

Korean (American) Dream

by  
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Lines from Scenes 11 & 14 in Diana Son's "Stop Kiss" script,  
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were used in this script).

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FADE IN:

EXT. LEE FAMILY'S RESTAURANT/HOUSE (FORT LEE, NEW JERSEY)  
- EVENING

Nestled amongst the establishments with English signs, is a tan, nondescript, two-story building that sticks out only because of its garish, lit-up blue sign with bold, white lettering: "Korean BBQ and Buffet." The sign is in between large, red Chinese characters on one side and Korean characters on the other, also lit-up. There is a neon, blue and red "OPEN" sign on the door.

INT. FIRST FLOOR/RESTAURANT - EVENING

It is packed and noisy with Korean patrons chatting and the sounds of grilling meat as the tables are equipped with inset grills. Smoke rises into the vents directly above.

MI-YEON, a petite, pretty, twenty-two-year-old woman in matching black apron and visor, comes out balancing a large, circular black tray with assorted side dishes of kimchi, vegetables, seafood, spicy pastes, etc. She sets the tray on a fold-out stand and puts them on the table in front of a Korean couple. She turns on the grill, adjusting the temperature.

MI-YEON

(in Korean)

I'll be right out with your short ribs.

Mi-Yeon turns around and sees a Korean family getting up from their table. She smiles and bows to them.

MI-YEON (CONT'D)

(in Korean)

Thank you. Please come again.

She puts the black receipt holder with their payment and tip in it in her apron's pocket. She starts clearing the table, stacking the dirty plates on the now empty tray she came out with.

CUSTOMER

(calling, in Korean)

You there, could we get some more water?

MI-YEON

(in Korean)

Yes sir.

She continues clearing the table when BRIAN PARK, a tall, lanky, 25-year-old with glasses, appears next to her, a pitcher of ice water in one hand and a wet rag in his other hand.

BRIAN

You better get going if you don't want to miss the 6 o'clock bus.

Mi-Yeon glances at her watch: 5:45.

MI-YEON

Crap. Thanks oppa.

She places the plate she was holding on the tray and turns to go towards the front of the restaurant. There are people by the door, waiting for tables to open up. MR.LEE, Mi-Yeon's 55-year-old father, is at the cashier spot, finishing up a phone call. He frowns at his daughter as she hands him the receipt holder and takes off her visor.

MI-YEON (CONT'D)

(in Korean)

I have class tonight.

Mr. Lee's face noticeably brightens.

MR. LEE

(in Korean)

Going for that perfect 180. Go on.

Mi-Yeon heads toward the double doors leading to the kitchen, holding the door open as Brian comes out with the tray carrying the plate of raw short ribs and vegetables. He smiles at her as she rushes past him.

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - EVENING

She runs through the kitchen, where a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN is washing dishes and two other WORKERS are slicing vegetables and slices of raw meat. MRS. LEE, Mi-Yeon's 50-year-old mother, looks up from stirring a boiling pot of stew, as her daughter goes towards the stairs leading to the second-floor and strips off her apron.

MRS. LEE

(calling)

Mi-Yeon...

MI-YEON

I'm late!

## INT. SECOND FLOOR/HOUSE - EVENING

The walls of the stairway leading up to the house part of the building have family pictures, from over the years, as well as single-shots of Mi-Yeon, MI-KYUNG, her 27-year-old older sister, and MI-NOO, her 17-year-old brother. There is a display case filled with trophies and plaques as Mi-Yeon reaches the top of the stairs and goes toward her room.

## INT. MI-YEON'S ROOM - EVENING

Mi-Yeon bursts into her room, tosses her visor and apron on the floor, and begins frantically rushing around her messy room, throwing various things into a duffel bag. The walls of her room are covered with posters of actors, movies, and Broadway plays. The wall over her desk has her framed diploma from Yale, as well as a collage of pictures of her in costume and on-stage, playbills, and ticket stubs. Her desk has a large book with the words "KAPLAN" and "LSAT PREP" on the cover.

Mi-Yeon finally zips up her duffel bag and goes out, slamming the door. The door bursts open again and Mi-Yeon comes in and grabs her LSAT book. As she turns to go back out, Mrs. Lee appears at the door.

Mi-Yeon tries to move past her mom, but Mrs. Lee stops her. She glances at the book in her daughter's hands and sighs deeply.

MI-YEON

Mom, please, not now.

She moves past her mom and goes towards the living room. She's about to go down the stairs.

MRS. LEE

(in Korean)

At least try to come back at a reasonable hour.

Mi-Yeon looks back at her mom.

