

GAP: Pink Theory

01

Momm Boss

It's the first time I've been waiting for so long...

I almost sang this song when I stood under the cool air while walking through the famous digital media office. My colleague from the content production department, who I work with, was pointing out things and telling me where everything was. But my eyes weren't focused on where she pointed, and I barely listened to what she was saying. My gaze was fixed on the office of my idol, the big boss.

"What's your nickname... you... you?"

"W... what?"

"You didn't listen to me, did you?"

My mentor, named 'Ya,' gave me a little annoyed look, but she understood when she saw that my attention was completely on the boss's office, which was covered with frosted glass, with only a soft white light glowing from within.

"You must feel cold and chilly near that office... but you're just a new employee, you don't need to worry about the boss too much."

"The boss?"

"Oh, everyone here calls her that... our boss is 'Momm'... didn't you know? She's pretty famous."

I nodded, smiling a little. Of course, I knew about 'Momm Boss.' She was the only reason I was so determined to get a job at this company.

No one knows how much effort I've put into being like her...

"If you pass the probation, will you get to meet the boss?"

"Oh, your nickname is 'Mon,' right?" Ya smiled at me, showing some wrinkles at the corners of her eyes, indicating her maturity. "You don't need to pass the probation to meet her. You'll meet her eventually, but whether you get to talk to her is another matter. Junior employees don't need to have conversations with the management."

"Is there no chance?"

I slumped my shoulders in disappointment. After all, I was still in the probation period. How could I expect to be close to the company's famous top boss? My job right now was to be everyone's errand girl. I had a feeling there would be a lot more I had to face.

"Well, it's not like there's no chance at all."

After my shoulders slumped, I straightened up again, feeling a bit excited, before flashing a smile. Ya glanced at me with a little smile, then tilted her head affectionately.

"You smile, and the world feels brighter, you know? It's the opposite of the boss... I've never seen her smile. I can't help but wonder if she's ever been happy."

“Ms. S... I mean, Momm Boss,” I corrected myself, trying to blend in with the rest of the staff, “I’ve seen her smile in magazines.”

“Well, she only smiles when she has to go out or when it’s necessary. But in reality, she’s never lively enough to make her subordinates feel good. She stays locked up in her office, and that’s probably better for everyone.”

I couldn’t help but wonder why Ya seemed so displeased with my idol, the Momm Boss. I felt like the beautiful and lively woman I admired seemed like someone with vitality. Over the years, I’ve only looked up to this sweet-faced person. There was nothing about her that I didn’t know.

I even knew that Momm Boss had eaten Japanese food yesterday...
I follow her on Instagram.

“So, when do I get the chance to meet her?”

“Tonight. Mr. Kerik, the owner of the company, is taking everyone out to celebrate the company’s good profits this year. But it’s just a celebration, not like the fan day when we went to Hokkaido.”

There was a hint of regret in her voice, almost like she was part of a storybook or a dream.

Given the current economic situation, I felt sorry for the business owners. Just taking us out for a meal seemed nice enough.

But just as I was about to step forward, the door to the secret room opened, and someone I had been waiting to meet walked out. My heart raced with excitement, and I quickly lowered my head, feeling shy because I was afraid she’d find out that I had a crush on her.

It felt like I was secretly in love with a senior. Sigh. The scent of Chanel No. 5 filled the air, and everyone in the department went silent as she passed by. I felt the coldness and tension in the office.

“Phew... she’s gone.”

“Why does everyone look so tense, like stone statues?”

“Even you lowered your head, didn’t you?”

“Well...” I lowered my head not because I was scared, but because I was shy. As for everyone else... “It’s better not to make eye contact if you don’t want to be turned into stone.”

“Really, that much?”

“Really.”

But despite the warning, I was still waiting for the day I could meet Momm Boss, the one I had admired for so long. I believe no one in the company knows Momm Luang Samarnan as well as I do. I can say I’m a true fan.

More than ten years... I’ve been waiting to meet this woman.

