Naughty Babe

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English Translation 2022 by TULIP

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Prologue

Tacha Wongteerawit is engaged to Phayak Chatdecha Chen because of a business agreement. The mutual benefits lead to the marriage contract between the direct descendants of the clan leaders of the two families.

The clan leader of the Chens was a Chinese merchant traveling to Thailand to sell goods. He got a chance to do business with the foreigner who ran a car import business in the earliest period of Siam in the Fifth Reign, where the royals and noblemen took an interest in automobiles. After several generations, the Chens decided to officially found a car import private company. *The Chens' Car Dealership* subsequently dominated the market of car import business in Thailand from then until the present time.

Chinese families are large. The history of family fights over inheritance that nearly caused them to be defeated by the economy made the family leader of one generation initiate the one-child policy. In the latest generation, the magnate only has one son, Phayak, whom he has arranged to be engaged to Tacha Wongteerawit.

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The engagement negotiation started when Tacha Wongteerawit was young. The young master educated from the world-class academy with perfect manners and a lovely face was adored by everyone. The way the young master spoke was adorable… He was even cuter when he called himself 'Nong[1]-Diaw'.

Khon Diaw…was the precious son of the president of the national auto-part import company, but he wasn't the only son. He hadn't been sent to study in England because they were well-off. The reason was he couldn't get along with his father's new family.

Khon Diaw's stepmother wasn't a cruel witch like ones in dramas. However, his father's new wife treated him indifferently on purpose. The siblings of about the same age turned aside whenever Khon Diaw approached.

His home that used to be warm and loving turned into a place where he was unwanted. The seven-year-old boy couldn't stomach the world of the adults. The unanswered questions…drove the cute Khon Diaw to be a naughty boy.

"It's mine!"

Khon Diaw once offered this toy to his stepbrother, but he got up and walked away that day. Why did he play with this toy in secret today, then?! If he didn't want it, he didn't have to play with it. If he had wanted it, he should have asked first.

"Hic…wahhhhh."

Khon Diaw got scolded by his father for making his stepbrother cry. Instead of chastising him, his stepmother fixed her reprimanding

[1] A word used to address younger people.

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glare on him while holding her crying child. Khon Diaw's little heart hurt as he thought his father no longer loved him. No one loved him.

In Khon Diaw's childhood, he hated staying home. He vaguely remembers he always got all excited when his father took him to the huge mansion by the Chao Phraya River. When they were there, his father never scolded him. His father would treat him to delicious food without his stepmother and stepsiblings.

The family of this mansion owned a large cat usually sleeping in the study. It would sometimes roam around with the sound of the chain being dragged on the floor. Khon Diaw never saw it up close. He had to wait for his father outside the study, eating snacks the maid had prepared or watching cartoons.

Khon Diaw barely remembers those times. They were vague as if shrouded by smoke. He only recalls he had to be there. Khon Diaw would wait in the living room as always, and his father would disappear into the room with the cat of the mansion owner.

Waiting was boring. The seven-year-old boy stared out the window overlooking the beautiful garden and the Chao Phraya River. His big, round eyes flicked back and forth between the view outside and the study door. His small lips were pressed together before he decided to rise from the couch… His father wouldn't scold him for having a quick look around.

Tacha loved the cool breeze by the river. He got to see the giant boat gliding past the mansion. The seven-year-old boy hovered over the white fence of the place to enjoy the scenery of the vast body of water. Right then, the sound of the chain being dragged across the lawn drew his attention. The vague memory became clearer when he saw the cat.

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The large brown-yellow cat he often caught glimpses at in the mansion owner's study stood a few feet away on the lawn. The end of the chain wasn't secured to anything.

"Nong-Meow…"

Smiling brightly, Khon Diaw stopped looking at the river and walked towards the cat. His teacher at school told him cats loved their chins scratched. He wanted to scratch its chin, but the cat was bigger than the ones he had seen… The cat seemed to be at Khon Diaw's height.

"Let's play together. My name is Khon Diaw. Do you have a name, Nong-Meow?"

A smile spread across Khon Diaw's fluffy cheeks when the cat ambled close. As the cat approached, he thought it was too huge to be called Nong. Finally, his small hand touched the short soft fur of the big cat.

"Good boy. Meow-meow."

"Nong-Diaw!"

His father's roar froze the small hand. His lovely face turned shocked when the big cat lunged forward and knocked him over on the lawn. The cat's furry paws were on Khon Diaw's body, then its mouth with rows of white teeth parted, showing its red tongue.

BANG!

Crimson blood spurted all over the seven-year-old boy's body. His big, round eyes widened at the big cat's obliterated head before the massive weight crushed him.

Tacha Wongteerawit woke up with a lost memory and got sent to England immediately.

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"Ah…"

Khon Diaw is jolted awake in the middle of the night because of the nightmare haunting him since he was young. He often dreams that he strolls in the garden by the river and a puma jumps at him. He sometimes wakes up then. Also, the dream sometimes drags on until the puma gets shot and its blood gushes all over his body. It sometimes reaches the point where the shadowy figure holding the gun appears in the farthermost of his vision. He tried to make out the face many times but always woke up first. There is nothing more than that, so this dream is simply a typical nightmare repeatedly replaying when he is asleep.

Tacha's father once said it was his childhood trauma from when he visited the mansion of his father's friend who had a puma and got scared to unconsciousness by it. Nonetheless, in his dreams, it never felt like he was afraid of the puma. He was…startled by its jump. Now, he's unsure if it was a shock from the jump or the death shot.

His delicate back is drenched in sweat. He runs his slender fingers through his wet hair and gets out of bed. As soon as the light is on, he sighs… The reflection in the mirror displays him frowning. His body is soaked, and he looks terrified like he was just on the verge of death.

The slim figure steps out of the bedroom and turns on all the lights until the top floor of the fancy car showroom in the center of the city is illuminated. He stops short in the middle of the quiet apartment before walking over to the glass wall and pressing the button to fold up the curtain. There are a few cars on Sukhumvit Street after midnight.

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Though his name is Khon Diaw[2]…he is afraid of being alone.

