

CHAPTER ❖ 10 ❖

The next day, Hyo called Kwan. He asked Kwan to meet him at the taekwondo studio. *“I have something important to ask you,”* Hyo said.

Both studios were busy with classes. Hyo took Kwan into the office. Kwan glanced around and stood looking at the painting for a few seconds.

“Kwan,” said Hyo, *“I am sorry for all the trouble I caused you when I left the engineering firm so suddenly. I left a project unfinished. I know you have been working harder than before to make up for my absence.”*

Hyo told Kwan that he was willing to work part time. Kwan’s reaction surprised Hyo. *“I was hoping you would ask for your job back. I need you at the company,”* he said. *“I am willing to take you back. But I want you to work full time.”*

Hyo said, *“But I want to do both jobs, here and at the company. When I’m there I’ll work hard on our projects and train a replacement. Here I have a chance to live out the dream of my youth.”*

The two men watched part of an intermediate class and then went back into the office to talk. Slowly, the brothers made a plan.

Kwan said, *“This is a trial period. I don’t know if it will work. I’ll try it for family harmony. By the way, Su Jin asked me if she could take taekwondo lessons. I told her no. But now that I’ve seen the studio and we have talked, I think I’ll let her.”*



March (four-and-a-half months later)

The day was cold. At the office Hyo asked his brother, *“Kwan, are you coming to the tournament this weekend? Su Jin is competing.”*

“I know. She doesn’t talk about anything else. Maybe I’ll come,” said Kwan. *“But I’m busy with this project.”*

Kwan was still difficult to work with. But he gave Hyo more responsibility now. And, to Hyo’s surprise, he found the work more interesting.

When Hyo left the office at 3:00, snow began to fall. It fell all evening. Tom and Hyo decided to close the studio early. There were six inches of snow on the ground and it was still snowing hard when Hyo got home.

School was canceled on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday because of the blizzard. Hyo stayed home in the morning and played outside with Dak Ho and Cho Hee. But he was worried about the big taekwondo tournament planned for Saturday. Would they have to cancel it? They decided to go ahead and hope for the best.

On Saturday morning everything was ready. Hyo, Hana, the children, Tom, and some of the instructors waited at the Recreation Center for competitors to arrive for the tournament. What if people thought the roads were too messy for driving? What if no one came?

Then the first car pulled into the parking lot. It was Su Jin, Mi Sun, Kwan, and Mother-in-Law. A few minutes later, the referees and some other studio owners arrived. Slowly people started arriving.

Soon, the recreation center was full and the tournament began. Tom announced, "Here's Hyo Kim and his wife, Hana. They worked overtime to make this all possible!"

Hyo was so busy that he didn't get to go and sit with Kwan. The day was well organized with almost no problems. Su Jin won third place in the sparring. Hyo was proud of his niece. He glanced at Kwan and saw that he was smiling as Su Jin posed for a photograph.

After the tournament was over, Hyo went and sat down with Kwan.

"Well, *what did you think?*" Hyo asked Kwan.

Kwan nodded his head slowly. "*When you asked me for your job back, you apologized for leaving me so suddenly. I told you to quit this taekwondo nonsense. But, after today, I must say there's more to it than I thought. I'm sorry for calling it nonsense. I can see that you are respected by the students and the other owners and instructors. I can see that you*

teach your students to respect each other. It's impressive. It's not the same as engineering, but it has its merits. I'm beginning to see why you like it so much."

"People have different dreams for their lives," Hyo said as he looked across the room at Hana.

"Yes," said Kwan. *"Are you still looking for an investor?"*

Before Hyo could answer, Dak Ho, Cho Hee, and Su Jin came running over. Su Jin handed her trophy to Kwan and grinned.

Hana, Mi Sun, and Mother-in-Law joined the group.

"This is how things should be," said Mother-in-Law. *"Everyone together. Father-in-Law would be pleased."*

Hana smiled. For once, she completely agreed.