While I recognize her, she probably doesn’t know me. But that’s okay. I didn’t come here expecting to get to know her. All I wanted was to admire her and follow the path of someone so beautiful and talented.

Right now, I'm just the new kid at the company, and the male staff often come over to chat with me like I'm the new student in the middle of the semester. Everyone's talking about me, but I try not to attract too much attention. After all, women tend to have a bit of jealousy, and I don't want to have problems with anyone.

The work at this company used to be about producing and managing advertising media and printed materials. But the company has survived by keeping up with the digital world, shifting its strategy to produce content and manage social media marketing actively. And this is the vision of Ms. S, whom everyone calls Momm Boss. Ah... I want to be like that.

Even though right now I can only help with paperwork and schedule meetings for the department... I'm still happy. Because besides my work, my happiness comes from watching the woman in that frosted glass office. Every now and then, I see her go out to the bathroom, then return and bury herself in work again. She's such a focused woman.

I envy her partner and pity them at the same time. A woman as talented as her, no man would like her for sure.

"Is everyone ready?"

When the clock struck 6 PM, the handsome guy in a suit came in, smiling and making loud cheerful noises, and that caused everyone to stop working and smile. His personality was the complete opposite of hers.

"We're ready!" Everyone replied happily, probably because work had just finished, and today we were going to have a party. I was one of the people who shouted.

Ah... my heart is racing. I'll finally get to meet Momm Boss clearly.

"Alright, let's meet at the café, Mok Café. Eat all you can tonight, it's a celebration!"

"Yay!"

Everyone clapped and cheered, like they had just gone on a hunt. But everything went quiet when the glass door, the one we all called the 'cold room,' opened, and Momm Boss walked out.

She was small in stature, wearing a simple black shirt, but somehow she still looked elegant. Her hair was tightly pulled up without a strand loose, showing her neatness. Her sweet face wasn't overly stunning, but you couldn't help but stop and look at her. Her light brown eyes scanned across the office.

"What's everyone so excited about? Haven't you had dinner before?" She said in her usual slightly nasally voice, before putting her hands in her pockets. "And you... think you're the head of the group? Making all that noise."

"Complaining."

One of the cheerful men put his arm around her shoulders, making me pay attention to the difference in their height. It made the smaller person seem delicate and easy to care for.

"Clumsy."

"Let's go eat, everyone."

His voice seemed to inspire everyone again, but it wasn't as loud as before. Everyone seemed to be mindful of Momm Boss's presence, which made me laugh. I think I might be the only one who feels she's... cute.

When you admire someone, you like everything they do, don't you?

The café we went to was fully booked for us. It might have been because the owner was a friend of Mr. Kerik, so there was no problem. I had just found out that the cheerful man who was making all the noise was the owner of the company and Momm Boss's 'fiancé.'

What a perfect match!

And to avoid making the subordinates feel tense, Momm Boss and Mr. Kerik decided to sit in a private area. I felt a little disappointed since I was hoping to see her face clearly.

"Are you okay? You look down."

I made a pout while looking at myself in the mirror in the women's restroom. A colleague who was putting on makeup came over to talk to me.

"I'm not really upset, just feeling a little down. I thought today I'd finally get to see Ms. S's face clearly."

"Oh, don't bother with that. You won't enjoy the food if you're focused on him."

"Why?"

"Someone without any vitality like him will just make you lose your appetite."

"Yeah, exactly." Another female colleague chimed in, agreeing with her while leaning in as if to whisper, "His face must be stiff from Botox. He never smiles, never shows any emotion, not even when he's angry."

"But everyone seems scared of him," I said, not really understanding, as I was still new. Everyone nodded and explained.

"They're scared because they can't predict what he's thinking. He's quiet when he's angry. I don't even know if he's ever been happy. Even when he found out that the accounting department was dating the purchasing department, he didn't show any anger. Maybe all the facial muscles are dead."

"Everyone's scared because he never shows any expression?"

