

PULGASARI

PILOT

Written by

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Based on the 1978 kidnapping of South Korean filmmakers Shin Sang-
Ok and Choi Eun-Hee by Kim Jong-Il.

COLD OPEN

EXT. PALACE OF THE SUN - NIGHT

Alarms blare and dogs bark from the inside of the massive, brutalist home of North Korean ruler KIM IL-SUNG and his son KIM JONG-IL. Large, smiley portraits of the two rulers adorn the facade.

Spotlights switch on overhead.

EXT. PALACE OF THE SUN - COURTYARD - NIGHT

A panting, terrified woman, who we'll come to know as CHOI EUN-HEE (50s), bursts out of a side door and into an enormous garden.

It's pitch-black as she stumbles through, lit only by the searchlights scanning from all angles. She's barely able to hide from them, only just managing to get behind trees and bushes as they swoop past.

The sirens haunt her as she fumbles through the dark courtyard.

INT. PALACE OF THE SUN - HALLWAYS - NIGHT

Inside the opulent palace lined with gold and coated with royal-red carpet, North Korean guards storm down corridors from all directions. The chaos is unrelenting.

In silk pajamas, a wrinkled and rotund KIM IL-SUNG (66) waddles out of the master bedroom, looking around with confusion.

KIM IL-SUNG
What's going on?! What's
happening?!

A NORTH KOREAN SOLDIER stops to answer.

NORTH KOREAN SOLDIER
Great Leader! One of the prisoners
has escaped! We're in pursuit!

The Soldier runs off.

KIM IL-SUNG
What prisoner?!

From behind approaches a younger Korean man bearing a striking resemblance to Kim Il-Sung. It is KIM JONG-IL (40s), jolly and wearing a disarming smile.

KIM JONG-IL
Father! I assure you everything is
under control!

KIM IL-SUNG
What the hell is going on here,
Jong-Il?!

KIM JONG-IL
Nothing! Nothing! Nothing you need
to worry about.

Kim Il-Sung turns red with fury.

EXT. PALACE OF THE SUN - COURTYARD

Vicious German shepherds bark relentlessly as they follow the scent of their target.

Across the way, Choi desperately tries to find an open escape. She pulls on every door she can, trying her best to stick to the shadows.

None of the doors will open and all the gates are locked. She comes to another gate, and sure enough that's locked too.

Hearing the onslaught of soldiers and dogs rapidly coming her way, she tries to climb. But her feet can't get traction. She struggles to lift herself up as her legs flail freely, unable to give her support.

The soldiers draw ever closer and, just as she's able to pull herself up, she's suddenly blinded by a bright white light. A flashlight.

NORTH KOREAN SOLDIER
Stop!

She drops down and immediately surrenders, fearfully raising her hands. Like a deer in headlights, she dare not move. Soldiers hold back the dogs, who are out for blood.

Frozen, her horrified eyes stare back at them, silently pleading.

CUT TO:

ACT I

1

FADE IN

1

Old black and white footage of a beautiful young Korean woman--famed actress CHOI EUN-HEE (36 here)--in a talk show interview. The HOST (35) is a handsome and charismatic man with a charming smile. The audience is mid-applause when we join them.

HOST

So, Mrs. Choi Eun-Hee, your new movie "Evergreen Tea" was just released. Excellent film, by the way. Currently in theaters, so I want everyone here to go see it.

The crowd cheers. Choi grins modestly.

HOST (CONT'D)

You are quickly becoming the face of Korean cinema. How do you feel about that?

CHOI

Well, it's simply a dream come true. I pinch myself sometimes! And I'm just so honored that the people love my--and my husband's--films so much and we can't wait to bring you more.

The audience "Awws" at the sweet love she has for her husband.

CHOI (CONT'D)

Many more!

HOST

Yes, your husband! Such a talent he is. A true icon.

Choi gleefully nods as a few superfans in the audience hoot and holler.

HOST (CONT'D)

(to audience)

And folks, speaking of which, we have a special surprise for you all. Please welcome Mr. Shin Sang--
Ok to the show!

The crowd erupts in monumental applause as a young SHIN SANG-OK(36) triumphantly enters the set. He sits down on the couch next to his wife, holding her hand. They resist the urge to snuggle; too much intimacy isn't allowed on TV.

HOST (CONT'D)
It's great to have you here Mr.
Shin Sang-Ok!

SHIN
It's truly an honor to be here. And
what an incredible audience, truly!

The crowd erupts into yet more applause. The Host calms them down so the show can continue.

HOST
So, Mr. Shin Sang, Mrs. Choi Eun,
you two have been on a roll lately.
South Korea's most beloved power
couple. And quickly cementing
yourselves as cultural icons.
What's next for you? Mrs. Choi Eun,
any family plans?

The couple smiles knowingly.

SHIN
Well, Eun-Hee and I did decide that
we're going to take a short break
before starting our next film.
Which WILL be coming, don't you
worry! But--

Choi can't hold in her excitement any longer.

CHOI
We're going to have a baby!

The crowd goes absolutely wild. The Host's more shocked than Steve Harvey on Family Feud. Shin takes Choi's hand and they raise it to the crowd. And then...

The tape stops.

2 INT. SHIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

2

All along, we've been watching a tape of an old interview, alongside SHIN SANG-OK himself, older (52), heavier, disheveled.

He sits by himself, in a luxury high-rise Seoul apartment with chairs meant to accommodate a dozen guests at least.

This once alive hotspot of friends and family has become a luxurious temple of loneliness.

The year?

SUPER: 1978, ONE WEEK BEFORE THE ESCAPE

He stares blankly at the stopped tape, half-empty shot glass in hand.

Killing it in one glug, he drunkenly arises, from his throne of a couch and waddles over to his fully-stocked bar. It's the one part of the house he still takes care of.

Pouring another shot of Soju, he contemplates the size of his glass, electing to switch for a larger whiskey glass. He fills it with a few shots worth.

He might as well take the whole bottle at this point too, so he returns to the couch, oversized glass in one hand and Soju bottle in the other.

But on his journey back, his drunk feet fail him. He trips and stumbles, glass SHATTERING everywhere. In the process, he knocks some books and papers off a nearby shelf as well.

SHIN

Ah fuck! Fuck!

He takes a moment to compose himself, sighing as he drips alcohol. He gathers up the books and loose papers and finds one of them to be a familiar folder.

The folder is dated 1976. He stares at it longingly, opening to see its contents. Divorce papers. Signed by Choi Eun-Hee, but he never signed.

He stares at his ex-wife's signature, rubbing it mournfully with his thumb.

RING! RING!

He jumps at the ringing of the phone. He closes up the folder and tosses it back on the shelf, heading for the phone.

SHIN (CONT'D)

Hello? Mr. Wong? I've been waiting for your--

MR. WONG

Hey! Mr. Shin Sang! How's it hanging?

SHIN

Hanging. How about you? How'd the team like my script?

MR. WONG

That's actually why I'm calling... I shared it with my guys and--

And? Yes?

His eyes glow with anticipation.

MR. WONG

No. Sorry.

The hopeful smile instantly falls off Shin's face.

SHIN

Why not? It's a good script!

MR. WONG

It is good. But you know, Hong Kong's the place to be these days. Everyone wants a piece. We get all kinds of hot ticket scripts and names! Got some future stars over here. Keep an eye out for the name Jackie Chan! He's gonna have some oomf to his name.

SHIN

Yeah, right.

Don't be so skeptical! But anyway, how do I say this? You don't have that oomf anymore.

SHIN (CONT'D)

But I do! People love my movies!

MR. WONG

Loved. Listen, I know a friend in Seoul who I have some sway with. I'll give him your script.