MI-YEON

Well, that depends on the subway and buses running on-time, doesn't it?

Mrs. Lee purses her lips. She steps toward her daughter and hands her a Korean lunchbox.

MRS. LEE  
(softly, in Korean)  
It's not good to perform on an empty  
stomach.

Mi-Yeon takes the lunchbox and looks at her mom,  
apologetic. She sighs and gives her mom a kiss on the  
cheek.

MI-YEON  
(in Korean)  
I'll try my best to be back by eleven.

Mi-Yeon turns to leave. Mrs. Lee looks at her daughter's  
retreating back, a concerned look on her face.

I/E. GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE - EVENING

The bus is steadily moving along through the traffic  
across the bridge. Mi-Yeon is looking out through the  
windows at the Hudson River. She peers down at the book  
on her lap and opens up her duffle bag on the seat next  
to her. She takes out a script, with "Stop Kiss by Diana  
Son" on the cover, and puts the LSAT book in its place.  
She then opens up her lunchbox: her mom has packed a  
couple of Korean-style California rolls, a small bottle  
of Aloe Vera Juice, and some gum for afterwards. Mi-Yeon  
smiles and pops a roll into her mouth, as she looks over  
the script that is filled with highlights and notes.

EXT. JOSEPH PAPP PUBLIC THEATRE (NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK)  
- EVENING

Mi-Yeon runs into the entrance of the brick building.  
There is a poster of her on the building, along with her  
co-star, TIFFANY MCCORMICK, under the heading of "Stop  
Kiss." It's Mi-Yeon's name, however, that sticks out.  
There is a sticker with the words "SOLD OUT" across it.

INT. BACKSTAGE - EVENING

Mi-Yeon bursts through the backstage door, which is  
bustling about with her fellow actors and various people  
involved in the production. She spots DIANA SON talking  
with the director, JO BONNEY, in one corner, and the  
STAGE MANAGER talking to a bunch of STAGEHANDS in another  
corner.

Mi-Yeon walks over to the makeup section and spots TIFFANY, her blond, leggy, beautiful 20-year-old co-star (who really doesn't look her age) in one of the chairs, her hair in curlers and her makeup already finished. SANDY, in charge of hair and makeup, mid-40's--who looks like she's ready to go on-stage herself with her jeweled cats-eye glasses and bright red lips--is sitting on the seat next to her, filing her nails. Mi-Yeon gives a slight wave to Tiffany, who waves back, and is about to open her mouth to address Sandy.

SANDY  
(not looking up, still  
filing)  
You're late.

Sandy lifts her head and looks at Mi-Yeon through the vanity mirror, one perfectly drawn-in eyebrow cocked upwards. She wrinkles her nose.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
And you stink.

Mi-Yeon laughs, as she drops her bag and lunchbox on the floor, and settles into the seat that Sandy has vacated.

MI-YEON  
Oh c'mon Sandy, you know you love the  
scent of l'eau de la smoked meat.

Sandy snorts and puts the nail filer behind her ear and pulls out Mi-Yeon's pony tail, immediately combing through it with the comb that was behind her other ear.

SANDY  
If there was a perfume of poor dead farm  
animals, that's what you smell like.

Mi-Yeon looks at her in mock offense and Sandy playfully taps her on the head with the comb. Mi-Yeon grins at her through the mirror and holds out the script in front of her. Tiffany gets up at that moment to lean on the table in front of the mirror, facing Mi-Yeon.

TIFFANY  
So did you hear the rumor that's been  
going around?

Mi-Yeon lowers the script to look at Tiffany.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)  
Mitch Stremmel might be in the audience  
tonight.

Sandy begins pulling and twisting her hair into a tight bun.

MI-YEON

Ow! Mitch Stremmel...oh, Leonardo DiCaprio's agent?

Tiffany nods.

MI-YEON (CONT'D)

What the heck is a big Hollywood big shot doing at our little show? Did he get lost on his way to see Usher starring in "Chicago"?

Tiffany shrugs, as Mi-Yeon goes back to looking at her script.

TIFFANY

It's probably not even true, but it's kinda exciting to think about don't you think?

Mi-Yeon looks up to see the hopeful, faraway look on Tiffany's face.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

(with dramatic flair)

You know. The struggling actress, dreaming of stardom, and then finally...her big break.

She sighs and meets Mi-Yeon's eyes.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

It could play out like a Hollywood movie.

A look of amused disbelief crosses Mi-Yeon's face before she suddenly throws her head back in laughter. Sandy hits Mi-Yeon's head with her comb.

SANDY

Hey! If laughing is going to cause you to move your head, quit it. We've already lost precious time and I still need to deal with your face.

