGHT**

12

--AP! Ji-ah steps on a fallen stick. Young-ja STARTLES. They're walking home on a nearly DESERTED road. Storefronts are left open but unattended. It's eerily quiet.

JI-AH
The orderly from the hospital. Is
he your new boyfriend?

YOUNG-JA
Il-sung? He wishes.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

JI-AH

I've seen you two whispering at work.
And you left with him the other night.

Young-ja slows. Trying to play it cool --

YOUNG-JA

If you're asking because you're
interested I can set you two up.
He'd be perfect to bring home to
your mother.

JI-AH

My mother doesn't like his kind.

An itchy beat. Young-ja laughs off her nervousness --

YOUNG-JA

His kind?

JI-AH

Communist.

Young-ja's anxiety SKYROCKETS. She looks around. Paranoid. Notices the group of AMERICAN MILITARY POLICE up ahead. Ji-ah is oblivious as she presses --

*

*

JI-AH (CONT'D)

I have overheard you two speak about
this war --

Young-Ja pulls Ji-ah into the doorway of a closed storefront for privacy --

*

*

YOUNG-JA

Shut up. You don't know what you're
talking about.

JI-AH

Young-ja Unni, I won't tell anyone.
And I don't care that you're
different...I am too.

*

Young-ja's expression softens, mistaking this as Ji-ah's communist coming out party --

*

YOUNG-JA

What are you saying?

Ji-ah thinks long and hard about telling Young-ja the truth. That she is not human. But instead --

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

JI-AH

My mother says it's wrong to be the way I am. She wants me to change. But I'm not sure I want to.

YOUNG-JA

So don't.

JI-AH

But she is just trying to protect me. Is that not a mother's love?

YOUNG-JA

No, that's not love. She can't see you, just who she wants you to be. You cannot let her fear control you.

As Ji-ah absorbs that, a TRUCK blasts past them. A COMMOTION rising just down the street. *What the fuck?*

*
*

They reluctantly investigate, and -- FREEZE in horror at the sight of -- a LYNCHING in mid-progress!

*
*

A MUTILATED MAN is in the back of the Truck, being strung up over an ARCHWAY. Korean characters are PAINTED across his head, chest and torso -- "RED BITCH".

*
*

The NEIGHBORHOOD has gathered. Pitching rocks. Spitting. Women and children included. They CHANT --

NEIGHBORHOOD

RED! RED! RED! RED!...

*
*

SCURRRR! The Truck speeds off, and -- the Mutilated Man drops, his neck SNAPPING instantly!

*
*

Ji-ah notices Young-ja is TREMBLING --

*

JI-AH

Young-Ja Unni, you are shaking. Are you cold?

*
*

Young-ja shakes her head, burning --

*

YOUNG-JA

It just makes me so angry. That they could do this...

*
*

Ji-ah absorbs this. This physical manifestation of something so foreign to her -- EMOTION.

*

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3) 12

YOUNG-JA (CONT'D) *
 There is nothing wrong with being *
 different. What's wrong is all of *
 them vilifying us for it. We're all *
 the same. We're all human...

Ji-ah's not. She looks way. Her eyes finding the American *
 Military Police watching the macabre scene. As one locks *
 eyes with her. A spark in his... *

13 **OMITTED** 13 *

14 **INT. ABATTOIR - HANOK - NIGHT** 14 *

A blood speckled US MILITARY POLICE UNIFORM strewn on the *
 floor. WIDEN to Soon-hee excitedly scrubbing BLOOD from the *
 floor --

SOON-HEE
 One more. And this is all over.

Ji-ah sits on the bed wrapped in a blanket. Drenched in
 DRIED BLOOD. Pensive. Remembering something --

JI-AH
 He loved me.

Soon-hee scoffs at that --

SOON-HEE
 That soldier just met you.

JI-AH
 No. Your husband. My father. He
 loved me. Why was that wrong?

Soon-hee pauses mid-scrub. Taken aback. Musters --

SOON-HEE
 Why do you give voice to that which
 brings us shame?

Ji-ah can see how much this hurts Soon-hee, but she presses --

JI-AH
 Umma, please help me understand.
 There seems to be so many different
 kinds of love.

Soon-hee's trembling now, tries to move past this quickly --

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

SOON-HEE

My husband hurt my daughter. His kind of love was wrong.

JI-AH

And that's why you had the Mudang summon me. To kill him. Because he was a monster?

Soon-hee nods. Emotion blocking further words.

JI-AH (CONT'D)

Yet you want me to kill like a monster to become human?

SOON-HEE

You don't understand why his love was wrong because you can't feel love. You can't feel anything.

JI-AH

Then is your love the right kind of love? How's it different from how he felt for your daughter?

Soon-hee takes her frustrations out on her scrubbing --

SOON-HEE

You'll know when you become human.

JI-AH

I'm not going to become human, Umma. I'm not taking another soul.

Soon-hee is shocked. She rises, anger boiling --

SOON-HEE

Yes you will.

JI-AH

I've now seen the lifetimes of ninety-nine men. All more bad than good. I've watched neighbors get dragged into the street by mobs and beaten to death. They were killed because they believed in something different. Not wrong. Just different. Why do you insist on me becoming a part of this --

*

SOON-HEE

Because I want my daughter back!