SHIN

(grumbling)

They took my film license.

MR. WONG

What's that?

SHIN

They took my film license! I can't make movies here!

MR. WONG

Ouch. Well, I'm sorry about that buddy. Call me if you're ever in town.

SHIN

Wait!

But Mr. Wong's already gone, leaving Shin alone with the dial tone.

SHIN (CONT'D)

Fuck. Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

He slams the receiver against the body of the phone again and again until it shatters into pieces.

Cooling down, he takes in the mess of shattered glass and telephone all around him.

3 INT. SHIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

3

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

The banging on the front door snaps Shin out of a hungover sleep on the couch. With a pounding headache, he slides off the couch and stomps over to the door, checking the peephole first.

On the other side are two pissed-off looking detectives. DETECTIVE PARK (39) and DETECTIVE JIN (31). They're holding their badges up to the peephole.

Shin opens the door.

SHIN

Officers? How can I help you?

DETECTIVE PARK

I'm Detective Park. This is Detective Jin. You hear from your wife lately?

SHIN

What?

Detective Jin pushes Shin aside and the two detectives enter his home.

DETECTIVE JIN
You don't mind if we have a look
around? Nice place.

SHIN
What's going on with my wife?

Detective Park spots the shattered glass and broken phone.

DETECTIVE PARK
What's this? You get in a fight?

DETECTIVE JIN
With Choi Eun-Hee, perhaps?

The two detectives close in on Shin.

DETECTIVE PARK
She here?

DETECTIVE JIN
You kidnap her?

SHIN
What are you talking about?!

DETECTIVE PARK
Oh come on, fess up. We know you
did it already! Let's make this
easy.

Detective Park puts his hand on Shin's shoulder. Shin shakes
it off.

SHIN
Don't touch me!

DETECTIVE JIN
Woah! Attacking an officer!

Detective Park grabs Shin's hands and handcuffs him. He tries
to wiggle out but it's no use.

SHIN
What the hell are you doing?! Let
me go!

DETECTIVE JIN
Resisting arrest!

DETECTIVE PARK
Come on, stop struggling.

SHIN
I didn't do anything! What's your
fucking problem!

Detective Jin dropkicks him in the face.

4

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

4

Shin holds his head as he sits in a dank room, light blaring
down onto the shoddy table he's cuffed to. Detective Park and
Jin sit across from him.

SHIN
I'm telling you, I haven't heard
from my wife in at least a year!

DETECTIVE PARK
Then where is she?

SHIN
I don't know! This is news to me
too!

DETECTIVE JIN
Is it, pal? Motive's all there.
Ugly divorce.

DETECTIVE PARK
Abandoned your family.

DETECTIVE JIN
Your son told us how much you
bothered her when the split first
happened.

DETECTIVE PARK
How she filed a restraining order.

Detective Jin points to the little window at the back of the
room. A face Shin recognizes stares through disapprovingly:
his son JEONG-KYUN (15). Standing with him is a KIND
DETECTIVE.

SHIN
Jeong-Kyun!

He tries to get up but the table holds him back.

SHIN (CONT'D)
Are you alright?! Tell these guys
that I didn't do anything wrong!

Jeong-Kyun just scowls at him.

SHIN (CONT'D)

Please!

Still nothing.

DETECTIVE JIN

Seems like he's not on your team,
pal.

SHIN

(to Detective Jin)

Shut up.

He turns back to his son.

SHIN (CONT'D)

I know I made a mistake...

Jeong-Kyun scoffs through the window.

SHIN (CONT'D)

But do you really believe I could
do something like this?

Jeong-Kyun looks away, guiltily.

SHIN (CONT'D)

You know I would never.

Jeong-Kyun says something inaudible to the Detective standing
next to him.

A BUZZER goes off and the heavy metal door swings open. The
Kind Detective sticks his head in.

KIND DETECTIVE

Alright, pack it up. Let him go.

5 INT. POLICE STATION - HALLWAY - DAY

5

Shin, no longer cuffed, rubs his wrist.

SHIN

(to the interrogation
room)

Assholes.

He spots Jeong-Kyun walking off with one of the detectives.

SHIN (CONT'D)

Jeong-Kyun! Wait!

Jeong-Kyun ignores Shin, but Shin chases after him. He grabs his son's shoulder, but Jeong-Kyun shakes it off.

JEONG-KYUN

Fuck off Sang-Ok.

SHIN

Thank you. For getting me out of there.

JEONG-KYUN

Well, like you said, you're an awful father and human being but you wouldn't stoop to kidnapping. Probably.

SHIN

Did you really think--?

JEONG-KYUN

Why wouldn't I? I remember the way you treated Mom after we left. Wouldn't have been too surprised.

SHIN

I regret that I... did those things.

JEONG-KYUN

Yeah. Whatever.

Silence.

SHIN

You can stay with me until she comes home. Your room is just the way you left it.

JEONG-KYUN

Keeping it for your real son?

SHIN

What? No. You're my son! It's yours.

JEONG-KYUN

That's not what I remember.

SHIN

I didn't mean to--

JEONG-KYUN

You abandoned us. Because you had to stroke your little genetic ego?

SHIN
Jeong-Kyun...

JEONG-KYUN
I didn't even want to see you!
You're just the only lead I had the
cops. So just be happy that I
didn't let you rot in jail! You
smell like piss and Soju by the
way.

He storms off.

SHIN
Wait, Jeong-Kyun!

JEONG-KYUN
I'll be at Uncle Gyeong-Ok's. Don't
call me!

Shin tries to go after Jeong-Kyun, but the Kind Detective
grabs his shoulder, stopping him. The Detective shakes his
head.

6 INT. SHIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

6

Shin barges into his home, still a mess from the previous
night, and makes a beeline for his Rolodex. He digs through
it, seeking a particular name and number. Eventually, he
finds it, yellowed with age.

He runs over to the telephone, only to realize it's still
busted.

SHIN
Shit.

7 INT. SEOUL STREETS - PHONE BOOTH - DAY

7

Shin shoves a coin into a payphone and carefully dials in the
number on the rolodex card.

A cautious woman's voice answers on the other end. It's that
of MRS. HWAN SING (50s), an old friend of Choi's.

MRS. HWAN SING
Hello?

SHIN
Mrs. Hwan Sing! Hello! It's Shin
Sang-Ok.

MRS. HWAN SING

Oh.

He grabs a pen out of his pocket, prepared to scribble something onto the Rolodex card.

SHIN

Listen, what's the name of that club you and Eun-Hee like to spend time at?

We no longer hear Mrs. Hwan Sing's voice on the other end as we pull out from inside the booth.

8

EXT. SEOUL STREETS - PHONE BOOTH - DAY

8

SHIN

Oh, it's been years?

Pause.

SHIN (CONT'D)

Sorry. I'm sorry! I just need the name. It's important.

Pause. He scribbles.

SHIN (CONT'D)

Thank you. Thank you! You're a saint. Say hello to your husband for--

He pulls the receiver away from his ear; he's been hung up on yet again.

9

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

9

A petrified woman sits in the back of a moving limo, hands tied behind her back, with a black bag over her head. She's hyperventilating, struggling to process what's going on. Beside her are two bodyguards--RIGHT HAND MAN and LEFT HAND MAN --in crisp black suits.

They hit a bump in the road and continue driving.

RIGHT HAND MAN

We're over the border.

An UNKNOWN MAN's voice speaks up.

UNKNOWN MAN

Untie her.

The bag comes off, revealing a panicked, crying, squinting
CHOI EUN-HEE (now 53).

CHOI

Where am I?! What's going on?!

She's looking around like a bird, trying to piece together
her surroundings, as Right Hand Man cuts the rope binding her
hands.

