Bittersweet
by illicit_soliloquy

Summary

Love is so bittersweet, isn't it? An exotic concoction meant to trick the tongue to have its consumers to pass pure gazes until the memory of innocence is shot down by a drop of a red liquid and leave the feeling of regret as a by-product. No one is safe from its alluring presence.

so what are Jaeyeol and Hyungseok to do when a gulp of alcohol spins their delicate relationship into a web of confusion?

Notes

This was written for a friend who asked for Drunk, Possessive Hyungseok.

This chapter is clear of alcohol use and would be considered "fluff", but the next page will contain underage drinking.

With that aside, we begin the story.

See the end of the work for more notes.
The clock ticked and tocked, hands working furiously as if to speed up time and get class dismissed. The clicking sound was monotone and calming. If you close your eyes, even for a second, it could soothe you to a deep slumber. It was so welcoming, reaching to embrace you...

"Hey, Hyungsok." Jinsung slid into the seat next to his friend and flung himself around his neck. "Do you have any plans after school? I thought he could go to an arcade or something."

"Hmm?"

Hyungseok can barely make out Jinsung's face with his blurred vision. Rest wasn't a pleasure he could satisfy or enjoy even with his head groggily pounding. Maybe sleep couldn't claim him, but he would take any chance to close his eyes and empty everything from his mind. Voices, rumors, yelling, beating, mockery, this high school Hell could miraculously be channeled into a mild buzz. Stifling a yawn, he turned his attention back to his company and pondered a bit. "Nah. Sounds nice, but I have other stuff to attend to. Maybe you could go with Mijin," Hyunseok suggested with carelessness and feigned ignorance to the obvious attraction. It earned him blooming crimson chrysanthemums on Jinsung's cheeks. Smirking and wiggling his eyebrows teasingly, he snickered and ruffled his schoolmate's hair after giving a playful nudge. In turn, he growled and smacked Hyungseok's hand. Immediately after, however, he scanned the classroom to find Mijin's eyes staring at him with slight disapproval. Hastily, he massaged his victim's palm and apologized, oblivious to the fact that she was grinning at how much power and influence she had over him. Jinsung was a fighter at heart, but he gradually grew soft and welcoming due to the effect Mijin had over him. It was quite a sight to see, a brute boxer become so weak to his romantic fantasies. Although, if you let that get to your head, it would end up being pummeled by swift knuckles.

Patting him on the back, Hyungseok signaled Jinsung to ask her. Nodding in confirmation, he decided to take his classmate's two cents and practiced his proposal under his breath. A slow grin took its place on Hyunseok's mouth before he went to rest a bit before leaving. His breathing matched the pace to the clock's seconds. Tick, in. Tock, out. Something gently pushed his shoulder. Tick, in. Tock, out. Something gently pushed his shoulder. Tick, in. Tock, out. Somehow finding enough energy, he shoved back and grumbled. Tick, in. Tock, out. It didn't seem to understand that he wasn't really active at the moment. Tick, in. Tock, out. Consistency and strong-will can be great aspects to a person, but it was not such an amazing thing at the moment. Perhaps if he stayed silent, it would eventually let him be in his tranquility. Tick, in. Tock, out.

"Hyungsok...."

It was a light, melodic sound with a bit of a rough edge to it. It wrapped itself around his ear and tempted him into comforting sleep. Soft, graceful fingers, with caution, weaved its way through his hair, toying with the ends. The gesture spread a feeling of peace. Hyungsok's mind tapped out and threw out his worries. He wished to stay like this forever, letting the unknown entity take care of him as he slept. At least, for a little while....

Then he snapped. No, he mustn't less he wanted to pick up his limp body later. Scanning the classroom, he came to see that the crowded students had dispersed into mere dust floating in the air, vacant and quiet except for an accompanying quiet breath and aura of fear and guilt. Turning his head towards it, he came to see an apologetic Jaeyeol bowing down furiously, keeping his face covered with his hands.
"Ah! No need to worry, Jae, I was just a little tired. Stop it, I needed to get up and going anyway. You were actually a help; I should be the one saying sorry." Hyungseok attempted to reassure him. No words had escaped his lips, but Hyungseok just knew what he was meaning to say. Sometimes they passed inaudible conversations. It was as there was an invisible connection between them. Through this tufts of hair, Jaeyeol bore his covered eyes into his friend's. Hyungseok was taken back.

"Come over to your place? I don't want to be a bother," he argued trying to turn down the offer without making it seem like he despised the idea. Honestly, he did think of what they could do together alone with only each other to please. It was a shower thought that came and went often. However, this wasn't a great time. "You're probably busy. Don't let me sink in the feeling of violating your time."