"I thought he was just cranky."

"It would be easier to handle if he were cranky. He's just completely numb."

"No, from what I know, Ms. S isn't like that."

"You know him that well?"

"I'm not sure if I know him well, but I know he's a woman who smiles and makes the world a brighter place, and she loves dogs."

“Momm? Loves dogs? I’ve always thought she liked cats.” After my colleague finished putting on lipstick, she left.

“Come on, let’s hurry. The food will be gone.”

“Okay.”

After everyone left, I stayed in the restroom, still feeling a bit down.

It felt like my expectations for today had vanished into thin air. I just wanted to see her face for a minute, to look into her eyes. But there was no chance to do that.

Why did I come here to work?

I stood there, slumping and staring at my feet, feeling hopeless, until I heard the toilet flush. I was surprised to realize someone else was still in there.

The door creaked open, and someone small walked out, their height just even with mine. The scent of Chanel No. 5 made my heart race, and when I looked into the mirror, I met the light brown eyes I had never expected to see.

“Where did you hear that I like dogs?” Gasp!

02

Help

Her perfectly composed face looked at me with scrutiny, showing no emotions or feelings, which made me start to feel scared like everyone else. What should I do? I don't know if Ms. S now is the same person as in the past, because the last time I saw her, she smiled so much that her face wrinkled, but now her face looks so tight, like she had Botox, because the beautiful woman never even frowned, as if she was good at hiding her emotions.

If I acted like I knew her, I'd be accused of being too familiar. Should I try to be close to her... no, I better protect myself first.

"Hello, Ms. S."

I awkwardly raised my hand to greet her, unsure of what to do in this situation, so I decided to be humble. The boss that everyone feared raised her hand to return my greeting, then looked at me while tilting her head.

"I read an interview where you mentioned liking animals, and I thought you liked dogs."

"Yes, I gave an interview, but I never said I liked dogs. As far as I remember, I like cats."

"Uh... I must have remembered wrong." I raised my hand to adjust my hair, feeling embarrassed. "Liking dogs or liking cats, it's still about loving animals."

"It's not the same thing. Have we met before?"

That question made my heart race and I found myself staring directly at the beautiful woman for several seconds, as if we were in a silent battle of gazes. The one who lost first was me.

I couldn't win. She had too much power.

"I don't think we've met before."

"What does 'don't think' mean?"

"I mean, I just started working today. I might have met you before, but I'm not sure if you saw me," I replied, trying to sound casual. The beautiful boss nodded thoughtfully, beginning to follow along.

"I thought so. You look like a new face."

The word "new" made me feel that Momm Boss, the one everyone was so afraid of, seemed suddenly adorable. I couldn't help but smile, and when I met her gaze again, her eyes widened, and she took a step back as if losing her balance.

"Are you okay?"

As I reached out my hand to steady her, the sweet-faced woman quickly raised her arm to block my hand, putting it behind her back, as if protecting herself.

"I'm fine. I might have just been dizzy from the alcohol, or the smell of the bathroom," she said, walking away. But she stopped, turned back, and looked at me. "We've really never met before, right?"

"If we had met, you would definitely remember me," I replied.

"Yeah, I guess so."

There was a slight hesitation in her voice, but then she turned and walked away. As soon as she left, I tried to keep up my excitement like a new kid, but once I saw my boss walk away, I almost collapsed to the ground as if about to faint.

Ugh...

Oh no, I wasn't prepared for this! And I ended up talking so much! I was so scared that the sweet-faced woman could hear my heart pounding as we spoke. It was thrilling, exciting... it felt like my idol, the one I had admired, was actually talking to me, asking how I was doing. I had hoped that we would talk today, but I never expected it to be like this.

I'm so glad I didn't make the wrong decision to work here.

"Your face is glowing! Did you meet the person you wanted to meet?" My mom greeted me when I got home, sniffing around me slightly, then waving her hands.