The lean figure pulls his knees to his chest and leans on the glass wall as he always does when waking up from the nightmare. The sound of a show rerun breaks the silence of the luxurious apartment… Khon Diaw loves this place because it is void of people. At the same time, he hates this place because it's frighteningly quiet and lonely.

He wishes he could return to England… He wishes he could be with Kuea Keerati. Having Kuea Keerati as his best friend saved him from the nightmare. Kuea was always bright and active and continually dragged him along to do whatever he was up to. Their dorm room was full of music and Kuea's chatter, but they both had to grow up.

The more he looks at the engagement diamond ring with a fancy shank on his left ring finger, the more deeply he sighs. Khon Diaw was eighteen back then. His engagement with Phayak was the talk of the town for days. On the engagement day, he was dressed in white attire and dolled up by a makeup artist and a hairstylist early in the morning… He was aware way before his departure to Thailand that he would be engaged to Phayak, though he had never exchanged a word with his fiancé.

In the grand ballroom of the five-star hotel in the center of Bangkok, it was decorated with fresh white flowers and chandeliers. The rows of beautiful white chairs facing the stage were occupied by countless honored guests. The flashes from the photographers and journalists stung his eyes in every step he took up the platform.

Among all participants, Tacha Wongteerawit knew only his

[2] Khon Diaw means the only one or being alone.

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father, stepmother, and stepsiblings. The man sitting with his legs folded to one side before the exquisite tray…was his fiancé with a deadpan face like in the photo his father sent him when he was in England. He was in the same kind of white attire.

Phayak Chatdecha Chen.

He was different from what Tacha had expected. His fierce eyes and permanently frowning slanting eyebrows made him unapproachable. Khon Diaw had never associated with anyone like this before…so Phayak was so scary for him that he couldn't meet his gaze. Tacha dropped his pretty round eyes to his hands or only turned them to the elders and photographers calling him.

The engagement ceremony when Khon Diaw was eighteen was held successfully by professional organizers. He didn't have to say a word throughout the ceremony, and neither did the man beside him… All Khon Diaw heard was his fiancé's curt low voice one time when he asked for his hand to put the engagement ring on, and Khon Diaw quickly picked up the other ring on the tray to put on the strong hand holding out. Phayak's hand was hot and bigger than his.

There was no interview of the young fiancé the media was interested in, given that it was an engagement between two influential families. There were only steps including photos taking, expressing gratitude to the elders' blessings, and putting his folded hands on Phayak Chatdecha Chen's chest to show respect in order.

Khon Diaw tried not to make a single mistake. His nervousness turned into a surprise when he felt the soft touch on his head as he showed respect to the older fiancé. When he withdrew his body, he saw his fiancé's big hand lowering to his side. Khon Diaw wasn't sure how he felt, but it wasn't an awful feeling. Not at all… Phayak might

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not be as scary as his appearance.

The engagement ceremony was followed by the press conference of Phayak taking on the position of the president of the Chens' Car Dealership and officially opening the new F1 circuit, the largest one in Southeast Asia.

Khon Diaw sat on the couch on the side while listening to Phayak's low voice presenting his vision on his first day as the president and explaining the project of developing the F1 circuit to be the F1 factory in Thailand… Phayak was far out of reach as if he belonged to a different world. Had it not been for the ring on his left ring finger, Khon Diaw would have thought he was dreaming.

To an eighteen-year-old teenager who had graduated from high school for less than a month, the project worth billions of baht sounded so epic that his heart drummed. When Phayak finished his speech, there was a resounding round of applause. Khon Diaw stepped forward to be photographed beside him again, then the engagement ceremony was over.

Khon Diaw's worry and excitement from having no idea of what to say to his fiancé vanished in the wind since Phayak led his bodyguards out of the hotel as soon as the formal ceremony was over. Khon Diaw was left in the luxurious suite room with a private swimming pool and a 180-degree view of Bangkok.

The media released the articles of the dreamy engagement ceremony. Two influential families were joined together like destiny. The image of the high-class cold man putting the ring on the younger guy resembled the scene in a romance novel… Behind all of that, Tacha was crying alone in the fancy suite room with his knees up to his chest.

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He was left by himself on the first day of their official engagement.

Years have passed by from the engagement to the wedding day.

The wedding ceremony in the next month of Phayak Chatdecha Chen and Tacha Wongteerawit will be the national grand ceremony many are anticipating. Their love is as beautiful as the ending of a romance novel. Two influential families are on par in both wealth and images. The grooms will stand side by side, a perfect match. One groom is the president of the renowned car dealership of the country and the owner of the biggest F1 circuit in Southeast Asia. The other groom's influential family owns the auto-part import company. Besides their mutual business benefits, their love began when one groom was only eighteen.

The glamourous wedding invitations designed by a famous designer have been sent to over three thousand honored guests, with a note in parentheses that they refuse to receive money envelopes. They have gone all out and splurged on the preparation. Everyone is jealous of the future groom, the soon-to-be son-in-law of the Chens. Gifts and blessings have continuously been delivered to the Chen Mansion by the Chao Phraya River. The atmosphere is full of joy… As if.

"Your tea, sir."

"Thank you."

The sweet voice of the staff member in the first-class airport lounge snaps Khon Diaw back to reality. His lovely face is visibly painted in worry. Hia-Yi must have been awake as it's already ten… However, Phayak didn't come home last night, so he probably had

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no idea Khon Diaw was gone. There is nothing to worry about. The maid will find out about his absence because he doesn't have breakfast and lunch as he's supposed to. He can't bring the furry Chihuahua with him, but she will be fine. The maid will feed her food, water, and snacks every day.

Everything has gone smoothly so far. He left his phone and all the valuable objects gifted to him by Hia-Yi at home. He brought nothing, except…the engagement ring he couldn't bring himself to take it off.

When he was going to leave it on the nightstand, he teared up… so he had to bring it. Hia-Yi wouldn't mind the loss of one ring. It should be fine to keep it. To Hia-Yi, the ring might mean nothing, but it means everything to Khon Diaw.

