Sparkling Cherry Blossoms and...Steaming Pirozhki?!

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**Summary**

Harry Potter—disappointment, failure, Squib. Those are the words he grew up hearing whispered in ballrooms and lavish salons by his father's contemporaries. Even so, Harry will prove to himself and all his naysayers that you don't need magic to fly. All you need is time, dedication, and a good pair of ice skates.

**Notes**

To get all the legal stuff out of the way:

Disclaimer: The author owns neither the Harry Potter characters/universe, nor any materials relating to either the Ouran High School Host Club or the Yuri!! On Ice series (both anime...
and manga). I'd hope that would be a given, but...you know. Gotta cover my broke arse.

ALSO, in case this being under M/M didn't make it clear:

Warnings: This story contains homosexual relationships. I would hope, at this point, that this wasn't something that necessitated a warning, but there you are. It also will include lots, and lots, and lots of snarky, snarly, cussing Harry being an adorable curmudgeon. It is, also, a MASSIVE AU (which should be a given, considering which three genres I'm smooshing together).

SO. I've been posting this exclusively to my FB author's page, but am now posting here, thanks to Silencia20's encouragement. So, if you like this (and I hope you do), please make sure to thank her, too.

See the end of the work for more notes.
Chapter One

Chapter Summary

Introducing: Skating Wonderkind and Grumpcake Extraordinaire, Harry Potter

Chapter Notes

This is 100% created for fun.

There may be alternative spellings of names/surnames. There may be moments of bizarre OOC...though, I'll try to keep those reasonable. I just wanted to see if I could combine these universes in a way that felt realistic, but with minimal angst.

Pii-pii! Pii-pii! Pii-pii!

Harry twitched in his sleep, aggressively burrowing his face into his downy pillow. His nose wrinkled as the sharp end of a goose feather poked through the thin fabric, stabbing painfully into the bridge of his nose.

Pii-pii-pii! Pii-pii-pii! Pii-pii-pii!

Grumbling under his breath, Harry slowly turned to peer through scrunched eyes at his chirping phone. The screen flashed an obnoxiously cheerful pink with every chime.

Pii-pii-piiBZZZT! Pii-pii-piiBZZZT! Pii-pii-piiBZZZT!

Harry glowered as his phone all but hopped along the bedside table with every vibrating chime. He resisted the urge to toss the sleep-ruining little shit-cock against the wall. He'd already shattered two phones doing that, and he was pretty sure his papa would be less than impressed if he went three for three. A few deft strokes of his thumb, and the chirping-buzzing alarm fell silent. At last. Phone still clutched in his sleepy death-grip, Harry weighed the pros and cons of just tumbling back into his blanket pile.
Pro: Sleep.

Con: He'd probably manage three minutes before his papa came tumbling into his room, urging him to get up and get dressed.

Pro: Sleep.

Con: He'd been having The Bread Dream, again. It wasn't even that he gave two shits about bread, in general, but having denied himself anything remotely glutenous—including wheat pastas, and fuck did he miss Italian food—for so long had apparently had strange effects on his psyche.

Pro: Sleep.

Con: His Coach had been chirping at him for goddamn WEEKS about a “Super-special surprise, just for you~” that he had set up for today. He didn't actually give a fuck if he made the man wait, but on the off-chance the surprise was worth his time...

Harry was hunched over his phone, not really even seeing it, teetering on the verge of flopping back onto his mattress when his bedroom door was flung open. His father, dressed in his favorite apron—a frilly, peach, beribboned monstrosity his mother had given him on a lark—flounced into the room.

“Rise and shine, Bambi~!”

Green eyes gleamed with the promise of death and despair from under his mop of black hair. His papa, not even phased, flashed him a toothy grin, lifting his hand to show off the Godly Tribute he'd been hiding.

“I have a thermos of coffee all ready to go.”

His phone fell out of his hand and onto his lap as his hands shot out to grasp at the thermos.

“Gimme.”

“Nope~! Not until you get up and get dressed. It's already half-seven, and you need to eat before you go.”
Harry sulked, still reaching for the coffee. “No, I don’t.”

“You do if you want to be allowed to compete, Bambi.”

Papa lifted a finger to interrupt him before a single word of protest—if you could call the f-bomb hovering at the edge of his tongue “a word of protest”—could pass his lips. “I mean it. You keep skipping out on eating to practice, I’ll bench you...not just for a week, but for this entire season.”

“The fu—it’s my senior debut.”

“I know it is, which is why you best mind me, little fawn~!”

He flopped back onto his mattress in a sulk. He wasn't even hungry, but he knew his papa was serious, for all that he was chirping at him like Idiot-sensei. “Fine. You win. Now gimme my coffee.”

“I want to see you UP and dressed first, young man.”

Harry groaned, rolling off his mattress and onto unsteady feet. He snatched up his phone—he had five Instagram notices to check, apparently—stumbling toward his bathroom. Fifteen minutes of feet dragging and grumbling later, he dropped into his seat at the breakfast table. At long last, his papa plopped the promised thermos of Heaven's Nectar in front of him. Ignoring the bowl of Greek yogurt with honey, dried fruit and walnuts—his favorite—Harry reached for the blessed caffeine.

A large, heavy hand plopped down onto the top, fingers wrapping around the twist-off lid. Harry didn't even have to lift his eyes to feel his papa staring him down. “I want to see you put at least three bites into you before you touch this thermos, Harry James...three BIG bites.”

Fighting back a scowl, he sunk back into his seat, reluctantly picking up his spoon and shoveling a massive bite of his lovingly-prepared breakfast into his mouth. He let out a little involuntary hum—it really was good, and his papa had apparently added a bit of dark molasses into the mixture, this time.

“Good, right?” Harry scowled, his cheeks puffing out with his yogurty melange, at the smug tone in his papa's voice.
James smiled. “Do you like the molasses? I know you're still a little low on iron...”

Harry swallowed his mouthful, his head bobbing in agreement. “s good. Better than spinach.” The less said about his father and Sirius' one and only attempt to get him to eat that Devil's Weed, the better.

Two more massive bites, and his papa's hand finally released its death grip on his thermos. His hands shot out to greedily clutch at the vessel of his life's blood, cradling it against his chest. Harry ignored his father's snort as he took a deep pull straight from the metal lip, ignoring the piddly plastic cap. *Hmmmmyesss. Fucking lovely.*

Reunion with his One True Love complete, Harry settled happily back into his seat.

*Siiiip.* “Did Idiot-sensei say when he'd be here?”

His papa sighed. “You really should be nicer to him, Bambi.”

*Siiiiiiip.* “I'll be nicer to him when he stops being useless,” Harry muttered dismissively.

“Harry.” Even without looking, he knew his papa was in what he though of as the man's Scolding Pose—fists resting on thin hips, shoulders hunched forward as if to loom over him.

*Siiiiiiip. Sip. Siiiiiiip.* Harry shot his father a solemn look. “Papa. I asked him to show me how to do a clean quad sal, triple toe-loop combo, and he couldn't even do it.”

“Not everyone can do that jump combo, Bambi—”

“Then, he kept on fucking up his spin combos,” he tossed his papa a baleful look, “I know everyone has off days, but he was both a Juniors' and Seniors' Division National Champion...he should be able to manage some fucking consistency.”
“Minami-san is plenty consistent, and came very highly recommended by your last coach—”

Harry scoffed. “—and she couldn't find her ass with a detailed map and a magnifying glass, papa.”

“HARRY. Sister Mary Dissarto was very kind to you—”

“—yeah, well, the other nuns called her Sister Mary Disaster for a reason—”

His papa let out a little snort of laughter, coughing to cover his slip. Harry smirked.

“Nonetheless, son. She helped you find Minami-san, and he helped you get gold, more often than not, in your qualifying rounds. And take the Gold at Juniors.”

“Helped? Barely. I had to teach myself most of those jumps in between competitions. He spent most of his time on skating forums, fanboying about his precious Idol coming out of retirement to skate in an Ice Show in Thailand.”

The man ran a hand through messy black hair. “Even so, Harry...”

He scowled, stabbing at his breakfast grumpily. “Even so, nothing. If he can't keep up with me without tripping over his fucking skates, he's wasting my time.”

“I'm sure he doesn't trip—”

“Three times. In one afternoon. Twice while trying to show me how to do a clean triple-triple, and once while demonstrating his layback spin...his so-called 'favorite move.'”

“...huh. Well...that's...wait, really?!” Harry nodded somberly. His papa wilted, “…I'll ask around, see if I can't find you an open spot with another coach.”

Harry hummed, calm in his victory. “Let me talk to him first,” he shot his father a sharp grin, “after
the bullshit he pulled over his precious 'Katsuki-sama' last season, the least he owes me is a referral to a competent coach."

His papa shook his head, but didn't scold him again for his rudeness.

Current Score:
Harry: 1
Idiot-sensei: 0

Bzzt!

Green eyes glanced up at the clock as he chased another mouthful of yogurt with hot coffee. 8:15. Harry hoped, for Idiot-sensei's sake, that it was the man himself at the door and not their aggressively flirtatious neighbor come to hit on his papa again. For one, he really didn't want to see that before his coffee kicked in. Or ever. For another, he really would kick the man if he decided to add tardiness on top of uselessness. Again.

He took another deep pull from his thermos as his papa shuffled out of the kitchen to answer the door. A click of the lock and the creak of old hinges, and then... “You're just in time! He's in the kitchen—HARRY! Grab your coat, Minami-san is here.”

Harry snorted. *Speak of the incompetent and he shall appear, apparently. I'd be surprised if his goddamn ears weren't burning.*

Snatching is coat and his skate bag from the front closet, he shuffled down the hall to meet his papa and Idiot-sensei in their cozy little genkan. Papa was passing the grinning Idiot-sensei his dance bag and wrapped bento as he rounded the corner.

“Hey, Harii-saaaan! How are you~?” As usual, the idiot had a huge, beaming smile on his face. With his flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes, he looked like a twelve-year-old brat, instead of the twenty-four-year-old adult he allegedly was. Harry sighed, fighting the urge to hit the man-child on principle.

“I'm awake. Can we go now?” He took one last pull from his thermos, passing it off to his papa, knowing the man had been hoarding a second, fresh thermos for just this moment. He wasn't disappointed.
“Manners, Bambi.”

Harry grunted as he snatched his fresh thermos, holding it close as he hauled the strap of his skate bag over his shoulders. “...how are you?”

The Idiot gave another Idiot-Grin and went off about something to do with “biggest fan” and “so excited” and “can't wait.” Harry, as usual, tuned him out about two seconds in.

“How are you?”

“Can we go, now? I need to be in the studio by fifteen-til.”

Idiot-sensei gave a little jolt, flushing and stuttering out a good-bye to his papa, and ushered him out the door. Harry sighed. He really did need a new coach, because he was about at the end of his patience with this sunshine-and-rainbows bullshit.

Caffeine or no, Harry let his eyes drift closed, his head resting against the rear-passenger window as he tuned out the chirpy rambling of his coach. He didn't dream. Hell, he didn't even know if he'd slept, or if it would be possible to sleep with Idiot-sensei making all that noise, but jerked awake after a poke to the ribs. Green eyes flashed with a killing intent that went ignored.

“We're almost there, Harii-san.”

Harry peered out the window, staring dispassionately at the Victorian-Gothic inspired architecture, with its pink-toned Venetian marble and artisan stained-glass windows, surrounded by fields of Sakura trees. Ouran Gakuen. Granted, it was more impressive in spring, with the trees in glorious bloom, but with the buds dormant, it just seemed like an oddly-lavish, geographically-misplaced private estate. A palatial one, yeah, but still akin to the stately homes of his father's peers back in England.

England. Good riddance to that bad, fucking rubbish.

He turned away from the view, feeling disgusted at the reminder of home, and sipped at his coffee.

“Drop me near the North Entrance. I have to get to the studio.”
Idiot-sensei smiled, leaning forward to relay his instructions to their driver. Harry, as usual, ignored his chattering, swapping the skate bag sharing his seat for the dance bag near his feet, snatching up the wrapped bento. Minami tugged his skate bag closer, wrapping his hand around the strap, as he continued to chatter. Harry smirked. If nothing else, he could trust his coach to keep an eye on his skating gear til he needed it. With how much his papa had paid for it, well...

He was pretty sure living, breathing human beings weren’t supposed to go the shade of ashy-shocked-nauseous green Idiot-sensei had turned when he’d seen the customized skates, with their distinctive logos, and did the mental math.

As the Bentley pulled to a stop at the curb, Harry slid out the back, grunting at Idiot-sensei’s cheerful “Til la~ter, Harii-san!”

The boom of the clock tower chiming the half-hour drowned out the rest of his farewell, and Harry picked up the pace. The absolutely last thing he needed was a bitchy prima ballerina ready and willing to make him pay for every minute late with literal blood and tears. The sweat was guaranteed, either way.

The halls of Ouran were still mostly-empty, save for a handful of the more academically minded students drifting in the general direction of the various campus libraries. Harry was sure that, were he prone to giving a shit about impressive works of architecture and architectural aesthetics, he would have taken time to appreciate how lucky he was to be able to experience Ouran’s campus everyday without actually being a student.

He would have been awed at the way the halls were built to look like an Italian loggia, and how the pillared design and sloped ceilings were incorporated surprisingly well into the overall Victorian aesthetic. A Victorian aesthetic that was no less Victorian for its Versailles inspired chandeliers.

He would have marveled at how each pane of stained glass was beveled to reflect the light in the softest of glows as the morning light shone through—neither gloomy nor blinding, but rather the sort of soft, filtered light you see in the romance flicks Sirius loved so much.

He would have *ooohed* and *aahed* with the rest of the masses at the veins of burnished rose-gold and shining bronze that wove a subtle tapestry through the marble of the flooring, neither overpowering nor detracting from the beauty of the rest of the High School campus building.

As it was, he couldn’t be bothered with that sort of horse-shit when he had ten minutes to get from
the entrance to the ballet studio, which was roughly a half-kilometer down the north hall. Harry, ignoring the stares from the students he didn't recognize, nodding curtly to those few he did, swore under his breath and ran for it.

The First Ballet Studio—the first, as its name suggested, of three similar studios—sat at the mouth of the first floor hall of the North Building. It wasn’t a small studio, by any means; quite the opposite. It had a full mirror wall with barre, as well as an area off to the side specifically for barre work en pointe.

Despite its massive size, it was nonetheless the first of many rooms in this particular hallway. Down the hall to the right were various dojo—Judo, Karate, Kendo, and Muy Thai, with a back entrance that opened out onto an Archery field at the very end of the hall. Unlike the varied dojo, however, the ballet studio boasted two unique features. The first was the floor, inlaid as it was with a soft, forgiving wood, save for just by the door, where you changed from school shoes into dance shoes. The second was a giant ball of fluff that was the aging Ragamuffin cat simply known as Muffin, who was waiting by the door for Harry as he stepped inside.

“Mrawwww”

Harry smirked at the enthusiastic greeting, shuffling carefully into the studio as his favorite fluffy boy slid in and out and around his feet, nuzzling him happily. Dropping his bag and his thermos by the far wall, he bent to lift the hefty fluff into his arms. Muffin purred happily, butting his head against his chin, kneading at his shoulders with fluffy paws.

“Going to dance with me today, lyubov moya?”

“No, because he's not the one whose fat ass needs the exercise.”

He scoffed. “Nice to see you, too. Piz'da.”

“What was that?”

“Nothing.”

“That's what I thought, govnyuk.”
The blonde Baba Yaga finally lifted her head to glance at the clock. “Huh. You're on time. Color me fucking surprised.”

He snorted. “Idiot-sensei was on time today, so I didn't have to waste time kicking his ass.”

“That's great. I don't fucking care. Stop wasting my time talking, and start stretching. I want you en pointe for at least an hour before you go, today.”

“Are you fucking—an hour?”

“All bitching and no exercising makes Harry a dull, fat-assed mal'chik.”

