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Writing Sample

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Cast:
--Jinsoo: 20 years old. Son of community leader in Hwang-hae Province. Studying arts in Incheon. After losing his family to the Communists, he joins the army.
--Jina: 16 years old. Younger sister of Jinsoo. Having witnessed her parents killed by the Communists, the shock makes her lose her memory.
--Hyewon: 20 years old. Jinsoo’s childhood friend, married to him.
--Jungil: 24 years old. Born in Ham-gyong Province. Adores Hyewon, but being a descendant of generations of house slaves, he cannot express his emotions. Dreams of an equal society. After Jinsoo and Hyewon marry, he becomes a Communist.
--Soochul: 12 years old. Lost his parents at an early age and lived on the streets until Mr. and Mrs. Yoon took care of him. When the war breaks out, he follows the Korean army as a chore boy.
--Half-moon (‘Vandal’ in the original): A brutal North Korean sniper, who always hits the right eye of a victim, smashing half of his face. Half of her face is always covered with a black cloth; in darkness her face looks like a Half-moon, a half moon.
--Mr. and Mrs. Song: parents of Jinsoo and Jina
--Mr. and Mrs. Yoon: Hyewon’s parents
--Hyejin: Jinsoo and Hyewon’s daughter

A South Korean Army Commander, POWs of the North Korean troops, a North Korean captive, an aristocrat, Jinsoo’s fellow soldiers

MUSIC AND LIGHTING ARE IMPORTANT IN THIS PLAY. WHEN THE CURTAIN RISES, DAZZLING SUNLIGHT SHOWERs AN ENDLESS FIELD, FILLED WITH RICE STALKS BLOWING IN THE WIND. THE ATMOSPHERE IS PEACEFUL AND MILD, AND ABUNDANCE IS APPARENT. MEN IN THEIR THIRTIES, FORTIES, FIFTIES, AND JUNGIL ARE TAKING A BREAK FROM WORKING IN THE FIELD.

Villager 1: Another fat year ahead, no?
Villager 2: Sure. The sun, the wind, the water, and the soil...the conditions are favorable here in Yeon-baek. And we also have the Song family taking such good care of us. Things can’t go wrong. We should just enjoy what we have here, right?
Villager 3: Isn’t Jinsoo coming home today? The son of the Song family..."...Villager 2: Yeah, he must be a grown man by now.
Villager 1: Sure, he’s twenty this year. Of an age for a wife.
Villager 3: I wonder why he wants to be an artist. It doesn’t seem like a man’s thing to do, and he left home and moved far away to study such a thing. Anyway, he must be really good at it.
Villager 4: Yeah, he must be really good at painting. See, he began living in Incheon away from his parents when he was a little boy, traveling to Hawaii, too.
Jungil: (curt) What good is that. It’s all a money game to go around here and there with an excuse to paint. He should be able to paint right here at home.

1 Half-moon is vandal in Korean.
Villager 2: Ah, your inferiority complex is showing again. Hey, he's a young master, so he is different from you.
Jungil: What "master" during these modern times. We aren't living in Choseon Dynasty. I'm a young master in front of my parents too.
Villager 1: (glancing at Jungil) Here you go again. By the way, I heard he's going to America for good this time. How about Miss Hyewon then?
Jungil: What "master" during these modern times. We aren't living in Choseon Dynasty. I'm a young master in front of my parents too.
Villager 2: (slapping the back of Jungil's head) Are you still hanging out with the commies? You'd better calm down! Now is not the time to talk like that.
Villager 4: Shut up. Here come the Songs.
Mr. and Mrs. Song: (appearing) The villagers bow deeply. Jungil greets them reluctantly. Mr. and Mrs. Song turn to the villagers with kindness.
Villager 4: How are you, sir?
Mr. Song: (smiling) What 'sir'? Haven't I told you not to address me that way? Anyway, how are you doing today?
Villager 4: Always good sir. Yesterday, today, tomorrow, every day is good.
Village woman: (to Mrs. Song) Isn't today the day the young master comes home?
Mrs. Song: That's right. I'll see my son Jinsoo today. He'll show up over the hill soon.
Mr. Song: I don't know why but I really miss him this time.
Mr. and Mrs. Song and the villagers all turn their heads in one direction. Soon, Jinsoo appears. He is wearing an artsy outfit and has a hat on. Walking behind him is his servant who carries his master's easel and a bundle. Jinsoo is also carrying painting tools on his back and on his right shoulder and paper rolls on his left shoulder.
Jinsoo: Father! Mother!
Leaving his painting tools, Jinsoo makes a deep bow in front of his parents. Mrs. Song approaches her son and hugs him but, being smaller, looks like she was hugged by him. For a short while, Mr. Song watches his son and wife before walking to his son, tapping his shoulder and then picking up his hat and stroking his head as if disheveling his hair. Jinsoo hugs his father, takes his hat back, then straightens his appearance. The villagers now cheerfully greet Jinsoo. Jina shows up.
Jinsoo: Jina, my sister! You're a grown woman.
Jina: (primly) Brother, long time no see.
Villagers exit one by one.
Jinsoo: My pretty little sister, didn't you miss me?
Jina: What little? I'm a grown lady, brother. I can marry!
Jinsoo: Uh uh, you little girl! You think you're a grown lady now! Wow, time flies. It feels like just yesterday when I was carrying you on my back! Remember? I sang lullabies to you and you fell asleep on my back.
Jina: That's not a nice thing to say to a lady! I don't remember you carrying me on your back!
Jinsoo: (Playfully) Really? Are you saying you forgot this song?
Sleep between the angels flapping their soft wings
I'll protect you from all the harms so go to sleep

Jina: (making a pouting face) Whatever! Teach me how to paint, like you promised! I want to paint, too!
Mrs. Song: Jina, your brother needs some rest!
Jinsoo: It's all right, mother. Please go in. I'll follow you in a moment, after Jina and I have talked for a while.
Mr. Song: (to his wife) Leave them alone. Jina must've missed her brother a lot. Let's go inside and wait for them.