He is about to travel across the continents with a suitcase, a wallet with a reasonable amount of cash, and his passport. Even Kuea Keerati, who booked the ticket and took care of everything, is not here to see him off in fear that the Hias will know… Both Hia-Lian and Hia-Yi must not find out about this.

All Khon Diaw knows is he is going to start his new life in Switzerland. Kuea Keerati has booked a hotel for a month for him to adjust to the new environment. After that, he will move to the college dormitory he has applied for a short course in. The student visa will allow Khon Diaw to live in a foreign country for a while. He will think of the next step after graduation.

The decision to go to Switzerland hasn't been made on a whim. It took Khon Diaw over six months to find a college, apply for a course, and get a visa. Everything went well to the point he could book the plane ticket… Finally, he is waiting to board the plane in the first-class airport lounge.

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It's the right decision... He asked himself repeatedly if it saddened him to leave it all behind, and the answer was yes. Of course, he was sad... They would never meet again from now on. He wouldn't get to see the deep frown or the man annoyed with everything in the world. Still, sadness urged him to start anew. No one would choose to be sad forever... Khon Diaw wanted to stop crying.

The engagement with Hia-Yi came with a dozen pages of conditions. Khon Diaw signed the contract for the first time when he was eighteen, with the lawyer clarifying each condition one by one. Their engagement was all for the sake of the businesses. He was forbidden to meddle, interfere, betray, or damage them and had to stay in his own place. Right then, Tacha realized...

Hia-Yi didn't want to marry a person. He wanted to marry a doll.

Khon Diaw had forgotten about this fact for the past seven years just because of the glimpse of Hia-Yi's smile, how he came home more often, how he brought him the dog, and how he brought up the wedding... Khon Diaw believed it was out of love and that Hia-Yi finally opened his heart. But, no. Hia-Yi's sweet doll discovered that Hia-Yi started a relationship with someone else. The wedding was supposedly to lift the pressure from the elders who had frequently pestered him. If...there had been no other party in this cold relationship, Tacha would have stayed by Phayak's side as before. He wasn't open-minded to the point he would share Hia-Yi with anyone. He was so angry and sad that he didn't want to be there anymore. Before he could talk himself out, he had fooled himself every day that Hia-Yi wouldn't marry him if he didn't love him at all.

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He daydreamed of the grand wedding ceremony until reality reminded him he was the only one excited. He cooperated with the organizers alone, chose the venue alone, selected the invitation design alone, decided on the gifts alone, and tried the outfit…alone.

He was left alone on the engagement day. He was left alone when he moved in to Hia-Yi's place. As the wedding ceremony was around the corner…he had to deal with everything alone… His name is Khon Diaw, but it doesn't mean he wants to be alone.

"It's time to board the plane, sir."

"Ah…thank you."

He gives the staff member of the lounge a thankful smile for reminding him. He grips the straps of his backpack and gets ready to hit the gate with the passport in his hand. In a few minutes, he will leave Thailand forever.

His slim legs carry him to the gate attendant at the entrance to have his passport checked. The first-class line is short. Suddenly, the outdated phone in his pocket buzzes and stops him short.

Kuea gave him this phone with a data SIM card for his early stay overseas. It's a prepaid SIM card, and the only one who knows the number is Kuea Keerati.

"You miss me already? I haven't even boarded the plane yet."

"Diaw…W- where are you…? Are you at the airport?"

"Well…I am. In front of the gate now. Where else would I be?"

"No… I mean, I'm not sure if I should tell you this, considering you're about to start your new life. But…but I…think you should know."

His best friend's troubled voice makes his smile fade. He knits

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his brow before walking out of the area where the gate attendant is checking the passengers' passports.

"What's wrong?"

"Hia-Yi… He found out you'd be traveling to Switzerland and kicked a big fuss at my place. He…He seemed so shocked, so I told him. Diaw…I'm sorry. I felt bad for him."

His best friend's words shock him a little. There is a pang in his heart. Regardless, as he has said, this is all not happening on a whim. Even if Hia-Yi has found out, it doesn't waver Khon Diaw's determination.

"It's okay. Once I'm there…it'll be hard for him to find me. By the time he's free, I'll already be far away. Hia-Yi is a busy man… He also needs to cancel the wedding ceremony. He might not even follow me. He might have only been shocked because of my disappearance."

"No, Diaw… Listen, Hia-Yi went to the airport an hour ago."

"T…To find me? He won't get to see me… I'm in front of the gate, Kuea. I'm leaving now."

His sweet voice trembles uncontrollably. He tightens his grip on the passport. Despite knowing there is no way Hia-Yi will be here in time, he can't help looking around. This is the passenger area. If…Hia-Yi doesn't have a ticket or passport, he can't get inside. Moreover…even if he can get in, the plane will have taken off by the time he reaches the gate.

"Diaw…Hia-Yi won't be there. H…His car flipped on the way."

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Chapter 1

New Beginning

The footage of the car accident on Bangna-Trad Road leading to Suvarnabhumi Airport becomes big news. The red Ferrari with a bid number plate crashed into the barrier and flipped over out of the road. The safety system of the sports car worth an eight-digit number saved the driver and he was sent to the nearest hospital.

Tacha Wongteerawit sits in front of the emergency room with a pale face. He was too baffled to speak when Kuea told him Phayak's car had flipped. Fortunately, a staff member of the airport talked to Kuea on the phone and took care of everything until he successfully arrived at the hospital. His big, round eyes are fixed on the shut door while he prays everything will be okay.

Tacha hasn't said a word ever since he came from the airport, not even when he saw Kuea and Hia-Lian, when the maid wrapped his shaking body from the frigid AC in a blanket, or when Hia-Yi's pa arrived.

His beautiful thick lashes flutter as he takes in the silence surrounding him. Finally, the processed shock turns into big drops

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of tears trickling down his cheeks. His little heart unbearably hurts. He keeps blaming himself. If he hadn't decided to go to Switzerland, Hia-Yi wouldn't have followed him and had an accident.

"Pa, Nong-Diaw is sorry."