With a two-fingered salute to the ray of fucking sunshine that was his ballet teacher, Harry switched out his street shoes for his soft-heeled dance ones, peeling off his jacket and grabbing his phone as he joined Nastya in her floor stretches.

Harry was sure that had any one of his vague acquaintances, like the Morinozuka or Haninozuka heirs that frequented the first floor dojo, poked their heads inside the ballet studio to say hello, the sight that would have greeted them would have come off as a bit...weird.

Nastya, legs spread out on either side of her hips, her forehead pressed to the floor and arms stretched out in front of her, didn't even seem to notice as Muffin slowly climbed his way up her back, coming to rest on her shoulders where he just kind of...flopped into a sprawl around her neck like a weird cat-furr stole.

Harry himself was stretched out on his side, his upper leg lifted in a stretch that had his calf resting against his ear. One hand was wrapped around his thigh, holding the stretch, while the other held his phone, thumb flicking as he scrolled through his notices.

He didn't even seem to notice when he switched sides/hands, or rolled onto his front, leg up and back in a nearly 90 degree angle. His sleepy gaze was locked on his glowing screen. The only thing that seemed of any interest was whatever he was watching play out across his glowing screen. A slow grin stretching across his lips, he pressed play again.
Harry snorted. Again.

“What’s so funny?”

“Aside from your face?”

“Don’t make me hit you.”

He scoffed. “It’s Chris.”

“Giacometti?”

“How many fucking Chrises you think I know?”

“I don’t fucking know, I’m not your keeper, you rude little shit.”

He scoffed. Nastya let out an annoyed huff. “What were you saying about Giacometti?”

“Oh...apparently, his boyfriend drunk-posted an uncensored video of his exhibition skate from last year’s GPF, and it’s a bit...well, it’s more...enthusiastic...than they showed on TV. It’s all over Instagram, and probably YouTube, too.”

“How enthusiastic is enthusiastic?”

“I’m questioning my remaining virginity percentage.”

“Meaning...?”

“Meaning that spandex was so tight and so sheer across his cock that I’m pretty sure I know what it looks like when he blows his load.”
Nastya let out a harsh bark of laughter. “Poor cupcake.”

“Excuse the fuck outta you. Being skeeved by a close-up of Chris nutting through his tights does not make me a cupcake.”

“No, but it is what that Plisetsky asshole calls you, right? Cupcake?”

“Yeah, well, he's a fucking senile house cat who thinks he's a Tiger, so who cares what he thinks.”

“You do, for one, or you wouldn't have a bug up your ass about it, still. You were, what, twelve? Everyone's a fucking cupcake at twelve. It's been over three years. Get over it.”

“Fuck you.”

“I'm not into pedo-sex, unlike those girls who stalk your little blonde friend, Hani.”

“Fuck. You. I did not need that in my head, you hag.”

Nastya scoffed. “You keep on saying fuck you, but I don't buy it.”

“Hah?!”

“Please. If you don't grow up to be the bossiest fucking bottom to ever take it up the ass, I'll eat my sweat-crusted tights, crotch first.”

Harry snarled, barely refraining from tossing his mobile at her head. “Eat a dick, you shit.”

“I take my cock like I take my coffee...hot on the tongue, and done in one swallow.”
“...you're a terrible human being, you know.”

“Have to be, to put up with your diva ass.”

Harry moved into the same stretch Nastya had been doing when he came in, his legs stretched out into a split and his torso touching the floor. His eyes stayed fixed on the screen, even as he stretched his arms out in front of him, playing with his phone. “One of these days, I'm going to kick your ass. Just watch me.”

“You can try, princess. Now stop wasting my time and put that shit away! I want your ass on the barre, then I want you working on your sloppy-ass grande jetes.”

“I thought you wanted me en pointe?”

Harry winced at the shark-like grin his ballet instructor shot him. “Thanks for reminding me. After your grande jetes, I want you in those pointe shoes!”

“...yeah, yeah. Bitch.”

“You bet your ass, cupcake. This bitch is going to make you fucking prima ballerina material, so help me god, even if I have to break you to make it happen. Now, UP.”

... ... ...

Harry, despite lingering in the hottest fucking shower he could stand for three quarters of an hour, felt like he'd had his ass handed to him. Repeatedly. By a mob of angry weight lifters. Considering Nastya had run his ass into the ground before she finally had him working on his turns en pointe, it was no surprise.

He was tired and dragging ass and ready for a long-ass nap, but knew if he traded lunch for sleep, Idiot-sensei would kick up a fuss...and then papa would hear about it.

...and he'd rather not find out how serious papa was about benching him for what was supposed to be his senior debut season if he skipped any more meals.
Dance bag thrown over his shoulder, he shuffled into the campus cafeteria, clutching his empty thermos and wrapped bento. The room wasn't full, per se, but it still felt crowded. It was fucking ridiculous to think about, even in the privacy of his own head, considering how plentiful lavishly, ridiculously over-large rooms were in Ouran Gakuen. Honestly, he doubted the cafeteria could ever be uncomfortably full, let alone crowded, even if every student decided to lunch there.

That wasn't the fucking point, however.

The point was that Harry was not exactly what you call a people person, so even the small crowd of thirty students, plus an additional twenty members of faculty, had him scowling and wishing Nastya wasn't such a hard-ass about eating in the studio. He wove his way through clusters of students as they exchanged polite (insincere) chit-chat about relatives and vacations homes and blah, blah, blah, who gives a fuck.

The rich little shits needed to get the fuck out of his way.

Settling down at an empty table at the back of the massive hall, Harry set down his dance bag and unwrapped his bento. His papa had gone all out—and probably used that special bento cook book uncle Remus gave him—to put together his lunch. One plain, salted onigiri and one salted and grilled with kelp. Kimchi with miso-flavored tofu. Two pieces of lightly battered sweet potato tempura.

Harry knew that his papa knew that the tempura was technically a no-go (even with panko), but...well. Considering he needed more oils and fats in his diet anyway, he was sure he could get away with it, just this once, as long as he didn't tell Nastya, and as long as he didn't make a habit of it. Pulling out his chopsticks and his mobile, he picked at his food with one hand, scrolling through his newest notifications with the other.

A thin brow quirked at the photo of a beaming Victor Nikiforov, clutching his flushed husband, Yuuri Nikiforov (formally Katsuki), to his side as they posed in front a vaguely familiar building. A frown tugged at the corner of his mouth as he stared at the post:

[Image.jpg]

“Coaching is so much fun~! Starting this season, my sladin'kaya will find out just how much fun it can be! # SkateOtakuForLife”
So. Katsuki (Nikiforov, whatever) was going to be coaching now, too? That was...interesting, he supposed. Aside from the Thai Ice Show, Katsuki had been AWOL since he’d retired at twenty-nine, just two years previous. Even the flamboyant Nikiforov, pushing thirty-five at the end of this next Grand Prix season, had taken the last two seasons off from coaching to do whatever it is married couples did (he had an idea).

*Bully for them, I guess.*

Harry brutally shoved down the bitterness that surged up at the thought of his, by comparison, grossly under-qualified coach. He quickly scrolled past the image, stopping at a candid shot of Plisetsky losing his shit at a mob of his so-called Yuri’s Angels. If nothing else, the blonde bastard was good for a laugh.

“Harii-chan~! Hello~!”

Green eyes lifted from his screen to meet with the warm, happy brown of Haninozuka-san. As always, the quiet, somber Morinozuka-san trailed just behind the blonde, kind of...hovering...at his cousin’s back. If the brunette wasn’t so hot, Harry was pretty sure he’d find his lurking kinda creepy. He’d never say as much to Morinozuka-san's face, but it was nonetheless true.

“Oh, hey.”

Harry forced out an awkward smile. Normally, he wouldn't have bothered, offering up a scowl and a quirked brow in exchange for the cheery greeting. HOWEVER, the cousins had gone out of their way to be civil from day one, even when the feather-brained first year girls were Kyaaaaa-Kyaaaaaing about the 'commoner bandit-dancer' breaking into their campus to use their ballet studio, because apparently ballet studios were only available to the rich? He wasn't even sure. Even now, it still made no fucking sense. All that to say, he owed them politeness, at the very least.

“You two on your way to afternoon classes?”

Haninozuka-san beamed, nodding happily. “Uh-huh~! Then after classes are over, we have a super-special club event. It's gonna be fun~! You should come, Harii-chan, I think you'd enjoy it.”

“Oh?”
“Yeah.” Green eyes flashed up to meet Morinozuka-san's, hiding his wry smirk at the less than helpful add-on.

“Tama-chan said something about a Winter Wonderland. There's gonna be Christmas trees, and fake snow, and even hot chocolate~!”

“...he does know it's June, right?”

“Yeah, but it'll still be fun~! Come. Please~?”

“Sorry, can't. I have practice.”

“Come anyway~! I promise we won't keep you longer than 15 minutes.”

Harry shook his head. “I really can't. My Senior Season starts at the end of July, which means I need to work on my Free Skate, or I'll tank.”

Mori shot him a concerned frown that was...well, more a nearly-invisible little brow wrinkle than an actual frown, really. “Relaxing is healthy.”

He snorted. “Sure, but that doesn't mean I have time for it right now.”

Hani nodded, giving a gentle squeeze to the stuffed bunny in his arms. “Well, if you find some time, you should come see us at the Host Club! I know you don't eat cake, but you can have tea with me and tell me about your routine, ne~?”

He shrugged again. “I'll probably have some time after my first qualifier.”

“Yay~! That will be fun.”

Harry shook his head. “I'm not promising anything. How much time I have will depend on where I'm placed, so I may not be back between competitions...then again, I might fu--erm, I might choke and have the rest of the season off.”
“You're gonna do great, Harii-chan, so you gotta make sure you tell us where you're competing so we can come see, ne~?”

Harry nodded lightly. “Yeah, sure, Haninozuka-san.”

With a quick, subtle smile—Morinozuka-san—and a cheery wave good-bye—Haninozuka-san—the two seniors wandered off towards class, leaving him to finish the rest of his lunch and worry what his Idiot-

sensei had waiting for him this afternoon.

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Chapter End Notes

Some helpful definitions:
lyubov moya = (Russ) My Love
Piz’da = (Russ) Cunt
Govnyuk = (Russ) Shithead
Mal’chik = (Russ) Boy
Sladin’kaya = (Russ dimin) My Sweet

Granted, Duolingo for Russian doesn't work on my phone, as it requires I download the Cyrillic alphabet, so this MAAAY be (probably is???) a bit off. Any corrections you want to give me on my Russian (or any other language outside of my native English) is welcome and appreciated.
Chapter Two

Chapter Summary

Harry breaks. A lot.

Chapter Notes

See Chapter One for Legal Disclaimer and Content Warnings

Also? Hashtag SorryNotSorry

See the end of the chapter for more notes

... ...

What in the fresh hell is this shit?!

Harry stared down into the depths of his skate bag, blinking in growing horror at the sight before him. Those...those...utter shit-cocks had defiled the sanctity of his skate bag with...with...with sheer, floaty linen and sparkly sequins. Sparkly sequins on SPANDEX PANTS.

Oh, fuckery most foul...

It was almost enough to make him cry. Or kill someone. Or both. Whatever. He wasn't picky.

A snarl of rage twisting his face, he slowly—reluctantly—stripped down and changed into his Short Program outfit. Overall, he supposed it wasn't the most horrendous looking skate outfit Idiot-sensei had put together for him. The skate leggings weren't tight enough to show off the outline of his dick, for one, and were—surprisingly—pretty damn comfortable. He could have done without the gaudy decoupage effect of having the collected diamonds and pearls of Marie Antoinette, Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barry fastened to his thighs.

The shirt, though. It was even worse than last year's leather-and-lace trashbin fashion disaster. Even worse, it left nothing to the imagination. Were it not for a bit of lace work around the bodice, Harry was pretty sure everyone and their fucking granny would be able to see his nipple piercings—
piercings that he was technically too young to have. Shit.

He grit his teeth, flopping gracelessly down onto the bench to lace himself into his skates. Idiot-sensei, and fucking Nastya, and his traitor papa...they were all going to pay. Like hell was he letting this fuckery stand unchallenged.

“If this is supposed to be Idiot-sensei’s idea of a fucking pleasant surprise, I’m going to pleasantly surprise him with a goddamn knife-shoe to his stupid, goddamn face.” Harry’s eyes radiated red-hot-murder as he flounced gracefully out of the changing room, iPod and speaker jack in hand.

Green eyes took in the interior of the familiar rink, and he nearly tripped over his skates in shock. There was Christmas crap everywhere. EVERYwhere.

“...the fuck?!”

In the half-hour he’d been in the changing room, the rink had gone from the relatively ordinary stadium he was used to, to... this bullshit. All over tinsel and garlands. String lights in white and gold and soft blue leaving the ice sparkling like a frozen lake instead of an ordinary rink.

...and, was that a fucking SNOW MACHINE? Blowing fake snow onto the ICE? Fucking Christ.

Oh. Of course. Suou-san's little club was doing their Winter Wonderland thing today.

Harry eyed the piles of fake snow carefully. Unless the snow machine these rich assholes used used something other than shredded fiber or shaved soap, he’d have to be careful not to get that shit caught in his blades. Not to mention, it was going to be a bitch to clean off the ice, later.

If that dumbshit fucked up the rink, he's getting kicked in the face, too. Right before Idiot-senpai. I don't care whose fucking son he is.

“Oi, govnyuk! What took you so fucking long?!”

Harry let out a hiss of wordless rage at the sight of Nastya's grinning face. His words were blade sharp, spit out between clenched teeth. “I was getting dressed.”
“Yeah. OK. Whatever you kids call it now, do it on your own goddamn time.”

He snarled at her, ignoring Idiot-sensei's whinging as he half-ducked behind his Demon teacher. “Ohgodplease, Aristova-san, don't make him angry.”

As always, Idiot-sensei went ignored.

Her eyes dragged slowly over every inch of him, assessing him. “Seriously though, you look like a goddamn angel baby. Well, except whatever that face is supposed to be.”

Harry's fingernails dug ridges into his palms as he glared Death at the dancing cunt of chaos that was his ballet instructor. “Sooka. Don't pretend this wasn't your fucking idea.”

Nastya grinned, unrepentant. “Maybe it was, maybe it wasn't. If you want to skate with the big kids, you better untwist your panties about it. Being pretty is part of the bargain, cupcake.”

“I don't fucking care about that, it's the goddamn peep show bullshit I don't like. Why the fuck does my top have to be see-through?”

“Because the judges like a bit of skin, and you need all the points you can get, unless you wanna try a 6-jump program like Plisetsky pulled off during his Senior debut season.”

“Don't fucking talk to me about that asshole! I don't care what he pulled off—and I'm fucking fifteen—”

“You'll be sixteen during competition.”

“—NOT THE POINT. I'm there to skate, not to get some old dudes' rocks off.”

“SPEAKING of skating, shouldn't you be doing that?”
“GODDAMNIT, don't ignore me—”

Nastya let out a snort. “You're being stupid, of course I'm ignoring you.” The blonde held up a hand to halt the tirade on the tip of Harry's tongue, “unless you wanna try and find a last-minute replacement, this is what you're wearing. Get over it and stop acting like such a...a...izbalovannyy rebenok.”

“Spoiled brat, my ass. You're one to talk about spoiled.”

The blonde demon's grin stretched wider, looking like a goddamn shark scenting blood.

“What was that? Cause I couldn't hear you over the sound of my being a recipient of the Benoit de la Danse.”

Harry bared his teeth, turning to stomp his way to the edge of the rink.

“POSTURE, loveling! And be careful with your fucking skates! No way in shit is your rich-ass daddy going to be able to replace those so soon before competition!”

He twitched, ignoring the bane of his existence, though...yeah, he did refrain from stomping. He was angry, not stupid; the hag had a point. Green eyes took in—and summarily dismissed—his spineless coach, still half-hiding behind Nastya. He shoved his iPod and jack into the man's fumbling hands as he passed him.