As he speaks, the sources of the Unknown Man's voice is
revealed: sitting across from her is FUTURE GREAT DICTATOR OF
NORTH KOREA KIM JONG-IL (40s)!

KIM JONG-IL

Eun-Hee, I'm sure you have many
questions. Relax and I will do my
best to explain.

She looks at him. Her eyes bulge with terror.

CHOI

Oh my god, you're... you're Kim
Jong-Il!

KIM JONG-IL

Yes, I am he. I'm sure you are as
starstruck and honored to be in my
presence as I am to be in yours,
Choi Eun-Hee. But I insist, no need
to sing my praises. The pleasure is
all mine. My boys Righty and Lefty
here will tell you, I've been a
great fan of yours for a very long
time.

Right Hand Man (RIGHTY) and Left Hand man (LEFTY) nod their
heads in unison. Choi looks around, still petrified, but her
survival instincts kick in.

CHOI

Um, I am... delighted to hear that
you enjoy my work. It is a true
honor to be in your presence as
well... dear leader.

KIM JONG-IL

Great or Glorious is fine.

CHOI

My apologies, oh Great Leader.

She bows her head. He waves her off, uninsulted by her
misstep.

KIM JONG-IL
Do not be afraid, my dear! I wish
you no harm. In fact, I offer you
something truly special. A once in
a lifetime gift!

CHOI
What may that be, Great Leader?

KIM JONG-IL
A chance to live forever!

He's mighty pleased with himself, but Choi is scared and
confused.

CHOI
I don't think I understand.

The limo comes to an abrupt stop. RIGHTY steps out of the car
and opens the door for Kim Jong-Il and his esteemed guest.
The Great Leader steps out and extends his hand for Choi.

KIM JONG-IL
There'll be plenty of time to
explain! But for now, come along.

She hesitates for a moment, but Choi takes his hand and exits
the limo, revealing...

THE PALACE OF THE SUN.

10 EXT. PALACE OF THE SUN - NIGHT

10

All lit up, it's a truly marvelous but brutalistic facade. A
massive garden sits in front and two large staircases ascend
each side of the palace's front, leading to an extravagant
door.

KIM JONG-IL
Welcome home, Eun-Hee.

CHOI
Home?

ACT II

11 EXT. FANCY SEOUL NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

11

Shin, scanning each building for its address, stops in front of a fancy nightclub, complete with a burly BOUNCER and a line out the door.

He double checks the address on the slip of paper he's carrying, and tries to waltz into the club.

BOUNCER
Hold on, back of the line.

SHIN
Oh no, I'm not here to drink.

BOUNCER
That's double reason not to let you in. Now back of the line.

SHIN
I just need to talk to a bartender... or manager! I'm Shin Sang-Ok, the filmmaker!

BOUNCER
I don't care if you're king
Geunchogo himself raised from the dead. Get in line or get--

BARTENDER (O.S.)
What the hell are you doing here?

The alteration halts, and both turn to find a BARTENDER (30s), just exiting a side door, smoking a cigarette. He's in a fancy dress shirt and a bartender's apron.

BOUNCER
You know this guy?

BARTENDER
That's Mrs. Choi Eun's ex husband.
She don't want him around. Don't let him in.

SHIN
Is she here?!

BARTENDER
Nope. Hasn't been for a little while.

(MORE)

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
But even if she was, I wouldn't
tell you. Now do what my friend
says and get lost.

Shin approaches the Bartender pleadingly. The Bouncer springs
into action, ready to take him down.

SHIN
I need to find her. It's important!

BARTENDER
Yeah, that's not the first time
you've said that. Don't make this
harder than it needs to be.

Shin keeps approaching, and the Bouncer grabs hold of his
arms.

SHIN
No! Wait! She's missing! I'm just
trying to find her.

BARTENDER
Missing, or hiding?

SHIN
Missing! Even the police are
looking. I just want any
information, any clues!

The Bartender waves his hand, dismissing the Bouncer who
reluctantly lets Shin go. Shin shakes him off, rubbing his
arms.

BARTENDER
If that's true, then I hate to
break it to you, but she hasn't
been around for at least a month.

Shin silently swears as his only lead fizzles away.

SHIN
What?

BARTENDER
I dunno why, but she stopped
showing up. Shame. One of my best
customers. She tipped well.

SHIN
Is there anything else you can tell
me? Anything?

The Bartender shakes his head.

SHIN (CONT'D)

Think!

A lightbulb goes off in the Bartender's head.

BARTENDER

Wait! Before she stopped showing up, she started coming with this guy a while back. Young. A real hottie. But a little scary.

SHIN

He'd know something?

The Bartender just shrugs.

BARTENDER

Maybe. I dunno. But if she's really missing...

SHIN

Anything helps.

The Bartender eyes the Bouncer, then turns inside.

BARTENDER

I think we got his info written down somewhere. In case she ever got too... You did a real number on her, you know.

He steps indoors, leaving Shin and the Bouncer standing awkwardly side by side. Shin's tapping his foot impatiently but the Bouncer is still as stone.

SHIN

So... get any trouble around here lately?

BOUNCER

Yeah. You.

SHIN

Oh. Well--

BOUNCER

Don't talk to me.

Several seconds of silence until the Bartender returns from the elusive club carrying a slip of paper.

BARTENDER

Here.

Shin reaches for it but the Bartender pulls back.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
You better not be bullshitting. If
this gets back to me--

Shin snatches it and runs off.

SHIN
It won't! Promise!

12 INT. PALACE OF THE SUN - NIGHT

12

Righty escorts the pair into the palace as Lefty peels off. It's massive, filled with expansive corridors and dozens of rooms, many of which serve as shrines to Kim Jong-Il and his father, current leader Kim Il-Sung. Choi can't help but be a little bit awed.

Kim Jong-Il points out his favorite rooms as they walk past. It's a room full of random chairs, seats, stools and couches, delicately arranged.

KIM JONG-IL
Here's a room of every chair my
great father has ever sat in. He
lets me use them sometimes! Of
course, our favorite chairs are all
in our private quarters.

They pass by another set of rooms. The first is filled with portraits, all of Kim Il-Sung. The second, smaller room has portraits of Kim Jong-Il. There are less of them, and they're all smaller.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
And this is my father's portrait
room! He loves his portraits. I
love them too. Oh, you'll love this
one! One time, the guy was painting
the two of us, and he messed up!
Made Dad's nose too big! So he had
the painter tied down to the canvas
and burned them both alive!

Choi shudders as Kim Jong-Il leads her up a flight of stairs, laughing.

13 INT. PALACE OF THE SUN - LOUNGING ROOM - NIGHT

13

Kim Jong-Il leads her into one of the many lounging areas in the palace.

This one is movie themed, complete with a giant screen and an extensive collection of projection reels and VHS tapes. Choi is stunned by the sight.

KIM JONG-IL

You see, I'm quite the movie buff.

A poster for Choi and Shin's classic film PRINCE YEONSAN (1961) resides on the wall.

CHOI

That's one of my movies...

She approaches it as if in a daze.

KIM JONG-IL

Indeed it is. And one of my personal favorites! Yeonsan was such a graceful leader. It's where I discovered you as well.

WRITER'S NOTE: Prince Yeonsan is a notoriously cruel and ruthless leader in Korean history.

Kim Jong-Il points to Choi's small face on the poster.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

Brilliant work! I've always said that the actor is the face of a movie, and you prove that to be true.

Choi smiles and bows.

CHOI

I am honored that you think so, Great Leader. But if you don't mind, may I ask why you have... invited me into your home?

Kim Jong-Il springs into action, moving to a set of luscious chairs and gorgeous wooden tables.