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

Ji-ah sinks. A sad confirmation. She's feared this is what Soon-hee has wanted all along.

SOON-HEE (CONT'D)

I only wanted to protect her. The Shaman said there would be a price. It was too high.

JI-AH

The Shaman summoned the kumiho spirit into your daughter. Her memories aren't in me.

SOON-HEE

That's not true. I've seen her in you. The way you say things. Things that you remember. My daughter's memories are buried deep inside and when you become human they'll all come flooding back.

Ji-ah sees the desperation in Soon-hee's eyes. A false hope her mother's clinging onto.

JI-AH

(singing:)

Butterfly, butterfly, come fly, fly.
Yellow butterfly, white butterfly,
come here while dancing...

The KOREAN NURSERY RHYME (NIBIYA) blankets Soon-hee in overwhelming warmth and joy as Ji-ah continues to sing --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

(singing:)

Petals dance in the breeze too,
smiling, smiling and laughing.
The sparrows tweet, tweet, tweet,
singing while dancing...

A tear falls from Soon-hee's eye. She grabs her daughter --

SOON-HEE

There. You see? I taught my daughter that song.

Ji-ah abruptly drops her voice into a low and stern cadence --

JI-AH

I'm staying up to read tonight, Soon-
hee. Do not bother me.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (3)

14

Soon-hee's punched in her gut, recognizing this voice all too well. She falls to her knees, shaking as Ji-ah lays it out loud and clear --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

Your daughter sang that nursery rhyme to herself every time your husband raped her. I have no memory of you teaching her that song, I have his memories.

Soon-hee retreats, tears flooding her face --

SOON-HEE

Enough...

But Ji-ah's not done. She follows her mother --

JI-AH

He handpicked you. A woman with a daughter out of wedlock. You were a pariah. He knew what you would allow him to do. All to rescue you from shame and disgrace --

SOON-HEE

ENOUGH!

Ji-ah's made her point all too well. And she takes no pleasure from it. She lets her mother go...

15 **EXT. SIDE OF - MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY**

15

A SECURITY CHECKPOINT. Ji-ah waits impatiently with Young-ja and her fellow NURSES as SOLDIERS armed with RIFLES rummage through their MEDICAL BAGS. Her eyes drift to the long line of fleeing REFUGEES moving through the checkpoint. As she tracks a resilient MOTHER carrying her CHILD on her back --

VROOOOOM! TWO U.S. ARMY JEEPS barrel down the road, kicking up a DUST STORM. Horns HONKING. Ji-ah and Young-ja exchange a nervous glance as the Jeeps aggressively halt in front of the checkpoint.

An AFRICAN-AMERICAN SERGEANT climbs from the lead Jeep trailed by a KOREAN AMERICAN SOLDIER (SUNG, 20). RIFLES drawn --

SERGEANT

Get on your fuckin' knees --

The Nurses are thrown into a PANIC as they're surrounded by --
an all COLORED ARMY UNIT!

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

SUNG

All of you. Down. Now!

Ji-ah grabs Young-ja's hand as they're forced to their knees. Sung translates as the Sergeant barks at the Nurses --

SERGEANT

Information is being leaked out of your medical ward and into the hands of communist pigs...

SUNG

Intelligence is being leaked out of your medical ward and into the hands of northern sympathizers...

The Nurses tremble in fear as the Sergeant walks the line --

SERGEANT

We've intercepted communications on multiple occasions between sixteen hundred and seventeen hundred hours. Which makes it this shift. One of you nurses is a communist spy.

SUNG

We've intercepted communications on multiple occasions between sixteen hundred and seventeen hundred hours. We know one of you is a spy.

The Sergeant pulls out a PISTOL. Waves it at the Nurses --

SERGEANT

Which of you is it?

SUNG

Who's the spy?

You can hear the heartbeats pounding in the silence, and --

BANG! A Nurse falls over, DEAD. The Sergeant shot her in the face. All the nurses SCREAM. Young-ja squeezes Ji-ah's hand. The Sergeant waves Sung off --

SERGEANT

I know you bitches speak English. I can do this all day.

He aims his pistol squarely at the Nurse next to Ji-ah. Still no response. He pulls his trigger --

CLICK. Crapfuck. His gun's jammed. He calls behind him --

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Private!

And a familiar face steps forward -- it's ATTICUS! This is not the hero of our series we've grown accustomed to seeing. He's HAGGARD and HARDENED. If clothes make the man, Atticus is clearly what his uniform's made him -- a killer.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (2)

15

His response is pure instinct. No thought. No hesitation. He swiftly draws his pistol. Squeezes the trigger --

BANG! Blood SPLATTERS all over Ji-ah as the Nurse next to her collapses dead.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Which of you is a goddamn spy!

Atticus moves in front of Ji-ah. Raises his pistol. She meets his eyes, refusing to turn away. His finger curls on the trigger, but --

YOUNG-JA

It's me! I'm the spy!

Before Ji-ah can even register that, the Sergeant HAMMERS the butt of his pistol into Young-ja's head. Knocking her out cold.

JI-AH

Wait, please --

She holds on to her best friend's hand as long as she can as Atticus and Sung drag Young-ja away...