Mi-Yeon mouths a "sorry" to Sandy through the mirror and shifts her gaze to Tiffany, who looks a bit annoyed and has her arms crossed.

MI-YEON

Oh c'mon Tiff, you know I think you're  
This is the guy who runs the most  
exclusive, A-list agency in Hollywood.  
If your name doesn't begin with Meryl and  
end with Streep, he's not going to even  
blink at you.

TIFFANY

But it's his job to look for the next big  
thing.

MI-YEON

(teasing)

And that's going to be you?

Tiffany is not amused. The smile on Mi-Yeon's face  
slowly falls, as Sandy begins spraying Mi-Yeon's  
hairstyle with hairspray.

TIFFANY

(softly)

You know, just because you don't have  
dreams about Hollywood...

MI-YEON

Tiff...

TIFFANY

(stronger)

Just make sure you're on-point tonight.

Beat.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

True or untrue, I won't have you messing  
this up for me.

Before Mi-Yeon can answer, Tiffany stands up straight.  
She doesn't look at Mi-Yeon.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

I need to get into costume. Excuse me.

She walks away. Sandy comes in front of her to fiddle  
with her bangs.

SANDY

Nice going. A little over an hour to  
curtain and you get your co-star pissed  
at you. Jo's gonna have a fit if your  
chemistry is off.

Mi-Yeon sighs, as Sandy shakes the can of hairspray.



MI-YEON

I didn't mean to. It's just...I felt like she shouldn't unrealistically get her hopes up about Stremmel. I mean, you know how-

Sandy covers Mi-Yeon's eyes and sprays her bangs.

SANDY

In case you've forgotten, who was the one who auditioned last minute and got the role that Tiffany was already cast for?

Mi-Yeon shifts uncomfortably in her seat, but doesn't answer.

SANDY (CONT'D)

And remember, Ms. Ivy League, for some, that unrealistic dream is the only thing going for them in their lives.

Mi-Yeon opens her eyes and a thoughtful look crosses her face, as Sandy begins to smear foundation on her skin.

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

The mutterings of the packed house permeate through the curtain, where Mi-Yeon, in makeup and costume as CALLIE, is standing in her apartment. Tiffany, as SARA, is standing off-stage, stage right.

STAGE MANAGER

Fifteen til showtime, folks, fifteen minutes!

Mi-Yeon tries to get Tiffany's attention, but she's refusing to make eye contact with her. Mi-Yeon walks over to her and stands directly in front of her.

MI-YEON

You know, I've always said you could be the next ScarJo.

Tiffany finally looks at her.

TIFFANY

Are you making fun of me again?

MI-YEON

Maybe a little.

Mi-Yeon smiles. Tiffany rolls her eyes.

MI-YEON (CONT'D)

Look, if you want to be mad, be mad after the show. Right now, whether or not Stremmel's here, let's give this audience a kick-ass show. So truce?

She holds out her hand. Tiffany ponders for a moment before rolling her eyes and shaking Mi-Yeon's hand.

INT. ON-STAGE - EVENING

Tiffany (as Sara) is lying on a hospital bed. Mi-Yeon (as Callie) is standing at her bedside.

MI-YEON (AS CALLIE)

(in progress, rambling)

...now I'm the lesbian traffic reporter whose lover got beat up. And I've gotten letters--from two women, their girlfriends were killed during attacks--and they wrote me these heartbreaking letters telling me what they've been through...and they tell me to speak truth and I don't know what that means, Sara. Do you?

Beat.

MI-YEON (AS CALLIE)

(CONT'D)

(softly)

Do you know me?

Mi-Yeon leans in closer to Sara, almost looking like she's about to kiss her.

INT. AUDIENCE - EVENING

As the scene goes on, the packed audience is completely transfixed by the performance. In the back is the rumored MITCH STREMMEL, powerful-looking, in his 40's, sharply-dressed, dark sunglasses on top of his head, who holds his chin between his fingers, obviously intrigued by what he is seeing.

INT. ON-STAGE/AUDIENCE - EVENING

The audience is on its feet and clapping, cheering for the cast and crew as they do their curtain call.

Tiffany comes out and bows and the clapping gets louder, but it's when Mi-Yeon comes out that the clapping and cheering gets noticeably more boisterous. The cast and crew do one final group bow and the curtain closes.

INT. BACKSTAGE - EVENING

There is an excited energy backstage, the cast and crew all in a cluster congratulating each other and talking animatedly. Mi-Yeon and Tiffany are in the middle of the group, flanked by Diana Son and Jo Bonney.