A sudden pang went through him. It caught in his lungs and throat. "O-Okay." Hyungseok sighed, giving up. "However, I'll need to head back home and get my stuff. We'll just share clothes? Fine."

Organizing and gathering his stuff, he went off with Jaeyeol leading. Possibly, if Hyungseok had seen Jaeyeol's face, he would have been concerned, but it was masked to hide an impossibly bright scarlet gradually appearing.

"Y-You have a very nice space." Hyungseok managed to stutter out in his state of shock. All of the money his mother and he earned in a lifetime wouldn’t even able to buy an eighth of the building Jaeyeol had called home. Realization struck him as he took in his clothing that he changed into earlier, the ones that his friend had given him. How much did these cost? His home a piece? He didn't feel like himself anymore. Consciously, he tugged at his sleeves and hid his hands, chewing them out of habit before spitting it out. They probably cost a thousand meals. A sudden wave engulfed him all at once. They were working vigorously to calm his guilty flame. As expected, Jaeyeol was looking straight at him with a reassuring grin that said, "No worries." Hyungseok pouted, but reluctantly nodded in understanding and began biting on his sleeves again.

Honestly, in Jae's perspective, he gave off the appearance of an innocent child. Tossing the idea of his friend as an infant, Jaeyeol smiled to himself. Wouldn't he look cute? He continued to lead his guest up to the top floor that gave you the view of the city for miles. Every morning, he gazed out for a few moments before starting his day. It was breathtaking to see the sky spark like a warm hearth and people moving in and out at early dawn when it was still quiet. Yet, he could never feel the warmth of sunlight at those times. The AC beat him cold. Either that or the emptiness of his home. Sometimes he shivered in the corner alone contemplating, weeping, giggling, it all depended on the stability of his mind. A firm grip grasped his shoulder. Jaeyeol peered up to see Hyungseok's face painted with consternation.

"You okay?" he asked, his words laced with unease. Timidly, he gnawed on his bottom lip. "Do you not want me to stay anymore? I can leave."

A rush of panic went through Jae. Frantically, he waved his hands while shaking his head in dismay. By his own will, he hoped to pay back his mistake of trespassing boundaries. He could feel his heart clench up. Why could he never portray the right message?

Showing a shy grin, Hyungseok gestured to convince that he had it sent to him. "Alright, alright. I'll
Relief wrapped its arms around Jaeyeol as he exhaled a heavy breath that had somehow became trapped in his esophagus. He yearned to spoil and please his friend. The thought occurred even more often nowadays. Selfishly, he wanted Hyungseok for himself. Since young, he wanted, needed a close someone by his side. Now that he has one, he’s willing to do everything to keep him there in his possession.

They kicked off their shoes when they entered the living quarters and climbed their way to Jaeyeol's room. It was eerily hushed. No signs of humanity or it ever being occupied were shown. The walls were white and bare, stripped of photographs or paintings. They were smooth and free of marks or stains, but, Hyungseok discovered as he ran a finger over the surface, there was a thin layer of dust resting upon them. Spring was calm warm that cradled you motherly, however, it felt like a frigid winter in here. Not the kind where the lithe snow pirouetted in the air gracefully as Jack Frost gave you kisses on your cheek, but the cruel being that whipped you for the tiniest of things and ruled like a bored, sadistic tyrant.

Clawing Jaeyeol’s sweater closer to his body, Hyungseok asked, “Where are your parents?”

Instantly, he regretted the phrase ever coming out.

As if the cold had frozen him, Jaeyeol stilled at the top of the stairs with his head bowed down. A whisper seeped from loneliness’s mouth and dripped onto the floor like teardrops.

“B-Business trip I presume?”

Loneliness began to chant louder, crushing Hyungseok’s skull as it squeezed harder and shrieked in his ear.

“A-Ah. I see,” was all he could say as he followed his host up the stairs once more.

His room was probably larger than his own living space. A glass wall faced towards the east where the sun would peek into as it rose in the sky to start the day. The bed sheets would have shone a metallic light against their silver hue. Like everything else, they were extremely neat as if Jae didn't sleep in them at all. What if he has eye bags under his bangs? Hyungseok fretted, What if he's exhausted and doesn't desire me to be here? He didn't want to assume claims in a situation he didn't understand about, but if he could just run his hand through Jaeyeol' hair and see his eyes, he would be content. Jaeyeol was somebody he could put his faith in; someone he has grown close to. He would like to keep him there, right next to his heart.

His thoughts were cut off as he felt an object bump into him. Peering down, all of his negativity rushed away. He petted the furry being next to him just to be attacked by three more.