KIM JONG-IL

Ah, yes! Join me, have a seat.

He turns to Righty as Choi nervously sits across from him.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

Righty, bring us three glasses and the finest bottle of American Whiskey you can find. From Hollywood!

14

EXT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

14

Shin approaches Choi's young, disturbingly handsome MYSTERIOUS LOVER (28), sitting at a small table nursing a drink and smoking a cigarette. He's certifiably too cool for school. Feeling threatened that his ex-wife tapped that, Shin clenches his jaw.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER
You're Shin Sang-Ok?

SHIN
I am. You are?

The Mysterious Lover simply grins and cocks his head.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER
Have a seat.

He offers Shin a cigarette, who reluctantly accepts. The Lover lights it for him too.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER (CONT'D)
Want anything to drink? Soju?
Vodka?

Shin drags his cigarette.

SHIN
No thanks. I'm gonna cut to the chase. Choi Eun-Hee, my ex-wife, is missing. The only reason I'm even here is because of the slim chance that you might know something.

The Mysterious Lover doesn't even wince, puffing out a cloud of smoke.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER
Eun-Hee's missing, huh?

Shin glares at him, silently disturbed by his indifference.

SHIN
Yes, and I know you and her
spent... a lot of time together.

The Mysterious Lover grins smugly.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER
Yes we did.

Shin winces.

SHIN

Just... do you know anything?

The Lover feigns thought.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER

Hmmm. Why should I tell you? Doubt she'd even wanna see you after what you did to her.

SHIN

What do you mean by that?

MYSTERIOUS LOVER

Oh come on. Abandoning her because she couldn't have children? That's just filthy.

Shin bites his tongue.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER (CONT'D)

Besides, no pregnancy? That's a plus in my book.

Shin can't take it anymore. He lunges across the table at the man, grabbing him by the collar and sucker punching him right in the nose. He slams the Mysterious Lover against the wall, furious.

SHIN

Do NOT fucking talk about my wife that way! One more bad word out of your mouth and I'll bite your tongue out for you!

The Mysterious Lover just smiles, blood dripping from his nose.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER

You really do care about her.

SHIN

More than your own Mother gives a shit about you. Now tell me what you know so I can be done with you.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER

If you really want to see her again...

Shin feels a piece of metal in his back, accompanied by a clicking sound. It's a gun! And it's being held against his spine by a large BURLY MAN (30s).

Shin's eyes widen and he slowly loosens his grip on the Mysterious Lover's collar.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER (CONT'D)
I suggest you comply with my
associate here.

The two men grab Shin's arms and, gun still held to his back, aggressively escort him out the front door.

15 INT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

15

They drag him out of the bar and into a wet, dark alleyway. A windowless van sits with its doors wide open. A SCRAWNY MAN sits in the back, seemingly expecting him as cargo.

SHIN
I didn't mean anything by it! Come
on, fellas! Let's just shake on it,
huh?

SCRAWNY MAN
Bring him in!

SHIN
What's this about, huh? Is this
about the movie loan? If you let me
go I can cut a check right now!

BURLY MAN
Puts up a fight, this one.

They stuff him into the back of the van, Scrawny Man keeping a gun trained on him.

SHIN
What the fuck is going on?! Where
are you taking me?!

MYSTERIOUS LOVER
You wanted to find your wife? Well,
you found her.

The doors slam shut.

16 INT. UNCLE GYEONG-OK'S APARTMENT - DAY

16

Jeong-Kyun, dreadful bags under his eyes, anxiously sits by the phone. The TV is on in the background, tuned to the news. He never changes the channel.

UNCLE GYEONG-OK (50s), a heavy and mustachioed man, saunters into the living room carrying MYEONG-HEE (6), Jeong-Kyun's younger sister.

UNCLE GYEONG-OK
Nephew, you know better than this.
It is no good to dwell.

He shuts off the TV. Jeong-Kyun pinches the bridge of his nose. This is not the first time this has happened.

UNCLE GYEONG-OK (CONT'D)
We'll be the first to know if
anything changes.

MYEONG-HEE
I want mommy.

UNCLE GYEONG-OK
I know little one. You'll see her
soon.

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

There's knocking at the door. Jeong-Kyun springs up to answer it.

On the other side are Detectives Park and Jin, along with a SUSPICIOUS PATROL OFFICER. He's in sunglasses, and looks oddly familiar.

JEONG-KYUN
Hi.

Myeong-Hee waves at the Suspicious Officer.

MYEONG-HEE
Hi Mr. Police.

He doesn't wave back. Detective Jin playfully tussles her hair.

UNCLE GYEONG-OK
Detectives! Good news I hope.

DETECTIVE PARK
I'm afraid not.

DETECTIVE JIN
Your father's disappeared too.
Can't find him anywhere.

JEONG-KYUN
What?!

UNCLE GYEONG-OK

Oh dear.

DETECTIVE PARK

We think he may have skipped town.

DETECTIVE JIN

After our interrogation. He knew we were onto him.

JEONG-KYUN

I knew it! That bastard! I knew he did it and he guilted me into letting him go!

Uncle Gyeong-Ok comes to comfort his nephew. Myeong-Hee cries at the commotion.

DETECTIVE PARK

We just wanted to let you know in person. I'm sorry kid. You did your best. You were a great help. We'll let you know if anything changes.

JEONG-KYUN

(to self)

It's my fault. It's all my fault. They had him. It's my fault.

UNCLE GYEONG-OK

Thank you Detectives. But I think you better leave.

DETECTIVE JIN

Of course.

Uncle Gyeong-Ok gently closes the door.

JEONG-KYUN

They had him! And I let him go!
Slipped right out like sand! Fuck!
If I see him again I'll... I'll
kill him!

Uncle Gyeong-Ok holds him gently, but he breaks free and runs out the front door.

ACT III

17 INT. TORTURE CHAMBER - ???

17

The Mysterious Lover and Burly Man take turns beating the absolute shit out of Shin, who's tied down to a chair. His face is beaten and bloodied. The two mystery men are relishing the activity.

BURLY MAN

How much more do you think he can handle?

MYSTERIOUS LOVER

It's not a matter of how much he can handle, my friend. It's a matter of how much we can get away with before the Great Leader grows suspicious.

SHIN

(delirious)

Great leader? Why thank you.

Burly Man clocks him square in the jaw.

BURLY MAN

You aren't worthy of such a title!

CREAK!

The torture chamber door swings open. Another TORTURER stands there, holding a trembling and handcuffed VICTIM who looks like he hasn't had a meal in weeks. Imagine a thinner Hans Moleman.

TORTURER

What are you doing in here? I had this room reserved.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER

Oh, we're just warming up the Great Leader's special guest. We'll get out of your hair.

The Torturer rolls his eyes.

TORTURER

Well wrap it up. I got something actually important to do and I don't have all day.

Mysterious Lover and Burly Man scramble to untie Shin, who doesn't object.

MYSTERIOUS LOVER
Of course, of course!

VICTIM
Does this mean I won't be tortured today?

TORTURER
Shut up. You're still being tortured.

VICTIM
Oh. Okay.

Untied, the two men escort Shin out of the torture chamber.

The Torturer and his Victim enter and the door slams shut.

18

INT. PALACE OF THE SUN - LOUNGING ROOM - NIGHT

18

Choi silently side-eyes the exit as Kim Jong-Il rambles on across from her about some mysterious plan.

KIM JONG-IL
So you see Eun-Hee, we shall do excellent things together and the whole world will know the brilliance of the Korean people!

Startled by her name, Choi snaps back to reality.

CHOI
Hm? Oh yes, we certainly will. I am... surely excited.