MR. AND MRS. SONG LOOK AT THEIR SON AND DAUGHTER WITH HEARTWARMING EXPRESSION AND EXIT. WHEN THE SERVANT PUTS DOWN THE EASEL, JINSOO TAKES OUT HIS PAINTING TOOLS. JINA WATCHES WITH GREAT CURiosity. ONCE THE THINGS FOR PAINTING ARE READY, THE SERVANT EXITS.

Jinsoo: Look at the mountain. Because of the sun, its shadow lies on the opposite side. You see it?
Jina: Yeah, I see it.
Jinsoo: The shadow may appear to be black. But if you really look, its shades are different. Look over there, the shadows of the tree trunk and its twigs. What do you think?
Jina: Their shades look different!
Jinsoo: Very good. If you can see it, you can also see living things breathing in the shade.
Jina: I see them! Yes, I see them! I see them in the shade. A baby deer hiding behind the tree and the fish in the stream next to it! Amazing!

JINSOO TEACHES JINA HOW TO CALCULATE ANGLES OF DISTANT OBJECTS WITH A BRUSH AND A PENCIL. HYEWON APPEARS. SHE WALKS TOWARDS JINSOO AND JINA.

Hyewon: I see them, too. I see the soft touches of the breeze that soothes all things after a typhoon raked them. It often even feels like I'm seeing people on the other side of the mountain.

JINSOO TURNS HIS HEAD AND LOOKS AT HYEWON. SPEECHLESS, THEY GAZE AT EACH OTHER. JINA GIVES HYEWON A WARM GREETING. BUT SOON PLAYFULLY TAKES TURNS LOOKING AT HER BROTHER AND HYEWON BEFORE PRETENDING TO EXIT BUT ACTUALLY TAKING A SEAT AT ONE CORNER OF THE STAGE TO SECRETLY WATCH THE COUPLE. BASHFULLY, HYEWON APPROACHES JINSOO. JINSOO LOOKS AT HER EXPECTANTLY.

Jinsoo: You must've waited a long time, right?
Hyewon: Waiting sweetens the encounter.
Jinsoo: Thanks for your understanding. I missed you so much.
Hyewon: I missed you too. Every single day I counted down the days before I would see you.
Jinsoo: (gazing lovingly at Hyewon) Hyewon, I'll be leaving for America after this summer.

HYEWON'S FACE SHOWS ANXIETY, ASTONISHMENT, AND DISAPPOINTMENT. SOON, THOUGH, SHE HIDES HER EMOTIONS AND SMILES.

Hyewon: I knew it. Yes, I heard about it. (Pretending indifference) Are you saying you're leaving for good?
Jinsoo: (Nodding and smiling) I wonder.
Hyewon: About what?

AS IF HAVING MADE UP HIS MIND ABOUT SOMETHING, JINSOO LOOKS NERVOUS. HE KNEELS. HYEWON LOOKS BAFFLED.

Hyewon: What happened? Why are you on the ground?
Jinsoo: This is the way. This is how they do it in America.
Hyewon: Do what?
Jinsoo: Proposing marriage.
Hyewon: What?

JINSOO TAKES A RING OUT OF HIS JACKET POCKET.

Jinsoo: Hyewon Yoon, will you marry me?
Hyewon: (baffled) What are you doing?
Jinsoo: I am asking you to marry me. Marry me and come to America with me. Let me ask you one more time. (In a louder voice) Please marry me.
Hyewon: People may see us? Stand up, quick.

JINSOO REMAINS KNEELING. HE LOOKS DETERMINED. HYEWON HURRIEDLY ANSWERS.

Hyewon: Okay, I'll do it. I'll marry you.

JINSOO PUTS THE RING ON HYEWON'S FINGER.

Hyewon: (admiringly) It fits perfectly.
Jinsoo: I can't believe my eyes. Hyewon Yoon, we are now engaged!
Hyewon: Engaged without having an engagement ceremony?
Jinsoo: Our parents will do that later. But you and I are engaged. So from now on, don't feel uneasy and don't even look at other men, okay?
Hyewon: Okay. I'm happy, so happy. Do I deserve this much happiness, I wonder. I'm too happy and I'm afraid this may disappear.

JINSOO EMBRACES HYEWON. IN THE DISTANCE, JUNGIL WATCHES THE COUPLE BEFORE MAKING HIS EXIT.

Hyewon: Stop it. Someone might see us!
Jinsoo: Doesn't matter who is looking at us, who cares? We'll be married soon. I love you.
Hyewon: I love you, too.

JINA APPEARS, LOOKING PLAYFUL. HYEWON BLUSHES SHYLY.

Jina: (to Hyewon) Your cheeks look like peaches! What is that shiny thing on your finger? Let me see it! Please? Can I see it?

JINA LOOKS AT THE RING ON HYEWON'S FINGER.

Jina: Oh! Dazzling! So romantic! I want to get married, too! I want to have an American style engagement!

THE THREE LAUGH HEARTILY, HUG, THEN EXIT.

SEVERAL DAYS LATER.

THE STAGE THAT WAS BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL IS NOW DARK AND GLOOMY. AS IF MIRRORING PEOPLE'S UNEASY EMOTIONS, THE SURROUNDING AREA IS ALSO SHADIED. PEOPLE WHO ONCE LAUGHED BRIGHTLY ARE NOW RUNNING AROUND IN CONFUSION ABOUT THE UPCOMING HORROR. WOMEN HIDE THEIR CHILDREN UNDER THEIR SKIRTS OR SEARCH FOR THEIR HUSBANDS WHILE MEN MAKE FRANTIC EFFORT TO PROTECT THEIR WIVES AND CHILDREN.