"I see you've been taking good care of the pups." Hyungseok laughed as one of them licked his cheek. "They've grown-up well. Then again, they were in your care."

A feeling of pride warmed his skin from the freezing interior. It was parent-like as if a father had the honor to watch his children achieve something worthwhile. Naturally, a parent also bragged about his talented children's accomplishments. Rolling his eyes, Hyungseok stood up and let Jaeyeol's so-called "kids" frolic with each other. However, they clung onto him. Giving in, the two teenagers showered the dogs in endless love while exchanging words. It was pleasant to be together without
anyone else. Just comforting quiet, save the pets’ barking, and the blessing of each other's company.
Growing weary of the pets, Jaeyeol herded them out of the room so it could just be the two of them in privacy. Crawling onto the bed, they found an agreeable position to lay down in. Hyungseok draped himself over Jae's back and hugged his stomach. It was similar to cuddling with a large teddy bear. He also gazed lifelessly with a permanent expression like one. Staring and staring at the window, observing the city so crowded and problematic. The atmosphere became empty and moping. Frowning, Hyungseok nuzzled into the crook of Jaeyeol’s neck and pouted. “Look at me.”

So he did, intensely with the pressure of millions of unnameable emotions. Viewing him so close, Hyungseok became aware of little details he hadn't been exposed to before. The pronunciation of his friend’s jaw, his high nose, the way you could see his eyes without seeing them, and his plush lips. Hot air escaped through them and heated his cheeks and tempted him to…

Distance instantly separated them as Hyungseok depleted such ridiculous thoughts. This is Jae, he chided to himself, a person with his own life and preferences, and a kind acquaintance if nothing more.

Fearfully, he chanced to see Jaeyeol’s reaction. Delusionally, he believed he saw a greedy hand reach out to summon him, but it was soberly by the owner’s side. It instead offered refreshments lazily.

“J-Juice?” He stammered pathetically.

Taking the instructions given to him, he fetched a bottle from the mini fridge and downed it, attempting to clear his head. There was a sharp tang to it and choked his breath. Pain pierced his skull. Stinging coals charred his skin and sizzled when sweat doused it. His eyes lolled back into a blind state. Realization struck him as he coughed it out and the contents splattered on the ground and dribbled down his chin like crimson blood.

Jaeyeol cupped Hyungseok’s cheeks with shaking hands. The dark liquid bubbled and popped, staining his shirt, but he barely took notice; the stench of alcohol clouded in his face. Hastily, he began wiping the hazardous substance with his sleeve until his wrist was forced back in an iron grip. His head slammed against the wall and his sight was disorientated spinning him around in a complicated dance he didn’t know the steps to.

“It’s really good,” Hyungseok slurred, ending the statement with a drunken hiccup. His pupils dilated as he pushed on closer to his victim. With a haggard breath, he murmured, dripping with charisma like wine, “Why don’t you have a taste?”
I was just too excited. If there is anything that seems off-grammar, uncompleted sentences-feel free to point it out. I hope you enjoy this chapter!

P.S. Happy Birthday to Chen from EXO (not a fan yet, but I am eager to see what EXO has to offer! Currently working on his birthday fanart)

Potent alcohol flavored his saliva as he rushed into him. By wanting instinct, Jaeyeol raked his fingers through Hyungseok's disheveled hair and yanked it when the feeling of pleasure rolled over him. He had never known how much he yearned for him until now. He indulged in the taste of him, more fine than any wine. How could this drink be so addictive? It made him drunk and caused his head to swim. Moans escaped his lips as his company sucked mercilessly on them. It took all of his efforts to resist to reciprocate the action. Sure hands skimmed over his skin and roamed over his toned back, taking claim to its territory. They ripped the edges of his shirt and dared to expose him.

The chilled air snapped Jaeyeol out of his hypnosis. This isn't right, taking advantage of a terrible situation to fulfill your lust; this was supposed to be an apology of fractured personal space, not further violation. He shoved Hyungseok away in a direction far from him. He received a dazed and confused look that turned to pure aggression.

"Why?" Hyungseok clamped his hand on his victim's jaw ruthlessly and stared him down with arrogance. "You want this; am I wrong?"

Jaeyeol slapped the hand out of his face and stood dignified. This wasn't his friend. His friend wouldn't dare to do such acts as choosing his opinions.

"No need to be harsh." The imposter growled. He put his arm around Jae and jerked him closer. "You owe me a favor, remember?"

I owe a favor to my classmate, Hyungseok, not a drunk swine.