16 **OMITTED**

16

17 **INT. CENTRAL LIVING SPACE - HANOK - DAY**

17

SHWOOSH! Ji-ah enters in a daze. Still unable to process her run-in with the American soldiers. Soon-hee looks up. Clocks Ji-ah's disheveled appearance and the BLOOD on her uniform. EXCITEMENT dances in her eyes --

SOON-HEE

Did you do it? Did you take your final soul?

A beat. Ji-ah can barely find the words --

JI-AH

The Americans...took Young-ja.
They're going to kill her...

Soon-hee's gravely disappointed. She rises, coldly brushes past her daughter like the monster she believes her to be --

SOON-HEE

Wash those stains from your uniform...

*

18 **OMITTED**

18 *

19 **OMITTED** 19

20 **INT. CAFETERIA - KNU HOSPITAL - DAY** 20

RAIN pelts the windows. A sea of BLOODIED SOLDIERS fill the ward. Some missing limbs. Some blown wide open. *

CHYRON: FALL, 1950 *

Ji-ah, on the heels of the TRIAGE NURSE, moves hurriedly from patient to patient with other fellow NURSES trying to stave off death --

TRIAGE NURSE

Male in his twenties. Significant burns on face, chest and arms. Hemorrhaging from his right thigh. Respirations thirty-two, pulse thready. Needs dressing and pressure on the wound.

Ji-ah steps right in, not missing a beat. Works to stem the bleeding as the others move off. Suddenly she FREEZES. Her eyes locked on something. Something that she can't comprehend --

ATTICUS

on a bed. Across the makeshift ward. Concussed. Being tended to by a Nurse.

Ji-ah begins to TREMBLE. It starts in her hands, then roils through her entire body. She's being overwhelmed by EMOTION, and she doesn't know what to do with it, so she bolts...

21 **EXT. COURTYARD - KNU HOSPITAL - DAY** 21 *

RAIN pours, but Ji-ah is oblivious as she leans against a wall. Lightheaded. HYPERVENTILATING. Unsure of what's happening to her. She looks at her TREMBLING hands. Just like Young-ja's when they came across the lynching. *Is this feeling rage?* *

TRIAGE NURSE (O.S.)

Ji-ah -- we need you!

Ji-ah tries to compose herself. Squeezes her hands tightly. Willing them to stop shaking...

22 **INT. CAFETERIA - KNU HOSPITAL - NIGHT** 22

All's quiet now. Ji-ah stands motionless across from a row of partitioned RECOVERY AREAS. Eyes locked on something inside of one. The Triage Nurse comes up --

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

TRIAGE NURSE

Good work today. Go home and get some rest.

Ji-ah nods. Doesn't pull her eyes away from whatever they're locked on. As the Triage Nurse peels away, REVEAL --

Atticus, bandaged up, on a cot. He's attempting to read a BOOK with SHATTERED EYEGLASSES. It's straining and difficult. The glasses keep sliding off his nose.

Ji-ah watches as Atticus readjusts his body, tries to sit up, but the pain is too much. His frustration BUILDS, until --

He HEAVES his glasses across the room. And now the TEARS come. He hates it. HATES it. But he can't fucking help it either. This is a man at the end of his rope...

23 **INT. CENTRAL LIVING SPACE - HANOK - DAY**

23

Ji-ah and Soon-hee eat breakfast in frosty SILENCE. War has forced them to eat from pouches of MILITARY RATIONS.

JI-AH

I'm taking my last soul. From a soldier at the hospital.

Soon-hee can barely contain her smile...

24 **INT. CAFETERIA - KNU HOSPITAL - DAY**

24

Atticus sits in the chair next to his cot. Still bandaged and bruised. A BOOK in his lap. Despondent. Ji-ah guardedly enters carrying an armload of FRESH SHEETS --

JI-AH

I need to turn your bed.

Atticus doesn't respond as she does just that. She occasionally throws a curious glance his way. After a silent moment, he rises, wincing in pain, and begins to help her.

JI-AH (CONT'D)

You don't --

ATTICUS

Please, I need something to do.

Ji-ah locks eyes with him. His are HAUNTED. And there's so much need there. She nods. Allows him to finish making the bed with her. She grabs up the dirty sheets to leave, but --

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

ATTICUS (CONT'D)

Can I ask a favor?

Ji-ah stills. The last thing she wants is to do anything for her best friend's murderer.

But she needs to get close to him to take his soul --

JI-AH

What is it?

He picks up the Book. Holds it out to her --

ATTICUS

Would you read this to me? I've only got a few chapters left.

Ji-ah takes in the book's cover -- **THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO**. That now familiar feeling bubbling up. That rage. And she doesn't know how to swallow it yet, so she blurts out --

JI-AH

Edmond gets his revenge on Fernand in a sword fight, brings down Villefort while defending himself on trial, and rekindles his romance with Mercedes. That's how it ends.

A beat. Ji-ah feels some small satisfaction in spoiling the book for Atticus. But he's not upset, there's a spark in his eye now --

ATTICUS

You've read this?

JI-AH

It's an interesting premise told poorly.

ATTICUS

How so?

JI-AH

Edmond shouldn't have found out about the betrayal so early in the story. And his relationship with Mercedes. Why rekindle it? It robbed him of his most interesting turn. What would he have done with his life when finally given a choice?

A beat. Atticus holds out the book --

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

ATTICUS
Find out for yourself.