She raises her glass in a toast. Kim clinks his drink to hers. They drink.

A commotion at the entrance. Choi looks over and spits her drink everywhere, all over Kim Jong-Il, because...

Stumbling in, barely able to hold himself up and being held by the Mysterious Lover, is Shin!

Silently raging, Kim Jong-Il gives Choi a friendly smile.

KIM JONG-IL
Apology accepted, Eun-Hee, do not fret. Righty, get me a towel.

Righty appears with a washcloth. Kim dabs himself up with it.

Shin stumbles towards Choi, falling at her feet, embracing her deeply.

Choi sits shocked, too stunned to move.

CHOI

Sang-Ok! What happened!

SHIN

Eun-Hee! Are you safe? Did they...?

CHOI

No. No. I'm fine. What did they do to you?!

KIM JONG-IL (O.S.)

Nothing a little liquor won't fix.
Mr. Shin Sang-Ok, it is such an
honor to have you with us!

Shin snaps his head away from his ex-wife. He sees his captor.

SHIN

Oh fuck.

KIM JONG-IL

I hear that surprisingly a lot.
Have a seat and help yourself to my
finest Hollywood whiskey.

Shin looks at Choi. She nods. His whole body in pain, he slowly brings himself into an empty plush chair. As he collapses into it, he lets out a sigh of relief. Comfort, finally.

He's joined the circle.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

So, now that you're both finally
here, we can truly begin!

He springs into action as if he's rehearsed this a million times. Of course, he has. He jumps out of his chair and begins his lengthy monologue while a reel of North Korean propaganda plays on screen.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

You see, my father has a dream. A
beautiful dream of a utopic society
free from the stringent chains of
capitalism and the west.

(MORE)

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

A land full of abundance and freedom for the working man. Full of rich culture. A place that leads the world into glorious revolution. A tremendous legacy to leave behind. I share this dream with him. I believe in this dream. And as my father's heir, I must keep him alive by fulfilling this dream. And you, my beloved artisans, are essential to its realization. But unfortunately, we are not taken seriously. The world laughs at us. For the longest time, I couldn't imagine why. Perhaps the masses simply weren't prepared for the excellence that is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Perhaps the strength and wisdom of its leaders--me and my father--are too intense and bright for them to handle. For years I deliberated and pontificated on this tremendous problem, until I realized! What does every serious society have that ours does not?

SHIN

(whispering to Choi)
Human rights.

CHOI

(whispering to Shin)
It's rhetorical!

KIM JONG-IL

Movies! They have movies. A society with films seen by millions has power over those millions. Oh, how I love the cinema. It truly has the power to tell stories. So my father gave me the crucial task of running the Korean film industry, and I tried to share our glorious films with the world. But they don't love my movies! For no good reason! No matter what I tried, I just cannot get an international audience. But they love yours. All over the traitorous South, and the world, people sing the praises of Shin Sang-Ok and Choi Eun-Hee! Including myself! Your films are magical to me.

(MORE)

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

So one night, in a vision from the heavens, the answer came to me. I knew what must be done. I knew I needed you. And so I invited you here, to where you sit now, to humbly ask you to gift your genius to the people of Korea. To usurp the west as the center of film across the globe and live on forever as pioneers and heroes! To make us the new Hollywood... Kollywood.

Pleased with his delivery, he smiles at Shin and Choi.

They stare dumbfounded. Shin gulps his Whiskey.

19

INT. PALACE OF THE SUN - HOLLYWOOD SUITE - NIGHT

19

Kim Jong-Il opens the door to a dark suite somewhere in the depths of the palace. He flicks on the light.

KIM JONG-IL

Your new home!

It's utterly gorgeous and decadent, complete with all the luxuries and amenities of the highest-end first world housing. Massive, opulent bedroom. Wardrobes stuffed with the finest clothes. Jacuzzi bathrooms. A conversation pit. It's got it all.

On the wall are posters of all of their films.

Kim Jong-Il guides them through the space, pointing out all of the amenities.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

A state of the art television set!
Perfect for all the movie nights
we'll have together!

Choi and Shin exchange a look.

On the coffee table in the Conversation pit sits a framed photograph. Kim Jong-Il picks it up gleefully.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

And a little reminder of home! Such
beautiful children you have.

The photo's of Jeong-Kyun and Myeong-Hee talking to the two detectives in Uncle Gyeong-Ok's doorway!

The color flies off of Choi and Shin's faces. Rageful, Shin steps forward. Choi Grabs his sleeve. He looks back at her. She shakes her head desperately.

Kim stops by the ginormous windows overlooking a beautiful courtyard filled with trees and flowers.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
Look at that view!

It is indeed a great view. Across from them, through another window, are two familiar faces: the Torturer and Victim that Shin Sang encountered earlier!

SHIN
That's...

As if he knows he's being watched, the Torturer turns around and closes the shade.

Kim Jong-Il slaps Shin on the back.

KIM JONG-IL
Oh pay them no mind, they're just
having a heart-to-heart talk.

A blood-curdling scream echoes throughout the courtyard.

They make their way to the bedroom, revealing just one large bed.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
And here's where you'll be
sleeping! Comfiest sleep of your
life, I tested it myself.

SHIN
Large.

KIM JONG-IL
Sun God size! Bigger than a King.

CHOI
Is this... the only bed?

KIM JONG-IL
Of course!

Choi and shin go red in the face.

CHOI
Oh, we're not...

KIM JONG-IL

Yes?

Neither Shin nor Choi dare to finish the sentence and disappoint the Great Leader.

Kim Jong-Il strides to a bright red phone on the bedside table.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

Now if you need anything. Anything at all! This is a direct line to my top guys. You don't even need to dial. Sang-Ok, if you ever want to sample some of Korea's finest ladies...

He nudges Shin playfully. Choi glares at Shin.

CHOI

Can we ask for a second bed, Great Leader?

Kim just laughs.

KIM JONG-IL

Good one! North Korea's lucky to have someone with such a sharp wit.

Choi grinds her teeth.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

We start tomorrow! Get some rest because we'll be up bright and early for some lights, camera, action!

He points finger guns at them as he skedaddles out of there, leaving Choi and Shin standing awkwardly in their new palace home.

CHOI

Oh god, Jeong-Kyun, Myeong-Hee...

SHIN

What the hell are we going to do?! We can't let him get away with this.

CHOI

What can we do?!

SHIN

We can get out of here. It's not safe. For any of us.

CHOI

What do you think I've been trying to do? If we run away he'll have us killed. Or the kids!

SHIN

If we stay he'll have us killed! You saw what they did to me! For fun!

CHOI

Never mind you. It's Jeong-Kyun and Myeong-Hee I'm worried about. We have two options. Try to escape and certainly be killed, along with them. Or stay, do what we're told and only maybe be killed.

SHIN

Great options.

CHOI

I know which one I'm doing.

SHIN

Are you really going to work for this genocidal freak?!

CHOI

I don't have a choice. And neither do you. I'm going to bed.

She storms into the bedroom, rips off her clothes and earrings and hops into bed.

Shin follows and tries to climb in after her.

CHOI (CONT'D)

Don't even think about it.

SHIN

It's the only bed!

CHOI

Should've thought about that before you destroyed our family.

SHIN

Eun-Hee, don't you want to do what we're told to please the Great leader?

CHOI

He's not here, is he?

SHIN

No, but... Come on. I got beat up.

CHOI

Just because we have to work together here, for MY children, doesn't mean it's going to be the way it used to be. It's never going to be that way again. You threw me aside like trash. So take the couch. We have bigger things to worry about.

SHIN

Fine.

Frustrated, he takes a pillow and the blanket into the living room couch.