He flopped onto the rink-side bench with a huff, carefully working the blade protectors off his skates. Idiot-sensei was ignored, save for a brief, unhappy glance, as the man edged his way closer, til he was just out of arms' reach. Smart move.

With the man half-hunched and shuffling, it was easier to see that Idiot-sensei felt really guilty about pulling this shit on him. Part of Harry felt sorta bad—maybe—about lashing out at him, when he knew that such a fucking cinnamon roll stood no chance against the likes of the blonde Hell Queen. The other part, however, was content to let him squirm...because fuck him, that’s why. He should be able to use his goddamn words and say “no” by now.

Harry stood with a slow stretch, stepping out onto the ice. This...this is what he needed to get his head straight—the main entrance doors were flung open with a flourish, and a stream of yellow clad
Ouran girls poured inside.

There was a moment of relative silence before a massive, ear-shattering cry went up amongst the fluttering crowd. “KYAAAAA~!”

Following in the footsteps of the screaming girls, Suou-san and his entourage of fellow Hosts swept into the room. The blonde, as expected, was leading the pack. “My darling little Ice Princesses, welcome to the Host Club’s Exquisite Winter Wonderland Event~! May the beauty and the splendor of this festive season shine all the brighter for your beauty.”

Harry stared. Was...was this guy serious?

“For your pleasure, in honor of the season, we offer up our most humble company and all the splendors the season offers.”

Harry scoffed. Either Suou-san was a really good actor, or he really did think a Christmas celebration in June was something that made sense. Fucking idiot. Lavender doe-eyes darted around the room as he chattered to one of the ladies. Harry fought the urge to duck and hide, especially once those eyes landed on him.

“Oh! It seems we have a surprise guest, ladies, and done up in such splendorous white, too~! Welcome, Potter-san!”

Nastya, the shit, popped up next to him, her mouth stretched into the phoniest smile he'd seen in his goddamn life. “Hello, Suou-kun~!”

The blonde jolted in happy surprise. “Aristova-san~! I'm so happy you could make it...how do you like my Winter Wonderland?”

“It's so beautiful~!”

Harry grimaced at the saccharine chirping of his demon teacher, shooting a venomous side-eye at Idiot-sensei. “I thought you said you booked the rink for me today.”
The man fidgeted. Never a good sign. “I did, but...Chairman Suou approved his son's event before he knew he wanted to use the rink, and since he didn't want to inconvenience his club activities, okayed them to be here while you practiced.”

Nostrils flaring, Harry took a deep breath. *Skating Kami, grant me patience.*

He waved off Idiot-sensei's fussing with a grimace. “Just...keep the idiot and his idiot brigade off the fucking ice while I practice...unless you think you can't handle that..?”

“A-ah—no. I can handle that, Harii-chan.”

Nastya, still smiling brightly and waving to a few of the fluttering girls, shot him a quick look. “Don't worry about it kid. If the cream-puff can't keep them off the ice, I can.”

Harry nodded in thanks, moving to push away from the side of the rink when a more welcome voice called out to him. “Harii-chan, Harii-chan~! I'm so glad to see you~! Why didn't you tell me you were coming?”

Biting back a curse, he moved back toward the edge of the rink, waiting impatiently as Haninozuka-san and Morinozuka-san made their way over. The blonde was all but bouncing, clutching his bunny and beaming. Done up as he was in a fur-trimmed winter coat, mittens, and bunny-shaped earmuffs, he really did look like a kid. Considering he was a one-man killing machine and two-plus years Harry's senior, it was fucking *weird.*

“Hey, Haninozuka-san. I didn't know your club was using the rink today, or I would have told you ahead of time.”

“Ne, ne...does this mean we get to watch you skate~?”

Harry bit back a curse. “Guess it does, only...it wouldn't be safe for people who don't know what they're doing to be on the ice while I'm practicing. Can you help my coach and Nastya-senpai keep people off the ice?”

Haninozuka-san beamed and nodded. Even the reticent Morinozuka-san nodded easily. Good. At least, if the rest of the club and their squealing fans wouldn't listen to Idiot-sensei and Nastya-baba, they'd hopefully listen to their two senior members.
“Well, I have to go warm up. See you in a few, yeah?”

“Uh-huh~! We'll sit with your coach and cheer you on, 'kay?”

“Yeah, uh...thanks.”

Finally, Harry pushed away from the side of the rink, trying to clear his mind as his body moved on autopilot. It was harder than it should have been, with the obnoxiously high-pitched cry of “MOEEEE~!” going up amongst Hoshiki-san's set of friends every time he did a layback spin, or practiced a quad.

Ugly scowl marring his face, Harry spun lazily around the rink, a mix of simple footwork, and spread eagles, and Ina Bauers, while he waited for Idiot-sensei to set up his music. Nastya, joined by Morinozuka-san, watched him quietly from the edge of the rink, occasionally waving away starry-eyed girls who looked seconds away from sweeping onto the ice and joining him out of a desire to fulfill whatever ridiculous romantic fancy their brains had cooked up.

Harry scoffed. More like, they'd try a spin, imagining themselves Ice Princesses, and wipe out, or get too close and end up with a blade to the face. Ridiculous.

Green eyes locked onto Idiot-sensei, where he was seated next to Haninozuka-san on the bleachers. The emphatic thumbs up was all the sign he needed. Moving towards the center of the ice, Harry came to a slow stop, moving his arms and feet into first position.

A breath and a heartbeat, and then the music started, sweeping him up in its slow, steady rhythm. Even as he moved effortlessly across the ice, weaving a beautiful story out of complex foot work, his arms moved fluidly through first, second, third, fourth, fifth position—in no particular order—to the beat of the song.

“MOOOOEEEE~!”

Harry took a deep breath. Focus. They don't matter. Only the music...that's all that matters.

An Ina Bauer, and arms in fourth, and into a flying sit-spin combo. Harry's lips set tight, even as he
held tight control over his sit spin. Slowly, he came out of his spin, his spine arching gracefully and his leg extended for a few beats before transitioning into a layback spin and a switch foot spin combo.

“KYAAAAAAAA~!”

The audiences at the Junior Division competitions...hell, Idiot-sensei's fanboying over Katsuki-san...was more obnoxious than that. Keep steady. Breathe.

“Harii-chan, Harii-chan~! YOU LOOK SO PRETTY~!”

Oh, for fuck’s sa—no. Breathe into the music. Fucking breathe.

“HEY. SHITHEAD. WHAT EVEN KIND OF EXPRESSION IS THAT? DID THE ICE FUCK YOUR MOTHER, OR WHAT?”

A cry went up amongst the girls, Suou-san's shrill voice pitching up in dismay. Cream puffs, the lot of them.

“DON'T FUCKING IGNORE ME, YOU SHIT.”

Another cry went up, and a wave of girls flopped to the floor in a swoon.

...fucking really?!

He twitched, ignoring the blonde Baba Yaga scowling at him from the far wall. Morinozuka-san didn't look near as scandalized as most of the other Hosts, but there was noticeable gap between he and Nastya, where there hadn't been one before.

“SERIOUSLY. YOUR FACE LOOKS LIKE A CAT'S ASS. YOU BETTER FIX THAT BULLSHIT RIGHT THE FUCK NOW.”

Just...concentrate on the rhythm, the flow of the song. Need to focus on his quads, not
disemboweling demon blondes.

“YOU ARE A MOTHERFUCKING ARTIST, DAMN IT. AN ETHEREAL FUCKING FLOWER. A FLOWERRRR, NOT A SHIT-ENC RUSTED SPHINCTER.”

“Aristova-san, PLEASE. There are DELICATE EARS PRESENT.” Suou-san's hands were clamped down around one of the Host’s—Fujioka-san, he thought—ears even as said Host scowled, unimpressed, up at the taller blonde.

"APOLOGIES, SUOU-KUN—WHAT DID I SAY ABOUT THAT FACE, MOODAK?!"

First chance he got, he was fucking murdering her. With hot irons. And maybe a dull spoon. Pudding, too...the tapioca kind. Green eyes caught a quick glance of Haninozuka-san calmly plastering his hands—stuffed bunny and all—to the taller blonde's face.

Good.

The music swelled, the excitement rising, like the feeling he got right before he went into a grand jete. Appropriately, Harry took that moment to launch into a quad lutz.

He ignored the cry of surprise that went up amongst the girls and all but the senior Hosts. Even Idiot-sensei cried out. Fucking right, he was awesome.

In for the landing, and...success. Well, mostly.

He'd wobbled a bit on his skates...over-extended his landing a bit, too, but he'd fucking done it. And without falling, unlike Idiot-sensei, the one and only time he'd tried.

_I'll need to clean that up before Finals, but...I can do it. I CAN._

Harry smirked, going into a spin from an Ina Bauer.

_Fucking take that, Idiot-sensei. Who says I'm not ready?_
One more layback spin and switch-foot sitting spin combo, and Harry slowly transitioned out of the spin, coming to rest in fourth position as the song ended. An ecstatic cry went up from the veritable sea of girls lining the rink walls. He ignored them, just concentrating on breathing.

_Fuck, but I'm tired._

That...was probably one of the more complicated programs he'd ever skated, for all that it was relatively slow paced. He felt limp, wrung out, as he slowly made his way to the edge of the rink. He ignored the Hosts all but bouncing in their seats in excitement—well, Ohtori-san and Fujioka-san weren't bouncing, but the rest were—as he approached the wall. Morinozuka-san gave him an impressed nod, which was pretty fucking flattering, considering how inexpressive he was at the best of times.

Nastya gave him a look. “Ugly-ass scowl aside, that wasn't terrible.”

Harry rolled his eyes, bracing himself as he slipped on his blade guards. Green eyes glanced up, eyes darting lazily over to where Idiot-sensei was seated on the bench next to a bouncing Haninozuka-san and...his brain came to a screeching halt. He supposed he was lucky he was braced against the wall, or he was sure he would have fallen on his ass.

Oh. _Ohhh._

Was this...the surprise? Harry blinked, taking in the calm, smiling brunette and his beaming, platinum-haired partner. Katsuki and Nikiforov. Well, Nikiforov and Nikiforov. Whatever. What mattered was that they...they were just sitting there. How long had they been there? Had they _seen_?! He swallowed tightly.

“Uh..................hey.”

The bespectacled brunette Nikiforov laughed lightly. “Sorry if we startled you, it's just...Minami-kun wanted it to be a surprise.”

“...what.”
Harry balked. He was pretty sure this is what it felt like when your brain died, but...well. His brain was dead, so he wasn't exactly in any position to check. “Oh.”

He was sure, if he wasn't so numb with shock, he'd be a bit more nervous. Or happy. Or both. Whatfuckingever. Even so...a quick glance at Idiot-sensei, and his brain found a bit of its focus, again. This was...well. It was incredible, but also really fucking confusing. Even when Idiot-sensei had been at Peak Incompetence last season, he'd never asked a senior skater to come in and give a second opinion. Never.

*Something's rotten in the State of Denmark. Or, Japan. Wherever.*

“That was...nice of him..?” Harry narrowed his eyes at Idiot-sensei, who suddenly seemed intent in studying his fingernails.

Katsuki-Nikiforov nodded. “Yeah. He knew I had some free time, and thought I could give you pointers, since we have a similar style.”

He felt very, very wrong-footed. Also suspicious, but mostly wrong-footed. “Ah...uhm. OK. Erm...thank you..?”

The Original Nikiforov's grin spread even wider. “You are most welcome~! So, Harry...I can call you Harry, yes~?”

“.......sure.”

“So, Harry, do you mind if I give you some notes?”

Green eyes blinked, meeting unreadable blue cautiously. “...go for it.”

Harry had only a moment to see the brunette Nikiforov flash him a look of the deepest sympathy before the deluge came. “First of all, let's just talk about what you're wearing. What even are those
pants...they look like a child took a hot glue gun to his grandmother's costume jewelry. Don't get me
wrong, you're plenty fit enough to wear them, but they still draw more attention to your thighs than
your skating.”

Nikiforov took another breath, and this time, Harry knew to brace himself. “Also? Correct me if I'm
wrong, but you're fifteen. I don't think it's necessarily appropriate for someone your age to wear
something that draws such obvious attention to your nipples, when the point of focus should be your
performance—” Harry shot a triumphant look at Idiot-sensei and Nastya, “—but that's nothing that
we can't take care of easily enough. I'm pretty sure I have something you can borrow.”

He paused, briefly, to look over at his husband. "We still have that one you love so much, with all
the feathers, don't we, Yuurichka~? I think it's in my closet next to the one you wore for Eros—”

Harry felt his mind go blank as Nikiforov went on and on about possible skate outfits, before finally
moving on to his actual performance. Though the feedback on the aesthetics and song were mostly
positive, everything from the tightness of his spin combos to his over-extended quad lutz landing
came under fire, and at almost too fast a pace to keep up. After a long minute in which Harry was
sure the Russian didn't fucking breathe, he came to an abrupt stop.

He flinched back a bit at the intent look in those eyes. “Don't mistake me. Your skating is beautiful—
it reminds me of my Yuuri's—but your technique needs to improve if you are going to forgo high-
point jump combos for aesthetics.”

The Japanese Nikiforov elbowed his partner, sending him a pointed Look. The platinum blonde man
jerked, shooting the brunette a look akin to a surprised-puppy head-tilt. The man gave him another
Look, nodding his head at Harry. Nikiforov flushed, whipping around to stare at him earnestly.

“I'm not saying that you can't medal right now—you probably could—but, if you want to take the
gold when competing against the likes of our Yura...you're going to need to do a lot better.”

Haninozuka-san and Morinozuka-san, thankfully, didn't chime in with useless encouragements, as
Harry half-feared they might. Instead, they were oddly, respectfully silent and solemn while
Nikiforov talked. Either they knew who he was, or knew enough, as fellow athletes, not to interfere
during a professional critique.

The bespectacled Nikiforov smiled at him again. “Honestly, your jump technique is a bit more solid
than mine was when Victor took me on, so you have a good head start. However, a head start isn't
going to be enough. Yurio-kun beat me at fifteen, even with all the years of experience I had on him.
He’s twenty-two, now. He’s learned from his failures, and refined his technique. So, you're going to
have to work hard to get your technique where it needs to be, if you want to beat him to the gold.”

Most people, he was sure, would have faltered or felt discouraged after all that. However, Harry was not most people. His shoulders relaxed as he leaned against the wall.

“First of all, thank you for winning me an argument I had JUST TODAY about my skate outfit.”

The platinum-haired Nikiforov smiled.

Harry shot a look at a scowling Demon Lady, before continuing on. “You're right about the spin combos and quad, though. I've been focusing on trying to refine them, but it's been a challenge without someone who can do them to show me how.”

Both Nikiforovs straightened in their seats, russet brown and bright blue eyes fixing on him in confusion. Idiot-sensei slumped in his seat, as if trying to become one with the bench. The bespectacled Nikiforov looked almost hesitant, confused, shooting a side-eye to Idiot-sensei as he spoke. “I skated against Minami-san for years. He's beaten me in competition a few times. He may not be able to do a quad lutz consistently, but he can do them. Much more consistently than before. Jumps aside, he should be able to manage to show you spins...he was always so good with his spins...”

Harry glanced at his sheepish coach blandly. “Well, either he's holding out on me, or there's something he's not fucking TELLING anyone, because he can't even manage a layback spin, most days, let alone a triple sal.”

The brunette adjusted his glasses, looking over at his friend. “That...can't be right. What's going on, Minami-san?”

The blonde seemed to be slowly dissecting every inch of his husband's formal rival with those blue eyes, thin fingers tapping an absent rhythm on his lips. Even Morinozuka-san and Haninozuka-san had their eyes fixed on Idiot-sensei.

“Stand up, Minami-san.”

“Nikiforov-san—!”
“UP~!”