Villager 1: There will be a war!
Village woman 1: War? How come!
Villager 2: War is coming! I've heard about it, too! They say that the Chinese will invade us!
Village woman 2: What are you talking about?
Villager 3: I heard that many people have already become Commissars! What's going on? We've just won this country back from the Japanese. Now are we going to beat each other up?
Villager 4: Well, common people like us may be okay but those rich aristocrats like the Song family and the Yoon family, may be ...
Village woman 1: What aristocrats during these times?
Villager 4: That isn't the point. What I'm trying to say is that I heard those noble rich will be killed first!
Villager 3: Nah! We'd better stop talking and take care of our own families.
Village woman 2: Right, we've got to protect our own flesh and blood!
Villager 2: There's a good chance that men will be drafted and girls taken away like during the Japanese era. We'd better prepare the young!

AT THE SONG RESIDENCE, MR. AND MRS. YOON COME IN. MR. AND MRS. SONG MOVE ABOUT UNEASILY.

Mr. Yoon: Mr. Song!
Mr. Song: Oh, is that you?
Mrs. Yoon: Mrs. Song!
Mrs. Song: I knew you would come.
Mr. Yoon: I know this is not proper for the parents of a girl to propose first, but it's not the time to follow the proper way. Let's marry your son and our daughter!
Mr. Song: That was exactly what I was thinking! Let's hurry and marry them and send them south. And then once Jinsoo leaves for America, we can follow him, too.

VILLAGERS BEGIN TO PREPARE A WEDDING CEREMONY. AS THIS IS AN UNSETTLED MOMENT, THINGS ARE DONE SIMPLY AND MODESTLY. JUNGIL IS HELPING WITH THE WEDDING PREPARATION.

Jina: Do you have a girlfriend?
Jungil: What?
Jina: You better find one quickly. Otherwise, I heard you'll be drafted.

LOOKING DETERMINED, JUNGIL GOES SOMEWHERE.

Jina: Where are you going? Why don't you have a bowl of the wedding noodles of my brother and Hyewon before… .

JINA LOOKS AROUND.

Jina: Where did he go?

IN THE FRONT YARD OF THE SONG HOUSE, WITH THE PARENTS SINGING, THE WEDDING CEREMONY OF JINSOO AND HYEWON IS BEING HELD AT A HUMBLE TABLE OF FOOD. HYEWON WEARS A SIMPLE WHITE WEDDING DRESS WITH A WEDDING VEIL AND JINSOO IS IN A SUIT.

Mr. Song: It breaks my heart to marry the children during this unsettling time.
Mr. Yoon: Yeah, it is heartbreaking to have their wedding this way.
Mrs. Song: Let's see the big picture. Most of all, the children should be safe. That's important.
Mrs. Yoon: What irony-- this happy gathering is the beginning of parting.
Mr. Song: (trying to change the mood) Once things become better, let's have another ceremony, a grand one!
Mr. Yoon: Sure thing! We'll do it.

IN THE BACKGROUND OF JINSOO AND HYEWON'S WEDDING SCENE, OTHER VILLAGE COUPLES ARE GETTING MARRIED. THEIR WEDDINGS ARE FAR SHABBIER THAN THAT OF JINSOO AND HYEWON.

Villager 1: Make it simple! Simple!
Village woman 1: (placing a bowl of water between a young man and a woman, then having them bow to each other) I want to do everything for you but let's keep it simple.

AFTER THE WEDDING CEREMONY IS COMPLETED, ONE OF THE VILLAGERS TAKES OFF JINSOO'S JACKET AND A WOMAN UNVEILS HYEWON BEFORE EXITING. AS THE STAGE DARKENS, JINSOO AND HYEWON ARE LEFT ALONE ON THE STAGE.

Jinsoo: It's only us. This is a bit… strange?
Hyewon: (shyly) Yes, a little.

JINSOO APPROACHES HYEWON AND HUGS HER.
Jinsoo: Let's ignore this unsettling situation around us and only look at each other, at least today. Things will be okay. I'm here, next to you. Everything will be okay.

Hyewon: Okay. Okay.

JINSOO UNTIES HYEwon's HAIR WHICH WAS UP. IT COVERs HER SHOULDERS. JINSOO SMELLS ITS SCENT.

Jinsoo: Your hair is like flowing water, silky as a cloud. It has such a fragrance. Let's have a peaceful time tonight. Don't worry about anything.

JINSOO AND HYEwon HUG EACH OTHER. THE STAGE DARKENS.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING IN THE YARD MR. SONG HAS HOUSEHOLD GOODS FOR JINSOO AND HYEwon TO TAKE DOWN SOUTH. THE NEWLY MARRIED COUPLE THEN LEAVE, PROMISING TO MEET OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS DOWN SOUTH SOON. AFTER JINSOO AND HYEwon HAVE GONE, NEWS OF WAR BREAKS. SOON COMMUNISTS COME TO YEON-BAEK. VILLAGERS ARE SCARED OUT OF THEIR WITS.

Mr. Song: They say landowners will be the first to be killed! Where is Jina, my dear?

Mrs. Song: Jina! Jina!

Jina: I'm coming!

SOOCHUL PASSES BY MR. SONG'S HOUSE.

Mr. Song: Aren't you Soochul of the Yoon family?

Soochul: Yes, correct, sir!

Mrs. Song: How's Mr. Yoon doing?

Soochul: He was taken away this morning!

Mrs. Song: Already?

Mr. Song: Soochul, please take Jina with you!

Jina: To where, father?

Mr. Song: (Handing a paper to Soochul) Jinsoo is in Incheon now. This is his address. Please take Jina to Jinsoo.

Soochul: (Taking the paper and pulling Jina's hand) Let's go! Quick! We've got to go!

Jina: Father! Mother!

JINA IS BEING PULLED AWAY BY SOOCHUL. NOT LONG AFTER JINA EXITED, MR. AND MRS. SONG ARE CAPTURED BY COMMUNISTS WHO ASSAULT THEM WITH KICKS AND GUNSTOCKS. RUNNING AWAY, JINA FALLS DOWN, CUTS HER LEG AND BLEEDS. THEY ARRIVE AT A VILLAGE. JINA IS LIMPING.