Mi-Yeon glances at her watch and pulls herself away from the group, despite their protests to come get drinks with everyone. She gathers up her duffle bag and lunchbox, waves to everyone, and rushes out the door.

EXT. JOSEPH PAPP PUBLIC THEATRE - EVENING

Mi-Yeon steps out of the building, the city looking orange from the streetlights. She's barely stepped away from the theatre when the window of a parked limo rolls down. It's Mitch Stremmel.

MITCH

Ms. Lee?

Mi-Yeon stops, giving the man a once-over with a frown on her face. Her expression then dissolves into surprised recognition.

MI-YEON

You're-

He smiles and motions for her to come closer to the limo. She hesitates and then steps toward it. He hands her a small, rectangular piece of paper through the window. In the orange light, she reads: "Mitch Stremmel, Endeavor Agency" with his phone number, fax number, and e-mail.

MITCH

Quite a performance tonight, Ms. Lee.  
Should you ever find yourself in L.A.,  
give me a ring.

Before Mi-Yeon can answer, the window goes up and the limo pulls away from the spot. Mi-Yeon holds up the card, looking at it with a stunned expression. She doesn't see the flash of yellow hair that has seen what has happened and has quickly gone back into the theatre building.

INT. STAIRWELL OF THE LEE HOUSE - NIGHT

Mi-Yeon is desperately trying not to make noise as she goes up the stairwell of her darkened house, but the old stairs are creaking under her feet. After a particularly loud creak, she stops, listens, and then proceeds with the slow ascension again.

She makes it to the top and proceeds to tiptoe towards her room. She jumps when the Korean-style grandfather clock gongs that it's midnight. She cautiously looks towards her parents' room, which is open just a crack so that she can see the flickering lights of the television and the muffled talking of some Korean drama.

Mi-Yeon reaches the door to her room and quietly begins to turn her doorknob.

MR. LEE (O.S.)  
(calling, in Korean)  
Is that Mi-Yeon?

Mi-Yeon freezes. She bfrowns, and swipes her hand across her mouth, seeing that she still has remnants of her heavy stage makeup.

MI-YEON  
(rushing, in Korean)  
Yeah, it's me dad. I'm really tired from studying, so I'll see you in the morning.  
Good night!

She quickly opens the door and closes it, leaning on it and sighing heavily before locking it.

INT. MI-YEON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mi-Yeon, her face now makeup-free and with glasses, has changed into a t-shirt and shorts, and is sitting at her desk. The room is darkened and only her desk lamp is on. She is doing an exercise in her LSAT book, but more yawning seems to be going on than actual work.

She puts down her pencil and pats her cheeks to wake herself up. She then opens the drawer of her desk and takes out Stremmel's card that she had thrown in there before she started to study. She stares hard at it for a moment, shakes her head, and starts crumpling it up. She's about to toss it, basketball-style, into her wastebasket when she stops, uncrumples it and puts the card back into her drawer.

INT. LEE'S HOUSE RESTAURANT - DAY

The restaurant hasn't opened yet and Brian and Mi-Yeon are the only ones in the dining area. Brian is wiping down the tables while Mi-Yeon puts the paper placemats, napkins, and silverware on the tables after he's done.

BRIAN

So what are you going to do about it?

MI-YEON

Do? There's nothing to do.

Brian stops his wiping and looks at her over his shoulder.

BRIAN

Mi-Yeon, this is a chance of a lifetime.

Mi-Yeon snorts.

MI-YEON

Shyeah, that'll go over real well with my parents. Mom, dad, thanks for the 160,000 dollar education, but I'm going to go to Hollywood where I'll end up as a waitress anyway.

She motions for him to continue wiping as she comes and stands next to him, clutching the placemats and napkins in one hand, and the silverware in the other. She looks straight ahead, a determined look on her face.

MI-YEON (CONT'D)

One year to study and make money, then off to law school. I made a promise.

Beat.

MI-YEON (CONT'D)

(voice softer)

One which I intend to keep.

Brian stands straight and gives her an incredulous look.

BRIAN

Who you trying to convince?

Mi-Yeon doesn't answer him as she pushes him aside and places down a placemat, a single napkin on-top, and then a spoon and chopsticks on top of the napkin in front of a seat. Brian moves onto to the last table. They work in silence for a moment before Mi-Yeon sighs.

MI-YEON

Besides, you know that the stage is in New York. If I can convince my dad that getting into NYU Law School is just as good as getting into HA-BA-DE...maybe I can have the best of both worlds.

Brian finishes his wiping and turns around.

BRIAN

So no second thoughts?

She shakes her head. She glances at her watch and looks up at him with a grin.

