

Halmoni

Part 7

[7]

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It's been a long time since Puppy was in love.

Puppy remembers blurting out to Thorny, "I just want someone who I love to love me back!" Thorny looked at Puppy dolefully and replied, "That's what everyone's making songs and movies about."

One day, an email from Party falls into Puppy's inbox. The message begins: "We would like to invite you to show / share your work at the **Club for Performance Art Gallery**." Puppy mulls over the name of the project and enjoys how it feels — like a flexible collage of some art-related words assembled into one: **Club** for **Performance Art Gallery**. Some other versions could be: **Performance Gallery** for **Art Club**. **Gallery Art** for **Performance Club**. **Art Club Gallery** for **Performance**. **Performance Art Club** for **Gallery**. **Art** for **Gallery Performance Club**.



Image made by Party

The project facilitates one-on-one live performances, where each artist shows their work to an audience consisting of one person. The content of the performance can be anything at any length between three and 40 minutes. Party explains that: “The club intends to set in motion processes that are, or were, blocked, paused, stopped, etc. because of lockdown, and work with the conditions that are available to us today. The idea is to give space, time, and opportunity to a thing, to practice, or to expanding something you are doing or *want to be doing*.”

What does Puppy *want* to be doing?

Puppy replies to Party that it wants to participate, and Party asks for a title, a short description, and a photo. Puppy replies with:

Title: *You are my true love*

Description:

My love is the most expensive thing I have and I will spend it on you.
You will be rich and I will be poor, begging on the streets for love.



On the evening of 27 February, Puppy meets Party in front of Ufer Studios. It is cold and dark. Puppy brings a winter jacket for Party, who didn't dress warmly enough for the evening. Party bought a "nice looking, light weight, and easy to carry" chair especially for the occasion, as she offered to provide a chair as "tech-support", but she has forgotten to bring it with her. Luckily, she has been able to borrow a chair from Ufer Studios instead.

Party and Puppy walk over to the performance location — a short underpass under the S-bahn tracks with walls covered in graffiti. Puppy has chosen this location because every time it walked through the underpass, it noticed sounds echoing around and around. As they approach the entrance to the underpass, they see the audience member, Roamy, who Party has selected for this performance. Puppy had no idea who the audience member would be until this moment. Roamy is dressed in a long, neon orange winter jacket that covers their whole body except for a glossy pair of white boots, and is sipping a beverage from their shiny black thermo mug. Puppy doesn't know Roamy personally, but has had a couple of short encounters with them in the past. Puppy waves at them from afar. The moon is perfectly full and intensely bright.

Puppy sets up the chair at approximately the mid-point of the tunnel next to one of the walls. It tunes its guitar. Roamy is standing directly across and in front of Puppy next to the other wall, wrapped in charm. S-bahn trains run overhead periodically, muting all the other sounds in the underpass with their rumbles. There are occasional passersby, who either smile or stare at the scene.

Puppy's imagination of the performance: Puppy would slowly and passionately sing a series of love songs that it has prepared to its audience member, looking into their eyes, as if they really are Puppy's true love at that moment.

The reality of the performance: Right before Puppy begins playing the first song, it considers saying, "You are my true love," to Roamy. When it looks up at Roamy's face and their eyes meet, shyness shrinks the sentence into a tiny dried up pea stuck in Puppy's throat. Puppy tries to swallow it down

and begins to play the guitar. As soon as Puppy starts to sing, it hears a strange shiver in its voice. The dried up pea has multiplied itself rapidly to fill Puppy's entire body like a rattling pea jar. It can't look up into Roamy's eyes at all. Its fingers are freezing up on the guitar strings from the cold air as time goes by. Puppy's eyes wander everywhere except Roamy's face, while its voice sings and sings out its love.