Soochul: Jina, climb up the tree.

Jina: What? Why?

Soochul: Go now! The Communists are coming. Go now and hide up in the tree. If you don't, both you and I will be killed. Come down from the tree after they have passed by. I'll be hiding over there!

HELPED BY SOOCHUL, JINA CLIMBS UP ONTO THE TREE. SOOCHUL RUNS TO A SPOT FAR FROM THE TREE AND HIDES HIMSELF. HEARING SOUNDS OF THE COMMUNISTS MARCHING AT A DISTANCE, JINA STRUGGLES TO CLimb THE TREE. WHEN SHE IS FINALLY HIDDEN, THE COMMUNISTS ARRIVE WITH SHOVELS IN THEIR HANDS.

Jina: (Talking to herself) That's our shovel and the other one is Hyewon's family's . . .

SOON THE COMMUNISTS START DIGGER A BIG HOLE. AS THEY DIG UP THE EARTH, DIRT PILES UP INTO A BIG MOUND NEXT TO THE HOLE. SOON, A COMMANDER ARRIVES.

Communists commander: Dig a deep hole! Dig a hole to bury the reactionaries' blood and bones! The landowners have fattened their bellies from the land! Now it's time to bury the bastards!

AD THE DISTANCE, VILLAGERS, WHO ARE MAINLY LANDOWNERS, ARE LINED UP BY THE COMMUNISTS. AMONG THE COMMUNISTS SOME TENANT FARMERS ARE SEEN. MR. LEE, ONE OF THE LANDOWNERS, IS BLEEDING PROFUSELY ON HIS HEAD. ONE OF THE TENANT FARMERS, WHO IS WEARING A COMMUNISTS OUTFIT IN A CLUMSY MANNER, ASSAULTS MR. LEE. MRS. LEE TRIES TO STOP HIM BUT TO NO AVAIL. ONE COMMUNIST DRAGS MR. LEE NEXT TO THE HOLE.
Communists commander: Listen up! This is the last chance for anyone to be accepted into the People's Army. Who will chop off the head of this bastard landowner to make a new world that is equal and fair? Again, this is the last chance to save your own neck and also honor and to be loyal to the Great General!

JUNGIL PROCEEDS TO TAKE A STEP. SEEING THIS, MR. LEE SHOUTS AT JUNGIL.

Mr. Lee: How can you do this to your owner? You ungrateful bastard! Heaven will punish you!

JUNGIL LIFTS UP A SWORD AND UNFALTERINGLY HACKS OFF MR. LEE'S NECK. THE HEADLESS HEAD ROLLS INTO THE HOLE. THE COMMANDER KICKS THE HEADLESS BODY INTO THE HOLE. A STRANGE SILENCE HOVERS OVER THE AREA. SOON, MRS. LEE STARTS CRYING AND VILLAGERS FOLLOW SUIT. TWO COMMUNIST SOLDIERS TAKE MRS. LEE TO THE HOLE. JUNGIL HACKS OFF HER NECK, TOO. WITNESSING ALL THIS, JINA TREMBLES, COVERING HER MOUTH WITH BOTH HANDS. IN THE DISTANCE SOOCHUL ALSO COVERS HIS MOUTH. AS IF BEING POSSESSED BY SOMETHING, JUNGIL CONTINUES CHOPPING OFF VILLAGERS' HEADS. AND WHENEVER THE COMMANDER SPEAKS, HIS MEN REPEATS WHAT HE SAYS.

Communists commander: Chop off the landowners' heads! Chop off the heads!

Confiscate the landowners' properties! Confiscate properties! Take possession of the land you've worked on! Take possession of the land!

Communists: Chop off heads! Chop off heads!

SPEECHLESS AND AS IF LACKING ANY EMOTION, JUNGIL CONTINUES TO CHOP PEOPLE'S HEADS OFF. SOON, MR. AND MRS. SONG ARE KILLED IN THE SAME MANNER UNDER THE EYES OF THEIR DAUGHTER, JINA. WHEN ALL THE EXECUTIONS ARE DONE, THE SOLDIERS BEGIN SHOVELING DIRT INTO THE HOLE. THE COMMANDER APPROACHES JUNGIL AND SPEAKS TO HIM.

Communists commander: Comrade, as of today you are promoted to the rank of commander. Got it? Cover up the bodies well so that they are not seen. Cover them up so that the polluted water doesn't spill out. Finish up the work thoroughly before returning to your unit!

Jungil: Yes, sir!

THE COMMANDER EXITS. FOLLOWING HIM, SEVERAL COMMUNISTS ALSO EXIT.

Jina: (talking to herself) Are those bloody bodies without heads indeed my parents? That jacket belonged to my father but it sure doesn't now.

AFTER FILLING UP THE HOLE, JUNGIL AND THE OTHER COMMUNISTS BEGIN MARCHING AND RIGHT THEN JINA FALLS FROM THE TREE. ONE OF THE SOLDIERS AIDS HIS GUN AT HER, WHILE ANOTHER ONE IS ABOUT TO HACK OFF HER NECK BUT JUNGIL STOPS THEM.

Jungil: What is it? Don't kill her. If you chop off her head now, we've got to dig another hole.

Communist 1: This girl fell from the tree.

Jungil: Examinates Jina appearing to have lost her mind. She gazes at the distance.

Jina: (Suddenly to Jungil) Brother!

JUNGIL STIFFENS. JINA CLINGS TO JUNGIL. A SOLDIER TRIES TO DRAG JINA AWAY FROM JUNGIL, WHO LIFTS HIS HAND UP TO STOP THE SOLDIER. STANDING THERE, THE SOLDIERS WATCH JINA.

Communist 2: (to Jungil) You know her?

Jungil: ...

Jina: Brother? When did you come back?

Jungil: ...

Jina: Brother, Jinsoo? Where's Hyewon, your wife?