MI-YEON

Time to go honor the second part of my promise. If only the first part gave me this much pleasure, ugh. Want to take my LSAT's for me so I don't have to study?

BRIAN

Only if you promise to take my MCAT's.

MI-YEON

Sure, if you want to fail miserably.

She snorts and thrusts the remaining table settings into Brian's hands. She reaches for her purse that's lying on a seat.

MI-YEON (CONT'D)

Have fun studying. And working. And then studying some more. Ew, we're so the Asian stereotype.

Mi-Yeon laughs and gives him a quick, friendly kiss on the cheek as she rushes by him.

MI-YEON (CONT'D)

(At the door)

Don't forget tomorrow, 8 a.m. sharp!

She waves and skips out, not noticing Brian rubbing his cheek and slightly smiling, before he puts the last placemat on the last table.

## MONTAGE SEQUENCE:

## INT. JOHN HAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Mi-Yeon is sitting at the desk with JOHN HAN, 5-years-old, doing math problems. When the little boy starts counting on his fingers, Mi-Yeon gently places her hands over his and shakes her head. She taps his head with a pencil. He pouts, but when she motions to the 'Super Mario' stickers, he huffs and starts doing them without the help of his fingers.

## INT. GLORIA MOON'S HOUSE - DAY

Mi-Yeon is sitting at the piano with GLORIA MOON, 9-years-old, demonstrating the proper hand posture for playing (curved fingers, not flat fingers). When Gloria plays it the right way, Mi-Yeon claps her hands and pats her on the back. She places a gold star on the notepad with a tally of how much Gloria has practiced this week.

Mi-Yeon rises to go, but the little girl stops her. She opens the lid of the piano seat and grabs a thick music book, which has more advanced repertoire, and shyly presents it to Mi-Yeon. Mi-Yeon smiles, flips through it, and sits on the seat. She begins to play, Gloria next to her, looking on with awe.

## INT. DAVID KIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Mi-Yeon is explaining the instructions of a SAT Reading exercise with 16-year-old DAVID KIM. MRS. KIM, his mom, enters the room with a tray of ice water, a plate of fried dumplings and sliced Korean pear, a small bowl of soy sauce, chopsticks and napkins, and an envelope. Mi-Yeon bows to her in thanks while Mrs. Kim does the same.

## INT. LOTTE, KOREAN MARKET - NIGHT

She is pushing a cart around the store, looking at the hand-written shopping list in Korean. TWO ELDERLY WOMEN, their hair in short, curly perms, see her and clap their hands in delight. She smiles and bows to them as they engage her in a lively chat.

One blows up her cheeks and draws her curled fingers up to them, indicating that she thinks Mi-Yeon has gained some weight (but doing it with a laugh and smile).

Another grasps onto her hand and holds her hand up near her hip, indicating that she remembers when Mi-Yeon when she was that little.

INT. SECOND FLOOR OF LEE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mi-Yeon steps into the house with bags of groceries in hand, clearly exhausted. She heads towards the kitchen.

MI-YEON

(in Korean)

I'm back.

Mrs. Lee meets her and takes the groceries from her hands.

MRS. LEE

(in Korean)

Did you eat something?

Mi-Yeon nods and waves over her mom's shoulder at her brother, MI-NOO, who is sitting at the dining room across from his father, who is giving him a lecture. Her mom steps back into the kitchen.

MR. LEE

(in rapid Korean)

...it's important to start making your college list now so we can start visiting. Although you've seen all the important ones with your sisters already...

Mi-Noo tries to discretely look at his sister for reprieve, but Mi-Yeon simply smiles and gives him a thumbs-up. She walks over to the table with the pile of mail on it. She picks them up and sifts through it, coming across an envelope addressed to her from the Law School Admissions Council. She opens it up to see that it's her ticket to take the LSAT's.

Mi-Yeon takes the envelope and goes toward her room, hearing her father rambling on, the words 'Harvard' and 'Princeton' especially enunciated.

INT. MI-YEON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mi-Yeon throws her bag on the floor and the keys and envelope on her desk. She notices that a picture has fallen off her collage. She picks it up and smiles.



It's her and a college classmate as Christine and the Phantom of 'The Phantom of the Opera.' She pins it back to place.

She picks up the envelope, opening the drawer to throw it into, and notices the wrinkled business card. She draws it close to her face. She finally crumples it up and throws it carelessly into the wastebasket, on her way into her bathroom. It bounces off the edge and lands on the floor behind the wastebasket, out of direct view.