"Socializing, Mom," I said, smiling wide before nodding to answer her earlier question. "I met Ms. S. I was so excited."

"Meeting your idol, of course, you'd be excited. So, is she still the same?"

"Well..." I rolled my eyes a bit, unsure how to answer my mom. "People change, right? Also, I don't really know Ms. S that well, other than the time I saw her smile."

"I know her better than anyone. I've kept every article about her in a file," my mom added. "One day, when I meet her, I'll show her."

"That's never going to happen. Momm will never get close to me. She's like a celebrity on TV, and I'm just a fan. I can only follow her and get inspired."

"Why do I sense a little sadness in your voice? Like you've just had your heart broken."

"I'm not heartbroken! I talked to Ms. S a lot today," I proudly told my mom. "But I probably won't talk to her again. She's the boss, and I'm just the subordinate."

"Momm is not that arrogant. She kept asking about that 'tiger' so much that even after finishing school, she still asked about it. Did you tell her that the tiger died?"

"Ms. S doesn't know me at all."

"She knows! You told me that Momm smiled at you, and she even put her hand on your head and ruffled your hair. You've been boasting about it non-stop."

"That was over ten years ago. Ms. S probably doesn't remember me."

"Didn't you tell her you're my daughter?"

"I didn't want her to think I was trying to get close to her."

"Don't overthink it. Normally, you're not someone who overthinks. But when it comes to Momm, you're so meticulous. Now, go take a shower. It's late. We'll talk more tomorrow. You smell like alcohol."

I nodded to my mom and prepared to take a shower before going to bed. My house was still a little shack, just like before, because of the damaged roof. My mom's salary as a janitor wasn't much. We still lived in a rental house, but the difference now was that I was grown up and could help ease my mom's burden. This month would be the first time I received my salary.

Even though today had been a bit dizzying, I couldn't help but pull out the file of Ms. S's interview articles to read. I was a huge fan of hers, someone she probably didn't even know existed, and I had been admiring her for over twelve years. Back then, I was in about 4th grade, and she was in high school.

If we calculated the age difference, it was about eight years, which was a decent gap. She was a high school senior at the all-girls school, the hardest to get into. If you weren't from a rich family or had noble blood, you'd have no chance.

The school that was so difficult to enter also represented a certain social class. If you studied at a top school like Thammasat, your friends would be doctors, politicians, and people who would develop the country. If you studied at expensive private schools, your friends would all be rich.

This school was the same, filled with nobles or people with connections, and the social circles in school were on a different level.

As for me and my mom, we were part of the level that was set apart. My mom was a janitor responsible for cleaning the school, taking care of the plants. As for me, I attended a regular school, but I had to visit my mom every evening at this school. There were many people in the school, but they had their own social circles. That didn't mean there weren't any rough talk, because, after all, it was a school filled with teenagers. I liked watching the older students in long skirts, secretly gossiping about boys from other schools.

It was a good social environment, but sexual topics were another issue... hormones were hormones.

This school had both women and people who identified as something else since there were no men. Some of them dated each other, whether it was for fashion or something else. I always saw the older girls holding hands, walking around together. People here had great skin, money... probably because they ate well, and it showed that they were 'rich.'

As for me... I was truly from the slums.

And because this was a school for nobles, there were students from high-ranking families.

Momm was one of them, even though there were only a few left. Ms. S was one of those students. I met her the day "the short one" gave birth. The school asked my mom to take care of the puppies because they didn't want dogs making the school dirty. Ms. S was one of the people who couldn't accept this policy, so she carried "the tiger," the ugliest male puppy in the litter, back home but was sent away by her family, tears in her eyes.

"Momm can't keep it, please help me," she said.

Even though she was a senior in high school, Ms. S looked surprisingly fragile. My mom, seeing her in tears, took the puppy from her hands and comforted her.

"Your family won't let you keep it, Momm?"

"Yes... I don't know what to do. I brought it here to make myself suffer. I'm afraid it won't grow up."