Communist 2: This girl...is out of her mind!
Jungil: Take her with us.
Communist 2: But…
Jungil: Take her. No time to delay. She grew up as a sheltered landowner’s daughter. If we train her properly, she will bring some propaganda benefits. And if it turns out not to be the case, we can always kill her then.
Communist: Yes sir.

COMMunist 1’S RIFLE BUTT STROKES JINA’S HAIR. JUNGIL FLINCHEs. COMMunist 2 TAKES A CLOSE LOOK AT HIM. AS JINA LOSES CONSCIOUSNESS, ANOTHER SOLDIER PICKS HER UP AND EXITS. SOOCHUL NOW RUNS AWAY.

LOOKING DESTITUTE AND TERRIFIED, SOOCHUL APPEARS AT JINSOO AND HYEWON’S PLACE IN INCHEON.

Jinsoo: Soochul!
Soochul: Jinsoo!
Jinsoo: Why are you alone?
Soochul: (Sobbing) Your father and mother…they were…by the People’s Army…!
Jinsoo: What? How about Jina?
Soochul: (Being flustered for a while) She was also…!

JINSOO IS ABOUT TO COLLAPSE. HYEWON HOLDS HIM UP.

Jinsoo: I shouldn’t have left them there! I shouldn’t have!
Soochul: (talking to himself) She must’ve been killed…Jina must be dead by now.
Jinsoo: I curse myself…I couldn’t do anything and let them die, But it’s not too late…! I’ll join the army.
Hyewon: What do you…?
Jinsoo: I’m not running away. I lost my parents and sister and land! Both of my parents were killed by the Communists. And not having land to go back to is like not having a future.
Hyewon: But… this is too sudden….
Jinsoo: We’ll meet again soon… (to Soochul) Please take Hyewon to her aunt’s house in Si-heung.
Soochul: Yes, sir.

JINSOO HUGS HYEWON BUT SOON RELEASES HER, THEN LEAVES. WATCHING HER HUSBAND GO HYEWON ASKS SOOCHUL FOR A FAVOR.

Hyewon: Soochul, please do me a favor!
Soochul: What is it? Jina?
Hyewon: Please follow my husband!
Soochul: I should’ve protected Jina. But I couldn’t. I couldn’t do anything. So what do you think I can do by following him?
Hyewon: The Communists are not here yet. Please, go with my husband. I’ll be at ease, if you do it. Please, it’s my wish.
Soochul: (as if determined, nodding) I couldn’t protect Jina. But I will protect Jinsoo. I will make up for Jina who I failed to protect… even after Mr. Song had asked me so sincerely!
Hyewon: Please, come back alive. Come back with my husband!
Soochul: Don’t worry! I’m a man! I will put my life on the line for the country!

FOLLOWING SOOCHUL, JINSOO EXITS.

Hyewon: You couldn’t know why I didn’t stop you from leaving… At this moment people are bleeding and others are dying. But you should come back alive… must come back. Please come back to me… come back (while covering her belly) to us.
Battles of the war throughout the country from north to south are expressed by movement and in images. Battles between the south and the north Korean army, then between the American army and Chinese army take place in turn.

Hyewon arrives at her aunt’s house in Si-Heung. The house looks deserted.

Hyewon: Aunt….
Aunt: Who is it?

Happily, Hyewon runs to her aunt and hugs her, but her aunt pushes her away.

Aunt: Who are you?
Hyewon: Aunt… it’s me, Hyewon!
Aunt: (after gazing at her) Ah! It’s you…how about your mother?
Hyewon: Aunt…mother and father…they are all… (failing to continue speaking)
Aunt: Yeah? So? (coldly) My sister is dead! I thought she’s living grandly after marrying a rich man! Look at me, after my husband died suddenly, I have led such a hard life.
Hyewon: Aunt! I have nowhere to go!
Aunt: It’s hard enough to take care of myself! Look! (pointing to a pile of dirty laundry) This is how I make my living, washing the dirty clothes of prostitutes selling themselves to Yankees. That’s all. I also bury their aborted fetuses for them. Life isn’t walking in a breeze here.
Hyewon: Aunt! Please! I have nowhere to go! I’ll wash the clothes! Please! I can be your maid, if that’s what you need?
Aunt: Yeah?

The aunt put dirty clothes in front of Hyewon, who immediately starts hand washing them. Time goes by and the seasons change. With her now bigger belly, Hyewon is washing by hand while wiping her sweat away. Her aunt tears up letters that come to Hyewon. She also brings more and more laundry.

Aunt: When will the time come when I don’t have to do this shameful job for those filthy whores!

Looking at the heap of laundry, Hyewon sighs. Her aunt flings something in a sack towards her.

Aunt: Another bitch had her fetus scraped out today. Bury it on the mountain tonight!

Aunt steps outside. Hyewon gags at the dirty laundry and the aborted fetus’s body.

Hyewon: A callous heart is more horrible than war.

The aunt suddenly comes back and grabs Hyewon’s arm to have her stand up.

Aunt: What is it? I was wondering how much you have to eat to have a belly like yours! Who is the bastard who got you knocked up?
Hyewon: Aunt, I’m actually married.
Aunt: When? Married who?
Hyewon: Jinsoo of the Song family. Just before I fled the war.
Aunt: You did? So? My own daughter died soon after she was born of typhoid fever. But you grew up well, got married, and are pregnant! I can’t afford to raise your baby! You’d better abort it tomorrow, otherwise I’ll give it to a Yankee if it’s born.
Hyewon: Aunt!

At night, Hyewon, carrying the sack with the fetus in it climbs up a hill. Spotting a tree, she buries the body under the tree.

On the right corner of the second floor of the stage as it brightens, Jinsoo returns exhausted to the barracks. He writes a letter and hands it to an orderly.

Hyewon: Be born to rich parents in a peaceful world in the next life.
Hyewon raises up her heavy body and begins walking. Suddenly, her water's break.

Hyewon: Oh, But I have a month to go before I'm due…

Hyewon barely walks. Soon she collapses under a big tree. On the right corner of the second floor of the stage, an exhausted Jinsoo again writes a letter, hands it to the orderly. Hyewon screams. The stage darkens.