Jaeyeol attempted to escape again but was found unable to move. His limbs were trapped by a foreign pair that clung onto him like vines. They took over every inch of his skin, becoming familiar with the feeling of every curve and edge. They wound around especially constricted around his hips. It throbbed, but it, shamefully, felt a little good. Jaeyeol was disgusted with himself. How did he come into a situation where he was suddenly treated like a powerless sex toy?

His chin was forcefully lifted, abandoning his neck bare to sin. Heat spread where a shameless tongue ran over his virgin skin. It made him shiver. Hyungseok sunk his teeth into his flesh, brutally. Sucking in a breath, he clamped his hands on his predator's arms and desperately worked to keep his composure. He wouldn't dream of giving in. However, it was a difficult bet to make when so many intoxicating kisses were laid on your throat that was bound to show love marks. Each time, his captor's mouth would suck his sensitive throat raw and run his teeth recklessly over the area before moving on to the next area. And each time, they lingered longer and were more forceful than the last, not satisfied with the lack of reaction. Make a noise. Gasp my name.
Hyungseok’s hand caressed Jaeyeol’s nape. Slowly, Hyungseok placed a kiss at the base of his throat. He licked a path up Jaeyeol’s neck and pressed his lips hard onto his partner’s pair. He felt a hand run through and grip his hair tightly, but no sound escaped his stubborn prey.

So, he took another path.

Gently, a change of personality, lips caressed Jaeyeol's collarbone and massaged its proclaimed lover's epidermis until it reached the edge of his jawline. It teasingly nicked and rubbed it affectionately, or was it protectively as if taking claim to its entity? The action set off a trigger. Jaeyeol reluctantly let a sigh pour out. His nerves tingled at the sensation. Such a foreign and wondrous touch. He could feel the stretch of a smirk on his bruised skin. So much for resisting. Hands climbed up the back of his head and eased it forward. The gesture was familiar and light, not the foreign roughness that pushes him around earlier. He was met with electrifying eyes, and for a second, he saw his friend, Hyungseok, again, and it made his thoughts wander to forbidden places. Perhaps it was a false front, but suddenly, he couldn’t think logically.

What if Hyungseok had been aware of what he was doing? Trailing hickeys across his neck that told every onlooker that he was his, strolling along the thin line that led to his insanity and temptations…

Despite all reason, his head subconsciously gravitated closer to the scent of a drunken breath. Daintily, he laid his plush lips onto a flavored pair. They, in turn, gasped in delight and victory. Slowly, they worked on their partner's bottom lip, nibbling it almost timidly. Gathering courage, they played a second attempted at their game. Hyungseok's tongue pushed through a weak barrier and invaded the territory with no hesitation. A pleased moan confirmed access. Jaeyeol pressed himself tighter against Hyungseok's body. Startled hands gripped Jaeyeol’s thighs to keep their being from falling. How can something so sinful feel like heaven?

Humidity and heat condensed into the air.

Moist clothes stuck to wet skin.

Bittersweet alcohol passed between eager tongues.

Hot, desperate gasps overtook the quiet.

Yet, it still wasn’t enough.

Jaeyeol temporarily broke the dizzying spell to yank Hyungseok’s shirt down and bite down into soft flesh. A sharp intake vibrated off the walls. Nails dug themselves into Jae’s back and his neck was tickled by a pleasured sigh. The signals barely registered in his brain. His head pounded and swirled, overcome with longing, adrenaline, and wine. His limbs moved at their own accord being free of a sober control. He swiped his tongue over Hyungseok’s lips, licking away the last of the alcohol, and gave them a little nip. They tasted like dirty bliss. Jaeyeol brushed his lips against Hyungseok’s skin until he found his ear. “Where did all the dominance go?” he whispered. He ran his thumb over Hyungseok’s lips before slipping it into their mouth. He could hear his partner gag.

He didn’t know what he was doing or why. All reason left him, likely replaced with tipsy confusion. However, he did know one thing: He wanted Hyungseok bad.

He went to make another move, but was pushed back and found himself trapped within a human cage on the bed. Hyungseok smirked from above. “Try me.”