The man balked, flushing. Harry watched closely as Idiot-sensei spluttered and tried to wave off the Russian man, finally giving in at a Look from his contemporary. The blonde, not bothering to explain what he was doing, started to run his fingers around Idiot-sensei's ankles, calves, and up around his knee. After a moment, he was joined by the stoic Morinozuka-san. The blonde Nikiforov lifted his brow. The tall boy shrugged.

“I practice Kendo. Know about sports injuries.”

The Russian man nodded, and the two of them went about slowly, carefully feeling and prodding around Idiot-sensei's joints. Morinozuka-san's fingers hovered at the edge of Idiot-sensei's left knee. His hand froze.

“A knee brace.”

Sharp blue eyes lifted to pierce Idiot-sensei. “Oh~? And why would you be wearing a knee brace, Minami-san?”

The man seemed to wilt under the combined force of Nikiforov and Morinozuka-san's stare, his face flushing. “I—I don't...”

Harry's felt his face flush hot with frustration, his lips pulling back from his teeth. He snarled. “Sensei. You owe me a fucking explanation.”

The man's hands shook as they ran through his spiky thatch of hair. “It's...I was trying to work out a quad-triple-triple jump for my next season. I wanted to be able to skate against Giacometti-san before he retired, since I'd already missed out on Katsuki-san’s final season. So I practiced a lot...more than was safe. I...my ACL...”

Harry hissed. “But that's...and you never told anyone?”

“No, I did, just...didn't tell them how bad it was.”
“And how bad was it?”

“An acute tear.”

“FUUUCK. So, what, you didn't even bother getting it looked at?!”

Minami-baka shook his head. “No, no, I did! I went in for a surgical consult, and everything, but the surgeon I saw said it would be at least a year or two, with rehab, to get me to the point where I compete again. Even with that, there was no guarantees...and I'd miss my chance. So.” Idiot-sensei shrugged weakly.

“So, you 'retired' to take on students without ever telling anyone that you were too injured to skate, let alone compete.” Both Nikiforovs and the two Ouran seniors looked sympathetic. Even Nastya had an empathetic look on her face.

Harry, though...he was pissed. The fuck. Off. Idiot-sensei braced himself, and Harry let out a hiss like steam escaping. “OF ALL THE STUPID, FUCKING PRIDEFUL—YOU COULD HAVE PERMANENTLY DAMAGED YOURSELF, YOU ASSHOLE. SHIT,YOU COULD HAVE PERMANENTLY DAMAGED ME.”

“Wait, what are you talking about?” The brunette Nikiforov looked alarmed; his mortified Idiot-sensei tried to become one with the floor.

“Less than a month ago. Maybe the end of May. I asked him to show me how to land a clean triple sal-triple-loop-triple toe, and he got this idea that we should try it as a paired jump combo, so that I could see how it worked. He'd do a lift and then throw me to show me the height I needed, and from there I was supposed to land that as a triple sal, then use the momentum to go into a triple loop.” Idiot-sensei flushed as Harry's eyes burned into his forehead as he continued.

"BUT...well, I'd just fucking seen him botch a layback spin, so asked him to show me the combo on his own, first. He got all of two sloppy rotations out of the first spin, landed wrong, and wiped out, hard. Who knows what would have happened if he'd actually tried to lift me.”

Idiot-sensei covered his face with his hands, face red with shame. “That was so stupid. I know it was stupid, Harii-chan—I know—I just...everyone I looked up to had retired or was retiring.”
"-except Giacometti."

"Yeah. He was retiring at the end of the season, but I still wanted to skate against him, if only that one time. I wanted it and ruined my chance, and...and...I thought that if I trained myself even as I was training you, it could feel like enough. I'm so sorry."

Harry slumped at his sensei's miserable confession. No, he wasn't any less FROTHING AT THE MOUTH ENRAGED, but continuing to rail at him would be like kicking a fucking injured kitten, and that was just not on. Christ, what a mess.

"...you know I can't let you continue on as my coach, now." He tightened his jaw at the teary sniffle.

"I know, Harii-chan."

"Even if you weren't so badly injured that you could safely coach me, the whole lying and putting me at risk thing—papa is going to be furious."

Minami-baka swallowed heavily, his face going pasty. "I know, Harii-chan."

Harry ran a hand through his hair. "Just...take some time, get your knee taken care of. My family knows some people in the UK, if you need a good referral."

Teary brown eyes peeked up at him from behind his hands. "Thank you, I'd like that."

Morinozuka-san quietly pulled a handkerchief out of his pocket, handing it to his blubbering former-coach. Haninozuka-san didn't try to cheer the man up so much as quietly press his bunny into his arms.

The rest of the Hosts, who'd pointedly avoided their corner as soon as the angry shouting had started, took this as their cue to start edging their way closer. Harry rolled his eyes, then went back to pretending they didn't exist.
“Sensei?”

“Yeah?”

“Since you're going to be taking care of your knee, I'm going to have to ask a favor.” The man tilted his head, looking like a fucking cream puff angel cupcake. Harry choked back a snort.

“I'll do whatever I can to help, Harii-chan.”

“Season starts in a month, and I'm going to need a fucking coach.”

His former sensei's eyes went wide. “Oh! Oh. Uh...well, I mean...I guess I can see who's free?” He turned to look at his former competitor, “Do you know if Giacometti’s coach is free? Or...OR...maybe Giacometti-san would want to, now that he's not skating?”

The bespectacled brunette had no time to answer before Minami-baka continued on. “No, I don't think that would be a good fit, anyway. He was much more emphatic on technical jumps than pure artistry. Aside from that, I'm not sure Potter-sama would be happy letting you do skates quite as...adult...as he favored quite so soon. Oh, Oh! Maybe Yakov? He seemed to do well enough for Nikiforov-sama, who was pretty artistic. Plisetsky, too. He'd probably be willing to take you on, but it would be a bit of a time crunch to get you competition-ready AND get you and Potter-sama settled in St Petersburg—OH! Maybe Ciao Ciao could fit you in, at least for the season...I know that he's done wonders for Phichit-san—”

The rest of the frantic man's rambling was drowned out by a large, pale hand slapping down over his mouth. The man blinked, staring at the fair-haired Russian who'd so calmly silenced him. “My feelings are hurt, Minami-san~! We're standing right here, and you haven't even considered us. How rude~!”

“Mrph—”

“—and after I did such a splendid job as my Yuuri's coach, too. I think I could do a good job with Harry, too, don't you?”

“Mrph!”
“If not me, then my Yuuri could certainly do wonders, don’t you think so~?”

“Hrnnnphfff.”

Harry felt wrong-footed, again. “…would you even want to? Coach me?”

“Yep~!”

“But...I thought you’d already have, like, a fuckton of students begging you to coach them.”

An unreadable smile. “We do, but those students, aren’t you, little Harry.”

“What the fuck does that mean?”

He faltered at the blonde man's wide, beaming, smile. It shone with sugary-sweetness and sparkling innocence. Harry didn't trust it. “I may not compete anymore, but I still want to kiss as many gold medals as I can before I die. Do you understand me now, little Harry~?”

Harry understood him, alright. He read him, loud and clear: You will be a competitor worthy of my time and attention, even if I have to break you to get you there.

Green eyes gleamed in anticipation, a wide, blood-thirsty grin stretching his lips. Finally—finally—a skater after his own heart. He couldn't wait to begin.

... ... 

Chapter End Notes

A few things...

In case it wasn’t obvious, Aristova is supposed to be Nastya’s surname. Thought it was
obvious, but in case it wasn’t...

Russian to English translations:

Govnyuk: shithead

Sooka: bitch

Moodak: Asshole

Izbalovanny rebenok: spoiled brat

This is probably all horrible, terribly flawed...and if you are fluent in Russian, please - please- feel free to message me with corrections (non-Cyrillic, as my computer doesn’t have a Cyrillic alphabet)

Also...ACL injuries are serious, y'all. If you've had one, or know someone who has, you know they are nothing to mess with. Poor Mina-kun.
Chapter Three

Chapter Summary

Viktor has a surprising temper. Hatsetsu is lovely. Harry deals with the reality of his changed circumstances.

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer and Content Warning is in Chapter One.
Also, Harry is a smol, precious grumpcake, and I love him.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Harry could say, with zero hesitation, that the six weeks leading up to his Senior Debut were Hell. Hot, sweaty, miserable, painful Hell. And that both Coach Nikiforov and Yuuri-sensei were sadists underneath their masks of guileless congeniality; they demanded nothing less than his absolute best at every moment, never resting—never letting him rest—til they'd wrung it out of him, along with a good deal of sweat and tears (and occasionally blood, too).

...the less said about “Hell Week”—or, “Quad-Jump Boot Camp,” as his coach had cheerfully called it—the better.

On the upside, he could probably do his more solid jumps in his sleep, now. Though the Quad Flip and Axel and Loop were works in progress, progress was being made. On the downside, he still had nightmares about doing jump combo after jump combo after jump combo til he was wheezing so hard he could barely stand, let alone breathe.

Two weeks in, and he was finally losing his patience. Not with either of his coaches, no. Not with the relentless training schedule, either. With the Host Club—more specifically, with fucking Suou-baka and the red-headed menaces who followed him around like puppies. Energetic, demonic puppies.

The double doors slammed open, drowning out Coach Nikiforov's most recent dissection of his Free skate. Both he and his coach twitched, not quite startled, but doubtlessly fucking annoyed. “...as I was saying, adding an Ina Bauer before your transition into the tri—”
Again, his coach was interrupted, but this time by an oblivious blonde. “Hello, Harii-chan~! DADDY’S COME TO WATCH YOU SKATE~! Aren't you surprised? Hm? Did Daddy surprise you?”

Harry turned to glance at the flailing blonde. The only thing surprising about Suou is how stupid he is.

The twins were leering and cackling at him, waving around ridiculously huge picnic baskets, as if to taunt him with the fact that they were settling in for the long haul. He grimaced, turning away in dismissal in favor of focusing on his coach.

His coach...well. It was hard to tell what he was thinking, but his expression was...weird. Not the fussy, flamboyant brand of weird he'd come to expect from the Russian Skating Diva. This was a very different, almost unpleasant, flavor of weird. Like the kind of weird where you get a funny taste in your mouth, and your throat goes tight, because shit's about to go down, and there is fuck all you can do to break the tension without making it fucking worse. After a moment, his coach's jaw relaxed and Harry let out the breath he hadn't known he was holding.

That had felt...oddly close. Close to what, he didn't fucking know, but...well. He'd Heard Some Shit about Coach Nikiforov. Whispers. Nothing concrete, just...vague murmurs about a “surprising temper.”

Normally, Harry would have just called bullshit and dismissed it as a rumor started by the gossip rags or tabloids, but...but...neither Yuuri-sensei nor Minami-baka had outright denied it. They just sort of traded shifty fucking looks. Combined with the whispers, it was enough to make even him sit up and pay the fuck attention.

...and to watch himself around his coach.

Thanks to his “unusually good behavior,” both his Papa and Sirius were convinced that Coach Nikiforov was a non-magical off-shoot of a Veela, or some such dumb shit. The more they chattered and debated and theorized about it, the more Harry just shook his head; they obviously didn't understand that the coach that they knew was not the one Harry knew. Relentless perfectionism and supposed temper aside, his coach was Viktor fucking Nikiforov.

Living Legend, and all that shit.

He didn't need a cheat like magic to make people shut up and fall in line.
His coach took a deep breath, letting it out slowly. And again. And again. Harry carefully watched his coach's shoulders rise and fall with every, hopefully-calming, deep breath. Those shoulders, though...they looked scary-fucking-broad as he visibly struggled to keep his shit together.

“As...as I was saying, an Ina Bauer as a transition into a triple-triple moving into a spin combo would afford you more room for aesthetics, overall. Just a quad with a spread eagle transition? It's impressive, yes, and would afford you more room to mess up elsewhere, but the technical difficulty of the new configuration would free up the first half of your skate for—”

Perched atop of his skate bag, Harry's mobile started to ping. And ping again. And again. With every ping, the screen lit up. After five ignored pings, Suou-baka—the sender of the homicide-inducing, or so his coach's face hinted, texts—lost his patience at being ignored. “Harii-chan~! Pick up your phone...Daddy wants to show you the pictures form the Host Ball~! Go on, look!”

Harry pinched the bridge of his nose. “Suou-bak...Suou-san. I'm in the middle of an extremely important training session, and your interruptions are both distracting and rude. Not just to me, but also to Coach Nikiforov. If you wish to talk to me, you need to please wait til we're done for the afternoon.”

The blonde flushed, looking genuinely startled; Harry couldn't tell if it was because he was just that fucking oblivious, or because he'd been called out on his rude behavior. He kind of thought a bit from column A, and a bit from column B. Suou-san came off as an airhead at the best of times, and Harry seriously doubted if the spoiled little playboy got called out on his shit, ever.

His coach flashed him a quick, tight smile before taking another slow, deep breath and letting it out. “—it would free up some time for a second layback spin, and the switch-foot sitting-spin combo you wanted to try to fit in, which would actually work better with the movement of the piece than what you're currently—”

His coach flinched, his shoulders going hard and tight as Suou-san sidled close, clearing his throat loudly. The older of the two blondes present didn't look up, his eyes shaded by his pale fringe. Harry would have thought he was deep in thought, or trying to ignore Suou, but he let out a vaguely impatient sound when the younger blonde hesitated.

Harry's stomach dropped unpleasantly. *Oh...oh shit. Coach has gone subverbal...this is BAD.*

“I just wanted to apologize to you, Nikiforov-sama, for so rudely interrupting before. It wasn't my
intention to intrude upon your time with your student. It was only my fondness for our darling Harii-chan that had me acting without thought. It is only that he works so hard, and a Daddy worries, you know, so I thought he'd appreciate an afternoon with his friends valiantly cheering him on as he—"

Harry edged away from babbling blonde, green eyes fixed on Coach Nikiforov. The more the Suou scion babbled on, and on, and on, the tighter his shoulders got. The man was obviously well-past the point of reining in his temper. Harry braced for impact as he watched as his coach's spine slowly uncurled, platinum-blonde bangs sliding away to reveal eyes like ice chips.

Harry swallowed. He almost pitied Suou. Almost.

Green eyes fixed on the tendons in his coach's neck as he slowly, deliberately, turned to look over his shoulder at the babbling Suou. Every inch of him radiated a sort of vicious impatience, and the Idiot Princeling had no idea.

_Ohfuckohfuckohfuckohfuckohfuckohfuck._

“—And, you simply must stay for our tea service. We serve a broad range of loose leaf varieties, including a few smoked teas you might like, Nikiforov-san~! I will admit to having a preference for commoner's coffee, though...even over the more palatable tea blends we have imported from—” Either Suou wasn't quite as stupid as he acted, or the look on Coach Nikiforov's face was even more terrifying than he imagined it to be.

The blonde froze, looking every inch a baby bunny caught in the hypnotic, deadly gaze of a tetchy Adder. The blonde boy trembled, his throat bobbing as he struggled to swallow against his visible fear. “B-buh...that's probably not...no, you're right, w-wrong time. I—I'll try to catch Harii-chan another time. Sorryforthetrouble...doexcuseme.”

It spoke volumes that the spoiled twins didn't try to fight Suou-san as he all but dragged them from the rink. For a long moment, his coach remained frozen, still turned away as if he was waiting to see if the babbling blonde would be so stupid as to try and slip back inside.

Harry, for his part, was surprised. Well, no. That wasn't quite right. Relieved, maybe? After growing up around Sirius' screaming shit-fits, he'd half expected to witness a murder. Or an evisceration, at the very least. Thankfully, that hadn't been the case, and really...he should have known fucking better, goddamnit. After all, his coach wasn't Sirius...and he had spent most of his life on the ice. What could be more appropriate than a temper to suit the ice he'd dedicated more than two decades to?
The silence lingered heavily for another breath. Finally, his voice carefully polite, Coach Nikiforov excused himself. “If you don't mind, I need a moment. Please practice the new combination we discussed while I step out.”

Fucking Shit. He shot the man a wobbly smile. “Sure, coach. You got it.”