Ji-ah's confused. So Atticus explains --

ATTICUS (CONT'D)
Edmond and Mercedes don't end up together. But I can see why they thought that change would make for a better movie.

Atticus was setting her up the entire time. Ji-ah's face flushes BRIGHT RED. She's caught. Atticus smiles. She turns to leave but --

ATTICUS (CONT'D)
C'mon, you have to finish it now --

JI-AH
I have to take my break.

25 **OMITTED**

25

26 **EXT. COURTYARD - KNU HOSPITAL - DAY**

26

A RED RUBBER BALL hurls up into the sky and back down. A cadre of AMERICAN and KOREAN NURSES play "hot potato" in a circle on break. Ji-ah among them, but her attention is on

ATTICUS

sitting on a bench with Sung. He's on the mend. More at ease as he laughs with his friend. That elicits a twinge of anger in Ji-ah. She disengages and makes her way over --

ATTICUS
Ji-ah, meet my friend, Sung.

SUNG
Seen any new flicks you want to spoil for us?

Atticus shoots him a *thanks-bro-now-she-knows-I've-been-talking-about-her* look. Then he looks to Ji-ah embarrassed --

ATTICUS
I told him about our little debate. Not everyone can go toe to toe with Alexandre Dumas.

Ji-ah smiles, taking in the compliment. Sits next to Atticus. Close. On the hunt --

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

JI-AH

I haven't been able to watch any movies lately. The only theater in town has shut down. I was really hoping to see Summer Stock. Who knows if it'll come back after the war. If we're even still here.

Atticus takes Ji-ah in. Feels for her --

ATTICUS

With everything that's happening it was probably nice to escape for a few hours in the dark.

Ji-ah lock eyes with him. His words resonating --

JI-AH

Yes. It was.

An awkward silence. Sung eyes them both, noting a genuine connection between them. Ji-ah looks to Sung, avoiding it --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

Have you two met Judy Garland?

Atticus and Sung LAUGH. Ji-ah recoils with embarrassment --

ATTICUS

I'm sorry, we didn't mean to laugh. But the only way we would ever meet Judy Garland is if I were her butler or he was her chauffeur.

JI-AH

I don't understand.

ATTICUS

In America, colored folks are treated differently. We're made out to be enemies in our own home.

Ji-ah's thrown for a loop, tries to make sense of all this. Appeals to Sung --

JI-AH

You should stay in Korea once the war's over. Be at home with people who will respect you.

Sung shakes his head. If only it were that easy --

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

SUNG

*In America, I'm called a gook.
In Korea, I'm called yangnom. That's
what no one ever gives a shit to
think about. Here or there I'll
always be seen as a foreigner.*

JI-AH

*Then why'd you come fight for a
country that doesn't want you?*

SUNG

*I was drafted. If I had a choice
you think I'd be here? Ask him.
His ass volunteered.*

Ji-ah looks to Atticus curiously. That's a good question.
Something that's been gnawing at him for some time.

ATTICUS

*You went to the movies to get away
from everything. From everyone. I
stuck my nose in books. I guess
there just came a point where books
couldn't take me far enough away.*

JI-AH

So you came here...

Atticus looks off into the distance, his mind now on the
horrors of war --

ATTICUS

And now I'm back to books.

Ji-ah sees the REGRET and GUILT in his eyes...

*

27 **INT. CAFETERIA - KNU HOSPITAL - NIGHT**

27

All's quiet as Ji-ah reads the closing lines of **THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO** to a now bandage-less Atticus --

JI-AH

*"He who has felt the deepest grief
is best able to experience supreme
happiness. We must have felt what
it is to die that we may appreciate
the enjoyments of living..."*

Ji-ah looks up, catches Atticus STARRY-EYED. Entranced by
her. She sets the book down in her lap --

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

JI-AH (CONT'D)

Why did you choose this one?

The question shadows Atticus's features --

ATTICUS

It's my father's favorite. I think because after years of unfair oppression, Edmond gets his sweet revenge. I don't know. Or maybe he just likes it because it was written by a negro man.

JI-AH

You should ask him. Which one it is.

ATTICUS

We don't really talk much anymore.

Ji-ah can see how much that pains Atticus. It reminds her of her own predicament --

JI-AH

Things are difficult with my mother too. She wishes I were someone I'm not --

ATTICUS

I like who you are.

They lock eyes for a brief moment, then look away. Both embarrassed by the sincerity in that.

ATTICUS (CONT'D)

My entire life, my pop's also been trying to make me into someone I'm not. I've gone halfway around the world to get out from under his thumb. And now, being over here, I've realized this war has done his job for him. Better than he could've ever imagined.

Ji-ah feels for him. Because she's in a similar situation --

JI-AH

We have to stop letting their fear shape us.

ATTICUS

That's good advice.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

Ji-ah's eyes darken --

JI-AH

It's from my best friend.

ATTICUS

*Well, I'd like to meet this friend.
Get some more advice.*

Ji-ah focuses back on the book to hide her rage. Her voice cracking as she continues to read --

JI-AH

*"Live, then, and be happy, beloved
children of my heart, and never forget
that until the day..."*

28 **INT. BEDROOM - HANOK - NIGHT**

28

A faded PHOTOGRAPH of a YOUNG JI-AH and YOUNGER SOON-HEE on the dresser. WIDEN to find Ji-ah in front of a mirror as Soon-hee styles her hair and make up to look like how she remembers her daughter.