INT. HALLWAY IN FRONT OF MI-YEON'S ROOM - DAY

Brian walks towards Mi-Yeon's room, carrying a backpack and a thick book with the words "MCAT PRACTICE TESTS" on it. Her door is ajar and her light is on, so he knocks on it. When he doesn't get an answer, he knocks again and slowly opens the door.

He sees Mi-Yeon sprawled out on her bed, fast asleep. Her open LSAT book is lying tent-like across her chest. He smiles and puts his stuff on the floor, before going over to her and shaking her shoulder.

BRIAN

Hey, wake-up, sleepyhead.

Mi-Yeon frowns, mumbles incoherently, and shifts, making her book fall to the floor. He picks it up and places it on her bedside table. He draws the covers, which are rumpled at her feet on the bed, over her body, and turns off her desk lamp.

Brian looks around the messy room and shakes his head. He gathers the clothes strewn all over the floor and puts them in the hamper near her door. He sits down at her chair and starts organizing her desk, putting all her pencils and pens back in their mug, when he notices her desk calendar.

In big, bold letters, written in red marker, are the words "CLOSING NIGHT" on Friday, the 15th. Written in purple marker is "LSAT'S" on Saturday, the 16th. He frowns, when at that moment, Mrs. Lee comes in with a tray with two glasses of water and orange slices. He jumps up to get it from her.

BRIAN

(in Korean)

Let me get that, thank you.

He places the tray on the desk and sees Mrs. Lee looking at her sleeping daughter.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
(in Korean)  
I'll wake her up in a little bit.

Mrs. Lee looks at him and sighs deeply.

MRS. LEE  
(in Korean)  
I worry. The test is soon and she's barely studied. I mean, how can she, when her heart is in other things.

Brian puts an arm around her.

BRIAN  
(in Korean)  
This is Mi-Yeon we're talking about. Has she ever failed you before?

Mrs. Lee shakes her head. She looks up at him fondly.

MRS. LEE  
(in Korean)  
At least you're here to keep her accountable.

BRIAN  
(in Korean)  
You give too much credit. I have to study too. It's just easier when another person's doing it as well.

Mrs. Lee nods and looks once more at her daughter. She turns to leave.

MRS. LEE  
Staying for lunch?

Brian nods. When Mrs. Lee leaves the room, Brian looks at Mi-Yeon, an unsure look on his face.

INT. ON-STAGE - NIGHT

Mi-Yeon, as "Callie," and Tiffany, as "Sara," are standing in Callie's apartment. Callie is dressed-up while Sara is even more so. They're having an argument.

TIFFANY (AS SARA)  
If you had wanted me to get dressed up, you should've told me.

MI-YEON (AS CALLIE)

I told you to be here at 5:30, you couldn't manage that.

TIFFANY (AS SARA)

What's the big deal--you don't even like your job.

MI-YEON (AS CALLIE)

I don't like my job the way you love your job but that doesn't mean you shouldn't come at the time I asked you to, wearing something appropriate.

TIFFANY (AS SARA)

Obviously this is more important than you-

There is a clomping noise from upstairs. They both look up and then look at each other.

INT. THEATRE BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Mi-Yeon is gathering up her stuff in front of the lighted vanity, amidst the excited noise and bustle of backstage. Sandy comes up next to her, a glass of champagne in her hand.

SANDY

Can't convince you to go to the after-party?

Mi-Yeon smiles at her through the mirror.

MI-YEON

Thought you'd be happy to be rid of me.

SANDY

Oh, I am. No more reeking of burnt carcass. Or your smart-ass mouth.

She chuckles at her and takes a sip of her champagne.

SANDY (CONT'D)

But you know, closing night, last hurrah and all, thought I'd buy you a drink.

Mi-Yeon turns to smile at her, as she zips up her duffle bag.

MI-YEON

I have an early morning tomorrow. Rain check?

SANDY

Sure, if you're ever in Los Angeles.

Mi-Yeon turns around and leans on the table to look at her.

MI-YEON

L.A.? You're going back?

Sandy nods.

SANDY

There are some prospective job offers that are of interest. Plus, I miss sunlight. And good vegan options.

MI-YEON

(laughing)

There's sunlight and veggies in New York.

SANDY

Not like the West Coast, honey.

Tiffany comes over at that moment and starts gathering her things off the makeup table.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Plus, I'll be in good company if you ever do decide to visit.

Tiffany makes eye contact with Sandy and smiles, continuing to pack up her stuff. Mi-Yeon looks between the two of them and frowns.

MI-YEON

Wait, you're going to--

TIFFANY

Yes, Mi-Yeon, I'm going to Hollywood, packing up my life to pursue my silly dreams. I'll probably end up doing commercials for toothpaste or as a desk clerk at the Beverly Hills Hilton, but you know what? I'm going to die at least trying. So if you want to tell me how stupid I'm being, just say it and get it over with.