Harry wasn't fucking stupid. He wouldn't have argued anyway—the man had had a goddamn point about the new combo—but he especially wasn't going to argue now. Neither was he ballsy enough to ask his coach where he was going, or when he'd be back. Coach would be back when he was back; til then, he'd just practice incorporating the new sequence into the second half, where the spread-eagle quad combo had been.

If he pretended not to hear the skreeeee of metal bucking as his coach punched? Kicked? Headbutted? what sounded like a locker door, well then...fuck off. That was his business, and screw anyone who tried to tell him that they'd do differently.

After The Suou Incident, the telling of which had earned him an incredibly awkward pat on the back from Yuuri-sensei, Coach Nikiforov quietly pulled his papa to the side for a “Serious Chat.”

Harry had given the two unusually somber-faced men a long glance before making himself fucking scarce. Whatever shit was about to hit the fan, he wanted no part of it. Still, he couldn't exactly go far, either. Unless he wanted to call up Minami-baka to come pick him up, he was pretty much limited to the living room and the sushi place two blocks down.

Harry chose the sushi shop. He enjoyed their cucumber roll well enough, and he'd heard good things about the Inari. At this point, he'd settle for sub-par onigiri and overly-salted miso soup if it meant NOT having to hear his coach and papa throw down, yet again.

The tiny chime of the bell above the door as he stepped inside was almost immediately followed by a quiet, genuine “Irasshaimase” from the elderly couple as he stepped inside. Fujiota Minato and Yuujirou were the very image of staid, proper Japanese gentlemen, but where their mouths remained politely neutral, their eyes always smiled at him. Harry dipped his head respectfully at the two as he took his usual seat at the counter.

“Hello, Fujiota-san, Fujiota-san. I hope you're well?” The overly-formal language sat awkwardly on his tongue, but he bit back a grimace of discomfort. Unlike most of the neighborhood elders, who'd given him and his father side-eyes for being loud gaijin, these two had treated them like a favored
child and grand-child, respectively. They'd been welcoming, where their neighbors had been wary, put off by his papa's effervescence and his default Bitch-face.

For these two, Harry could suck up his discomfort and be polite as shit.

“Very well, Potteru-san. And you?”

“I'm well, thank you. I have a new coach this season—two, actually—so I have high hopes for my senior debut.”

Both Minato and Yuujirou quirked their lips up into tight smiles which, for them, was as good as beaming at him. “We look forward to seeing you skate, Potteru-san.”

Harry shot them a bashful smile and quick thanks. “So, uh...you know I love your cucumber roll, but I was thinking. Your Inari?”

Yuujirou, the taller of the two older gentlemen, laughed quietly. “Of course, of course.” The younger boy flushed as Minato shot him a quiet, doting look before whipping out his knives and setting to work. Harry sat quietly, humming along to the radio as he got lost in the movements of the older man's hands, so thick and knotted with arthritis, but still so sure.

Less than ten minutes later, his plate of Inari was set in front of him. Harry drooled...well, nearly. The little pockets of fried tofu over-flowed with rice and kimchi, drizzled lightly with their specialty sauce. Harry gingerly lifted one tiny pocket to his mouth, popping it inside with a low, happy hum. Bliss.

“I'm happy you like it, Potteru-san.”

Harry flushed, swallowing carefully before he nodded. “Yes. It is very good.”

Three plates later (six pieces, total—more sushi than he usually ate in one sitting), the quiet of the shop was finally interrupted by his coach stepping inside. He didn't look nearly as frazzled as he should, considering he'd spent—a quick glance at the wall clock—two hours arguing with Harry's
stubborn papa.

Blue eyes took in the tiny, bright sushi shop calmly as he'd sidled up next to him. “I was wondering where you'd gone.”

“Yeah. If you were gonna have another throw-down with papa, I wasn't about to be dragged into it, again.”

Coach Nikiforov smiled; it wasn't a particularly nice smile, but it wasn't his sadistic smile either, so Harry felt no need to worry. Yet. “Speaking of, there's a change of plans for tomorrow.”

Harry shot him a look. “But...I thought you wanted me working on the new combination tomorrow?”

“I still want you to work on that, but not tomorrow.”

“...what are we doing tomorrow, then?”

“Tomorrow, you and I are heading out to Hasetsu.”

“Hasetsu.”

“Yes. After the last...well, your father and I discussed things, and agreed your home rink should be in Hasetsu. At least until the end of your first GP season, or Worlds—whichever works best.”

Harry bit back the scoff he wanted to let out at the idea of his father agreeing to let him go so far away for so long without him. The man didn't even like him walking the four blocks to the grocery store without his phone on and emergency money, in case he ran into “a gang of roughs.”

Green met unreadable, icy blue. Well, then. Harry turned back to the Fujiota couple, who had been politely keeping their distance and looking away while he and his coach had talked. “I suppose this is good-bye, then. At least for a while. Fujiota-san, Fujiota-san. Please support me in my upcoming season.”
Harry bowed to the two elders politely, paid his tab, and followed his coach back to the apartment. He had half-expected the man to stay and watch him pack, but he’d turned away at the door. “The car will be here promptly at nine tomorrow morning, so make sure you’re packed and ready to go, Harry.”

His shoulders fell at the idea of being up so early, but he gave his coach a nod when the man shot him a sharp look. He hovered in the genkan till the man disappeared into his car, then ducked back inside. He had fucking packing to do, apparently, and would rather do it now before he got too tired.

His skate bag was easy enough to pack up; his two pair of practice skates and his competition skates, plus two sets of hard and soft covers for each, went in first. Then, his iPod with all his skate music and the USB cord (both zipped away in a secure, leather case). Then, two dance belts, two pairs of thigh-high leg warmers. On top of that, a plethora of thick socks, his dance flats, a handful of track suit pants, leggings for dance practice, and a mix of shirts. His track suit jacket was thrown atop the bulging bag and set near his door.

It took twice as long—mostly because he had to dig through the dusty storage closets to dig out the three “muggle-friendly” travel cases his papa owned—to pack his daily necessities. His clothes—everything he had, basically—was carefully packed away into the first case. He laid an empty, travel-friendly duffle atop the clothes before shutting the case; he wouldn’t exactly need his full wardrobe when he traveled to skating events, so might as well plan ahead.

His school books, assignment folders, pre-labeled manila envelopes, and laptop and attachments went into one of the smaller, carrying cases. Harry knew that even if his papa wasn’t coming along with him, he’d expect him to keep up on his lessons, and mail them out in a timely manner, no matter where in the world he was.

The last case—a rolling backpack, basically—held everything else: tablet, mobile and charger, toiletry bag, DVD travel case, portable DVD player, and a bright pink, bedazzled bag filled to the brim with hair ties and pins, lip gloss, extra combs and hair gels, deodorant, and hair spray for performance day cosmetic “emergencies.”

By the time Harry was done packing, he was dusty, sweaty, and grumpy. He absolutely did not fucking want to get in bed without a wash, but he was pretty sure he’d have to crawl to the bathroom to get there. He let out a whine and flopped onto the floor, his cheek squishing as he pressed the side of his face to the tatami.

With one grunt of protest, Harry dragged himself to his feet and stumbled off towards the bathroom.
The next morning, true to his word, Coach Nikiforov arrived via rental car precisely at nine. He quietly traded a muzzy Harry a travel cup of coffee for his heavy skate bag, bundling him into the back of the fancier-than-usual Bentley while he and the driver quickly stowed the luggage in the trunk; He barely had brain power to appreciate the swag interior, though some part of him did take note.

Both driver and passenger seats had monitors, as well as touch-screen command centers, embedded into their backs. A small, flat screen folded down from the ceiling with a press of a button. Between the seats, there was a little island with cup-holders as well as USB jacks for phones. Harry set his coffee into the holder, frowning as he remembered he'd already packed his phone away.

“Hey, coach?”

His coach peeked around the side of the door. “Yes, Harry~?”

“My phone and charger are on top of my DVD carry case in the main pocket of the roller case. Can you grab them?”

“Sure~! Just a sec.”

Harry mumbled a sleepy thanks as the man's head ducked back around the door. Eyes feeling heavy, he leaned back against the plush leather and let himself drift. It was only the sound of the doors shutting and the weight of his phone dropping into his lap that jarred him from sleep. Bleary green opened to stare into sparkly blue.

“Ah...uh, spasibo, coach.”

“Pozhaluysta, Harry~!”

His eyes closed again, and for a while, he drifted; The car didn't roar or rumble like so many luxury sports-cars meant for show. This car seemed to glide quietly through the traffic, muting the sound of both noise of the engine and outside world alike. The only real sound was the tap of his coach's blunt fingernails against glass as he played with his phone.

The sun was a bit higher in the sky by the time they made it to Narita Airport. The Bentley pulled to a stop just in front of the hanger where their charter plane sat, ready and waiting to take them to
Kyushu. Harry blinked against the sunlight, brow furrowed as he squinted against the glare on his glasses.

“Come on, Harry.”

He gave a little grunt, grabbing his side case from the trunk as the driver helped pass off his suitcases to the pilot before stepping aboard. The charter plane was small, but with just enough leg room for someone like his leggy coach, so was plenty roomy for a shrimp like him. The flight was blissfully short and quiet, and Harry grumbled to himself as his coach carefully steered him onto a bus, then off, and finally onto a train.

Harry drifted, his face smashed against the cool glass. His stomach growled loudly, startling him awake, and he flushed as his coach grinned at him broadly.

“Hungry?”

Harry grunted.

“Well, if you can hold out another hour or so, we'll be in Hasetsu by then, and I'll take you out for some Tonkotsu ramen~!”

“No thanks.”

Coach Nikiforov shot him an aghast look. Harry rolled his eyes. “For the love of—I don't eat meat.”

“But, you eat yogurt!”

“Last I checked, dairy wasn’t the same thing as meat.”

“But, it’s still an animal by-product, so why—”

Thankfully, the train ride was as short as promised, or he might have murdered his coach by the time they arrived, with how he went on and on and on about the vital sources of protein that he, an
athlete, was depriving himself of, especially as he had also excluded eggs and seafood from is diet, and didn’t he know how vital protein was for building muscles, and blah blah blah.

“Really, Harry, if you are going to limit your food options, not just as a growing teenager, but as a competitive athlete, I’d think you’d at least give eggs a pass. Greek yogurt is a good source of protein, yes, but the human body isn’t necessarily made to process milk by-products, once weaned —”

...and so on.

Harry let out an audible sigh of relief as the train pulled into the station, standing up so quickly that it visibly startled his coach. “Oh, we're here~!”

He was all too happy to distract his coach with the juggling act that was gathering their luggage together for departure. By the time they stepped off the platform and were headed toward the escalators, their previous discussion was—thank fucking GOD—forgotten.

Harry didn't even mind his coach's overly-sappy reunion with his husband if it meant the man's smothering attentions were focused on someone else. Warm brown eyes peered over his husband's shoulders and met his. Yuuri-sensei pulled back from his husband’s clinging long enough to give him a subdued wave. “Hello, Harii-kun. Nice to see you, again. I hope your trip wasn't too tiring.”

He shot the older man a long, flat look that spoke volumes. The wry, answering look was enough to tell him that the man knew ALL TOO WELL how painful it was to travel with his husband, and how much he sympathized. After a bit more clinging from his husband, Yuuri-sensei ushered them towards the cramped, little rust-bucket he'd borrowed from Yuuko. Whoever Yuuko was.

Their luggage barely fit into the car with the three of them, if only because his coach was a ridiculous human being. Seriously. He'd been staying in Tokyo for a while, sure, but he hadn't been living there the same way Harry had, and yet...Harry had less than half the amount of bags than his coach, and he'd just uprooted his life.

Luckily for them all, Harry was small enough to comfortably curl his legs up onto the back seat so he could set his bags onto the floor. He hid his smirk as his blonde coach fussed, his knees bent a bit awkwardly, with no room to scoot the seat back. It was petty, yes, but felt like sweet justice, all the same. THAT was for the goddamn train ride from Hell, AND for being so ridiculously extra that a side-trip required six goddamn top-of-the-line suitcases to fit all your shit.
Harry, more hungry than tired now, was all too happy to press his face to the window and take everything in. It was beautiful. Well, he'd always thought Japan was beautiful, even the dingiest of side streets with its food stalls and cramped bars. Hasetsu, though...it was a different sort of beauty.

This was wide, expansive skies, and crying sea gulls, and quaint districts instead of a clutter of tall, gleaming towers and multi-color, flashing neon. It was both everything and nothing like Harry'd heard it was.

Yuuri-sensei, the side of his face flushing, awkwardly pointed out landmarks at his husband's quiet urging. His alternating cheerful and subdued tone as he pointed out the open air market and the derelict onsen district spoke of an obvious love of home, but a love...not jaded by, but mellowed? tempered? by an awareness of what his home was: a tourist town in its death throes.

The numerous empty store fronts, closed tea shops and onsen, and shuttered restaurants was jarring to Harry, who'd only ever known the bustling, thriving cities of London, Cambridge, and—more recently—Tokyo. Driving through downtown Hasetsu felt like trampling through the terminal ward in a hospital—disrespectful in face of looming death. The ghosts of what this town must have been, might still have been, had things been different, lingered everywhere, from faded ads plastered to walls proclaiming grand openings, to derelict cafes, their fronts still hung with cheerful, celebratory banners.

Harry's eyes met Yuuri-sensei's in the rear view mirror. “I know it's not much, Harii-kun, but I hope you feel at home, here.”

He gave his sensei a tight smile. “I hope so too, Yuuri-sensei.”

The man gave him a tight, embarrassed smile. “We used to have a few arcades, but they're mostly gone, now...they shut down when the onsen started going out of business. There's Hasetsu Castle and the Ice Castle and the open market, but not much else for someone your age.”

“Yuuuuuuuru~! Don't forget the bars!”

Yuuri-sensei shot his husband an unimpressed look. “He's not even sixteen yet, Vicchan.”

“Yura wasn't even that when he was sneaking vodka at Grand Prix Final Banquets.”
Yuuri-sensei's expression went flat. “Even if Minako-sensei would sneak him alcohol, I'm not going to encourage him to get drunk to pass the time, Vitya.”

“Well...he could always go see the Ice Castle! I'm sure Yuuko-san would be happy to have him visit.”

“Viktor, a visit implies he isn't going to be there every day of the week for the foreseeable future.”

Privately, Harry agreed with him. No matter how nice a rink, Ice Castle was going to be his work place, and he had no interest in seeing his future office, of sorts, til he was ready to get down to business.

“Yuuuuri! You're no fun~!”

“I'm plenty of fun, just more practical than you.”

Harry relaxed at the sound of the lighthearted bickering. Yuuri-sensei was interrupted by an elbow to the side from his husband. He squawked, shooting the blonde a chiding look.

“Don't look at me like that, solnyshko. You forgot to tell him about Yu-Topia~!”

The brunette blinked, startled, darting a glance back at Harry through the rear view again.

“Oh, uh...that's right. My family runs a Ryokan—it's an inn with an onsen, but kinda more traditional than the inns you see elsewhere. Usually, you only really hear that word used for Edo-era resorts, but my family's was designed really traditionally, so we get away with it.”

Harry couldn't give two flying monkey fucks how traditional it was, or whether or not Edo-era historians would get their panties in a twist over the nomenclature. The fact that he was going to live somewhere where he didn't have to worry about doing his own laundry or making his own bed or making his own coffee was good enough for him.

He would have liked to say the onsen was an appeal too, but...well. With the start of the skating season creeping ever closer, it wasn't like he'd have much time to spend just soaking in the hot
springs.

“Viktor said you don't eat pork, Harii-kun?”

“Huh? Oh, uh...no. I don’t eat meat.”

Yuuri-sensei rubbed the back of his head sheepishly. “Ahh, that’s too bad—not that it’s bad! Just...my family is famous for our Katsudon—it's panko-breaded pork cutlet fried and put over rice with some egg, and...yeah. It's good.”