Ji-ah is solemn and somber as if she's getting ready for her funeral. Soon-hee is ecstatic as if she's preparing Ji-ah for her wedding day --

SOON-HEE

*I know exactly the dress you should
wear...*

29 **EXT. SECURITY GATE - U.S. ARMY BASE - NIGHT**

29

Ji-ah now wears her mother's hand picked DRESS. She looks absolutely STUNNING as she waits outside the heavily patrolled security gates. She's nervous as the BASE SOLDIERS eye her.

The gates finally open, REVEALING -- Not Atticus. But Sung. He carries a RIFLE. Shouts to the base soldiers --

SUNG

*You can have a go with her when I'm
done. If she can walk.*

The Soldiers snicker --

BASE SOLDIER

*Just make sure you're not fucking
your own sister.*

Sung lets that roll off as he escorts Ji-ah through the gates --

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

JI-AH

I was supposed to meet Atticus for a night on the town.

SUNG

Plans have changed.

Ji-ah hesitates. Something's off --

JI-AH

Does Atticus think I'm a comfort woman?

SUNG

No Koreans are allowed on base anymore with that one exception. Communist spies are everywhere.

A beat. *Have they discovered she was friends with Young-ja?*

30 **OMITTED**

30

31 **INT. BUNKER - U.S. ARMY BASE - NIGHT**

31

DARKNESS. Sung leads Ji-ah in. She can't make anything out past the shaft of light falling through the open door --

JI-AH

What is this?

SUNG

Wait here. Don't move.

He shuts the door behind him. Ji-ah grows weary. *Has she walked into a trap?* She hears footsteps behind her --

JI-AH

Atticus?

No response. She's really freaked out now as she hears a RATTLING, and a BRIGHT LIGHT blinds her.

It's a PROJECTOR illuminating the small ARMY THEATER.

Atticus stands in front of the screen. Dressed in an ARMY DRESS UNIFORM. Ji-ah's taken aback. He looks HAWT. This is her Hollywood love-at-first-sight moment.

He hands her a single FLOWER. Looks her up and down --

ATTICUS

Judy Garland's got some competition.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

JI-AH

You sure don't.

Now it's Atticus's turn to feel the heat. But he plays it cool. Signals up to the projection booth. Sung gives him the thumbs up as a MOVIE starts playing on screen.

Ji-ah's heart RACES. It's **SUMMER STOCK (1950)**. She looks to Atticus. He went to all this trouble. For her.

JI-AH (CONT'D)

How did you...?

ATTICUS

I wish I could take credit, but it was mostly my Uncle George.

JI-AH

Is he in the movies?

ATTICUS

No. He publishes a book called the Safe Negro Travel Guide. But he gets to know all kinds of people as he travels the country collecting information for it.

Ji-ah can't help the massive smile that spreads her lips as Judy Garland's name flashes across the screen.

ATTICUS (CONT'D)

Let's get some good seats...

As Atticus shows her to the best folding chairs in the house, Ji-ah's smile falters, what she plans to do tonight just got much harder...

32 **INT. BUNKER - U.S. ARMY BASE - NIGHT**

32

Ji-ah and Atticus are SILHOUETTED against the screen as Gene Kelly woos Judy Garland with "**YOU WONDERFUL YOU**" from **SUMMER STOCK (1950)**. *

They inch closer. The anticipation ELECTRIC. They look each other in the eyes for a long moment. Their lips touch. A tentative exploration. Their kiss grows until they're almost both overwhelmed by it, but -- *

Ji-ah pulls away. She looks to her hands. They're TREMBLING. But this isn't rage she's feeling right now. *So what is it?*

ATTICUS

You okay?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

Ji-ah swallows whatever it is. Pushing it deep --

JI-AH
*I'm just a little cold. But I know
what will warm me up...*

The liquid gaze she sends Atticus cannot be misinterpreted...

33 **INT. ABATTOIR - HANOK - NIGHT**

33

The LOVING BED on full display. It's draped in ceremonial silk. The candles already lit. Incense sticks burning.

SHWOOSH! Ji-ah slides the door closed behind Atticus. Shoves him onto the bed. Aggressively kisses him. Atticus is into it, but -- *

ATTICUS
Hold on...

She's not stopping, willfully turning him on. She needs to get this done for Young-ja. Atticus pins her hands --

ATTICUS (CONT'D)
Ji-ah...

She can't hide her frustration --

JI-AH
What is wrong? Don't you --

ATTICUS
Yes. Of course. I just...

Ji-ah sees something in his eyes. Wary embarrassment --

ATTICUS (CONT'D)
I've never done this before.

Ji-ah sits back as the surprise washes through her --

JI-AH
You're a virgin?

Atticus shyly nods. Ji-ah doesn't know what to do with this news. An awkward beat, then --

JI-AH (CONT'D)
I'm not.

ATTICUS
That's okay. That's not why I...

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

A beat as they both process emotions that are unfamiliar to them. Atticus tries to talk through his --

ATTICUS (CONT'D)

*I wanted to tell you...to be honest
with you because...being with you...
I've done some horrible things.
Things I've tried to forget. And
when I'm with you, that seems
possible. It's like because you see
the good in me I know it's there.*

Ji-ah's trembling again. Not just her hands. Her whole body. A MIXTURE of emotions rolling through her.