"It's okay, son. It's okay."

He bawls, not hearing anything else. He keeps apologizing until Kuea pulls him into his arms. His best friend's consoling words can't heal his shattered feelings.

After hours in the emergency room, Phayak is out of danger. His pa requests his son to be moved to the famous private hospital, and the medical crew professionally coordinates the transference.

"Nong-Diaw, come with Pa. Yi will be fine. He's stubborn. Lian, Nu-Kuea, thank you for coming here."

"Yes, Pa. Nu-Kuea and I will see you at the hospital."

The Chens' future son-in-law lets his fiancé's father take his hand and lead him to his car. The Chens' bodyguards surround them as their boss is an influential figure. Even the ambulance bringing Hia-Yi to the next hospital rides on the road cleared by the police and led by the Chens' men driving alongside the police cars.

Tacha is in the seven-seater car with Pa. On their way to the private hospital, Pa, who has stepped down from the leader of the Chens for years, delivers his orders to his and Hia-Yi's secretaries, who arrived at the hospital around the same time. Khon Diaw has seen Hia-Yi's pa since he was the president of the Chens' Car Dealership. It will take a while before Hia-Yi levels up to his pa's life experience and aura. Even in this situation, Pa is calm and handles everything step by step. The sleeping dragon has returned to the throne.

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Tacha is led to the guestroom beside the recovery room. Hia-Yi is still in the ER of the hospital, but he will soon be transferred to this room. Pa has reserved the best recovery room of the hospital. The interior is no different from a five-star hotel room, with a separate room for the patient's relatives, where Tacha occupies at the moment. The Chens' maids and the hospital staff have prepared their favorite snacks, Hia-Yi's, his, and Pa's, to show their best service. There are dishes served from a five-star hotel for twenty-four hours.

Out of everything, Tacha only wants water. He actually wants to wait for Hia-Yi in front of the ER, but Pa won't let him. When a nurse gives him the basic health examination, he realizes the color has drained from his face.

"Diaw, eat something."

Kuea settles next to Khon Diaw and breaks the bread into a tiny piece to feed him.

"Kuea… Hia… It was because of me."

"It wasn't. Don't blame yourself. Hia-Yi is safe now. You're the one that needs to take care of your health. We'll think about what to do later. Don't be stubborn."

"I don't have the appetite."

"Try it. You can't fall sick, too. Open up. Don't make me scold you. Ahhhh. Good job."

Relenting, Khon Diaw eats a little before taking a shower and changing into the clothes the maids have prepared. The staff constantly reports on Hia-Yi's condition to them. The doctor has run the physical examination on Hia-Yi's head to toe as requested by Pa. Everything is okay. The only concern is Hia-Yi needs to wear an arm cast. They still have to wait for the results of the CT scan and X-rays, though.

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After hours, Hia-Yi's pa returns to the room. Phayak Chen undoubtedly inherited the fierce eyes from the man in his sixties. Hia-Yi indeed resembles his pa.

"Nong-Diaw."

"Yes, Pa."

"Have you eaten? What about you, Nu-Kuea?"

"I have, Pa, but Diaw didn't eat much."

"Can I have a word with Nong-Diaw for a moment, Nu-Kuea?"

"Sure, Pa. I'll meet up with Hia-Lian downstairs. Be right back, Diaw."

Kuea Keerati folds his hands to show respect to the elder, the graceful manner of the son of the noble family. Once the door is closed, Pa sighs and strokes Khon Diaw's head.

"You must be in shock."

"Yes… Pa, it was Nong-Diaw's fault… If…"

"Lian told me you were going to Switzerland. Did you not want to be with Yi?"

"I…"

"Yi treated you wrong, didn't he? You should've told me, and I would've smacked his head. I won't speak in his place. This is between you and Yi. I won't meddle, but I hope you push everything off for a while. We have to postpone the wedding and the F1 race held in Thailand. I'll leave Yi in your care for the time being…and I won't interfere with your decision after that."

"Yes, Pa."

"Yi had a concussion when the car roof collapsed. The doctor performed the CT scan and the result turned out fine. Still, the doctor said we couldn't lower our guard. Since the CT scan was run rather

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quickly, the blood might not seep out yet. I want you to keep an eye on Yi. If there's a brain hemorrhage and we know it too late, Yi will be in a coma or die."

"Pardon?"

Khon Diaw's eyes widen, then he bursts into tears again. The mean Hia-Yi won't open his eyes again? Though he has braced himself to never see Hia-Yi again, he didn't expect it to be this way. If Khon Diaw was in Switzerland…he would at least be confident that Hia-Yi would be doing well on the other side of the world, still being wicked, acting annoyed with everything, being…happy in his own way.

"I only have one son. If anything happens to Yi, the Chens will be in a mess. I'm old. I have no clue how many years I have left. If you don't care about Yi, think about me. If…If anything happens to him, I will give you all assets of the Chens."

Hia-Yi's pa looks years older than his age now. It's sad that a parent has to make peace with the possibility that their child could die first. Khon Diaw squeezes Pa's hand… All this time, Hia-Yi's pa has never maltreated him.

"Pa, don't worry. Hia-Yi is going to be okay. Nong-Diaw will take care of him."

"The only thing I'm afraid of is…it might not have been an accident. Someone might have tampered with Yi's car. A lot of things bother me. I've had someone investigating it."

Pa's stressful voice shakes Khon Diaw up so much he starts trembling. If it weren't an accident but were actually a plan, the intention of causing someone's death would be too terrifying for Khon Diaw. Why would they be so malicious…? Why would they want Hia-Yi to

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die? Khon Diaw is aware that a car dealership isn't a clean business, but…there should be another way. They shouldn't solve a problem by erasing someone's existence forever.

"Don't go anywhere during this time, Nong-Diaw. It's safe to stay here. I'll go back to the company to deal with things."

"Yes, Pa. Nong-Diaw will walk you out."

The small figure sees Pa off at the door. Some of the Chens' bodyguards accompany Pa back to the company, while many remain here to ensure everything is okay. Hia-Yi usually had a couple of bodyguards in tow. There are a lot more this time because his pa probably feels paranoid.

