

Junseo: *“There is this feeling of ‘finally, I’m where I am meant to be.’”*

How does it feel to finally debut? Was there anything from your trainee days that was particularly challenging for you?

It feels like a relief. To put in all the hard work and effort as a group and as individuals just to have it reach the outcome it was going for? A relief. I also feel like this was something we were destined for: to debut as DIVINE9, so there is this feeling of ‘*finally, I’m where I am meant to be.*’ Something in particular I felt burdened by as a trainee was being appointed as the leader, probably. Though I’m the type of person who just lives life as it comes to me, having to suddenly look after eight other people at what, 18? It was not something I felt I could do, but I learned eventually that I was and still am capable of it. No matter how hard it can get trying to wake up eight very sleepy people in twenty minutes...

How did it feel transitioning from one of the “Big 3” like JYP to a newbie company with no groups?

I had only been at JYP for about a year, so there wasn’t this huge anxiety that some might expect or even feel themselves when going from a big company to a small one such as NiKe. I had no attachment to the company and I knew a few months in that being there wasn’t going to be right for me in the long run, but I still stayed as long as I did just to see it through. No doubts even come to mind about going to NiKe really. Like I said, I live life as it comes to me, so when the opportunity to audition for another company came up, I took it.

How and why were you chosen to be leader?

The fact that I was the oldest definitely played a factor into me being the leader, but aside from that I think it’s because the others listened to me more than they listened to each other *laughs*. There’s actually a time I remember where it was just chaos at the company building and I had said something like “guys, really, stop acting like this” and Minjung had said ‘okay dad!!!!’ and everyone repeated him like those seagulls in *Finding Nemo*! I think that really solidified my role as leader.

Do you ever wish things turned out differently in that regard? That maybe someone else was picked as leader?

I wouldn’t say that, but I will say there are times when I look at the maknaes and think that in another life, they are meant to lead and I know I’d follow them.

What about your sister's dancing drew you into it yourself?

It was the way she almost became a different person when she danced. I say almost because she'll always be my older sister no matter what she does, but when she dances she becomes like... my older sister with a mask on? That's the best way to describe it. She's a super shy person actually, so to think of her in front of others, getting their attention, having them just *focus* on her seems like something she'd hate, yet she still dances. It just blew my mind as a kid that this person who scolded me, annoyed me, and put broccoli in my ice cream could just *do* that. I went up to her one day and asked her to show me how she did it and soon enough I was attending the dance classes with her.

Would you say your sister is a big source of inspiration to you?

Oh, definitely. I feel like part of why I'm able to really do what I am able to is because of her. And something I really find sweet is that she's become the members' older sister as well. She sometimes spends her time with us during practice to cheer us on and give us tips. We had almost put her name in the credits in the album because she had actually helped us a bunch with the choreography for 'In the Sky.' The only reason we didn't was because she didn't want to.

Which one of the members is the easiest to handle? And on the other hand, who's the hardest to handle?

(sighs) This is going to cause a ruckus at the dorms when this interview gets released, but Jiho is someone who I find least difficult to handle. It's not that he *never* bothers me, but he bothers me the *least*. Jiho, if you read this, I'm grateful for you! Now the hardest member to handle... well there's two and it's Minjung and Seongsu, *especially* when they're together. I won't go into detail about it to save my own sanity when they hear about this, so moving on to answer the question I know *Muses* want to know: between living with five of them versus them as five year olds I'd choose the latter. I'd imagine they'd be like my own younger brothers, so it couldn't be that bad....

It seems like cats are your favorite animals; what do you like about them?

My love for cats came from my childhood. Our neighbor had a few cats and sometimes they would just wander into our house when we had a window open or were receiving a delivery. It gave my mother a heart attack the first time it happened, she thought they were strays but after she saw the collars they had on, she was okay. One cat in particular would always come to me. His name was *Hanri*, like Han River, and he just stuck to my side like glue when he was in the house. It got to a point where our neighbor would *call me* if Hanri hadn't been home at all. Cats just have a calming aura to me, and of course they're really cute. I'm hoping eventually to have a cat at the dorms, maybe even two.

How many plants do you have at the dorms?

This is a bit embarrassing for me to say but I have nine plants at the dorms as a representation of the nine of us in the group and their names are just the reverse of our own. So for example, Chinhae's plant is *Haechin*, Hanwool's is *Woolhan*, and so on. Sunny's is really funny, it's called Nysun, but it sounds so similar to the car brand that I just call it that instead. I love them all equally like the members, so no favorites here!

You seem to hold the others' hands a lot; do you like skinship/have any thoughts in particular on it?

I hold the members' hands as a comforting gesture most of the time. I noticed early on how they'd often be messing with their in-ears or their clothing when they were nervous for a performance, so I would just offer my hand and they'd take it. It became a habit after the first couple of times. Chinhae always uses it as a way to pull me into a hug, and he'll call the others over so it ends up becoming a group hug. That's when it becomes comforting to me, when the members are just together like that, hugging each other. Aside from hand-holding, I do enjoy skinship with the members in any situation, especially when I'm watching movies late at night with Jiho and HJ. We all end up falling asleep on the couch at some point and leaning on each other.

Would you be able to tell which member's hand you're holding if you were blindfolded?

Honestly, I think I could. I've held them enough times, I'd say.

What does DIVINE9 mean to you?

I don't think I could ever put into words what DIVINE9 means to me except maybe saying they are everything. And I hope we stay together for a long time.