Coach Nikiforov fucking swooned against his seat, sighing like a goddamn heroine of a daytime drama. “It truly is the most delicious food, my Yuuri,” he shot a side-eye at Harry over his shoulder, “not that Harry would be allowed to have it, regardless. He has competitions coming up, and it's for medaling athletes only~!”

Harry shot his coach a flat look at his taunting. “Pork isn’t a vegetable. Neither is an egg. So, if you're trying to piss me off by being a troll, you're failing.”

Yuuri-sensei burst out laughing, the sound loud and unrestrained, as his husband sulked loudly. Harry turned his face away, hiding his bashful smile at the sound of his sensei's mirth. He hoped he'd get to hear it again, soon.

Chaotic schedule aside, Harry actually liked Hasetsu. He didn't have the same kind of near-religious reverence for it as Coach Nikiforov, but he still thought it was nice. The fact that it was blessedly free of Suou—from Hosts of every kind—made it all the better.

Even though he didn't really have time to spend more than twenty minutes at a stretch in the onsen, Harry still loved living at Yu-Topia Katsuki. He loved how much the inn felt like a home—his home—for all that it had strangers coming through in a constant stream. He loved the elder Katsukis, and how genuinely warm and welcoming they were.

Hiroko-oba-san just sort of radiated quiet joy; Harry could see exactly where Yuuri-sensei got it from. Toshiya-oji-san was jolly and loud and the center of whatever celebration was going on, at any given time. Harry wouldn't say he saw much of the man in his son, but he was reserving judgment as he'd heard just as many stories about “Drunk Yuuri” as he had about “Temperamental Viktor.” Mari-nee-san was quiet, but completely, brilliantly hilarious and practical and her brother's biggest fan.
The boardwalk was also brilliant. The view alone was worth all the sweat and exhaustion of his morning runs. The fact that Axel, Lutz and Loop always had an ice-cold bottle of water waiting for him when he made it to the Ice Castle made everything better. Their hilarious, sometimes cutting, comments as they scrolled through his Instagram feed kept him entertained for hours, which was good, since coach had him doing fifty loops around the ice every morning as a part of his endurance training.

Since he was too young to drink, he'd yet to meet Minako-san in person, but had spoken to her over the phone. Harry wasn't much of a talker, so had blushed and stumblted and made a total twat of himself. Even so, Yuuri-sensei had quietly handed him a key a day or two later, and told him that his teacher's old ballet studio was his, if he wanted to practice, and that he'd show him how to get there by bike when he had a free moment.

A cold finger prodded into his side, and Harry did not fucking flinch, nor did he squeal like a little girl handed craft paper, scissors and glitter glue. “Pay attention! I know this doesn't seem important —”

“No, I know it's important...I just don't know why it's important at three in the fucking morning.”

“—but, your skate outfits are more crucial than ever, so having the right one can mean the difference between a middling score and medaling one.”

Harry gave his sensei a flat look, pointedly looking at the two outfits clutched in his hands. “And that's why you dragged me out of bed and shoved me in a closet before the ass-crack of dawn, to show me skate outfits? Couldn't this wait?”

“No.”

He sighed, heavily. “Fine, whatever. As long as I'm here...gimme.”

Yuuri-sensei stared at him. Harry bit back a curse. “For fu—I'm not going to hurt them, I just want to see.”

Slowly, the older man held the first outfit aloft. “This one would be for your short program.”

His sensei's soft gaze lingered on the feather-and-gold netted confection. He seemed almost lost in thought, his eyes drifting closed as he lifted his husband's most famous skate outfit to his lips. It was incredibly sweet and incredibly intimate. Harry felt incredibly uncomfortable and cleared his throat.
Yuuri-sensei's eyes popped open, and he flushed deep, deep red. “Sorry, right. This one is much less complicated or revealing than what you have now, which won't detract as much from your skate. Also, it's more in tune to the purity of the song.”

“Purity. Sure. Why'd you really pick it?”

The man shot him a tiny smirk. “Honestly? Playing the nostalgia game is never a bad idea, as long as you're invoking nostalgia for something good. Granted, I wasn't a terrible skater, but I did much better in my National qualifiers than I probably would have, had I not been wearing one of Vitya's more...memorable...pieces.”

“Bullshit. I've seen the videos—Eros was incredible.”

“Yes, but dressing it up in a way that invoked Vitya? Probably helped more than it should have.”

Harry grunted. He didn't want to medal because he reminded the judges of his coach, but Yuuri-sensei made a good point. Also, at least he wouldn't be wearing a chandelier on his thighs anymore.

He nodded to the other outfit his sensei had pulled aside. “I get nostalgia, but...what about that? I'm pretty fucking sure I don't remember that.”

Yuuri-sensei shrugged. “You wouldn't. I was going to wear it for the Exhibition skate the year I won Silver. But then, Vitya and I had just gotten engaged, and I wanted to do something with him, so I ended up not using it. I didn't think I'd ever have an excuse to take it out of storage.”

Harry tilted his head, trying to figure out what, exactly, he was looking at. His sensei laughed, holding it aloft with a flourish. He blinked, stunned.

It was an extremely fitted black-and-gold horrorshow—Carnivale-Chic meets Ziggy-inspired-Gaga—with a high half-collar, a ridiculous amount of black feather-down, and a plunging neckline dramatic enough that it invalidated every fucking criticism Yuuri-sensei had ever voiced about his original outfit being 'inappropriate.' Seriously. Unless he was seeing wrong, that neckline dropped far enough that it would probably show off his happy trail, if he'd had one to show off.
He stared, rapt. It was...well. It was both the ugliest and most stunning piece of trash that he'd ever seen in his entire life. Gaga herself would weep in bitter envy over the trash-couture appeal of this fashion disaster. And those pants? 

Sweet, minty Lord. If they weren't made to show off every curve of his ass, then he'd eat his fucking Junior Worlds Gold medal.

"...Hari-kun? Are-are you OK? You're making a bit of a weird face."

"One question."

"Yes?"

"I feel like you'd expect me to sing if I wear this—I don't have to, do I?"

"Whu-? Of course you do—"

"—I mean, I'm just...I'm fucking terrible. Really terrible. Like, irreversible emotional-trauma sort of terrible. I could probably manage 'Moonage Daydream' without permanently scarring you, but I'd rather not risk Coach stabbing me with my knife shoes in revenge."

Yuuri-sensei snorted. "You don't have to sing 'Moonage Daydream'."

"'Pokerface,' then? Mental scarring is guaranteed with that one, but I can get you some ear plugs, if you want—"

"Seriously, you don't have t—"

"—because I am prepared to do what I have to, if it means you let me wear that."

Yuuri-sensei took a deep breath, rubbing the bridge of his nose. "...so you like it."

"It's a fashion disaster on par with permed mullets and shoulder pads in women's blazers. I fucking love it."
The man chortled. “Consider it yours, then.”

... ...

Chapter End Notes

Spasibo: Thank You

Pozhaluysta: You’re Welcome

Tonkotsu: Pork bone

Solnyshko: sun

Sweet, minty Lord/flying monkey fucks: Thanks be to KC, who said it/them first.

Yes, yes, I -know- that one feather and net outfit of Viktor's wasn't white and gold in the anime, but I'm basing its coloring off the original. i.e., the Johnny Weir outfit that inspired it. So sue me. XD

THANKS BE TO SILENCIA20, partner-in-crime for all things fanfic-y. I thanked her in the FB version, and am thanking her again here, because she came through with the hilarious/awesome brainstorming while I was stuck with a dead/dying laptop. She quite literally saved this fic from dying before it ever got started.
Chapter Four

Chapter Summary

Stand aside, Phichit Chulanont...Viktor Nikiforov is here to prove to all and sundry that he's the One True King of Instagram. Harry despairs.

Chapter Notes

As always, Legal Disclaimer and Content Warnings are posted with chapter one.

And also...as always...I'm not even sorry that I'm not sorry about this chapter. May it bring you the joy that writing it brought me.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Harry stared blandly at his phone as it continued to light up with notices every few seconds. It had barely stopped lighting up since his coach had first posted about their arrival in Hasetsu, complete with a picture of him looking awkward as shit, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with Yuuko-san, the sign for Ice Castle Hasetsu framed to sit just above their heads. He'd got so many notices in those first few days that he'd been forced to silence it, as the ping from Instagram notifications kept waking him up.

When a week had passed and he was still getting notices, he'd thought it was a little weird; as far as he'd known, his coach had only tagged him in that one thing, and it wasn't even that impressive. Despite the weird feeling in the pit of his stomach telling him he was missing something, Harry had set his phone aside—unchecked messages, and notices, and all—to focus on his training.

That—that shit, right, fucking there—was Dumb Move No. 1.

He should have known, should have seen what was coming. Looking back, it seemed so stupidly obvious that he was in for some bullshit when his coach's first instinct was not to show him around his new rink and talk him through his practice schedule, but to stop and proceed to waste a good half hour posing him like a doll for “the perfect Instagram pic.”

He had thought the man was just excited to be back in Hasetsu, that he'd focus once he got over the initial thrill of being home, amongst the sea, and Kyushu ramen, and the warm atmosphere of the onsen. For a while, that was true enough...or, it seemed true, at the time.
It hadn't been true.

It hadn't been true, at all.

Well, no that wasn’t quite right. Maybe his coach could multi-task better than he let on, but was too much of a troll at heart to let anyone know. It was either that, or he’d been straight-up playing him with the whole “mono-focused sadistic-coach” act.

And that had been Dumb Move No. 2—taking anything about his coach at face value.

He’d known better. He had. And yet, he’d brushed off the nagging feeling those few times he’d caught the man smiling absently at something on his phone, or tucking it into his sleeve when he moved to join him at the edge of the rink. Like a moron, he’d thought the man was doing what at least one of his former coaches had—recording his routines to make notes on, later. Putting together a visual file of his improvement. Being a fucking professional.

Yeah. Right.

Professional.

I'm a fucking idiot.

Harry’s thumb flicked absently over his screen as he scrolled through the wall of images and video clips his creeper coach had tagged him in...had been tagging him in, apparently, for the past eight weeks, or so. He winced, moaning in misery as he eyed some of the less flattering candid pictures his coach had uploaded. Without his permission.

...as one does, apparently, when one is an unmitigated shit.

[image.jpeg]

Harry, hair a sweaty rat's nest, was face-planted and drooling on one of the low tables of Yu-Topia's dining area. His coach was squashed in next to him, giving the victory salute as he posed for the selfie. Yuuri-sensei was frowning at his husband as he draped a blanket across his shoulders.
v-nikiforov Poor @hjp-skates, he's so tired after a long first day at the rink. #proudskatingdad
5,896 Likes 600 comments

Harry was leaning against the entrance to the rink, his back to the camera. He stood with one hip cocked out, his head turned just enough to see his bored expression. His cheekbone-length hair was pushed away from his face, held in place by the pair of sunglasses perched atop his head. His was wearing a regular practice shirt, but had it knotted up by his ribcage. His skate pants were a boring grey, but with Work, Bitch spelled out in large, hot-pink type across the butt.

v-nikiforov "\'(^ A ^)" '// @hjp-skates is so #smolandsassy #skatingsonsocute
13K Likes 567 comments

Harry moved into and out of focus as he worked through a dizzying switch-foot spin combo, both his butt and thighs looking large and in charge wrapped in his hot pink practice leggings. His coach’s squeal of “DAVAILIII~!” was a loud contrast to the soft shckkk of Harry's blades on the ice.

v-nikiforov Only 2 wks w @katsudon-nikiforov as his coach, and @hjp-skates has already tightened up his spins. #amazing
6,980 Likes 417 comments

Harry glared death at the camera, a mouthful of noodles dripping down his chin, as his coach surprised him with a pic.

v-nikiforov @hjp-skates enjoying his #KyushuRamen #Hecaughtme ))))
7,546 Likes 209 comments

Harry, his face red and wrecked, was frozen, mid-landing, his leg and arm gracefully extended.

v-nikiforov @hjp-skates 《《o(≥ dossier o》》 #3A3L3TL #ImCrying #smolskatingson
15,437 Likes 945 comments
Harry and Yuuri-sensei were side-by-side in the marketplace, the former's head barely past the latter's chin. Harry was posing in front of a small mirror, sassing it as he tried on a wide-brimmed pink sun hat and a pair of sunglasses with matching frames. Yuuri-sensei had a hand in front of his mouth as he laughed.

v-nikiforov @hjp-skates is #fierce ❤️ #skatingfamily

19K Likes  378 comments

Harry, half-buried under a mound of blankets and Makkachin, was dead to the world. His dark hair was a fuzzy, tangled mess of static, his mouth is gaping open as he slept.

v-nikiforov Only #3wks til @hjp-skates makes his senior debut! #hessocute

3,684 Likes  215 comments

An ass-view of Harry and Yuuri-sensei as they were filmed through the crack in the door to Minako's ballet studio. The sound of Beyonce filtered out into the hall, but the lyrics are inaudible over his coach's excited breathing and whispered “Yuuri~! Amazing~!”

v-nikiforov @hjp-skates and @katsudon-nikiforov are up to something, and it involves #QueenBeyonce

5,743 Likes  129 comments

A grainy snap-shot of Harry and Yuuri. Both were shirtless, with their hips and shoulders cocked as they were captured mid-motion. They looked fierce as fuck, their brows furrowed in concentration.

v-nikiforov @katsudon-nikiforov @hjp-skates #dancingpartnersincrime #Alejandro #GagaWept

21,675 Likes  854 comments

Yuuri, his face set in a frown, was blocking the camera with his palm. Harry was smirking at Coach Nikiforov, half-hidden behind his grumpy sensei.

v-nikiforov @katsudon-nikiforov and @hjp-skates are planning a surprise w/out me. #nofair (;;__;;)
Harry's chin-length hair was a rumpled mess, hanging over his coach's pair of aviators. He was wearing a hot pink midriff shirt with a screen design of a darker toned tiara that was super-imposed over novelty font that read “queen bitch.” The image had caught him with his tea cup half way to his mouth, the drift of steam fogging his glasses.

v-nikiforov So Smol. So Sassy. @hjp-skates #skatingson #growingupsofast (y ;___;)y

17K Likes  450 comments

Harry and Yuuri-sensei, shirtless and wearing sparkle leggings, heels, and bedazzled sunglasses, were red-faced, their chests and shoulders beaded with sweat as they danced along to Beyonce's “Single Ladies,” their bodies, honed from years of rigorous dance training, easily moving in time with the dancers in the video.

v-nikiforov @katsudon-nikiforov and @minako-ballet may have given @hjp-skates some sake for his birthday. #happy16th #smolskatingson \

13,985 Likes  459 comments

A close up of an envelope from the ISU clutched in Harry' thin fingers.

v-nikiforov #TheListPlacements #omg #soexcited for @hjp-skates

5,450 Likes  215 comments

This post contained three video snippets, converted into repeating GIFs. Harry, his posture elegant and fierce, as he lands a clean 3A-3L-3TL combo. A close up of Harry's footwork for his Free Skate. Harry turning to look into the camera and smirking.

v-nikiforov Look out, @yuri-plisetsky, @hjp-skates is coming 4 ur #GPF gold medal

1,289 Likes  348 comments

Harry sighed, dropping his phone into his lap. He screeched as Yuuri-sensei's head popped over his shoulder. “What are you doing?”
He picked up his phone, waving it weakly at his choreographer-cum-coach. “Just...catching up a bit.”

“Ah,” a quick, sheepish grin flickered across his face. “I suppose I should have warned you that Vitya's a bit of an Instagram Ninja.”

Harry shot him a dry look. “It would've been nice to know about before a video of my drunk-ass dancing to Beyonce ended up going viral.”

“To be fair, there aren't many videos of sixteen year old figure skaters wearing heels and dancing to Beyonce, so that might have been a part of it.”

“...that wasn't really my point.”

Yuuri-sensei smiled. “Just look at it this way, Harii-kun...you'll never need to hire a social media manager as long as Vitya is around. He'll do all your promoting for free.”