CHOI

Hey!

SHIN

You get the mattress, I get the blanket!

Too tired to argue, Choi curls up into an unsheltered ball.

Shin plops down on the couch, wrapping himself in the blanket. The image of Jeong-Kyun stares at him. He stares back.

20

INT. KIM IL-SUNG'S OFFICE - NIGHT

20

Kim Jong-Il approaches the Supreme Leader/SUN GOD KIM IL-SUNG'S (66) comically large desk. Kim Il-Sung sits quietly reading a document. He's aged, grumpy looking.

A massive portrait of himself sits behind him. Next to it is a significantly smaller portrait of Kim Jong-Il.

Kim Jong-Il kneels before him.

KIM JONG-IL
Supreme Leader, Father.

The Sun God merely grunts, eyes focused on his paperwork.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
I know you have long imagined our
great Republic as a global cultural
center.

SUN GOD
Uh huh.

KIM JONG-IL
I just want you to know... I have
taken the first steps to achieving
this pivotal dream you entrusted me
with. An honor I never lose sight
of!

SUN GOD
Huh? Oh yeah. Good.

KIM JONG-IL
These foreigners I've volunteered
to revitalize our film industry--

This grabs his father's attention.

SUN GOD
Foreigners?

KIM JONG-IL
Yes, Father. I really believe
they're what we need.

SUN GOD
Capitalists. Can't be trusted.

KIM JONG-IL
I know you think they cannot be
trusted, and normally I would
agree. But--

Kim Il-Sung merely sighs and returns to his paperwork.

SUN GOD
Okay. Fine. Just keep an eye on
them.

KIM JONG-IL
Thank you Father! I knew you would
understand.

(MORE)

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

After all, it is my duty as your son and heir to preserve and execute your legacy. And that's exactly what I shall do.

The Sun God waves him off.

SUN GOD

That's nice son. Go... go make a movie. I'm trying to organize a trade deal.

KIM JONG-IL

Thank you Father for your tremendous faith in me! I will not let you or your people down. Our people! This endeavor will result in a prosperous and thriving Korea for all. And you will be a legend. And I will be a legend. And we will stand side by side!

Kim Il-Sung dismissively grunts as his heir excitedly exits.

21 INT. SHIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

21

The front door of Shin's empty abode is kicked down with the force of a thousand angry sons. It's none other than Jeong-Kyun, desperate to track down who he believes to be his traitorous father.

JEONG-KYUN

Where the fuck are you?!

He trashes the place, partially to look for clues, and partially just out of spite. He knocks over the couch, smashes chairs, shatters all of his father's china on the floor.

He rips out draws and trawls through his father's papers, looking for clues of any kind.

JEONG-KYUN (CONT'D)

Come on! Something!

But of course, nothing. He screams and kicks over a lamp.

22 EXT. SHIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

22

The same Suspicious Police Officer is standing outside the building, looking up at Shin's apartment. Even though it's nighttime, he's still wearing sunglasses.

He takes a photo and scribbles a note in a little notebook.
He's left-handed...

ACT IV

30 INT. PALACE OF THE SUN - HOLLYWOOD SUITE - DAY

30

A feminine hand shakes Shin awake.

CHOI (O.S.)
Sang-Ok! Get up! Get dressed! He'll
be here any minute!

He snorts awake, rubbing his eyes. Slow as a rock, he sits up. Choi is already dressed in grey-black professional attire.

CHOI (CONT'D)
Rush! Rush! We don't have time for
this! Look presentable.

She shoves him to a wardrobe and yanks out a white shirt and grey pants. Standard issue men's dress in the Republic of Korea. He slides them on.

SHIN
How'd he know our sizes?

The front door swings open. Kim Jong-Il and Righty enter the suite.

KIM JONG-IL
Wakey wakey! We've got a big day!

Choi smiles and bows at the Great Leader as Shin zips up his trousers.

31 INT. PALACE BARBERSHOP - NIGHT

31

They're escorted to the Kim family's lavish in-house barbershop. It holds only two seats, closely attended to by the suave and dapper BARBERS: one man, one woman. They smile and bow in unison at the Great Leader.

KIM JONG-IL
My favorite man!

He embraces the MALE BARBER (60s, frail but energized), who grins and embraces him in return. He ignores the FEMALE BARBER: she only does women.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

(to Shin and Choi)

You know, this man knows more about me than my own father. Sang-Ok, you're in for a real treat. Eun-Hee, I'm sure Dal-Rae here will do a great job too.

SHIN

A great job with what?

KIM JONG-IL

Haircuts! You're getting a top-notch all-Korean makeover, on the house!

CHOI

Oh, Great Leader, honored as we are, I think--

KIM JONG-IL

I insist! Have a seat.

Shin and Choi exchange a look before reluctantly sitting down in the two chairs. The Male Barber gets to work right away, while the Female Barber offers Choi a handful of options. They're all outdated, homely, unappealing.

Choi grimaces, and picks the option that preserves the most length.

SHIN

Hey, why does she get a choice?

KIM JONG-IL

My friend, you're being given the greatest haircut Korea has to offer: mine!

It is not the greatest haircut Korea has to offer.

SHIN

But I don't--

CHOI

Sang-Ok!

(to Kim Jong-Il)

We are... most grateful.

Kim Jong-Il rubs his hands together.

KIM JONG-IL

You two are going to look marvelous!

32

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

32

Choi, Shin and Righty pile into the back seat of the limo like sardines, fancy new hairdos deeply unflattering. Kim Jong-Il's already inside; he always goes first.

KIM JONG-IL

Wow, you two look simply stunning.
You especially, Sang-Ok.

Once they're all situated, Kim Jong-Il whistles and the limo begins its journey through Pyongyang.

They pass a desolate patch of concrete: KIM IL-SUNG SQUARE

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

Ah, Kim Il-Sung square. One of the first monuments my father had built for the great public when we were liberated from the chains of the capitalist South. It's a sign of his love for the people. How deeply he cares for them... and our Republic.

He looks at the empty square with a mix of admiration and forlorn.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

When we are finished, we'll all have our own monuments that tower high above Pyongyang. The three of us! And they'll sing songs.

CHOI

How excellent, your excellency.

Shin sneers at her. They continue their ride, bouncing over a massive pothole.

Except for the monuments and statues to Kim Il-Sung and North Korean pride, the city is decrepit and brutalist. There's little plant life and the lovely subjects of the Great Republic look drab and have nary a smile on their faces.

An unhappy couple takes a wedding photo in front of a statue of Kim Il-Sung. Kim Jong-Il smiles gleefully.

KIM JONG-IL

Ah! Look at the happy couple!

They keep moving and the smile soon disappears from Kim Jong-Il's face. He stares out the window with genuine concern.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
Can you both keep a secret?

Shin and Choi nod desperately.

CHOI
Of course, Great Leader.

Kim Jong-Il sighs.

KIM JONG-IL
This place is not a nice place, is it?

SHIN
What?

CHOI
It's lovely, oh Great Leader!

KIM JONG-IL
Be honest with me. I am no fool. I know the glorious people of this great Republic are struggling. That the streets are desolate and barren compared to the capitals of other great nations.

SHIN
Yes.

KIM JONG-IL
I believe in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I believe in my Father, the Supreme Leader. I truly do believe in the dream this nation stands for. But I know it is not reality. My Father's people are facing difficulties. It tears me up inside. I don't want this to be my legacy. Or my father's.

CHOI
I am--we are so sorry to hear that, Great Leader.

KIM JONG-IL
Thank you. That's why I invited you here, you see. This isn't just some little distraction or vanity project; I'm far too humble a servant to the people for that.

