

lasagna are added to the menu. Your father eats rice and cold banchan. Afterwards, he drinks a pot of tea while watching *Night Court* on the couch, to help him learn English. Sometimes, if you've finished your homework and practiced your violin and he is in a good mood, he'll let you watch with him. This is the only time your father laughs. He loves district attorney Dan Fielding, and so you do too.

One evening, your best friend eats dinner at your house and his hair is long enough to pull into a ponytail. He casually mentions that he is planning to drop out of school when he turns sixteen and work full-time at the restaurant. After he leaves, your father mutes *Night Court* for the first time ever. "You are not allowed to be friends with him anymore," he orders.

You are furious. It is your first big fight with your father. Your mother and your sister watch from the kitchen, afraid to get involved. You yell that your father doesn't make your decisions. Your father smacks you across the cheek. "*I have been making your decisions since before you were born,*" he yells. "*I am your father.*"

He sends you to your room, but you were going anyway. You are thirteen; too old to cry. You have to use the bathroom, but the only one is downstairs. You wait as hours tick past, fingers brushing your cheek. Sometime past midnight, you creak open the door to your room and tiptoe downstairs.

Your father is hunched over the kitchen table. He has put a dishrag over the lamp, so it won't shine so brightly. To the side, abandoned, is a medical textbook in Korean. You have forgotten how to read text, but you can see diagrams of hands, intricately labeled.

Your father pores over an English workbook instead. You recognize the title, and your handwriting inside. It is the one you finished last year. Your father has covered the multiple choice quiz with his hand, so he cannot see the answers. You watch him mouthing the sentences. "Whales were once land animals but adapted to life in the ocean."

Your father looks up and sees you. He freezes. "Why are you awake?" he whispers finally.