The second floor of the stage is brighter. Jinsoo writes a letter, hands it to the orderly.

Jinsoo: Please answer me this time. My love, my wife... please stay alive!

The orderly brings a letter to Jinsoo. Jumping happily, he reads it but wails in grief.

Jinsoo: Ahhh! Hyewon’s dead! My love, how scared you must’ve been. Moon in Heaven, please take my love into your arms! Please take my poor love into your arms!

With Jinsoo’s cries the curtain drops.

[TEXT: ONE AND A HALF YEARS PASS. THANKS TO HALF-MOON, THE NORTH KOREAN ARMY SNIPER, THE SOUTH KOREAN ARMY WAS PUT IN A DEFENSIVE CORNER. THE SNIPER IS CALLED HALF-MOON BECAUSE ONLY HALF OF HIS FACE IS REVEALED IN DARKNESS. THE OTHER HALF IS COVERED WITH A BLACK CLOTH. HIS TARGETS ARE ALWAYS SHOT IN THEIR RIGHT EYE.]

The South Korean Army puts up tents during its march. In darkness soldiers take a break. Among them are several GIs with a towel around his waist Soochul mimics a female singer.

Soochul: Chocolate! Chocolate! American Chocolate!
Chocolate! One chocolate makes the war forgotten!
Chocolate! Chocolate! Made in the USA!
Chocolate! If you have it, you don’t need Marilyn Monroe!

Jinsoo: (upset) What do you think you’re doing?
Soochul: (unperturbed) Entertaining fellow soldiers! They are dog tired!

Laughing, Soochul is dancing again. Jinsoo can’t help but make a face of approval. An American GI comes over and laughs too. Right then a bullet flies in out of nowhere. The GI covers his right eye before tumbling to the ground and changing the whole atmosphere. Soochul flings off the cloth around his waist and then protect Jinsoo, who does the same for Soochul.

South Korean Soldier 1: Sniper!
South Korean Soldier 2: It’s Half-moon!
South Korean Soldiers: Half-moon’s here!

One by one, Korean soldiers collapse, struck by bullets flying in from nowhere. Jinsoo fires his gun in the direction where bullets are coming from. The sniper disappears.

South Korean Army Commander: I will not let my men die any more, they are like my sons! I will put a bullet in the eye of the sniper! And the sniper will be the one catching the ghost in the darkness!
Jinsoo: I’ll do it!
Soochul: Jinsoo!
South Korean Army Commander: What’s your name?
Jinsoo: Jinsoo Song, sir!
South Korean Army Commander: Are you good at shooting?
Jinsoo: Yes sir and I have very good eye sight!
South Korean Army Commander: Why should I trust you? Can you kill the enemy?
Jinsoo: Yes sir, trust me, please! We shouldn’t lose any more fellow soldiers. Before Half-moon runs away, I’ll catch that bastard.
South Korean Army Commander: We must seize the White Horse highlands within a month. And you must cut the throat of Half-moon before that.
Jinsoo: Yes sir!
Soochul: Jinsoo…
Jinsoo: It’s okay. I have perfect eye sight.
Soochul: But…
Jinsoo: Soochul, my whole family, Hyewon, Jina, and my parents, were killed by the enemy. If I don’t take revenge, how can I see them again in the other world? I’m determined not to spare my life. In my mind I’m already dead.
Soochul: Jinsoo:…

JINSOO TAPS THE BACK OF SOOCHUL, WHO IS SOBBING. SOUTH KOREAN SOLDIERS GIVE A SNIPER’S GUN TO JINSOO, WHO BEGINS TO PRACTICE TARGET SHOOTING IN THE DISTANCE.

Soochul: He used to hold delicate brushes and paint beautiful scenes… now he holds a heavy gun to cover his enemies with blood. Ah, what fate!

THE LEFT CORNER OF THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE STAGE BRIGHTENS. AT A HOUSE IN THE RED-LIGHT DISTRICT NEAR THE GI CAMP, HYEWON FINISHES DOING LAUNDERY. JANE, A GI PROSTITUTE, FONDS A BABY. HYEWON COMES IN AND TAKES THE BABY FROM JANE.

Hyewon: Thank you, Jane.
Jane: No need to say that. And thank you for doing all the chores for us.
Hyewon: Oh, no. I hope I’m not too much of a burden to you.
Jane: Oh, honey, don’t say such things. Your baby softens up even the Yankees. And you have no place to go if you leave here.
Hyewon: I should find my aunt and…
Jane: (in a rough tone) Your aunt! That bitch? She stole your stuff and sold it before running away with a Yankee! Natasha said so. Your aunt? That bitch is far worse than you think — she told people you were dead! Don’t even try to find her. She volunteered to be a broker and put our babies up for adoption! And she is the one who brings the abortionist to us!

HYEWON IS DISTRAUGHT.

Jane: (embarrassed, smooths her hair) Oh, sorry. Did I say bad words in front of the baby? See, our destiny is to sell our lower mouths to feed our upper mouths, but you can live okay the way you’ve been living—doing laundry and cleaning.
Hyewon: I’ve been accepting favors from you all for a year.
Jane: It was a extra work for us to gather laundry and give it to your aunt. Now you’re doing laundry and cleaning whenever needed… so convenient. We’re the ones benefiting from you staying with us. You crazy mom, sprawled out up on the mountain with this cute baby dangling between your legs. Do you know that you almost strangled your daughter with your thighs?

HYEWON LAUGHS, KNOWING JANE’S HEART IS WARM EVEN THOUGH HER WORDS ARE ROUGH.

Jane: Laugh, you brazen girl! Anyway, we need your housekeeping for our sake, okay?
Hyewon: Yes, madam!

JANE EXITS. NATASHA COMES INTO THE ROOM WITH OATMEAL SHE HAS COOKED.