Jaeyeol kissed him once before impatiently pulling off Hyungseok’s sweater. He gladly complied. His chest was wide and fair and, most importantly, unmarked. Jaeyeol ran his finger over
Hyungseok’s chest before adding butterfly kisses onto the blank canvas. To his eyes, he had created beautiful strokes of maroon, love, and recklessness. Suddenly, he was engulfed by strong arms. They brought him up to a passionate mouth. Jaeyeol wrapped his arms around Hyungseok’s neck as he surrendered to him, savoring the newfound sweetness now that the wine was licked clean off. Hyungseok kept a steady hand on Jae’s back, but his heart was pounding and unstable. He slid his hand under his partner’s shirt and rubbed his spine in slow circles. The skin below Hyungseok’s fingertips were set aflame. He pressed on harder into Jaeyeol until fireflies danced across his vision. Then, he came to the conclusion that it wasn’t fair for him to be the only one shirtless. He wrenched Jaeyeol’s top of and threw it to some area of the room. Hesitating, he didn’t want to get too cocky, he let his hands roam all over Jaeyeol’s body. It was pure, ignoring the fresh hickeys, and smooth. It was also quite lean and built. Hyungseok could trace the lines of a strong abdominal area. He heard Jaeyeol gasp under his touch when he reached the bottom curve of his backbone.

“Wait,” Jaeyeol panted. He gripped Hyungseok’s hand in its place. “Keep touching me there.”

“Oh? Like this?” Hyungseok slipped his palm farther down and under the fabric of Jaeyeol’s pants and grasped. The entity under him began to tense and tighten up. “You bastard.”

“In all honesty,” Hyungseok taunted, “You have no room to talk. Literally. I’m occupying it.”

He pushed his tongue back into Jaeyeol’s mouth before a word could escape. He felt his head being pulled down harder. To keep his place, he began to suck on a battling tongue. In turn, Jaeyeol emitted a low moan vibrating from his throat. It made Hyungseok’s skin crawl.

If Hyungseok had been his right self, he would have stopped to become a stuttering, pitiful tomato, but he wasn’t. He was an alcohol-driven Hyungseok, and all he wanted to do has taste every flavor his lover had to offer. Annoyingly, however, he felt Jaeyeol let go.

A string of saliva was the only thing that still kept their mouths connected.

“Hyungseok...” Jaeyeol whispered. He curled black tufts of hair as an attempt to brace himself. He peered into Hyungseok’s expectant eyes before and took a breath before daring to say, “D-Do you really love me?”

Hyungseok blinked. “Pardon?”

With more force, Jaeyeol repeated, “Do you really love me? Or is this all a ruse?”

It took a few minutes to decipher the meaning of the question - Hyungseok didn’t understand why it was necessary to ask this. Quickly, he shook the bewilderment off his face. He cupped Jaeyeol’s cheek. “What makes you question?”

“Hyungseok-” Jaeyeol coughed, his voice was hoarse from little use, “ Don’t joke around. I-I want to know if this is really you; if you're doing this because you love me, not because of some stupid alcoholic influence. That-” his tone became quiet, “That you’re not using me.”

He could feel Hyungseok flinch but immediately relax afterward.

“Oh, Jaeyeol,” he sighed, “I may be ignorant enough to confuse champagne with soda, but I know enough to know that alcohol just makes you feel more strongly of an emotion that you already feel.”

He gave a light chaste kiss. “I truly do love you.”
Jaeyeol let the tension that was in his bones flow free. He rocked his head back and laughed maniacally. He felt tears run down his face which only served to make him laugh more. He didn’t even know why anymore. Why did he doubt? Why was he afraid? Why was this damned wine doing this to his head?

He felt a tongue lick his tears away.

Hyungseok nestled his head into the crook of Jaeyeol’s neck before muttering, “Don’t cry. That’s a real turn-off.”

Jaeyeol couldn’t turn his giggle off. “Love you, too.”

However, it never reached Hyungseok’s ears. The wine had finally taken him over and knocked him out.

In this state, he seemed so much more vulnerable. If Jaeyeol was desperate enough, he could do whatever he pleased with him. A bruised, alluring porcelain doll was laid out for him to play.

Yet, he was just too tired. All he wanted to do was sleep. He hugged Hyungseok closer to his chest - he felt so warm - and let his dreams take him to unknown places.

Places that always had Hyungseok by his side.

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Hyungseok’s eyes flew up to stare at an unsanitary ceiling. He could feel a fire blazing on his cheeks as his newly, unforgettable brain, recounted every. Single. Dishonorable. Moment.

Slowly, he got up. He rummaged around until he could find a pencil and pads of paper. The supplies lay organized on the floor.

Then, he set his pencil down and proceeded to write a ten-page apology.
The next chapter is a work-in-progress at the moment. It seems to be taking much longer than I had first thought it to be. I am over 1100 words and not even halfway into the plot for the chapter. Therefore, I will need more time. To amend, I will fill it in with a side project I had created when talking with one of my friends, the origin of this fanfic, about angst when the first chapter was underway and the title of this story hadn’t been decided. However, the reason behind the angst and the details I used aren’t specified. There is no valid reason why everything is happening. So, I would like to see what you guys think. Hope you suffer!