(MORE)

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
 These films are my ticket--our
 ticket--to prosperity. To the
 utopia my father and I dream of.
 He'll see. They'll all see.

In his eyes is a genuine desire for help. He grabs their hands.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
 My future, and the future of this
 country, depends on the films--nay,
 the art--we make together. They
 pave the way for beauty, power,
 happiness. They pave the way for
 what I'll will be remembered as:
 the man who saved Korea.

The limo pulls to a stop.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
 Ah! We're here!

33 EXT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

33

The three exit the limo, followed by Righty. An eager Kim Jong-Il speeding up ahead, Shin and Choi trail behind, whispering to each other.

SHIN
 Let's run. Now!

CHOI
 Are you crazy? And go where?!

SHIN
 He's crazy! Let's make a break for it!

CHOI
 No! He's got the kids, Sang-Ok. We do what we're told! He won't kill us.

SHIN
 How do you know?

CHOI
 Even if we run he won't kill us either. You heard him! He needs us to "save Korea." But he doesn't need Jeong-Kyun or Myeong-Hee or Gyeong-Ok. Running will only make things worse!

SHIN
How much worse can it get?

CHOI
Shut it!

She speeds up to separate herself.

34 INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

34

The group enters the theater. It only has one small screen and uncomfortable wooden seats, like a school auditorium. They take their seats. Nobody else is there.

KIM JONG-IL
I reserved us a theater to watch Korea's most recent film! It's a good one. A little cultural enrichment for you. Take notes, I want to hear all about what you think! Oh projectionist!

THE PROJECTIONIST, a petrified and frail old man, promptly starts the projector. The reel countdown begins.

When it hits 1:

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
And... Action!

He laughs, looking to Shin and Choi for approval. Choi fake laughs.

The movie begins. What ensues is an egregiously gratuitous propaganda piece about the downtrodden worker being freed from his chains by a holy savior: a generic retelling of North Korea's original myth.

We see several of the wooden scenes projected on-screen:

MONTAGE: THE FILM

1. A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN changes in her bedroom. Outside the window, THE HERO watches. Of course, she doesn't know.

THE HERO
She's beautiful. Almost as beautiful as a man free from the confines of exploitative labor.

Kim Jong-Il nods approvingly. Choi and Shin are silently appalled.

2. The Hero frees a group of miners from evil American guards. Their bullets bounce off his chest. He picks one up and crushes it into dust.

THE HERO (CONT'D)

Ha! These capitalist bullets are no match for the collective power of the worker coursing through my veins!

AMERICAN GUARD

We're no match!

The Hero shoots Communism-red LASERS out of his eyeballs and the guards are pulverized instantly.

Kim Jong-Il is enraptured. Shin and Choi are befuddled.

3. The Hero gives a motivational speech to his new comrades. Kim mouths along.

THE HERO

Brothers! Sisters! Join me!
Together, we shall destroy the West
and begin a global revolution! Take
up your arms and let us put an end
to this age of terror! Starting
with none other than President
Carter!

The on-screen crowd erupts into cheers.

Kim Jong-Il whistles in excitement. Shin and Choi struggle to contain their snickering.

4. After a long battle, The Hero and The Beautiful Woman embrace lovingly. He's got the girl.

THE HERO (CONT'D)

Thanks to me, you--and all the
other slaves trapped under the boot
of capitalism--are free. And now,
let us live together... in love.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

There's nothing keeping us apart!
Let us ride off, arm in arm... And
we shall have a beautiful baby
girl! And her name will be...
Freedom.

They stare hopefully into the sunset as giant THE END text fades on screen accompanied by sappy music.

Kim Jong-Il, tearful, erupts into applause. Confused, Choi and Shin unconvincingly follow suit.

35 EXT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY 35

The three exit, Kim Jong-Il bounding with excitement, his hostages processing the abomination they just endured. They enter the limo and drive off once more.

36 INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY 36

Once they're on the move, Kim Jong-Il clasps his hands together.

KIM JONG-IL

Wasn't that great?! Naming the baby Freedom. So poetic! You know that was my idea! But can you imagine that it bombed internationally? After all the focus groups loved it!

Choi and Shin stare silently.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

But I'm sure with a few of your fine touches, a few of your caresses, we can make it even better! A true masterpiece! So, what did you think?

SHIN

Well, uh--

CHOI

It was excellent! We both loved it. Didn't we, Sang-Ok?

SHIN

Uh, yes. Loved it. Great picture.

Kim Jong-Il stares at them suspiciously. They gulp.

KIM JONG-IL

My keen senses detect some... discomfort. I insist, if there's something you wish to say, do so. That's why you're here!

They're hesitant to speak. Shin nudges Choi, telling her to go first. She nudges back.

SHIN

From a business standpoint, I don't think killing the President of the United States is a good idea.

Choi gasps in fear. Surely, Shin is about to be punished for questioning the Great Leader.

KIM JONG-IL

But that was the best part!

CHOI

I agree!

SHIN

Artistically it's... remarkable! But others won't see it that way. Especially not western... capitalist... audiences. I'm speaking purely from a marketing perspective, of course!

KIM JONG-IL

I see...

Painful silence. Kim Jong-Il eyes Shin suspiciously.

CHOI

Great Leader, I thought the acting was delightful, but it could be made even better! So much emotion and depth can be drawn from these scenes and characters... I would be honored to give your cast some instruction.

Kim Jong-Il's face lights up.

KIM JONG-IL

That I agree with! The Republic's finest are not so fine. I could do better! It would be an incredible honor to pass your masterful techniques onto my troupe.

Shin, emboldened by the lack of pushback, pipes up once again.

SHIN

And the dialogue should be toned down. Too obvious.

KIM JONG-IL

What do you mean by that?

CHOI

If you gave us a humble chance,
Great Leader, Sang-Ok and I could
certainly deliver the same message
of freedom and revolution in a way
that's more palatable to
international audiences!

SHIN

If you're so... generous and
willing, of course.

Kim Jong-Il thinks for a bit.

KIM JONG-IL

I just love this initiative. I knew
this was the right decision!
You two are gonna earn me an
Academy Award!

CHOI

That's the dream, Great Leader!

SHIN

Isn't that a capitalist award?

KIM JONG-IL

That was a test. Good job!

He wags his finger at shin Sang playfully.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

You had me worried there for a
second, Sang-Ok. But I knew you had
the right idea.

He laughs. Shin and Choi fake-laugh along.

The limo pulls up to a grey, boxy CULTURAL CENTER. There's a
red carpet lined with photographers. There's no doubt they're
all forced to be there.

SHIN

What's this?

Kim Jong-Il exits and the crowd erupts in tearful cheers and
applause.

KIM JONG-IL

(sing-song)

I have a surprise for you!

37 EXT. CULTURAL CENTER - DAY

37

Shin exits the limo, followed by Choi. They're met by weaker cheers. Kim waves his arms, conducting the crowd to cheer louder, which they do. How charming. Shin and Choi are scared and confused.

Kim Jong-Il leads Shin and Choi down the red carpet, but takes his sweet time to bask in the crowd's glory. He waves, smiles, and relishes every ounce of attention. He stops to kiss babies and shake hands. People cry tears of joy.

Shin and Choi wait patiently.

38 INT. CULTURAL CENTER - DAY

38

They finally make it inside, and the surprise is finally revealed:

The building's been set up for a wedding service! The red carpet continues all the way up to an altar, decorated with flowers and balloons. On the wall above the altar, a massive portrait of Kim Il-Sung.

Live chickens and roosters roam around aimlessly. The chickens have flowers in their beaks, and the roosters have chili peppers in theirs. As is tradition.

But for photographers and reporters, there is no audience.

SHIN

What is going on here?!