ATTICUS (CONT'D)

*I've never felt this way about anyone
before.*

He takes charge now. Kisses her. Begins to undress. And Ji-ah is conflicted as hell. She wants this for so many reasons -- because love is all she's ever wanted to feel, and also because sex with Atticus will avenge Young-ja.

SUDDENLY -- she SHOVES him off. Shouts with ferocity --

JI-AH

GET OUT! NOW!

Atticus is STUNNED. Frozen in place at this turn of events. Before he can find his words --

SHWOOSH! The door slides open behind him. It's Soon-hee staring daggers at Ji-ah. *What. The. Fuck.*

JI-AH (CONT'D)

Go yangnom!

Atticus freaked the fuck out, BOLTS, leaving the two alone. Soon-hee scowls, her excitement for this night now a distant memory. Ji-ah drops her eyes --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

*For so long I felt nothing. And I
wanted so badly to make you happy.
I even learned to mimic love from
Young-ja hoping that would be enough.
But I think I really feel something
for him, Umma --*

SOON-HEE

Don't call me that.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

Ji-ah needs her mother to hear this --

JI-AH

You summoned me. I am in this world
because of you. You are my mother
whether you want to be or not.

Soon-hee is wholly unmoved --

SOON-HEE

Then you dishonor me by disobeying.
How can you sit there pretending to
have feelings for the person that
killed your best friend?

JI-AH

I'm not pretending --

SOON-HEE

You could never feel that way --

JI-AH

How do you know?

SOON-HEE

If you do, then you truly are a
monster.

Soon-hee SPITS in her face. Storms out in disgust...

34 **EXT. U.S. ARMY BASE - DAY**

34

Ji-ah waits outside the security gate. Agitated. On edge.
A volcano inside of her. The gate SLIDES open. Atticus
emerges. He approaches guarded and hurt. Forceful --

ATTICUS

You have to leave --

JI-AH

You killed my best friend.

Atticus STAGGERS at the accusation. Confused and shocked.

JI-AH (CONT'D)

*Her name was Young-ja. She was a
nurse. Your unit shot some of us at
a checkpoint. Then dragged her away.*

A beat, then HORRIFIED RECOGNITION floods Atticus --

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

ATTICUS

I was following orders. She was a communist sympathizer --

JI-AH

Is that what you tell yourself?

ATTICUS

Who knows how many lives I saved by doing what I did --

JI-AH

Does it balance how many you have taken? The ones that keep you up at night sobbing? There's no book for you to escape what you've done.

*

He TREMBLES, not from the cold, but from the realization that his only salvation in this war is now making him confront his worst nightmares --

ATTICUS

You knew this entire time and didn't say a word. You made me care about you. That's fucking sick. What is wrong with you?

JI-AH

Nothing is wrong with me. You're the monster.

Spit as viciously as if it were coming out of her mother's mouth. And it hits Atticus just as hard, because like Ji-ah he fears, no BELIEVES it to be true --

ATTICUS

Why? Why'd you even agree to go out with me?

JI-AH

I was going to kill you.

A long beat as Atticus lets that sink in. The crack in his dam widens, a wave of guilt and despair washing over him --

ATTICUS

Why didn't you?

Ji-ah sees it in his eyes. He'd let her. And he'd find it a relief. And that breaks her heart, because the truth is --

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: (2)

34

JI-AH

*Because I've never felt this way
either. You murdered my best friend,
and then saved me, I think.*

Atticus turns away. The emotion overtaking him. It's all too much. For both of them. But Ji-ah has to get it out --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

*The first time I saw you at the
hospital, the anger shot through me
like lightening. I had never felt...*

...anything. But she can't say that, so she pivots --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

*All I could see was a murderer.
Then I got to know you. And I
realized how this war has torn you
apart.*

Atticus faces her. Desperate hope behind his eyes --

ATTICUS

*I don't know who I am anymore. The
person who's done the awful things,
or the one horrified by them.*

JI-AH

The killer is just one part of you --

ATTICUS

You can't know that --

JI-AH

*Yes, I can. I've done many awful
things as well. The same way you've
been following orders, I've been
blindly following my mother's wishes.
But we've always had a choice. To
make the better decision. We just
haven't. We must accept those
consequences. Because if we don't,
we won't see the choice in front of
us right now.*

Ji-ah takes Atticus's trembling hands, calming them in hers --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

*We've both done monstrous things.
But that doesn't make us monsters.
We can be the people we see in each
other.*

*

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: (3) 34

Atticus meets her eyes, a stillness in him that he's forgotten. He pulls her close. They KISS. PASSIONATELY...

35 **INT. BUNKER - U.S. ARMY BASE - NIGHT** 35

CLICK CLICK CLICK! The finished reel spins in the projector. The movie's over. The bright light bounces off the blank white screen, illuminating --

Ji-ah, wrapped in nothing but Atticus's army issued coat, straddles a naked Atticus in the throes of taking his virginity. She's unusually focused, her eyes concentrating on his every expression.

Atticus CLIMAXES, the sensations PULSATING through his body. Ji-ah holds TIGHT onto him, her nails nearly DIGGING into his back. He MOANS. His orgasm is unbelievable. *Is it from pain? Will Ji-ah's tails emerge?*

Atticus's moans subside. Ji-ah releases her hold --

JI-AH

You okay?