It was difficult to differentiate cries from rain.

Tears stained the front of his shirt as he stared at the crippled, helpless form in front of him.

"H-Hyungseok..." he whimpered, "I need you..."

Wrapping his arms around him and patting his hair to soothe him, he whispered sweet nothings through the frigid air. "It's okay, Jaeyeol," Hyungseok promised, "I'll never leave you."

"T-Thank you." He wept. "T-Thank you for never abandoning me like they did, for not h-hurting me, for u-understanding-"

His lips were sealed as sweet, plush ones over lapped his.

"It's not me," Hyungseok chuckled a little to himself. His eyes bore into Jaeyeol's soul, touching him deeper than anyone else could have tried. Gradually and intimately, he planted kisses on Jaeyeol's forehead, nose, lips, and lingered a bit longer on his throat. Snuggling into the crook of his neck, Hyungseok breathed the scent of his beloved and exhaled, "You saved me."

Carefully, as if he were fragile glass, sucked at his lover's neck before whispering, "I love you."

Tugging him closer, for his affection and for his comforting warmth, Jaeyeol nodded silently and sighed out, "I love you, too."

Hyungseok pushed him away slowly and played with his sleeve, asking inaudibly for permission. Jaeyeol didn't hesitate to nod. He could trust him. He could put as much as all the betrayal he felt by others who were supposed to love him. Inhaling in preparation, Hyungseok revealed one of Jae's darkest secrets tattooed along his forearm. Writing of hatred for such a child and years of despise and belief of the slate being worthless decorated with slashes of belt marks. There was no bare skin freed of sin. Reading them, it broke Hyungseok's heart to pieces one by one as each letter was displayed before him. Jaeyeol felt a streams of water flowing down his arm, not by rain. He wiped his partner's cheek with a familiar hand and smiled a broken smile. Hyungseok brushed it aside and went down to give assurance to each statement written across on his loved one's wrist down to the segment between his forearm and bicep. Shuddering in bittersweet joy, Jaeyeol flung himself onto Hyungseok and willed himself not to cry. They kneeled in the rain embracing each other, feeling the blessing of
just having the other one. Hyungseok examined his own wrist that wore one lonely statement smudged by the rain. *You will never find love.* He wiped it away and chided to himself, *I already found it.*

Chapter End Notes

There’s also something I’ve been thinking about: Should I hold a Q&A? This fanfic isn’t that popular, but I found the idea intriguing. However, I want actual questions. If there are at least 10, I will go with it (posted on Wattpad[same title, same username] since AO3 does not allow reader-author interactions) If there is less, I will answer them in the comments, but not make a separate note to share with the rest of the readers and delete this notice. Anyway, thank you for your patience for readers still continuing on with me! I will post the teaser for the next chp. soon.
A lot of depressing matters led up to this day such as Kim Jonghyun of SHINee’s death. Let’s try to keep those time in our memories but continue to find joy for those affected by it and for ourselves. I hope this chapter will bring a smile on you right faces!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Jaeyeol!” Hyungseok placed the last ornament on the tree. “You think this is alright?”

“Anything you do is more than alright. Perfection to say the least.”

Hyungseok scoffed. “Stopped honeying your words and actually look!”

Laughing, he went over to inspect it. “It looks great, but what are you getting all riled up for? It’s just a tree.”

“A Christmas tree, for your information.” He, sitting on the living room floor, tilted the gift boxes a little here and there. “We’re also having guest, remember?”

“Yes. Those guests are our friends who couldn’t care less of what it looks like.”

“Stop ruining my fun.”

Jaeyeol kisses his beloved’s temple before planting them on his pouty lips. “I’m sorry. Look, I’ll help out.” He said as he took a wreath out of a nearby box and placed it on Hyungseok’s head. “Beautiful! Simply a masterpiece!”

Hyungseok batted it of his head before giving Jaeyeol a slap on the wrist.

He wanted this to be special. After all, even though there would be more people along with them, it this was their first Christmas as a couple.

The room had an aroma of gingerbread cookies, that they finally managed to make after burning them, and themselves, countless times, and Jack Frost blew on the windows a soft, snowy display on the windows. They kept the lights dim to encourage the glow of their artificial fireplace which was adorned by stockings with their friends’ names and garlands. How wonderfully Christmasy the atmosphere felt already without the laughter of company. Something’s missing. Hyungseok pondered a bit. But what?

“Oh! How could I forget?” Hyungseok rummaged around for a small red bag. Reaching in, he found the missing puzzle piece: Mistletoe.