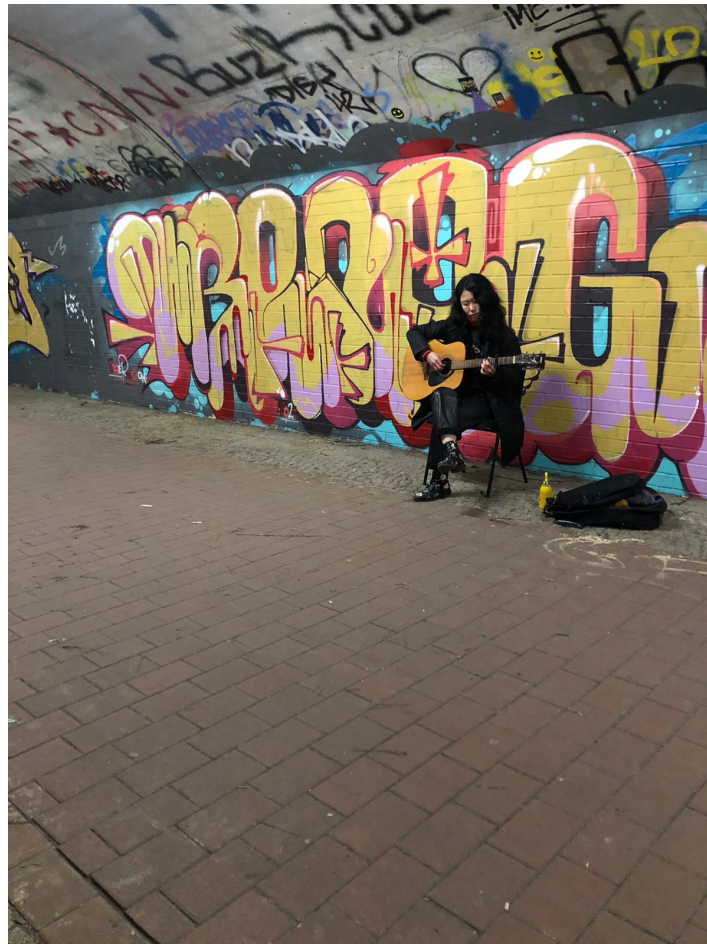


Photo by Party

After the performance, they walk out of the tunnel and admire the glowing full moon. Still feeling some of the dried peas clattering around its body, Puppy carefully mentions how, in its country, people say that two bunnies making rice cakes live in the full moon, and that we can make three wishes to the bunnies. Puppy has been making three wishes to every full moon it has seen ever since it was a child. Almost every time, one of those wishes has been about love.

Puppy wants to talk to its grandma about love. All her children's marriages have been full of drama and crisis. Why does she still always tell Puppy to get married? To her, is marriage really about love?

After many unanswered calls and a text to its aunt, Puppy finally reaches its grandma on the phone. The video doesn't work and its grandma says, "I got my hair nicely done and the video doesn't work!" When the video finally connects, she says that she is very grateful that she came back to life so she could see her children again. She adds, "I got so incredibly ill that I thought I was going to die. Your aunt must have gone through a lot during my sickness ..." Thinking that she was about to die, its grandma, who hasn't been to a hair salon for months due to Covid, said to its aunt, "I can't go to heaven looking so unkempt. I want to look nice when I go." Its grandma laughs and says, "This is the hair I struggled so much to have done! And now, look! I recovered!" Puppy's heart sinks to hear that its grandma has been so ill, but it keeps its spirits up and smiles.

Puppy asks its grandma what kind of person she thinks would be good to love and share one's life with. Without any hesitation, she answers, "Someone who understands. Even when my moods are not so smooth, if a person can accept me as I am, that's the best quality in a partner. If someone intentionally hurts others, that's not a good person." She adds, "I have such a hot temper and a bad habit of just blurting whatever comes to my mind ... but your grandpa understands that. If he made a fuss every time I said something in the heat of the moment, we wouldn't have been able to live together."

Since its grandma listens to old Korean pop songs all day at home, Puppy asks her which one her favourite is. She replies that she doesn't even know what a good or a bad song is, but she likes all the lyrics because they remind her what life is like — filled with relationships, memories, and feelings. When Puppy asks what kind of lyrics she enjoys the most, she answers: "Love songs are the best. I like all the lyrics that talk about love. Love is such a wonderful thing. Without love, there's no joy."

The following is a love song that Puppy composed about its grandparents.

the boy next door
a younger brother of my best friend
he is so quiet and I've never heard his voice

one day, my friend married and went away
one day, I overheard the adults arranging the marriage between
me and the boy

oh, what nonsense
oh no, no, no
I locked myself in a room and went on a hunger strike for days
until my brother destroyed the door by force
stormed in and shouted
"Marry or leave!"

marry or leave
marry or leave
I was so scared
I married the boy

for sixty-nine years
we've held each other's hands



one time
after a big surgery
I felt so ill
couldn't eat anything for days

I told him I want to eat 게절
from this far away restaurant
that's become a vague memory of the past

he set out to find this restaurant
got on rows of cabs
looking for the place
looking for that 게절

in the end
he couldn't find it
returned home with 게절
from a different place

when I tasted it
I whined unhappily
“This doesn't taste like that 게절”
I didn't know of his saga of searching for the right one!

he smiled at me gently and said
“It *is* that one. Just try to eat ...”

later
when I recovered
and heard this story
I held his hands and laughed

Just when Puppy and its grandma are about to hang up, the video stops working again. Puppy only hears its grandma's voice saying, “Let us meet again. I love you,” and she starts crying. She says in her tearful voice,

“You hang up first ...” Not knowing what to do with all the feelings rushing in, Puppy disconnects the call.

Two bunnies in the moon,
can you show Puppy something about how to hold its heart around love?



Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung
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Dachverband Tanz
Deutschland