As soon as Tacha is alone again, he sobs like a madman, unable to make sense of anything. Everything is awfully hard for him. He doesn't know which bit of his busted feelings to pick up first. He's worried, scared, paranoid, and hopes Hia-Yi is safe.

"Hia…hic…"

He's afraid…afraid to be alone… No, don't take Hia-Yi away… please…

After over thirty hours of silence, Hia-Yi is finally transferred to the recovery room. Tacha sits beside the bed, staring at Hia-Yi, who has been with him for seven years… Tacha cries now that he can hold his hand again. He feels relieved that Hia-Yi is safe for real. Despite some concerns about his condition, a smile flickers on the corners of Khon Diaw's mouth. The sleeping face still frowns in annoyance. Is Hia-Yi fighting someone in his dream?

The unfamiliar things are the bruises all over his body. The left side of his head is draped in a large bandage. That must be the place

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struck by the car roof. A cast on his right arm. Had the Ferrari not had an excellent safety system, Hia-Yi wouldn't have been here. He holds Hia-Yi's left hand in his small palm.

"Get well soon, Hia-Yi… D…Don't sleep for too long."

He pulls Hia-Yi's hand to his wet cheek. At least he's still warm… Hia –Yi hasn't gone anywhere… He's…just too tired to get up.

Khon Diaw has been in the hospital for two days. The Chens don't allow the journalists to wander around in the hospital and only give information through Hia-Yi's secretary. Despite the question about Phayak's condition, they are curious about the wedding with more than three thousand guests and the F1 race that has gained the attention of people around the world.

Pa refuses to let outsiders visit Hia-Yi or receive any gifts, demanding that this is a family matter. Only Hia-Lian and Kuea have permission to get in. Khon Diaw no longer cares about the public matter as Pa can unquestionably handle it all. He pours his attention to Hia-Yi. He doesn't even answer the calls from his father, his stepmother, his stepsiblings, or his relatives. They are showing their support out of the blue.

"How are you, Nong? Here's Hia-Yi. He's sick. Don't be naughty at home, okay?"

The little cheerfulness during this distressing time is Nong… the furry Chihuahua. Since he can't bring her here, he has to video-call her. The bulging-eyed dog tilts her head in front of the camera and barks. Khon Diaw laughs at her silliness when she tries to put her nose in the camera. During this tough time, seeing Nong makes Khon Diaw feel so much better.

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"She was sad. Must have missed you."

"I think she's missed Hia-Yi. She's mine, but I don't know why she keeps running to Hia-Yi."

The regular housekeeper, whom Hia-Yi chose from the mansion to take care of the apartment atop the showroom and Nong, laughs. She updates him on the apartment before hanging up. The belongings Tacha left at the airport have been retrieved. His Switzerland plan needs to be postponed for a while. Has he given up…? No. He will wait until this is all over. Once Hia-Yi has recovered enough that Khon Diaw is sure he will be fine, they will talk about canceling the engagement and the wedding. They can still get married if Hia-Yi needs to keep their image. Nevertheless, they will no longer associate with each other after that.

Khon Diaw won't leave without saying goodbye in fear that the incident will reoccur… They can part on good terms this time.

For so many times, Khon Diaw has gazed at Hia-Yi, who sleeps soundly even though he kept striking up conversations. The more he talked, the worse he felt. They barely have shared memories. In the past seven years, Hia-Yi hardly came home. He would sometimes take Khon Diaw out to dinner, buy him gifts, and even brought Nong home, but then he would be gone.

What's Hia-Yi like when he's with other people and his friends? Khon Diaw has never partied with Hia-Yi's friends, unlike Kuea, whom Hia-Lian always brought along. Hia-Yi kept Khon Diaw at home, like a doll in the display cabinet. Hia-Yi would come home, take a quick look at him, and walk away. Khon Diaw felt as if their time wasn't equal. Hia-Yi might have had tons of things to deal with…but to

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Khon Diaw, every second stretched out. How can the time of the person who waits move as fast as that of the person making him wait…? Even now, Hia-Yi has been unconscious for only two days, but it feels longer.

"I'll read you a book."

Since Tacha has no topic to talk to the sleeping guy, he has bought as many children's books as the bookstore in the hospital has. He doesn't know if they will help, but Hia-Yi might feel better after listening to the stories. He might be annoyed with these children's books and decide to wake up quickly. Hia-Yi, in his usual state, wouldn't listen to Disney tales.

Hia-Yi's accident is analyzed in the news TV channels regarding its connection to the economy and the F1 race. When they are out of interesting updates, they start speculating about the wedding with no publicized postponement or cancellation. Some unethical channels present his background like a documentary.

Khon Diaw listens to his own story from those who know nothing about him and turns off the TV. He takes a deep breath to chase away his irritation before returning to the bedside again.

To other people, the engagement between the descendants of two influential families is a business collaboration with mutual benefits. But, in fact, the Wongteerawits were going bankrupt. The guarantees that convinced the Chens to help them were their beautiful lands in the northeast adjoining the Chens' properties. To successfully build the F1 circuit in Thailand…the Chens' lands weren't enough.

His father made the Chens a freaking exploitative offer. Even so, Hia-Yi's pa accepted it as he thought of his goal in the future

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more than Hia-Yi's feelings and the amount of money it would cost… The engagement with the eighteen-year-old boy wasn't favorable to Hia-Yi at all.

That's why Hia-Yi hates him, his father, the Wongteerawits that leech off of the Chens like a literal leech. Tacha's family is unlike the Chens that uphold the one-child policy in every generation. His father has made his siblings the executives of his business. His uncles and aunts are incompetent and only interested in the luxurious lifestyle. Khon Diaw doesn't even like his relatives, so how can he ever expect Hia-Yi to like them? Hia-Yi is kind enough to provide for the Wongteerawits, yet he also has to be engaged to Khon Diaw against his will.