Natasha: Jonson brought over some oatmeal, saying he wanted to eat his mom’s food. I cooked it. Try it.
Hyewon: Oh, special! Thank you, Natasha! And cola, too. Thank you!
Natasha: Oh… it was just a Pepsi… Not a Coke… You don’t need to thank me.
Hyewon: either way it was delicious! It made me digest all the food I ate! What a miracle! I burped!

Natasha: Okay, okay, dear. Pepsi or Coke. Whatever you want, I will bring it to you.

Hyewon: Thank you. But it's okay. I just want a sip from your bottle.

Natasha: ... Hyewon... thank you! My baby that you buried....

Hyewon: Ah....

Natasha: But I didn't have an abortion. Actually, I didn't know I was pregnant and continued having sex. I had to make money. One night, a client kicked my belly, but that wasn't unusual. It was painful and I lost consciousness. Later I asked around what had happened to me while I was passed out and found out your aunt took the baby’s body to bury.

Knowing your aunt buried baby bodies up on the mountain, I wandered around that night, but instead found you lying on the ground. Near you, there was a fresh dirt pile, the mound where my baby was resting. Thank you for making such a cozy cradle for my baby while suffering from incredible birth pain. Even I wouldn’t have done such a good job. Thank you so much.

Hyewon: I did what I had to do. Thank you, Natasha. If you hadn’t taken care of me then....

Natasha: I don’t even know where I got such supernatural energy, but I managed to help you while you were delivering your baby and took you and your baby home. You looked unconscious but still held your baby tight in your bosom, taking one step at a time. Looking at you I was in tears, feeling I myself just had a baby.

Hyewon: Thank you, Natasha. If you didn’t spot us then, we would have died. Thank you

Natasha: Well...eat something now. You should live a healthy life with your baby. I heard you’re from the North but your baby was born here. So this is your baby’s home.

NATASHA EXITS. HYEWON CRADLES THE BABY BEFORE FEEDING IT. THE BABY FALLS ASLEEP.

Hyewon: (talking to herself) My dear...it’s a girl. Sleeping like an angel. I’m afraid whether we can survive this war. But I must survive for our baby...you too must come back alive...we will meet again. I named our daughter Hyejin, putting our two names together. My Hyejin, look at me, my precious daughter. Your dad will come back alive and will get to see you. Let’s be strong, you and I. I can do it when you are with me. My angel. Dear moon in heaven, please look after my husband and open a path between us. Please guide us to him!

HYEWON HOLDS HYEJIN AND SINGS A LULLABY

Hyewon:

My baby Hyejin...my baby Hyejin...my angel Hyejin...my angel Hyejin....

Sleep among the angels flapping their wings
'I'll protect you from harm so now go to sleep

THE STAGE DARKENS.

AT A BARRACKS IN THE EARLY MORNING, THE SKY IS DARK BLUE, THEN FOG HANGING IN THE AIR. GHOSTS OF SOUTH KOREAN SOLDIERS KILLED BY HALF-MOON AND HEADLESS GHOSTS APPEAR TO JINSOO. STARTLED, HE OPENS HIS EYES. THE GHOSTS DISAPPEAR. WIPING AWAY COLD SWEAT, JINSOO GETS UP.

Jinsoo: A nightmare again.... (Looking around) Fog... Half-moon will be coming. Shouldn’t hesitate to make a move. (Looking down at his fellow soldiers) I’ll take care of that devil. (Looking at Soochul) You’re a man now, not a boy anymore. You must survive this war.

GATHERING UP HIS SNIPER GUN AND OTHER EQUIPMENT, JINSOO LEAVES. SOOCHUL PRETENDS TO BE ASLEEP THEN GETS UP.

Soochul: I won’t let him leave alone.

PICKING UP HIS GUN, SOOCHUL FURTIVELY Follows JINSOO.

REACHING THE MOUNTAIN, JINSOO CRAWLS TOWARD THE TOP, SECURING HIS POSITION, HE SEARCHES THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN FOR HALF-MOON. HE IS STARTLED TO SEE HIM ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE.

Jinsoo: That one eye shining like a black pearl in the early morning darkness... Half-moon...motionless...must be a boy, thin and with narrow shoulders.
Jinsoo: Jina! My sister! You’re alive! Alive!

Jungil: Why don’t you shoot? Shoot him! Pull the trigger for our Great Leader!
Jina: I can’t!

Jinsoo: Soochul! Soochul! You’re gone!

Jinsoo Wails.

South Korean Army Commander: Jinsoo Song!

Jinsoo Stops moving. As the South Korean Army Commander signals, a soldier takes Soochul’s body from Jinsoo, who looks stupefied.

South Korean Army Commander: Good job. Take a rest.

Jinsoo: (to the commander) Can I keep this one for a while?
South Korean Army Commander: Sure. But return your gun.
Jinsoo: Yes, sir.

A soldier takes it. The soldier’s exit.

Jinsoo: (To the North Korean captive) What do you know about Half-moon?

North Korean Captive: Two years ago we killed many landowners in Hwang-hae-do province. It was there a girl fell from a tree. Her eyes had no focus and made me have goosebumps. She seemed to have lost her mind, called our commander “brother”, followed him everywhere. Seeing her eyes, the commander sent her to a detention camp. Jinsoo: Who was your commander?
North Korean Captive: A man named Jungil Kim. He got a fast promotion for chopping those landowners’ heads off. Jinsoo: Jungil… Jungil… that name rings a bell. Right, one time Hyewon told me about a man named Jungil, a tenant farmer of the Lee family. She said he scared her.

RECALLING WHO JUNGIL WAS, JINSOO TREMBLES IN RAGE, HE QUESTIONS THE CAPTIVE AGAIN.