The word "won't grow" made my mom laugh because it meant "die," but Ms. S avoided using that word, clearly frightened. I, who had been watching the scene, went to tug on my mom's shirt and innocently said,

"Mom... let's keep it. I feel bad for her. She's crying, and it's not pretty."

I remember that moment when Ms. S looked at me for a moment. My mom, seeing the pleading expression from someone from a noble family (she believed that), and knowing I wanted to keep the puppy, agreed, though she was still reluctant.

"Okay, I'll take care of it, but I have to admit, I'm not very strong. If it gets sick..."

"Momm will help," Ms. S said, turning to me with a full smile, her face beaming. "Thanks so much, little one."

Thump... thump...

My heart raced at that moment, especially when Ms. S reached out and gently placed her hand on my head as if showing affection. I told myself that she was such an impressive woman, someone who could smile with her whole face yet still look so bright and beautiful. It wasn't easy to find someone like her.

From that day on... I had Ms. S as my idol.

I knew everything about her—what she studied, what she excelled in, her height, what she liked to eat. I knew her through the interview articles in magazines because she came from a wealthy family, so the media paid a lot of attention to her. She was cultured, intelligent, born into a noble family, and her beauty was captivating. Even though she wasn't a star on TV, I believed that if given the opportunity, she could easily act just as well as any professional actress.

Ms. S's dream was to own a kindergarten, and she loved writing. I knew so many things about her. If Daenchai liked Nui in the movie "Fan Day" and seemed obsessed, I guess I was one of those too.

To avoid looking like a creep, I had to keep my excitement under control and not let it get too overwhelming. If Ms. S found out, it could get awkward.

I missed her.

"Today, go to see Momm and tell her that mom says hello. She hasn't given up yet." The next morning, before I left the house, my mom still urged me to visit my boss and tell her that we had met before.

"I don't want to, Mom."

"Don't overthink it. I'm sure Momm will be happy to hear about the tiger. She'll miss me, and it'll be a great opportunity for you to learn a lot from her."

After saying that, my mom handed me a picture of the tiger.

"You have a picture of the tiger?"

"I took it with my phone. I even had it printed at school with high-quality paper. You can show it to Momm. It's a great chance to get close to her."

"But..."

"Come on. It's time. Work and here are far apart, right? You'll be late if you don't hurry."

Mom was pushing me hard to talk to Momm, but it wasn't easy. Everyone in the office knew that Momm Boss was hard to approach, and I could feel the fear from those around me, making it even harder to get close.

But still, I wanted to go introduce myself. Yesterday, we talked, and the sweet-faced woman didn't seem arrogant—just cautious and reserved.

All day, I couldn't focus on my work. I just kept staring at Momm Boss's office, which was covered with frosted glass, with only dim lights glowing from inside. I looked at the picture of the tiger I brought with me, feeling a little down. I secretly hoped the dog, which might have been reborn, would somehow help me meet Ms. S and talk to her for a little while.

"Tiger... if you're grateful to me, please make today the day I get to talk to Ms. S."

I clasped my hands and prayed while working until six o'clock, when everyone started leaving. I was the only one left. And yes... Momm still hadn't come out of the office.

The office was far, but I really wanted to talk to her. Should I knock and go in? My hesitation slowed everything down.

But in the end, I decided to stand up and walked over to knock on the glass door.

Knock, knock.

"Ms. S, may I come in?"

Silence...

At first, I thought I'd walk away, but something told me to push the door open. What I saw was Ms. S with her face down on the desk, looking like she was sleeping. I suddenly felt guilty for disturbing her rest.

I better leave, but I was so worried. She must be so lonely in the office, all by herself..

I hesitated whether to stay or go. In the end... I chose to walk out, but then I heard a sound, like someone groaning softly.

There was only Ms. S in the office.

"Help me."

"Huh?"

"My medicine's out... the headache won't go away."

Then Ms. S rolled over onto the carpeted floor. "Ms. S!"