Tacha sometimes wonders if Wongteerawit wasn't his surname…would Hia-Yi be kinder to him? Though he thinks about it at times, it never changes the reality. Though he never demands anything, never misbehaves, never causes Hia-Yi trouble, and obediently acts as his lovely doll, deep inside, he wants to scream, tell Hia-Yi to care about him… He wants him to come home.

Khon Diaw…never wants to be alone.

The discomfort of the inability to move frustrates Phayak so much that he wants to cuss at someone, but he can't even move his body. Let alone yelling at other people. The bits of his feelings are no different from scattered jigsaws. He has no clue what is happening or where he is. He drifts in and out of consciousness… It's so exhausting that he needs to rest, but he's also annoyed with himself that he has the urge to push through his limit and pinpoint what exactly he is hearing.

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In the silence, someone is talking incomprehensibly. There are sounds of laughter and crying. Why is someone crying…? What happened? Who died? It's so annoying that he wants to tell that person to stop because it's distracting.

"Hia-Yi."

After several attempts, he finally makes out those two words. He hears these two words many times more until he's sure this person is calling him. Hia-Yi…Hia-Yi, then he cries, then he reads out the tales Phayak can partly perceive. Eventually, he feels the squeeze around his hand before it's gone. The lingering warmth aggravates him even more. What's with all this?!

He's frustrated with himself for understanding nothing and being unable to do anything. Fucking annoying! Why the fuck does he keep drifting in and out of consciousness?

There's a limit to his patience. Even if he can't see anything, he knows he faces forward. His hand feels the warm touch again.

"Hia-Yi…"

He concentrates on his hand, trying his best to grab the warmth that will fade away again. He clenches his palm around it, refusing to let go. He won't let that person release his hand again. Never!

"Hia-Yi!"

At the end of the tunnel, the darkness gradually becomes brighter, but he has to squint because he can't adjust his vision in the blinding brightness. One thing is for sure, his hand is gripping something tightly. He eventually discovers that it's a small hand of a person with big, round eyes, tiny lips, and a cute nose… His cheeks are wet with tears. So, this is the one who has been crying so much? His eyes are swollen. His nose is red. He was the one who kept

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reading ungraspable stories about Little Red Riding Hood choking on a pumpkin to death and waiting for a prince to kiss her awake. The prince then became a frog and lost some freaking shoe. It was nonsense.

"…Who are you?"

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Chapter 2
Awakening

"I…I'm your fiancé. Hia-Yi…can't you remember me? It's Nong-Diaw."

Phayak hates this feeling. He's annoyed with the situation that makes him feel like he's sitting in a square room with no exit. Everything is irritating, especially when he sees the sadness in those big, round eyes. The man presses his small lips together in an attempt to hold back his tears… He must have cried because of him countless times.

"Nong-Diaw…"

He doesn't recognize the person before him, but he remembers Nong-Diaw. He's a seven-year-old boy with big, round eyes, tiny lips, a cute nose, brown curly hair, and soft cheeks like a doll. Nong-Diaw in his memories slowly overlaps the man before him…

"Nong-Diaw… Khon Diaw…? Tacha?"

"You rememeber!"

The slim figure lunges forward and wraps his arms around Phayak, making him freeze. The wetness on his shoulder flusters him. Plus, Nong-Diaw looks different from the one in his memories. Nong-Diaw's arms are small… No matter when he was seven or now,

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Khon Diaw is always tiny. He strokes the slim back with his big hand before a twinge shoots up in his head and he clenches his jaw.

"Hia…I've pressed the doctor call button. Please hang in there."

The small guy, anxious, is about to run to the door, but Phayak seizes his delicate hand. He has no idea why he doesn't want this person to leave. There are many questions to be answered. Still, it's hard to even move his body. He only has the strength to hold the younger guy's hand.

"Don't go."

"But…"

"I'm okay."

Soon, the doctor and nurses enter the room. Even if Phayak has a headache and fatigue, he tries to answer the doctor's questions as much as possible so the doctor can diagnose him correctly. He wants to recover fast.

"He didn't recognize me for a moment…but he does now."

"Mr. Phayak has received a concussion, so he might have memory errors. I'll run a basic test. Mr. Phayak, what date is it?"

The stare from everyone in the room pressures Phayak, and he feels hopeless at the same time. His answer will probably not match with the current date. Nong-Diaw's hopeful eyes are slowly clouded.

"I think it's the 16th. September, 16, 20xx."

Phayak doesn't want to lie, though the answer makes the younger guy cry again. The small hand squeezes his… The massive pressure crushes his shoulders. He doesn't know what he has forgotten. When he tries to think, his head hurts.

"I'm sorry."

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All he can do is pull Nong-Diaw, who isn't as small as he thought, into his embrace. Phayak still remembers him, his laughter, and those big, round eyes staring at him innocently.

"Mr. Phayak, do you remember your personal information, such as your age and career?"

"I don't know right now. It hurts my head when I try to think. I remember my fiancé, that's for sure. Nong-Diaw…but it's Nong-Diaw when he was seven, not this person."

Phayak's memories are in disorder. The current Nong-Diaw might not have plump cheeks like before, but the boy as cute as a doll… has indeed grown up to be as adorable as ever. After the doctor and nurses are gone, the little guy remains by his side with his small hand clasping his. He comforts Phayak that he will get well soon, even if he himself is scared.

Concerned about his memory errors that come in flashes, the doctor has prescribed an antidepressant for him so he can rest. His condition will be examined by a neurologist later.

He still wishes to remember his background, but the medicine empties his head. He can only listen to Nong-Diaw reading him the story of *the Rabbit and the Turtle*. Phayak hates stories for kids, but he used to read them to the seven-year-old boy with big eyes. It feels relatively weird that their roles are switched. Nonetheless, Nong-Diaw's voice is gentle and more pleasant than his.

"And then, the rabbit…"

"Nong-Diaw."

"Yes?"

"How old am I?"

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"Thirty-two. I'm twenty-five."

"How many years have we been engaged?"

"Seven years… Don't ask about those things right now. The doctor said you shouldn't think much. You'll get a headache."

He has to ask because it bothers him. The engagement ring on the younger guy's left ring finger makes him feel terrible for remembering nothing. How can he forget such an important day?