He exhales deeply. Nods. He's more than okay. Kisses her all over. Ji-ah brims with joy, returning his affection...

36 **INT. CENTRAL LIVING SPACE - HANOK - DAY** 36

Ji-ah tiptoes in, hoping that her mother is still asleep. But she's not. She's eating breakfast rations alone. Ji-ah pauses. Caught. But Soon-hee doesn't even react. Just continues eating as if Ji-ah doesn't even exist.

JI-AH

You can't ignore me forever.

But Soon-hee thinks otherwise. Stands to leave the room. Ji-ah cuts her off, forcing a confrontation --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

I love Atticus --

SOON-HEE

You're still a kumiho. You'll kill him sooner or later --

JI-AH

No. I can control my tails. I've had sex without killing many times.

Soon-hee wraps her head around this revelation. Ji-ah's been lying to her. Anger BUILDS --

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

SOON-HEE

So you've made my daughter a monster and a whore.

JI-AH

You've told me that because I wasn't human I could never have feelings. That no one could ever have feelings for me. But you were just making excuses. To give yourself reasons not to love me.

The truth of this is in Soon-Hee's eyes as Ji-ah continues --

JI-AH (CONT'D)

Young-ja cared about me. Atticus cares about me. And if they can, so can you.

SOON-HEE

Have you told him?

Ji-ah quiets. This is the thing she's been avoiding. Her biggest fear --

SOON-HEE (CONT'D)

He only cares because he doesn't know the truth about what you are...

*

37 **OMITTED**

37 *

38 **OMITTED**

38 *

39 **INT. ABATTOIR - HANOK - DAY**

39

CLOSE on PAGES of a MYTHOLOGY BOOK -- an ILLUSTRATION of a NINE-TAILED FOX in a SNOWY LANDSCAPE. *Italics* = English

*

CHYRON: WINTER, 1950

*

JI-AH (O.S.)

Deep in the mountainous forest lives a nine-tailed fox spirit called a kumiho...

WIDEN to find the sparse room is now decorated and lively. Ji-ah kneels with Atticus holding the Mythology Book.

Tension roils through her body. But Atticus barely notices. His mind elsewhere as she builds the courage to reveal her secret --

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

JI-AH (CONT'D)

The spirit can be summoned into the form of a beautiful woman to avenge a wrong done by men --

ATTICUS

Ji-ah...there's something I need to tell you.

She looks up. Clocks the grave look on his face. He pulls a LETTER from his coat pocket. Hands it to her --

ATTICUS (CONT'D)

I've earned enough points to rotate out. I can go home.

Ji-ah's eyes hopscotch over the letter. Her heart breaking. But she hides it best she can --

JI-AH

That's good news...

*

ATTICUS

It's not an order. I can choose to stay...

She looks up with soft surprise --

JI-AH

But, you hate this war. I can't ask you to stay for me.

ATTICUS

Then come with me.

Ji-ah is floored. She sees it in Atticus's eyes. He means it. And he's waiting for an answer. Ji-ah looks to the book in his hands. The illustration of the kumiho spirit --

JI-AH

Atticus...there's things you don't know about me.

ATTICUS

So I'll learn them. There's nothing you could tell me that could change the way I feel about you.

Ji-ah looks into his eyes. Wants so desperately to believe what she sees there. This is her moment. To tell him everything. And she's considering it, but --

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

She SHUTS the book. KISSES him. And Atticus takes that as her answer as they fall into each other's arms. They have that first time I-LOVE-YOU sex.

It's slow and gentle at first, their bodies in rhythm, feeling each other from the inside out. And then it's not. A wave of passion overtakes them both.

Ji-ah becomes lost in the moment. Gone is that determined focus when she took Atticus's virginity. He CLIMAXES. And she CLIMAXES with him. Closing her eyes. Reveling in the feeling of pure ecstasy washing over her, until -- Atticus's SCREAMING jars her out of the moment!

She opens her eyes to take in the TERROR on his face because -- her TAIL-LIKE TENTACLES have emerged, SEARCHING for Atticus with a mind of their own.

They both FIGHT them. Atticus to get away from them. And Ji-ah trying to control them. But it's all in vain. Her tails find Atticus's eyes, HIS MEMORIES FLASH --

1) SIX-YEAR-OLD ATTICUS being handed a balloon by DORA during the DAY... *

2) YOUNG ATTICUS reads NANCY DREW by FLASHLIGHT at NIGHT in his tent fort in Montrose's living room... *

3) YOUNG ATTICUS getting his ass beat by MONTROSE with BELT in Montrose's bedroom during the DAY... *

4) ATTICUS and SUNG hold Young-ja to a chair as she's tortured. Another SOLDIER pulling her teeth out... *

The tails VIBRATE in hypnotic symmetry with Atticus's UNDULATING body -- his LIFE FORCE is being sucked dry.

And in this moment, Ji-ah forcibly GRABS HOLD of her tails, wrestling them under control, and -- KICKS Atticus off, HEAVING him to the floor as her tails RETRACT!