Smirking to himself, he scanned the room for his partner. He was citygazing through the full-length window where the world below glistened with ice and beauty. A wonderful backdrop for a flawless embrace. Almost childishy giddy, Hyungseok ran over and stuck the mistletoe onto the glass. Jaeyeol flinched, startled, and whipped his head to the culprit. Hyungseok met his eyes and feigned ignorance. “Where did that come from?”
Jaeyeol quirked his eyebrow up. *Fine,* he thought, *I’ll play your game.* He leaned in and wrapped his arms around his lover’s waist. “No idea. You know what it means?”

Discontent flashed upon Hyungseok’s face but left just as quickly. He will not let his kiss be stolen. He tangled his arms around Jaeyeol’s neck and brushed his mouth over his cheek. Dropping his voice he whispered, “I’ve heard a few things.” He ran his fingers through the curls that collected at his boyfriend’s neck. He could feel goosebumps rising on the skin beneath his touch. A tight squeeze constricted around his waist.

“What kind of things?” Jaeyeol said as he slipped his hand under Hyungseok’s sweater and rubbed slow circles on his bare back. It was sizzling against his cool palm. It made Jaeyeol pull Hyungseok closer. *Dammit, I’m loosing.*

“These kind of things.” *I win, you cocky piece of crap.*

He pressed his lips against Jaeyeol’s before he could say any more. He happily obliged and let himself slip into the kiss. It took all his restraint to keep himself from sighing too much between Hyungseok’s biting and yanking. He swiped his tongue over hungry lips and pushed it deep into his lover’s mouth, savoring the taste of him. He didn’t if he could’ve stopped if Hyungseok hadn’t pushed him away to take a breath.

“You’re a little needy today, huh?” Hyungseok traced his lips with his finger and let it fall. He lay a kiss on the base of Jaeyeol’s throat. He could feel his lover’s Adam’s bob as he swallowed. Bringing his mouth back to appease him, he murmured against his lips, “Not that I mind.”

He closed his eyes and began to melt into him again.

At least, he would’ve if they hadn’t been so rudely interrupted by the sounding of a doorbell.

“**I’ll get that.”** Hyungseok recovered first. He detached himself with ease, but could still feel the lingering touches of his partner.

Jaeyeol’s head was forever spinning. He hugged his torso in an attempt to keep Hyungseok’s warmth with him. He sighed. *I need that again.*

His desperate thoughts were cut off as the comfortable quiet of his home was immediately replaced with cheerful noise. Suddenly, he was lifted off the ground.

“Merry Christmas, Jae!” Vasco exclaimed with his usual youth-like brightness in his eyes, ignorant that Hyungseok was in the middle of marking the person he was hugging just a moment ago.

“Merry Christmas.” Jaeyeol coughed out, barely able move under his friend’s crushing grip. *Geez, did he triple the difficulties of his workout routine?*

“You’re going to kill him.” Mijin laughed as walked with Jinsung’s arm around her shoulders. “Santa’s going to put you on the Naughty list.”

Vasco hastily dropped and patted down Jaeyeol who took in full, gasping breaths. Bum Jae, who was practically covered by his friend’s hulking stature just shook his head and said in a tired manner, “I told you to be careful.”

“Sorry, sorry.”

“He’ll live.” Jinsung said. “I was attacked by the big guy’s bear hug, too remember? Surprisingly not dead.” He rubbed his arms and shuddered. “Thank God. It was a Christmas miracle.”
“Lay off of him.” Hyungseok scolded and popped a gingerbread cookie into Jinsung’s mouth. All he got in turn was a shrug and a mumble that suspiciously sounded like, “To be honest.”

Sighing, he waved everyone away from the doorway and towards the fireplace. “Just set your gifts down and make yourselves at home.”

They plopped their presents into the respective person’s stocking. Well, Vasco attempted to. Hyungseok swore each gift was five feet tall. That’s going to be fun to unwrap.

“That’s a pretty dope Christmas tree.” Bum Jae noticed, gesturing towards it. “Excellent décormanship if I do say so myself, a member of the architect department.”

Hyungseok whipped his head towards Jaeyeol and mouthed an “I told you so.”

A rude tongue was what he got in reply.

He chuckled and stuck a cookie into his mouth. He walked over to his stubborn dear and nudged the dessert against his lips. After a few stubborn seconds, Jaeyeol reluctantly accepted it and grabbed the treats with his teeth.

Smiling in victory, he turned to his friends who were either gushing about the scene or blushing in embarrassment. With bravado, he announced, “Let the party begin.” Then with a wink, he added, “There’s mistletoe.”