"If I'm thirty-two, why aren't we married yet?"

"Pardon? What did you say?"

"Don't you want to marry me?"

Did he become such trash in his missing memories that Nong-Diaw, who promised to marry him since he was seven, no longer wanted to marry him? Has Phayak Chatdecha Chen grown up to be a thirty-two-year-old man who has failed in life? Why didn't Pa dismember him, stuff his parts in a fertilizer sack, and throw him into the sea long ago?

"…W…Why would it depend on me?"

"Because I planned to marry you when you were eighteen."

Tacha Wongteerawit is utterly confused. Hia-Yi woke up and couldn't remember him in the present time, and now he's demanding the answer as to why they aren't married yet. It's not up to Khon Diaw. Hia-Yi brought up the wedding only recently, and they were only engaged when he was eighteen. Who would get married so young?! More importantly, why would he mention it when they're about to end things?

"Hia…we're going to break up."

Khon Diaw can feel Hia-Yi's frustration. Whether he remembers it

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or not, Khon Diaw can always sense his grumpy mood. The frown, the pressed lips, and the glare give it away… The small figure shifts, but their hands are clasped. Hia-Yi even tightens his grip.

"What? Break up? Who?"

"Y…You and me. We're going to break off the engagement and cancel the wedding. We'll go our separate ways."

"Where?"

"A…Anywhere."

"Don't go."

"I have to. I…I've planned everything."

"So have I."

"But you don't remember."

"I can make a plan even if I don't remember anything. Who told you we have to remember things to make a plan? Bring that person to me."

How mean! Khon Diaw starts to get irritated instead of feeling sympathetic. Despite his lost memories, he's still so mean! Why isn't it the same as the drama he watched with Nong? When the male lead or the female lead loses their memories, their personality improves. They become obedient and better people to earn sympathy and compassion. No one would argue like Hia-Yi.

"Talk to yourself. It's you!"

"Easy, then. I've talked to myself and made up my mind. Drop whatever plan of yours. That's it."

"I'll break up with you! You can't stop me. We've talked it out. You promised!"

Though they never talked anything out, it's not like Hia-Yi will remember. If Hia-Yi insists on being stubborn, he can be stubborn

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as well!

"Did we sign the contract?"

"What?"

"Where's the contract? Where's the witness? Where's the evidence? Your engagement ring is still on your finger. Nong-Diaw should discuss it with yourself first. If you can't think of anything, quit thinking and stick to my plan. We're not breaking up. That's it."

H…Hia… No, you son of a bitch!

"Don't joke like that."

"A verbal contract is of no use. There's no evidence. I don't remember agreeing to this. Nong-Diaw can't joke about breaking up with me either. It's unfair. I've never made an agreement without signing a contract. Besides, breaking off the engagement is a big deal. No one talks about it lightly with no proof. Nong-Diaw bullied me."

Khon Diaw's small mouth flaps open and closed. He wants to argue but fails to find a word. Has he ever won against Hia-Yi in an argument? And who bullied him?! Hia-Yi is the mean one here! How can a man be so wicked? What a vicious punk! He barely came home, yet he had the nerve to ask why they weren't married!

"How did I bully you? You were the one bullying me. We're going to break up because…you have someone else."

Khon Diaw has decided to bring it up. It was the reason he chose to end their relationship. He's had enough being Hia-Yi's doll. He's endured it for too long. They've been engaged for seven years. Khon Diaw is curious that if Hia-Yi planned to marry him when he was eighteen as he claimed…what has he prolonged the engagement for if not because of the third person? Would he even marry Khon Diaw if the elders didn't pressure him?

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"Who?"

The shock and guilt he expected from Hia-Yi are nowhere to be seen. Hia-Yi gets even more frustrated. Is this fair? Does Hia-Yi have the right to be frustrated? Khon Diaw should be the one frustrated!

"Someone. Maybe more than one."

"I remember none. I only remember Nong-Diaw."

It sounds so romantic that his face might flush, but anger burns that heart-fluttering feeling to a crisp.

"You don't remember! Still, it doesn't change the fact that you cheated on me. Don't act like it's never happened and expect me to just go along with you!"

"How could I cheat on you? Pa reminded me every day that I would be engaged to Nong-Diaw and marry Nong-Diaw. He would give the mansion to Nong-Diaw. Nong-Diaw this, Nong-Diaw that. If I had someone else, would Pa spare my life? I wonder if I bowed to you day and night after the engagement to show my respect. The Chens have upheld the one-child policy for generations. The only child will be born from the only partner. If the partner can't conceive, we adopt a child. Why would I find another person just to be kicked out of the family by Pa?"

Hia-Yi is as cranky as ever. The new trait is he's a chatterbox now! Before, Khon Diaw could count the words he said. Now that Hia-Yi has received a concussion, he gets all talkative. Had the cat got his tongue back then? Asshole!

"Don't be sarcastic. What mansion? You left me alone at the showroom! I don't know about that only child and only partner thing. All I know is I've lived in your place alone for seven years!"

Hia-Yi's belief is twisted. Khon Diaw expected Hia-Yi to realize

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how trashy he had been and at least apologize to him and let him explain the truth. And so, they would be able to sort things out together. They would solve the problems together. He always lost to Hia-Yi anyway… because he loved him. Would he be here if he didn't? Even so, Hia-Yi simply raises his eyebrow and cocks his head.

"What? Did you kick me out and live with that dog instead?"

Fuuuuuck! How can he fall for this kind of person? Khon Diaw is about to lose it! He tells himself over and over that Hia-Yi is injured. Hia-Yi is not in his right mind. Hia-Yi is crazy. Hia-Yi is screwy. Hia-Yi has gone nuts due to the concussion. That's why he's not making sense.

"You left of your own volition!"

"Impossible. Why would I leave my own place? Where would I sleep? I'm a homebody."

Ugh! Khon Diaw hates that smug confidence! He remembers nothing yet keeps on yammering nonsense! A homebody?!