Jinsoo: So, what happened to the girl?
North Korean Captive: Detention camp is hell where only the toughest survive. The girl was good looking and an instructor tried to rape her. They wrestled and during the scuffle the instructor’s neck was sliced while half of the girl’s face was torn. She was sent to the execution ground. There she kept glaring at someone. It was the commander who had brought her to the camp when she fell from the tree. The commander stopped the execution and took her with him. He treated her face wound by searing it with fire and the girl didn’t even make groaning sounds. She had only one eye but saw things as if she penetrated them deeply. After the commander trained her, she was able to see through even a dark forest, as if she had a thousand eyes. I was trained along with her and I used to be so fearful when she glared at me – I felt like she was seeing through my bones. She always shot the right eye of the victim, as if taking revenge for her lost right eye. That bitch is the famous sniper, Half-moon, a killing machine, a monster, the devil killer.

JINSOO KICKS THE CAPTIVE’S HEAD. SOUTH KOREAN SOLDIERS COME AND TAKE THE CAPTIVE OUT AND TRY TO QUESTION JINSOO, WHO WAITS LIKE A BEAST BEFORE SOBBING. AS NIGHT FALLS, JINSOO STANDS UP AND LEAVES HIS BARRACKS.

Jinsoo: Jina, I’m coming to you…. I’ll save you, your brother will save you.

ARRIVING AT THE MOUNTAIN TOP, JINSOO TAKES A CLOSE LOOK AT THE SURROUNDINGS. HE THEN ENTERS A FOREST. A CLOTH APPEARS – JINA’S HIDEOUT. INSIDE, JINSOO FINDS JINA WITH A DRESSING OVER HER SHOULDER WOUND. SHE IS TREMBLING IN PAIN. NEXT TO HER ARE TWO GUNS. HER FACE HAS A RED MARK WHERE JUNGIL STRUCK HER WITH HIS FIST. APPROACHING HER, JINSOO GAZES AT HER.

Jinsoo: Jina… How happy I am to see you alive. Let’s live together like when we were young.

JINSOO TRIES TO REMOVE THE CLOTH COVERING JINA’S FACE. ASTONISHED, JINA OPENS HER EYES.

Jina: Who are you?
Jinsoo: Your brother.
Jina: You my brother? My brother comes in the morning.
Jinsoo: Jina, I’m your brother.
Jina: I’m not Jina.
Jinsoo: Your name is Jina Song, my sister.
Jina: Don’t lie! I’m a soldier of North Korea!

JINA AIMS HER GUN AT JINSOO, WHO DOESN’T MOVE. JINA AND JINSOO STRUGGLE. JINSOO HOLDS JINA’S ARMS FIRMLY AND STARTS HUMMING A LULLABY. JINA FLINCHES AND LOSES HER GRIP ON THE GUN.

Jinsoo: Remember? This song that I used to sing to you.

JINSOO COMES IN WITH FOOD.

Jina: Brother! Commander!

JUNGIL FLINGS THE FOOD TO THE GROUND. DRAWS A DAGGER AND ATTACKS JINSOO, WHO SPEAKS AT JINA WHILE COUNTERATTACKING.

Jinsoo: Jina, this bastard isn’t your brother! I am your brother! This bastard has been using you! He’s not protecting you but watching you! He’s the one who used to work for the Lee family. And he killed our father and mother!

JINA APPEARS PERPLEXED.
Jungil: (to Jina) What are you doing? Shoot him!

Jina gazes at Jinsoo for a while then begins humming the lullaby.

Jina: (to Jinsoo) Brother? Brother Jinsoo!

Jinsoo: Oh, you remember now! Remember the song that mother and I sang to you!

Jinsoo: Yes, my sister!

Jina: Brother, why have you come home this late? Do you know how long I've waited for you? Carry me on your back, please. See, I pretend I'm grown, but I'm still your younger sister.

Jinsoo: Okay, I'll do it. Let's go home.

Jina: Sleep between the angels flapping their soft wings
   I'll protect you from all the harms so go to sleep
Jinsoo: Sleep between the angels flapping their soft wings
   I'll protect you from all the harms so go to sleep
Jinsoo: Sleep...sleep...wings....
Jina: Sleep...sleep...wings....

Flares signaling the end of the war, the stage brightens. The lighting is bright but the atmosphere is cold. The surroundings are in ruins. Lines of South Korean soldiers, refugees, and displaced people are seen. Things look disconnected from each other. Jinsoo is in a group of soldiers.

Displaced person 1: Lost everything and left our home...what to do now?
Displaced person 2: We aren't leaving home for good...I wish....
Displaced person 3: What can you do, even if you go back? It was home when our parents and siblings lived together! But now, no one is there...no need to go back!
Displaced person 4: I left all the things built through generations and now I'm empty-handed...what to do?
Displaced person 5: My wife and children… the whole family is still in the North….
Displaced person 6: My daughter married a man in the South… she should be my anchor to settle down.

SOLDIERS STOP THEIR MARCH TO TAKE A BREAK. JINSOO BREAKS AWAY AND GOES TO A WELL AT THE OUTSKIRTS OF A VILLAGE. A YOUNG GIRL LOOKS AROUND, SOBBING.

Jinsoo: If Hyewon were alive and with me, our child would be the same age as this girl.

JINSOO LIFTS UP THE GIRL AND TAKES HER IN HIS BOSOM. THE GIRL WEEPS.

Jinsoo: What’s your name? Where’s your mom? Who’s your dad?

JINSOO HUMS THE LULLABY SONG TO THE GIRL. THE GIRL STOPS CRYING. THE MOTHER OF THE GIRL APPEARS, HER FACE FRIGHTENED IT IS HYEJIN.

Hyewon: Hyejin! Hyejin!
Jinsoo: (To the girl) Your mom?

JINSOO TURNS TOWARDS HYEJIN. HYEJIN LOOKS AT JINSOO. GRADUALLY, THE LIGHTING WARM. JINSOO AND HYEJIN GAZE AT EACH OTHER, APPROACH EACH OTHER, HYEJIN LOOKS AT JINSOO AND HYEJIN IN TURN. JINSOO AND HYEJIN SMILE AT EACH OTHER, SEEING THIS, HYEJIN LAUGHS.

THE CURTAIN DROPS.

-The End-