

Act Two. Scene Nine.

The single concrete room. Chi Soo packs his few possessions in a knapsack. He stands and looks around the room, it is completely bare. A sound from outside. Chi Soo freezes. A knock. Chi Soo darts behind the door. Another knock. Chi Soo pulls out a knife.

Eun Mi enters, she is dressed in black hemp, carries a bag. She looks around the bare room.

EUN MI Too late.

Chi Soo drops the knife. Eun Mi turns. They look at each other. Chi Soo walks towards her.

Tentatively, awkwardly they reach out to each other. Hold each other.

Eun Mi pulls away, takes a hard-boiled egg out of her bag, gives it to Chi Soo who peels it and eats it. She hands him an orange, he looks at it in wonder, takes a bite.

EUN MI No. You have to peel it.

Eun Mi takes the orange and peels it, hands it to him. He tastes it, makes a sound of pure pleasure.

CHI SOO This is the best thing anyone's ever given me.

They smile at each other.

EUN MI I read your story. It was beautiful, made me cry.

CHI SOO It's my parent's story.

Eun Mi looks around the bare room.

EUN MI Are they...

CHI SOO Dead.

Chi Soo looks at her in her mourning clothes.

CHI SOO Your mother?

EUN MI Dead.

P'YONGYANG by In-Sook Chappell

CHI SOO We're both orphans.

They look at each other.

EUN MI You look tired.

CHI SOO I don't sleep. I'm frightened I won't wake up.

Pause.

EUN MI I see you... I see you as you really are.

CHI SOO You... you made me hope. I kept myself alive in case... you came back.

They look at each other.

CHI SOO I'm not the boy you met at school. I've... done things.

EUN MI Me too.

CHI SOO I'm tall, need a lot of calories. Why don't you ask how I'm still alive?

EUN MI Whatever you've done... I've done worse.

CHI SOO No.

EUN MI Whatever you did, you did to eat.

CHI SOO I...

Eun Mi puts her hand over Chi Soo's mouth.

EUN MI Don't tell me. Lets not tell each other.

Chi Soo nods. Eun Mi takes her hand from his mouth.

EUN MI I forgive you and you have to forgive me.

CHI SOO Yes.

Eun Mi glances at the knapsack.

EUN MI *(softly)* Are you going somewhere?

CHI SOO ...No.

P'YONGYANG by In-Sook Chappell

EUN MI I've been watching Chinese pirate dvds. I saw an American film about... a girl from the core class who ...loves a man in the hostile class. They're kept apart but they think about each other, want to be with each other anyway.

They look at each other. They talk quietly.

EUN MI Your story could be a movie but not in the DPRK.

Chi Soo looks at her.

CHI SOO Why would you go anywhere else? You have everything here.

EUN MI Not anymore.

Eun Mi looks at him.

EUN MI I've seen television dramas from Seoul. All my life, I've felt sorry for the South Koreans, thought they were poor, backward, starving.

CHI SOO No. That's us.

EUN MI When I watched the opening sequence of COFFEE PRINCE I went numb. They're like us but taller, brighter somehow. Their hair is cut in styles I've never seen. They wear clothes in different colours and textures. They're all rich... in the streets were rows and rows of cars.

CHI SOO They have enough to eat.

They look at each other.

EUN MI That's the life I want.

CHI SOO Me too... I have family in the South.

EUN MI I want to be an actress in Seoul. You could write scripts.

CHI SOO Do you remember when we dreamed of going to P'yongyang together?

EUN MI Yes. We can go... together.

CHI SOO Tonight.

P'YONGYANG by In-Sook Chappell

EUN MI I can't. I need...

CHI SOO I have to leave tonight. I don't trust my neighbours. I thought you were bowibu.

*Eun Mi indicates towards the left and then the right wall.
Chi Soo indicates towards the right wall.*

CHI SOO They're not in.

EUN MI Where are you crossing?

CHI SOO Near Onsong. It's been dry for weeks, the water's low. Come with me.

EUN MI My mother's funeral is the day after tomorrow. I have to bury her.

CHI SOO I understand.

EUN MI Are you using a broker?

CHI SOO No... None of them want to help men, only women. I'm going alone.

EUN MI And then, in China?

CHI SOO I'll meet you.

EUN MI Yes.

CHI SOO I'll need to find work, earn some money. Then we'll travel across China. We'll walk through the Gobi desert at night, the stars will guide us. When we've crossed the border into Mongolia we'll give ourselves up.

Eun Mi looks at him.

EUN MI Min has connections in China, can get us papers. You met her remember?

CHI SOO Do you trust her?

EUN MI I think so. Why?

CHI SOO There are terrible stories about North Korean women in China.

P'YONGYANG by In-Sook Chappell

EUN MI I trust her. I'm sure she's getting a cut. We'll fly to Seoul together.

CHI SOO Fly?

EUN MI The people she knows can get us a Chinese ID and passport.

CHI SOO For me too?

EUN MI Yes. I can leave in three days. Are you sure you can't wait?

CHI SOO I have to cross tonight. They saw me selling the rest of my things in the market.

EUN MI That...

Chi Soo looks at Eun Mi.

CHI SOO I need money. They know my father was a South Korean soldier, that both my parents are dead and nothing's keeping me here.

EUN MI I can leave in three days. Meet me across the border in Yanji.

CHI SOO Where in Yanji?

EUN MI ...Apparently there's a cold noodle place called Mina Shi. It's on Aidan Road by the north bus station. It has a red door and is next to a coffee shop.

CHI SOO Mina Shi, Aidan Road, north bus station.

EUN MI Meet me there in the evening in four days time.

Eun Mi searches through her pockets, pulls out notes gives them to Chi Soo.

EUN MI If you can wait I can give you more.

CHI SOO I can't.

Eun Mi pulls cartons of cigarettes out of her bag.

EUN MI For bribes.

P'YONGYANG by In-Sook Chappell

CHI SOO Thank you.

EUN MI Good luck.

CHI SOO You too.

Chi Soo reaches out and touches her face. They move closer. They kiss, it's awkward like a teenage kiss, a first kiss.

They look at each other, embarrassed but full of feeling.

They kiss again, they get the hang of it, the kiss becomes more passionate.

EUN MI We belong together.

CHI SOO Yes.

EUN MI You're my family now.

Chi Soo looks at her.

CHI SOO If we're in South Korea we could have a baby.

EUN MI ...Yes.

CHI SOO It wouldn't be like... He or she could have a future.

EUN MI We'd have to be married. If we had a baby.

CHI SOO We'll be married. I mean if you want to.

EUN MI I want to. I love you.

Chi Soo looks at her, the words are unfamiliar to him.

CHI SOO I love you.

Chi Soo kisses her, touches her breast. Eun Mi pulls away.

EUN MI Not like this. Four nights. We'll check into a hotel in Yanji.

CHI SOO Yes.

EUN MI We'll be together. We'll be safe.

P'YONGYANG by In-Sook Chappell

Eun Mi takes a candle out of her bag, lights it.

EUN MI Go. I'll stay here until the candle burns down.

Chi Soo picks up his knapsack.

CHI SOO There's never been anyone else.

Pause.

EUN MI Four nights.

CHI SOO I'll be there.

Chi Soo exits. Eun Mi stands alone in the middle of the room.