Mi-Yeon looks taken aback.

MI-YEON

I was just going to wish you good luck.

Tiffany straightens and pushes her hair out of her face. She zips shut her bag.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Good luck to you too.

She turns to leave.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Oh, and if the whole law thing doesn't work out, maybe you should try it yourself. I mean, you've already got your golden ticket.

She leaves and Mi-Yeon just stands there, stunned. Sandy finishes her champagne and leans close to her.

SANDY

Meet your next Hollywood diva.

Mi-Yeon turns to look at her.

SANDY (CONT'D)

She's already got the histrionics down. What's this about a golden ticket?

Mi-Yeon simply shakes her head and straightens to gather her jacket and bag.

MI-YEON

Beats me. I'm going to say goodbye to everyone before I go. Don't disappear without giving me a hug, okay?

Sandy smiles at her and nods.

INT. MI-YEON'S ROOM - DAY

Sunlight is streaming through the blinds, and Mi-Yeon is hunched over her desk, her head lying on her LSAT book, a string of drool spilling onto the page. She is slightly snoring.

There is a light knock on the door. It opens to reveal Mi-Noo, who looks at her and chuckles quietly into his hand. He digs into his pocket to get out his cellphone and starts shooting pictures and videos of her, a mischievous, gleeful look on his face.

Mi-Yeon stirs and then grimaces as she lifts her head and rubs the back of her neck. She wipes away the string of drool and looks blearily at her brother, confused by her location. Her eyes suddenly widen.

MI-YEON

Why, you little --

Mi-Noo shrieks as she jumps towards him to grab his phone, but he escapes from her grasp, and there's loud shouting and thumping of feet, as Mi-Yeon chases her brother down the hall and into the kitchen, where she stops short at the amazing sight before her.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The table is colorful and crowded with all sorts of Korean food: vegetables, kimchi, meat, rice, etc. Mrs. Lee is setting the table while Mr. Lee, who's in an apron, sets a steaming pot of stew in the middle. Mi-Noo is hiding behind Mrs. Lee, intending to use her as a shield in case Mi-Yeon attacks him, but Mi-Yeon is rendered immobile by the sight of all the food. Mr. Lee comes over to his daughter.

MR. LEE

(in Korean)

Good morning, future Prosecutor Lee!  
Come, come sit.

Mr. Lee takes her hand and leads Mi-Yeon to her chair, pulling it out for her to sit. Everybody takes their place. Mr. Lee reaches for his water glass and lifts it up.

MR. LEE (CONT'D)

(in Korean)

Before we dig in, I just want to say to my second daughter, how proud I am of you.

Mi-Yeon smiles at him.

MR. LEE (CONT'D)

(in Korean)

You know, I say this a lot, but I came to this country so that I could fulfill a dream: that I would have a doctor, lawyer, and an engineer in the family.

Mi-Yeon's smile slightly wavers.

MR. LEE (CONT'D)

(in Korean)

Mi-Kyung's a surgical resident in San Diego.

He nods at Mi-Noo.

MR. LEE (CONT'D)

(in Korean)

Mi-Noo's math and science grades will no doubt get him into a good engineering school.

He then beams at Mi-Yeon.

MR. LEE (CONT'D)

(in Korean)

And you, second daughter, are on your way to becoming a lawyer, something I always dreamed of being.

Mi-Yeon shifts uncomfortably in her seat and breaks eye contact to take a sip of her water. Mrs. Lee notices the look on Mi-Yeon's face.

MR. LEE (CONT'D)

(in Korean)

Do you know how lucky you children are to be born and living in America? I just wish I could turn back--

MRS. LEE

(in Korean)

Now, dear, enough, the food's getting cold.

MR. LEE

(in Korean)

Oh, right, right. Dig in everyone.

He looks at Mi-Yeon as he ladles some hot stew into a bowl for her.

MR. LEE (CONT'D)

(in Korean)

Eat up, prosecutor. Harvard awaits your perfect score.

Mi-Yeon tries to smile and take another sip of her water, but she ends up choking and coughing. Her parents congregate around her, but she waves them off.

INT. LSAT TEST CENTER - DAY

Mi-Yeon sits at a desk, tapping on it lightly with a pencil. There are many other people in the large room. An LSAT REP is reading the instructions, but Mi-Yeon is only half-listening. Her father's words keep echoing in her mind.

MR. LEE (O.S.)