“You...you're really terrible at the whole making-people-feel-better thing.”

“Well, I wasn't trying to make you feel better.”

“What were you doing, then? Rubbing my misery in my face?”

“No, just stating facts.”

Harry grunted, turning to stare grumpily at his phone. It wasn't like he blamed Yuuri-sensei. Not really. He blamed Instagram. And his coach...mostly his coach and his need to be as extra as humanly possible. He shot a glower at the older brunette as he jostled his shoulder.

“C'mon. I have the studio booked for us this morning.”
“I thought you wanted me working on my Free Skate.”

Yuuri-sensei blinked. “Did I say we weren't working on your Free Skate? If I said that, I'm sorry—that was a lie.”

He snorted, slumping over the low table, picking at his rice and miso soup. “I just want it to be October, already.”

“You're not nervous?”

Green darted over to meet warm brown. The man moved to get comfortable next to him at the table. “I'm not not-nervous.”

Yuuri-sensei snorted “So you're nervous.”

Harry shrugged. “Yes and no...mostly no. I just—I fucking hate waiting.”

The man nodded, a soft smile tugging at his lips. “I did, too...” his smile turned wry, briefly, “of course, I was also an anxious mess every second of every season...at least until Vitka coached me.”

Harry grunted, knotting his fingers together tightly. “Anxiety isn't my issue; I'm just an impatient little shit.”

Yuuri-sensei let out a surprised bark of laughter, his eyes wide behind blue-framed glasses.

“Harii-kun!”

Harry shot him a flat look. “You fucking telling me I'm not?”

“Well, that's...that's not really—”
He gave his sensei a flat look. “You can say it, you know. It's not like I don't know I'm a shit.”

“Still...”

He waved off the half-apologetic, half-amused look his sensei shot him. “You know my papa...you've met my papa. He once wrote a 'strongly worded letter' to a reporter's parents after the woman made a snide remark about one of my Free Skates from my Junior debut; if he could get away with it, he'd wrap me up in cotton wool and stick me in his pocket. If even he can admit it, you can.”

Yuuri-sensei laughed. “I'll admit that you're one of the most stubborn skaters I've ever met—”

“That's what I thought.”

“—but Harii-kun, you're also one of the most dedicated and most disciplined, too. I know the wait is terrible, but I know that, when the time comes, you're going to wow them all.”

His face burned with embarrassment, his skin feeling tight across his cheeks and the bridge of his nose. He ducked, dark hair swinging in front of his eyes to hide them from his sensei. “You really think that.”

“Yes. I know—I know—Vitya isn't really...he's not good at remembering the praise part of the whole coaching thing. He was the same way when he was my coach.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah. He was great at finding ways to incorporate my strengths into my skating. He was great at finding ways to incorporate those strengths into pieces that also shocked both the audience and judges. He was great as dissecting the technical aspects of performances, breaking them down to pinpoint weak spots. He just wasn't...the things he finds admirable are obvious to him, and he often just assumes everyone can see what he sees, so doesn't always think to include the good—the great—with the bad.”

Harry took a deep breath, swallowing past the lump in his throat. The lump felt bigger as Yuuri-sensei beamed at him, ruffling his hair softly. “I know...both Viktor and I know...that you're going to do very well for yourself.” He rose to his feet, tugging Harry after him, “however, if you want to go
beyond that, if you want to be the best you can be...the best of them all...then we still have things we can work on.”

The shorter brunette took a few deep, bracing breaths.

OK. OK. He could do this. He smirked up at his sensei. “Whatever ya got, sensei, I'm ready.”

What he had wasn't more Beyonce or Lady Gaga or even Britney. What he had was what looked like a burned CD in a simple, plastic case, the title scrawled across the face of the CD in chicken-scratch Kanji. Though Harry's spoken Japanese was decent—it wasn't great, but it wasn't as bad as Suou's—his Kanji was...well, it was atrocious. He was OK with Hiragana, but Kanji and he just didn't get along. At all.

Harry stared blankly at the CD, then at his coach, and then at the CD, again. “Uhm...you know I can't read that, right.”

Yuuri-sensei smirked. “I figured as much.”

The man tossed him both his regular dance flats as well as his well-worn pointe shoes. Harry shot him a surprised look. “We're...we're doing ballet-ballet today.”

The man smiled lightly. “Yeah, but a bit more intensive than you're used to from me, so make sure you stretch really well and don't rush your barre warm-up.”

“O...K. Are you going to tell me what we're doing?”

A slow, borderline-sadistic grin stretched his sensei’s face. “Something Aristova-san has been torturing you with for years, or so she's told me.”

Harry froze, eyes darting up to meet his sensei's even as he stretched his torso out over his thighs. “The Black Swan. You're having me dance The Black Swan.”

Yuuri-sensei nodded. “We'll be running through it every studio-day.”
“Every..?”

“From now until we have to leave for Skate America, yes.”

“Fuck.”

A quirked brow. “Was Aristova-san lying when she said she taught you?”

“No, she did.”

“But she never made you dance it.”

“Er, not really? I mean, she'd assign me a sequence or two to run through when I practiced en pointe, but I've never done it from start to finish.”

“Well, today you will.”

The shorter brunette let out a strangled warble. “Great. Fantastic. Should I even fucking ask who you're having stand in for Siegfried?”

That wide, sadistic smile that he'd grown to expect from the man, but only on the ice, split his face. “Me, obviously.”

Harry stared at the man for a long moment that seemed to stretch, and stretch, and stretch. “You...you really want me dead, don't you.”

“Of course I don’t.”

“So you say...but, I'm pretty sure your husband will kill me when he finds out.”
“Not if?”

“With your stalker-husband? It's a matter of timing, not probability.”

Yuuri sighed. “Even if he finds out, he won't kill you.”

“Strangle me with my skate laces.”

“You're being dramatic.”

“Maybe smother me, but not with a pillow...with his bare hands as he just kinda quietly stares down at me, his eyes telling me I should have fucking expected this for being so goddamn stupid as to agree to it.”

Yuuri-sensei snorted. “Now you're really being dramatic.”

Harry shot the man a flat look. “Didn't he write all over your back in permanent marker, then run off to perform naked yoga on the roof of Hasetsu Castle because he was jealous of a fish statue?”

“He...his Japanese wasn't as good, then. He got confused.”

“He thought you were comparing him to an ex, so he waited til you were passed out drunk to tag you like a graffiti artist tags a wall.”

“That's not exactly what—”

“You're saying that a man that scrawled cryptic messages across your back in ink, a man who ran off and risked arrest for indecent exposure to prove himself better than a non-existent ex—and all that while you two were still only kinda engaged—wouldn't destroy me if he mistook our dancing for something more than just dancing?”

“...he's really not that bad.”
“He’s a mouth-breather who posts video clips of himself lurking in dark hallways filming you through cracked doorways. He’d definitely kill me if we actually touched while dancing.”

Brown eyes blinked, startled. “Filming through cracks, what—?!?”

Harry rolled his eyes. “Remind me to fucking show you my Instagram feed later.”

The older man pinched the bridge of his nose, shaking his head and muttering under his breath about “extra.” The brunette turned to stretch out his back, leg stretched up and out, with his ankle resting on the barre. “Just...you worry about Odile, I'll worry about Viktor.”

“Good luck with that.” He shot the man a snarky smile, bending back over his lap with a cackle as the older man threw a sweaty sock at him.

“Little shit. If you have time to sass me, you have time to stretch.”

“...you sound like Nastya-baba.”

“I'll take that as a compliment.”

Harry smirked, sending the man a side-eye through long fringe. “...you really shouldn't.”

“Come to think of it...I'm pretty sure Minako-sensei has her tutu from her time as Odile tucked away somewhere.”

“Hah?!?”

“Unless you want to wear that for every run-through and risk my 'mouth-breathing husband' seeing and posting pictures, I'd get back to stretching.”

When he was sure his sensei wasn't looking, he quickly stuck his tongue out at him, before bending
Harry panted, bending over his knees. No matter how many times he danced The Black Swan pas-de-deux in the past, no matter how many times he'd danced it since Yuuri-sensei had added it to their routine, it exhausted him. He grimaced, swiping the sweat out of his eyes as he met Minako-san's gaze.

She was beaming at him, bright with genuine warmth. “That was so beautiful.”

“Er, thanks—”

The older woman shook her head, brown hair flying around her face. “No, you don't understand. I've known Yuuri all his life—I had him in ballet flats before he could properly walk. Meeting you...finally seeing you dance at your birthday...seeing you dance this piece, in my studio, where I watched Yuuri grow as a dancer...? It's like...it's like staring into your grandchild's face for the first time.”

Yuuri-sensei blinked, wide eyed, at his old teacher, his face flushed and his eyes suspiciously glassy. Harry shifted. He didn't...aside from his papa and his mum—who he rarely ever saw, anymore—he never really had any close family. So. It was a bit...it was...his chest ached at the thought that his sensei's sensei felt so strongly about his dancing.

He dipped into a deeply respectful bow. “Thank you, Minako-san. You honor me.”

If he squeaked when she pulled him into an exuberant hug, well...who wouldn't. The woman had a grip on her. “You're family, and family can go yobisute.”

Harry, eyes wide, nodded tightly against the woman's shoulder. “Alright, M-Minako.”

He yowled, grimacing as the woman pinched at his cheek. “There. That wasn't so hard, was it?”

“Naow, buhh yuhr urten muh fashhe.”

She let go, pushing the young brunette back to beam into his face. Harry rubbed at his cheek,
scowling at the twinge that shot up his jaw.

The woman's face swung around to fix on the older brunette. “Yuuri!”

His sensei jumped. “Uh, yeah?”

“You take care of this boy, you hear me?”

“Of course.”

“I mean it. He may have been your skater first, but he's my baby-danseuse now, too. Understand?”

The man let out a soft laugh, rubbing at the sweaty hair clinging to his nape. “I understand, sensei. I'll keep an eye on him.”

Dark eyes narrowed on her former pupil's face. He waved his hands frantically. “Really, I promise! I won't let Vitya drag him into anything he's too young for.”

The woman relaxed. “Good.”

Harry watched the by-play, bewildered. He felt like he'd missed something. Knowing him, he probably had. Ankle resting on the barre, he bent over his extended leg, stretching the tension out of his lower back. He'd earned a long, long soak in the onsen tonight, training schedule be damned.

His phone lit up from its perch atop his wind-breaker. Harry groaned, slowly lowering his leg and shuffling over to pick it up. It...was a notice from his coach. An Instagram notice.

[YouTube link: Japan's Treasure and their Ex-Pat Wonderkind Dance The Black Swan]

The YouTube video was obviously shot from a low angle and on a camera phone, but the quality was decent, regardless. The music of the piece was soft in the background, but recognizable as The Black Swan suite. Harry was in a loose Sex Pistols midriff shirt that fluttered around his rib cage as he danced, his black dance leggings accented with pink thigh-high leg warmers. His pointe shoes, old and scuffed, were faded almost white with age. Yuuri-sensei wore a more traditional white dance
tank and black dance leggings, his ballet flats looking even more worn than Harry's pointe shoes.

minako-ballet TFW your balletson has a son of his own. dancefamily skatefamily @katsudon-nikiforov @hjp-skates

45,856 Likes 3,126 comments

Harry flushed, letting out a huff as the likes rolled in, @v-nikiforov leading the Squee Brigade.

 Fucking Typical.

         ...

         The hot-fucking-mess that was his Russian-born coach clung to his husband, sliming tears and mucus up the side of his neck, onto his face. Saint that he was, Yuuri-sensei barely twitched, though he quickly swiped at the mess with a handful of tissues the minute his husband detached himself. “Seriously, Vitya, we'll be gone less than a week. You'll be fine.”

         “But I'll miss you, Yuuri~! Makka will miss you!” The man, a mess of rumpled hair and fever-glazed eyes, leaned into his husband's space, whispering...Harry didn't even know what, but something utterly filthy, if Yuuri-sensei's face was to be believed.

         His sensei's breath hitched and he let out a soft sigh. “...Vitenka.”

         He gagged.

         Harry [10:32 a.m.]: Adults r gross. "=_=)

         His coach dragged bright blue eyes up his husband's face, the stare heated and flirtatious and yeuuuuuchhh. “My Yuu-chan.”

         “V-Vit'ka.”

         Harry [10:35 a.m.]: Srsly, coach is half-dead w fever, AND YET.
**Harry [10:37 a.m.]:** He looks like he’s about to sex-pounce Yuuri-sensei.

**Harry [10:37 a.m.]:** He paid to have us arrive in 2 cars. I don't want to ask, but I can -guess- by how gross they're being rn. (^_^;)

He pointedly ignored the adults trading soppy looks as his phone pinged.

**Hani-San [10:38 a.m.]:** Eh~? You and Katsuki-san are at the airport already? But, why so early? I didn't think you needed to be in Boston til the 22nd?

He rolled his eyes. Of course the baby-faced cinnamon roll of a seventeen year old Host wouldn’t be phased by the implication of car sex. *Of course.* That was just his life, now.

**Harry [10:42 a.m.]:** It takes a little over 23 hrs to get there, so we have to leave early.

**Hani-San [10:42 a.m.]:** Why so long?

**Harry [10:43 a.m.]:** JSF comps us for basic travel + lodging. We’d have to pay out of pocket if we wanted to upgrade to a better flight/room.

**Harry [10:43 a.m.]:** Papa could afford it, but sensei is stubborn. He won't let papa pay to fly us out privately, even though I've told him he's fine w it.

**Hani-San [10:44 a.m.]:** You wanted to pay to fly him out, Harii-chan? That's sweet~!

**Harry [10:44 a.m.]:** Not sweet, practical. He gets bad jetlag and I know he's worried that he'll be too sick the day of my Short Program if we don't leave early.

**Hani-San [10:45 a.m.]:** (//* o */\) Wow, poor Katsuki-san. That sounds awful.
Harry [10:45 a.m.]: It is.

Hani-San [10:48 a.m.]: Harii-chan, Kyo-chan wants me to let you know he's happy to let you use one of his family's jets, next time.

Hani-San [10:49 a.m.]: He says not to worry about the cost, he's just happy to help. Ne, ne, isn't that sweet~?

Harry blinked. Huh. That was incredibly nice, which...well, it struck him as oddly out of character, considering he'd barely exchanged two words with Ohtori.

Harry [10:50 a.m.]: Oh, uh...thank Ohtori-san for me? I mean, I don't know if Yuuri-sensei would go for it. And the ISU has rules about donations, so he'd have to get permission from them and the JSF, I think?

A quick glance at his two coaches. The blonde was nuzzling into his husband's neck as the brunette flushed. Despite his scolding frown, Yuuri-sensei's eyes were bright and sparkling. Harry turned away again. He absolutely did not want to know any more than he already did about his coaches' shared sex life. He'd heard more than enough through the onsen's ridiculously thin walls.

Harry [10:52 a.m.]: If it could be worked out, that would be great. I'll be flying out again in Nov for the Trophee de France.

“...on the TV, and I'll have my phone on me the entire time, promise.”

The blonde huffed, but finally let his husband go so that he could grab the handle of his wheeled suitcase. Harry hefted himself out of the uncomfortable seat, dumping the cheap cup of airport coffee in the bin. His phone pinged, but he tucked it into the outside pocket of his side-pack instead of checking the text.

“Yuuri-sensei, we need to go.”

His blonde coach, looking miserable and sick and sad, shot him a betrayed look. Harry rolled his eyes. “He can face-time you once we're at the fucking gate, Jesus.”
Coach Nikiforov huffed, but gave his husband a gentle little push towards the ever-growing line for the security checkpoint. “Go on. I'll talk to you later, solnyshko.”

Yuuri-sensei nodded. “It'll be—” his brow furrowed, his fingers moving as he quietly did the math “—almost three in the morning...yesterday...when we land in Boston. Ugh.”