KIM JONG-IL

A wedding, of course!

CHOI

Who's getting married, Great Leader?

Kim chuckles.

KIM JONG-IL

You!

SHIN

What now?

CHOI

Absolutely not.

KIM JONG-IL

My friends, I understand your hesitation.

(MORE)

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

But here in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we believe in the power of the family. The collective family we're all a member of. And so all of us must uphold Korea's values and traditions. And in your case, the whole world is watching. So let's put on a united front for them, shall we?

Choi and Shin stand there awkwardly. Shin shrugs at his bride-to-be.

SHIN

Why not? It'll be just like old times.

KIM JONG-IL

That's the spirit.

Choi stares murderously at Shin, daggers for eyes.

CHOI

Fine.

Shin can't help a smile from forming on his face.

KIM JONG-IL

Excellent! We have tuxedos and hanbok dresses just in your sizes! Take your pick, get dressed, and we'll get this show on the road.

Righty swoops in from nowhere, carrying a beautiful Hanbok Dress (traditional Korean wedding attire) in one hand and a perfectly cut silk Tuxedo in the other. The Bride and Groom reluctantly take them.

A chicken SQUAWKS in the corner.

All dressed, they approach the altar, where an ecstatic Kim Jong-Il already stands.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)

You two look absolutely beautiful together. But before we begin! Greet the portrait.

He gestures to the massive painting of Kim Il-Sung, the Sun God of Korea.

SHIN

Um... Hello

CHOI

Hi.

KIM JONG-IL
Excellent! Now face each other.

The two do as they're told. Shin's blushing but Choi looks more miserable than ever.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
Let's begin! Do you, Ms. Choi Eun-Hee, by glory of the Sun God and Supreme Leader Kim Il-Sung, take Mr. Shin Sang-Ok to be your lawfully wedded husband, forever unified in your service to the Workers' Party?

Choi grunts.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
Speak up, dear?

CHOI
Fine.

Shin turns beet-red.

KIM JONG-IL
How lovely. Now do you, Mr. Shin Sang-Ok, take Choi Eun-Hee as your lawfully wedded wife, forever unified in your service to the Workers' Party?

SHIN
Yes I do.

This is the most cooperative Shin has been since he arrived.

Righty runs up with two small squash (like the vegetable), containing wine.

KIM JONG-IL
Before it's official, I insist you drink our ceremonial wine out of our ceremonial gourds. It's the final step in our beautiful tradition.

Shin happily takes his squash and chugs. Choi reluctantly takes hers and tries to gulp down the wine, but she barely manages, gagging and coughing. When they're finished, Righty takes the two squash away.

KIM JONG-IL (CONT'D)
 Well then, by decree of the Sun God
 and Supreme Leader of Korea Kim Il-
 Sung, I declare you husband and
 wife! Congratulations!

A kiss unlikely, Kim Jong-Il steps between them and grabs each of their hands. He raises them above their heads in a victory pose. Shin's suppressing a smile, and Choi looks like her mother died. And Kim? He's the happiest of them all.

A photographer captures the beautiful moment, and it's sent all around the world.

39 INT. UNCLE GYEONG-OK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

39

Jeong-Kyun, calmer than we last saw him but still seething, paces around the living room. As usual, the news is on the TV. Uncle Gyeong-Ok and Myeong-Hee sleep snuggled together on the couch.

Jeong-Kyun pays little attention to what's on-screen, until...

REPORTER
 Breaking News: We've just received
 an update on the mysterious
 disappearance of cinema icons Shin
 Sang-Ok and Choi Eun-Hee. Once
 starstruck lovers, these two
 legendary figures became bitter
 divorcees, and now it appears that
 these once great figures have
 defected to the North.

Jeong-Kyun leaps for the TV like an over-zealous grasshopper, sucking in every photon.

JEONG-KYUN
 What the fuck?

REPORTER
 But there is more. These photos
 seem to depict the once-separated
 couple remarrying under the
 supervision of North Korean
 dictator Kim Il-Sung's son, Kim
 Jong-Il.

A series of wedding photos flashes on screen as the reporter speaks:

1. An image of the two giving their "I dos."

2. A still of them drinking the ceremonial wine
3. The victory pose.
4. The same victory pose, this time in front of a statue of Kim Il-Sung.

JEONG-KYUN

What the fuck?!

REPORTER

In a statement to the press,
accompanied by Kim Jong-Il, the
newly remarried couple had this to
say.

The broadcast cuts to footage of Shin, Choi, and Kim Jong-Il seated at a long table with microphones. Behind them is a large portrait of Kim Il-Sung.

SHIN

(clearly reciting a
script)

We have decided as artists, and
people, that the Democratic
People's Republic of Korea grants
us creative freedom and a lifestyle
that we could not receive in the
South. We are here happily and are
pleased that our loving
relationship survived the crushing
oppression of the South.

CHOI

(also reciting a script)

Yes. We chose to be here by our own
volition. And we are very happy
and... love each other very much.
We are pleased to have the freedom
to serve the Great Leader's
artistic endeavors as devoted
filmmakers and citizens of the
Worker's Party of Korea. Also, we
want our children to know that we
love them...

Kim Jong-Il nudges her gently.

CHOI (CONT'D)

And hope that they, too, soon see
the superiority of the Democratic
People's Republic of Korea.

Only a wavering gasp escapes Jeong-Kyun's lips.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Why they have done this is unclear, but one thing is certain: this is a great betrayal to our culture and our people. While for the past two years, many were hoping for a comeback from this once iconic couple, this traitorous act solidifies the collapse of their once-great legacy.

Jeong-Kyun flips off the TV and sits, dumbfounded and hurt beyond belief, staring into space.

INT. PALACE OF THE SUN - HOLLYWOOD SUITE - NIGHT

Choi, still in her wedding attire, sits in the bed still as stone, legs up to her chest, staring emptily into space. The shock of the day bears down on her.

Shin changes into his pajamas, seemingly unaware of Choi's shut-down.

He starts whistling a wedding tune.

This knocks Choi out of it and she looks towards him as he whistles, his back turned to her. Hate, fear, and anguish all flash through her eyes.

All changed, Shin finally looks over at Choi.

SHIN

I'm sleeping in the bed tonight.
Since we're married again.

She doesn't respond. Angry tears silently flow down her face. She wipes them away with her sleeve as she stares out the window.

Shin flips off the light, approaches the bed and climbs under the covers, getting himself comfy.

SHIN (CONT'D)

Let's try to make the best of this,
okay?

No answer. She maintains her empty stare.

SHIN (CONT'D)

Eun-hee?

Brief images flash in her mind, the memory of that fateful day...

FLASHBACK/MONTAGE: A PAINFUL MEMORY

- 1) She opens the front door of a warmly-lit Shin's apartment
- 2) Shin and a pregnant woman dancing.
- 3) The utter shock on her face
- 4) She lugs suitcases down a hallway as Shin chases after her
- 5) She breaks down crying in the elevator

END FLASHBACK/MONTAGE

Choi still stares, unmoving, but in her eyes is a new awareness. Panic, fear, hate, determination.

She glances over at Shin, who's now snoring, out like a light. Gently, she rises from the bed and tip-toes for the window. She tries to open it, but of course it won't budge. It doesn't actually open at all.

She silently curses to herself. Holding her head, she paces back and forth, until she realizes something.

Going into the living room, she approaches the suite's front door. Her hand reaches for the handle...

And she opens the door, silently sneaking out.

EXT. PALACE OF THE SUN - NIGHT

Alarms blare and dogs bark from the inside of the massive, brutalist home of North Korean ruler KIM IL-SUNG and his son KIM JONG-IL...

TO BE CONTINUED