As he lies unconscious, something odd happens. The flood of his memories aren't stopping --

5) SPARKS fly as Atticus in a mechanic's uniform, works under the hood of a car... *

6) Atticus in bed with a BLACK WOMAN post sex, sweaty from the Florida heat... *

7) Atticus, his duffel slung over his shoulder, wearing the same JACKET he wore in 101, buys a bus ticket to Chicago or climbs onto the bus... *

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

39

8) A pale, blood drained Atticus lying on a SUNDIAL APPARATUS. The life fading from his eyes... *

Ji-ah screams as the visions abruptly end. She breathes heavily, trying to make sense of this premonition. The anguish of Atticus's death weighing heavily on her.

Atticus stirs. Tries to get to his feet, but he's weak and wobbly, consumed by a terrible feeling of DREAD --

ATTICUS (CONT'D)

What just happened...?

Ji-ah, rocked by the premonition, moves to him in a PANIC --

JI-AH

Don't go home.

He flinches away from her. Dread rocketing to terror as he tries to clear the fog over his mind --

ATTICUS

What the hell did you do to me --

JI-AH

You're going to die.

Atticus is dumbfounded. Can't process --

ATTICUS

What?

Ji-ah grabs him, imploring --

JI-AH

You can't go home. If you do. You'll die there. I saw it --

There's a sincerity in her voice and in her eyes that leaves Atticus with a foreboding feeling. She's telling the truth.

He pushes her away. FRIGHTENED. He grabs his clothes --

ATTICUS

Stay away from me.

Ji-ah scrambles to the Mythology Book, holding it up for him --

JI-AH

Wait. Listen please. I'm a kumiho --

ATTICUS

STAY THE FUCK AWAY FROM ME!

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (4) 39

He knocks the book away. FLEES out the door. Out of Ji-ah's life. She's left alone. SHATTERED in his wake...

40 **INT. CENTRAL LIVING SPACE - HANOK - NIGHT** 40

SWOOSH! The front door slides open. Soon-hee steps in, blanketed in snow. Ji-ah sits in the dark. Still as statue. Soon-hee sees the utter devastation on her face --

JI-AH
Umma. He left me.

Soon-hee's eyes well. Her heart breaks. She goes to Ji-ah, taking her into her arms just as Ji-ah's knees buckle, the weight of her emotions too much.

She collapses into her mother's embrace as Soon-hee squeezes as tight as she can. This touch is the very thing Ji-ah's wanted for so long. She wails as Soon-hee gently rocks her --

SOON-HEE
My daughter, you'll be okay...you'll be okay...

As we linger in this moment a rare INTERVIEW with JUDY GARLAND in her twilight fills the track. She speaks with resolve --

"I don't honestly understand why I've been the victim and made the victim of so many untruths..."

41 **OMITTED** 41

42 **EXT. ANCESTRAL VILLAGE - DAY** 42

"...Perhaps you don't understand what it's like to pick up the paper and read things about yourself that aren't true..."

Ji-ah helps Soon-hee trudge through the snow as they arrive to the outskirts of a rural village at the base of a snowy mountain. There's a serenity and peacefulness here. It's been untouched by the war.

"...Read loathsome things that have nothing to do with your life or you or your heart or your beliefs or your kindness, or your willingness..."

Soon-hee enters the village as Ji-ah freezes in place. She clocks a FOX standing at the edge of a forest. The fox STARES at her like it knows her from a past life. Then darts away into the trees. Ji-ah's not sure what to make of this.

"...I've spent years and years and years trying to please through singing or acting. There's nothing wrong with that."

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

And yet I've constantly been written or talked about by certain individuals as an unfit person. Well, what kind of people are they? They're dead people..."

Soon-hee signals to Ji-ah, directing her attention towards a FIGURE amongst some rocks in the distance...

43 **EXT. OUTCROP - ANCESTRAL VILLAGE - DAY**

43

"...But they've tried to kill me along the way and by god they won't. They won't."

A WOMAN dressed in white robes prays atop a rock outcropping. This is a MUDANG, a Korean Shaman. She rubs her hands over lit candles in prayer. Then lights a piece of paper on fire, studying it as it floats away into the air.

She senses Ji-ah and Soon-hee as they approach --

MUDANG

You have come back to me asking,
knowing full well the price.

Ji-ah and Soon-hee kneel before the Mudang. Heads bowed --

SOON-HEE

I will bear the cost. Whatever it
may be.

The Mudang studies Ji-ah. Smiles. Looks to Soon-hee --

MUDANG

The cost will not be yours to bear.

Ji-ah acknowledges the implications with a silent look to her mother. The Mudang address her --

MUDANG (CONT'D)

You've stopped at ninety-nine souls
and come seeking answers.

JI-AH

I had a vision of a man's death.
And not by my hands. I've never
seen anything like this in all of my
encounters. Will it come true?

The Mudang smirks at the shortsightedness of her question --

MUDANG

The reason you ask that question is
the same reason you call this woman
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

MUDANG (CONT'D)
your mother. Your mortal concerns
are meaningless.

Ji-ah presses again, harder this time --

JI-AH
Will Atticus die?

The Mudang lights a piece of paper. Hypnotized by the flames --

MUDANG
You have not even become one with
the darkness yet. You will see
countless deaths before your journey
is done.

That ominous message washes over Ji-ah. Soon-hee squeezes
her daughter's hand as the fiery piece of paper takes flight
into the wind, dispersing itself into a million pieces of
ash, never to be seen again...

SMASH TO BLACK.

TO BE CONTINUED...