"I don't know! I don't care where you slept! I was fine being with the dog. I didn't need you. At least the dog is cuter than you!"

"Which showroom?"

He doesn't remember his own place yet calls himself a homebody! Ha…

"Near Ratchaprasong Intersection on Sukhumvit Street. I've lived there since we got engaged."

"Then I don't believe I cheated on Nong-Diaw. That's the branch responsible for importing the most expensive cars from all over the world. The customers are billionaires, elites, and high-rank authorities. I've always taken care of them myself. All my assets are also there… If you live there, you have the Chens' property with you."

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"It has nothing to do with me. It wasn't my decision to live there."

"It just doesn't add up. Every car in the showroom is worth over thirty-million baht. Why would I have the guts to sleep somewhere else? What if Nong-Diaw got mad at me and smashed those cars? The insurance fee could cause the Chens to go bankrupt. What if someone stole all my cars? What would I do?"

"Who would steal every car in your showroom? We're talking about cars here! Moreover, the Royal Thai Police is nearby. And that car-smashing thing. Why would I destroy your cars? How could you think that? It's impossible."

"Right, it's impossible that I would cheat on you. The more I listened, the more I had the feeling that I must've loved Nong-Diaw so much that I gave Nong-Diaw every single coin. You're not testing me, are you? You've succeeded. Will we make up now?"

Make up? Who the hell would make up with him?! Is there any way to send this Hia-Yi to fight with another Hia-Yi?! He had the balls to argue despite his lost memories, and he argued about everything. Who would have thought Hia-Yi would make him keep watch on his property and the dog?! Khon Diaw never interferes with Hia-Yi's business, after all.

"My head hurts…"

Whose head should hurt here?! Khon Diaw still has a lot to say, but Hia-Yi escapes by falling asleep. Even when he sleeps, he still frowns and won't release his hand… What a nutjob. Khon Diaw hopes Hia-Yi fights himself in his dream and they battle it out to death!

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Phayak wakes up again surrounded by people, Pa, his best friend, Pa's secretary, his own secretary, and two doctors. The first doctor is the one who checked on him earlier. The other one is a neurologist. They are all here except Nong-Diaw.

"How are you feeling, Yi?"

He narrows his keen eyes at his best friend, unable to remember his name… They must be close. Otherwise, this man wouldn't have stood here. What's the point of his question, anyway? Does he expect the person in this state to wake up and feel refreshed?

"Good. Where's Nong-Diaw?"

"He's taking a walk with Nu-Kuea. You should talk to the doctor."

"Who's Nu-Kuea? Why is he taking a walk with Nong-Diaw? Did he ask me?"

The third person's name bugs him. Who is he? How dare he take a walk with Nong-Diaw? His best friend pauses and turns to his pa. Pa stays silent before getting up from the couch and walking over to him.

"I gave him permission. What the hell is your problem?"

Outsiders might not be familiar with the way they talk like they're fighting. It can't be helped. His pa is a single father, and Phayak is his heir bound to inherit all his businesses… Pa is only kind when he talks to his future-son-in-law.

His pa finds it incredibly adorable when the younger guy calls himself Nong-Diaw. Those big eyes and that clear voice saying Pa this, Pa that are extremely loveable to Pa, who has a not-so-cute son like Phayak. The fact that he is Pa's only child, and a son at that, means he has been raised with the responsibility to become the next

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leader of the family. Thus, Pa has always been strict with him in all aspects. He wished he was jealous of Pa's Nong-Diaw but couldn't bring himself to be. It couldn't be helped. Nong-Diaw was seriously cute.

"But he's my person. You, the one who's my friend, bring… Who is it again? What's his name…?"

"Nu-Kuea. And I'm Lian. I've told you three times."

"When?"

The way everyone goes rigid makes Phayak want to slam his head on the wall. What the hell is going on?! What's wrong with his brain? He wishes he could part his skull and ask if it will recover or not. What a damn weakling. His fiancé is gone, yet he doesn't remember a single thing.

"Get some rest, Yi."

Aside from getting annoyed with himself, he's annoyed that Nong-Diaw isn't here. He doesn't remember the names of people he knows. He just can't. He only remembers Nong-Diaw, but Nong-Diaw, whom he remembers, isn't here. But, these people whom he doesn't remember are all here.

"Bring Nong-Diaw here! No one will do it, huh? All right…I'll go and get him myself."

"Yi!"

He pushes himself up from the bed with his usable left arm, not caring that his blood flows into the shifting IV tubing line. If his right arm wasn't broken, he would yank the IV out.

"Let go of me! You…"

"Lian."

"Right, Lian, let go!"

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Phayak kicks his best friend, who tries to pin him down, then his pa's bodyguards restrain him. He hears the doctor saying he will put a sedative into the IV.

"No! Don't do it! Get out of here. Get out. Why the fuck are you holding me down?! Doc, I said, don't!"

He doesn't want to sleep right now. He wants to see Khon Diaw! The sight of the doctor injecting the sedative into the IV tubing line means he won't get to find Nong-Diaw and will fall asleep again. Fucking annoying! Why the fuck does he sleep so much?! Is he afraid he won't get to sleep when he's dead or what? How can he sleep when his fiancé is nowhere to be seen? Damn it!

"Yi, calm down. Diaw isn't going anywhere far. He'll be back."

"Don't mind him, Lian. Let my bodyguards deal with him."

"Pa, you can't do this to me! Pa!"

"Get some sleep, son, so you stop being crazy."

"Pa! If Diaw is gone, if my fiancé is gone…!"

Soon, drowsiness makes his eyelids feel heavy. No matter how hard Phayak fights it, he can't beat the sedative.

"Yi, Nong-Diaw isn't gone. Trust me. Now sleep."

That's not true. Khon Diaw will be gone… The younger guy is leaving him. Diaw…Diaw is going to… Where? He can't remember… Where is it?

"Pa…Nong-Diaw is leaving. He will leave for real… Nong-Diaw won't come back. He won't."

The feeling of never getting to see each other again scares him. It painfully clenches his heart. Pa's worried face is the last thing Phayak glimpses before everything goes black.

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