(in Korean)

I came to this country to fulfill a dream...you are on your way to becoming a lawyer...Do you know how lucky you children are to be born and living in America?...Eat up, prosecutor. Harvard awaits your perfect score...score...score...

LSAT REP

Please turn to the first page of your booklet and begin.

Mi-Yeon jerks from her thoughts, draws a hand over her face, and opens her test booklet.

A wall clock shows time passing: 9:25, 10:55, 11:30, 11:52, 12:00.

LSAT REP (CONT'D)

And time. Please put your pencils down and close your booklets.

Mi-Yeon finishes filling in a final bubble and puts her pencil down. She inhales and then exhales deeply while stretching her arms above her head.

EXT. LSAT TEST CENTER - DAY

Test-takers file out of the building, Mi-Yeon amongst them as she walks with her head down. A pair of men's Nike hightops come into her line of view. She looks up and sees Brian, who smiles at her. He reaches for her backpack.

BRIAN

Figured you might not want to immediately go home to the barrage of 'So how was it?' 'Was it easy?' 'Can Harvard give you your acceptance today?'

She chuckles and gives him her backpack.

MI-YEON

You figured right.

Her cell phone rings at that exact moment. As Brian holds the backpack, she unzips the front pocket to take it out. She looks at the caller ID and holds it up for Brian: MI-KYUNG UNNI.



MI-YEON (CONT'D)

Which is why the phone will be off too.

She turns off her phone and puts it back into the backpack pocket, and then lets out a big yawn. Brian laughs and shrugs her backpack over his shoulder.

BRIAN

C'mon, I'll buy you lunch and the large size of your favorite boba tea.

TITLE OVER:

3 WEEKS LATER...

INT. MI-YEON'S ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark, with the only light coming from the cell phone that Mi-Yeon is holding while lying in her bed. She opens an email message with the subject "LSAT Score for Mi-Yeon Lee" and clicks the link and types in her username and password. She draws in her breath and closes her eyes as the screen changes. She puts a hand over her eyes and after a moment, peeks through her fingers. She gasps as she sits upright in her bed.

MI-YEON

Oh my god.

The screen shows: "SCORE: 178, PERCENTILE: 99.9%"

INT. LEE FAMILY'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Mi-Yeon is sitting on the stool at the cashier, a spaced-out, distant look on her face. She shakes out of it when a MAILMAN enters the restaurant and hands Mi-Yeon some letters and bills. She sifts through them, when Mr. Lee comes up next to her.

MR. LEE

(in Korean)

Still no word on your score?

Mi-Yeon freezes. She clears her throat and looks at her dad.

MI-YEON

(in Korean)

No, not yet. Probably next week.

He nods and then makes his way back to the kitchen. Mi-Yeon watches her dad's retreating form and turns to space out again.

MRS. LEE (O.S.)  
 (in Korean, voice low)  
 Mrs. Kwon said her daughter got her LSAT score through e-mail a week before it arrived in the mail.

Mi-Yeon startles and sharply turns. Her mother comes into view and she wears an unreadable expression. Mi-Yeon masks innocence and shrugs her shoulders.

MI-YEON  
 (in Korean)  
 It must be something you pay extra for because I haven't gotten anything.

Beat.

MI-YEON (CONT'D)  
 (in Korean)  
 You know Dad would be the first one to know if I knew anything. I know how important this is for him. And you.

Mrs. Lee shakes her head.

MRS. LEE  
 (in Korean)  
 Scores and grades never mattered too much to me. I just want all my children to be healthy and happy. Your dad too.

Mi-Yeon opens her mouth to say something but hears a bell tinkle, indicating that someone has arrived. She welcomes the Caucasian couple entering the restaurant, grabs two menus, and leads them to a table with a forced smile.

MONTAGE SEQUENCE SIMILAR TO PREVIOUS ONE OF MIYEON AND HER STUDENTS PLAYS.

INT. MI-YEON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mi-Yeon flips on the lights and walks over to her desk. She sits down on the chair and rummages through her purse, producing three envelopes. She pulls out a small, spiral notebook from the shelf. On the cover, in purple marker lettering, is: "Law School Funding" with the first letters (LSF) in big, bold lettering while the ensuing letters are much smaller.

She takes out bills from the three envelopes, quickly counts them, and consolidates them into one. She opens the notebook, revealing a pocket flap that holds various deposit slips from "Bank of America" and lots of numbers on the pages. She adds "350" to the final number and adds them, writing a new number of \$15,450. She puts the envelope in her purse and then closes her notebook.

She looks at the cover for a second and traces the "L" "S" and "F" with her finger and purses her lips. She picks up the pencil she just used to put a tiny question mark in between "School" and "Funding."