Chapter End Notes

As you can see, this was a last minute decision, but Merry Christ-Mass all you hoe hoe hoes!

(Happy early birthday to Sana of Twice and Taehyung of BTS if I am not able to post the new chapter at the time of their dates!)

P.S. The Q&A is still going! I will be accepting questions until the end of the book. To spice things up, you can even ask the Lookism characters! Remember, 10 questions and the Q&A is a done deal (totally not desperate hA. I really don’t want to start an event like this so that it could not happen.)
I know I'm probably one of the worst authors you have ever come aware of, and I'm terribly sorry. After a 2(?) month hiatus, I'm happy to say I finally got the chapter done to share with you! All the readers who left, once again, I'm sorry; all the readers who stayed, thank you. I'm sending all the love in the world to you! Without any more waiting, here is chapter V of Bittersweet!

Hyungseok has never felt so violated before until now as he sat under the class’s gaze.

i’m uNcOmfOrTaBLE.

He wished to become one with the table. He turned his head to the left and saw a few grils staring at his nEcK. The boy put it higher up his face like that one kid in that anime nArUUuToOoO.

“BRO.” Jinsung smaked his a$$ on the seat next to him. “WHY YOU LOOK DIE?”

Hyungseok groaned in reply. “BECAUSE ME AM DIE, BRO.”

Jinsung put his hand on his friend’s shoulder. “Bro, do you need a bro?”

“Bro, does said mans even care?”

“hA,” Jinsung scoffed, “bro, nO.”

“bInCH,” Hyunseok slapped his classmate’s phALanGes away from him. “Don’t touch me i’m prEssED.”

Then an awkward silence filled the air.

Everyone’s eyes moved in unison to oNe dIreCTioN.

Hyungseok turned, too, and gApED.

IS HE.

exPossSSED.

Imma finna slAP aNotHER biNCH toDaY. Hyunseok thought angrily as he yANkEd Jaeyeol out of the room.

He inhaled. “bOI.” He pointed his palms at the blonde. “What are you thinking?”

Jaeyeol snAppED his head to the side. I got thE gOoD stUff to sober you up m8

He lifted a bag filled with hangover medicine.

“You know what I’m talking about, baSstUrd; don’t pLayY!” Hyungseok fInessEd the drugs and
Jaeyeol rolled his eyes like this angsty teens who always say “It’s NOT A PHASE.” “Why does it matter? You think these tHots ever remember who fUks with who? Bet 50% of the class ain’t straight BET. HAVE YOU SEEN THE WAY BUM JAE LOOKS AT VASCO?!”

Hyungseok laughed in disbelief. “Why does it matter? Other than these hypocritical tHots, there’s also society’s hOeS. They’ll snAtCh our @s$es!”

“But hYUnSeOK,” Jaeyeol cried, “You said you lOvED ME!11! If you loved me, you wouldn’t care what those hOeS said! I DUN BELIEVE YOU!”

“JAEYEOL NO!” Hyunseok slid across the floor and latched onto Jae’s feet. “I didn’t mean it that way. I just don’t know how to deal with my ragÎnG gAY hoRmOnes!!”

“Imma teach you then, bInCH.” Jaeyeol wacked Hyunseok across the face. “You and me is going on a date!”

Hyungseok’s eyes widened. “WAIT WHAT IM STUPID THO-”

“WE GUN DO IT.” Jaeyeol picked Hyungseok up and shouted in his face, “HAN RIVER LETS GoooOOOOOOOo.”

[After]

Hyunseok stopped dead in his tracks as he say Jaeyeol in all his hOt dAmN gloRY.

“And,” he swallowed where to- “jAeE is THat HYunSEOk?!?!”

Jaeyeol and Hyungseok winced in unison. This muTHaFukinG tHOt.

“hIT mE UP on sOMe Hot mANs im coMinG wiTh yOU!” Jae Hye shrieked as she attached herself to Hyungseok’s arm like a parasite. Hyungseok looked at the sky. God, what did I do to deserve this?

Chapter End Notes

Merry April Fools, bitches.

Anyway, I am seriously trying to get the next chapter done and I’m just going to say it is looonnnngg (5500+ words and counting). It mentions tweaks I have made in the first chapter, so as a heads up, when the next update finalizes, look at Chp. L first before moving to Chp. V! Last announcement: Q&A still going, so if you have any questions of me or the characters of Lookism, comment them below and I’ll be posting the answers on Wattpad!

In all seriousness, I’m so blessed to have you guys. I will work harder!
End Notes

I hope you enjoyed it! This work is planned to have at least three chapters and a crack version (don't ask on how that happened). So, I anticipate that you continue reading it.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!