The man frowned at his husband. Even Harry winced. He hadn’t seen his sensei’s jetlag first hand, but heard enough about it that he was already worrying, and they hadn’t fucking left, yet. “Don't be afraid to take your sleeping pills if you need to; that's what they’re there for. I love you.”

“Love you, too.”

“Don't worry about calling me, just a short text to let me know you made it alright.”

“Alright.”

Harry hovered awkwardly at his sensei's side, shooting his blonde coach a tight smile. “I'll make sure to remind him, just in case.”

The man shot him a grateful, beaming smile. Harry flushed, turning away. That was just...it was so. He sighed. Another tug of his sensei's arm, and they were winding their way through the mid-morning crowds towards the check-point.

Harry, glancing at his too-quiet sensei out of the corner of his eye, didn't complain as he was left in charge of awkwardly shuffling shit along. As much as Coach Nikiforov rubbed him the wrong way half the time, he knew he truly loved sensei, and sensei was ridiculously hung up on him, too. No matter how short the separation, Harry knew that it had to be bothering the older man.

Yuuri-sensei, his head bent over his phone, only looked up from his texting when they were waved towards the metal detectors by the cheerful old man checking passports and IDs.

“Sorry, Harii-kun.”

He shrugged. “It's fine. I know you would have preferred if Coach took me, instead.”
A large, warm hand landed on his shoulder, stopping him from shuffling forward for a moment. He lifted his eyes to meet warm, whiskey brown gazing down at him seriously. “That's not it at all, Harii-kun. I just know how Vitya gets when he's sick, and would have preferred not to inflict that on my parents.”

Harry smirked. “I'm going to tell him you said that.”

A low, half-sincere moan. “Oh, don't. He'll pout for months.”

The seats at the gate were actually worse than the ones near the ticket counter, and Harry winced as an unforgiving fold in the stiff pleather dug a burrow into his left ass-cheek. He ignored the muttering and random flashing of cellphone cameras. He wasn't famous on the same level as either of his coaches, say, but he was famous in his own right.

JGPF gold medalist two years running, and now the first student that his coach had taken on since he temporarily stepped away from the skating world when his husband retired. The fact that he also had said husband, Japan's Best (Retired) Male Singles Skater, as a co-coach and choreographer would only increase his press exposure as the season went on.

Harry checked his phone. There were a few texts from both Haninozuka-san and Ohtori-san.

**Hani-San [11:00 a.m.]:** Kyo-chan says he wants to talk to you.

**Hani-San [11:05 a.m.]:** I'm giving him your number, OK~?

**Hani-San [11:25 a.m.]:** I'm about to go have some cake, but I'll see you in Boston on the 23rd, if I don't talk to you before then, ne~?

**Unknown Caller [11:40 a.m.]:** Potter-san, this is Ohtori Kyoya. Hani-senpai gave me your number.

Harry quickly added the older boy to his contact list.
Ohtori [11:43 a.m.]: I just wanted to reassure you that the offer to use one of my family's jets is always open. I'm registering as an official sponsor as we speak, so the ISU and JSF shouldn't pose any problems.

...what.

No. But, seriously. He was what.

Ohtori [11:45 a.m.]: I also want to reassure you that my sponsorship does not come with any provisos. I have no wish to interfere with your competitions or your training; I trust your coaches can handle that on their own.

Ohtori [11:46 a.m.]: Neither does my sponsorship require you put up with Tamaki turning your competitions into Host Club events.

Harry let out a breath he didn't know he was holding.

Ohtori [11:50 a.m.]: I would, however, like to accompany you to a few of your competitions; I admit to being curious to seeing you perform in a competitive setting. Would that be acceptable to you?

Ohtori [11:52 a.m.]: I understand, from Hani-senpai and Mori-senpai, that they have plans to fly out to Boston within the next few days, and are already making arrangements for November.

Ohtori [11:55 a.m.]: Tamaki, incidentally, will not be joining us, least of all because he still retains a certain...fearful respect...for your coach. I wonder what I could tempt you with to tell me what happened there? Neither he nor the twins have been forthcoming.

Harry tapped out a quick message to Haninozuka-san, letting him know that he'd meet him at the landing strip on the 23rd, and to enjoy his cake. As for Ohtori, he read through the texts a few more times, trying to get a read on him. He was...well, he had surprised him.

His first impression of the 4th son of the Ohtori had been that the older boy was a massive cunt. To be fair, Harry was barely six months into his second change of rink since moving to Japan, and was feeling a little raw, so was maybe a bit more sensitive than normal to Rich Boy Fuckery.
It wasn't like he was unfamiliar with that brand of fuckery. He'd been surrounded by it when he'd lived in England. So, when he'd been confronted by the Ohtori's ingratiating smiles that reeked of self-interest, Harry had been entirely turned off. Not even his temperamental hormones, who found any decently attractive boy with a pulse fair game for his...messier...dreams, had gone there with the brunette.

It had taken a bit, but his impression had improved...from “massive cunt” to “kind of a twat.” Not much of an improvement, but still an improvement. Still, improvement or no, there was just—something about Ohtori that rubbed him the wrong way.

It wasn't the ego that was the problem. To be really fucking fair, Harry had a bit of an ego, himself. As did his papa...and uncle Sirius. Hell, half the people he'd met during his years skating and dancing—including his coach and Minako and Nastya-baba—had huge fucking egos. So, no. The ego wasn't a problem.

His being a spoiled shit wasn't the issue, either. Harry practically lived the definition, and he knew it. It was kind of hard to avoid when you came from a family as obscenely wealthy as his, when you had a father as determined as his was to coddle him.

So. He couldn't really pinpoint what about Ohtori had his instincts shrieking like his papa the one time he'd found a spider in their pantry, but they were.

**Harry [01:19 p.m.]:** Sorry for the delay, it was a bit of an ordeal getting through security and finding our gate.

**Harry [01:21 p.m.]:** If you're serious about wanting to fly us out, then The Trophee de France takes place in Bordeaux from Nov 21st -23rd

**Harry [01:23 p.m.]:** Come when you want, but I'd need to be there by the 18th.

**Harry [01:23 p.m.]:** The JSF is usually in charge of booking. You'll want to talk to them soon, or they might assume you're comping our rooms as well as our flights. I know you can afford it, but the local hotels always raise prices 200% the weeks leading up to the competitions, and tend to overbook. So...heads up.
Ohtori [01:25 p.m.]: Thank you for the information. I'll make sure to get in touch with the ISU.

Ohtori [01:26 p.m.]: ...I notice you didn't mention anything about what happened with Tamaki and your coach. Willing to share?

Harry felt a grin tug at his lips.

Harry [01:30 p.m.]: That. Yeah. See, Suou and the twins had been making a nuisance of themselves at a few of my practices, interrupting our meetings as well as the skate sessions.

Harry [01:31 p.m.]: That last time, though. Well. It was bad enough he interrupted to brag about the pictures from the Host Ball he'd sent me. He then spent, like, twenty minutes bragging to my coach about your club's tea service instead of apologizing.

Harry [01:32 p.m.]: Coach...he didn't say anything to Suou-san, just kinda -looked- at him. Suou went white and started babbling before he booked it out of there with the twins.

Harry [01:34 p.m.]: That actually...if you come (you can if you want) don't expect my coach to be the best host. He's not a dick...he's kinda like Suou, when he's off the ice...but he doesn't like interruptions when he's trying to focus.

He could almost hear the sigh in Ohtori's reply.

Ohtori [01:36 p.m.]: That sounds...well, that sounds exactly like the sort of situation Tamaki would cause, actually.

Harry snorted.

Ohtori [01:41 p.m.]: Don't worry about your coach, Potter-san. As long as he doesn't actually try to take a bite out of me, I'm sure I'll be fine.

Harry [01:43 p.m.]: I think he saves the biting for the bedroom.
He choked, almost tossing his phone across the sitting area in surprise. He hadn't actually meant to send that. It was so much worse because he didn't really know Ohtori that well, and had been trying to be polite to his new sponsor.

...and wasn't THAT a weird thought.

That awkward bullshit aside, he didn't know what the older boy wanted from him. If Ohtori was angling for some sort of...sugar daddy/sugar baby set up, then the last thing he should be doing is encouraging him.

Because fuck that shit. Fuck it in the fucking ear.

Ohtori [01:45 p.m.]: He bites in the bedroom, does he. How...intriguing.

Harry winced. That—that was why he shouldn't have gone there.

Also...thinking about Coach Sex is like thinking about Parent Sex; Utterly Brain-Breaking.

Harry [01:50 p.m.]: `\( (-_-) /` I guess. I think we're boarding soon. I'll talk to you soon, Ohtori-san.

Ohtori [01:51 p.m.]: Of course, Potter-san. Good luck in your competition. I'll be watching.

Harry [01:52 p.m.]: Thanks.

Yikes.

Chapter End Notes

And THIS is the chapter that almost broke my Facebook author's page.
...no, I'm not kidding. It completely glitched out THREE TIMES when I tried to copy/paste it into a note, and it half the reason why this story is going to be 100% on AO3, from now on.

Also? I didn’t even get to Harry’s debut at Skate America. I would apologize, but Yuuri and Harry were just bringing too much fab this chapter for me to cut them off. So, you’re just gonna have to wait. I promise I’ll make it worth it, or I’ll try to.

Yobisute: A term used in Japanese when you are granting someone permission to forgo suffixes (-chan, -kun, -san, etc).

Solnyshko: Russ diminutive that means something akin to sun/sunshine.

Start of Season vs First Competition: Skate Season starts Aug 1st, but the first Competition for the Grand Prix Qualifiers isn’t til October 24th (Skate America), so Harry would have debuted the day after his 16th birthday, but won’t debut ON THE ICE til October.

Japan to Boston: I did actual research for flight times vs time difference, so fight me. It is totally possible for there to be a negative 13 hr time difference between countries it takes 23 hrs to get to.
Harry dreamed of the rain.

Falling in heavy sheets off the roof of the apartment complex where he'd lived with his father. Rumbling as it cut rivers through the cracks of aging roof tiles. Banging like steel drums as it battered the old, metal gutters, flooding them.

Not even his father's umbrella stood a chance against that rain.

Buffeted by the wind, it would sting and tear into your face, dripping down the back of your neck as you pushed your way through the deluge. Man...teenager against nature. Nature always won.

Winter rain was terrible, yes—biting and unforgiving as ice—but not the worst. The worst was the summer rain—heavy, oppressive, suffocating—as it pressed down onto the city, the heat of it making the humidity feel so much worse. It was misery made manifest, that rain.

He grimaced, moving to swipe at the rain clinging to his skin and—the back of his hand smacked, hard, against the face tucked into the crook of his shoulder. He jerked awake.
Harry, disoriented and a bit sleep-drunk, could only stare at the dull grey plastic partition with a curtain that matched the drab gray-on-gray patterned carpet for a long while. Right. He was on a fucking airplane. Still. Yuuri-sensei snuffled, burrowing his face deeper into his neck, but didn't wake.

*Guess those sleeping pills fucking work.*

The phantom warmth of summer rain clung to his skin, even as the last of the sleep fog left him; He swiped at his neck, grimacing as his hand slipped through thick drool that stank of morning breath. “Did he really...he *drooled* on me. Gross.”

Yuuri-sensei grunted, sleep-glazed eyes blinking up at him. “Whu'zat?”

Harry scoffed. “Don't worry about it, sensei.”

The man dragged his hands down his face, rubbing at his eyes, hard, for a moment. “Whu'time'zit?”

Harry checked his phone. 11:45 p.m. “Almost midnight.”

Sensei's face twisted up into a massive yawn. “Sh-shit.”

“Yeah. We'll be in Detroit soon.”

“Hrmf.” Sensei dug into his jacket pockets, letting out a little crow of triumph as he pulled out his own cell. It gave a hum as it powered up, the screen flashing pearly white. His lenses glowing with the reflected glare, Yuuri-sensei stared blankly at the screen for a minute or two.

And another minute. And another. Of just sensei staring at his phone, dead-eyed.

Harry shot the man a careful look. “You, uh...you know you're not gonna get any messages in airplane mode, right..?”
Sensei rolled his eyes. “I'm aware.”

“Then what the hell are you—?”

The man shook his head, his face haggard with exhaustion. “Nothing, just—trying to wake up.”

“By staring blankly at your phone. Right.” Harry shifted at the intensely grumpy look sensei shot him. “Uh...so...where are we meeting your friends?”

“What—oh. Uh, Phichit and Celestino said they’d meet us at the gate with coffee.”

The moan he let out was almost obscene. “He's bringing us coffee?”

Sensei shrugged. “That's what he said.”

“I fucking love him already.”

Yuuri-sensei snorted. “I'm sure he'll be glad to hear that.”

Detroit Metropolitan wasn't the nicest airport he'd been through, but it wasn't terrible. It didn't have slot machines tucked into every corner, unlike the airport in Vegas, and the fact that some of the restaurants and news stands were actually open made it a far cry better than Portland International, where everything seemed to shut down after 8 p.m.

Harry glanced around. It was actually pretty crowded, considering how late it was. Or early. Whatever. People cut in and out of the flow of the foot traffic, pushing through huddled families and darting around loitering tourists trying to find their terminal. It was bright and loud and noisy as fuck, but Harry was keeping his mouth shut, because at least he was on the fucking ground. “Sensei?”

The man looked up from his rapid texting. “Yeah?”

“I need to...do you mind..?” He gestured vaguely towards the Men's room.
The man waved him off. “Go ahead, Harii-kun. Take your time—clean up—I'll let Phichit know we'll be a few.”

“Thanks.”

Leaving his roller suitcase with his sensei, Harry hurried into the bathroom, side-pack flung over his shoulder. It was...well, it was a fucking American Men's room. Tile. Dingy mirrors. Urinals. Men hunched over said urinals, faces lax as they took what sounded like the greatest piss of their lives. Same shit, different shitter, basically.

Still, compared to the claustrophobic little cubicle that was an airplane toilet, it was fucking _palatial_. Harry shuffled around the urinals, stepping over discarded briefcases and jackets, and scooted into the only clean stall.

Calling it clean had been a stretch.

The floor was stained piss-yellow, but the fluorescent lighting made everything glow a sickly yellow, so it was hard to tell if that was just the tile, or an actual puddle of congealed piss. Harry considered his options: to piss first, or to change first. Considering he'd have nothing put a bit of thin toilet paper to wipe off his hands...

He grimaced. Yeah, no. Definitely fucking changing first.

He'd rather not get piss-mist on his clean clothes, thanks-so-fucking-much.

He took his time, careful not to let his hands or bare feet touch the walls or dubiously clean floor. T-shirt, converse, socks, jeans were all slowly tucked away as he pulled out a warmer, more comfortable change of clothes.

Gray and fleecy, the sweater was one of Yuuri-sensei's. Well, technically, it was his coach's. Sensei had “liberated” it from his husband, and Harry had "liberated" it from sensei, so it was plenty big enough to hang past his knees. The sleeves, too, were more than a bit long on him, and kept slipping down past his fingers no matter how many times he pushed them up to his elbows. Despite looking like a goddamn child in the thing, it was thick, warm, and roomy as fuck, so Harry didn't even care that it was too big, or looked like a tent on him.
The hot-pink yoga pants with the smiling-cupcake pattern had been a birthday gift from Nastya, the bitch. No matter that she said the pattern was a coincidence, he knew better. Her fucking shitty smirk had given her away immediately. Still, they were better than jeans. He was fucking sick of wearing goddamn jeans and just wanted them off, even if that meant walking around with cupcakes plastered to his ass and thighs.

The flats were...well, they were fucking flats. They were nothing fancy, save for the fact that his papa had bought them online from the danskin store when he'd heard he'd be traveling.

“They’ll feel better on your feet when they're all swollen from being on the plane for so long,” he'd said. He'd been fucking right.

After a hurried piss and a quick wash up in a grimy sink, Harry legged it out of the Men's room and into the main concourse. Yuuri-sensei was exactly where he'd left him, leaning against the standing terminal map...his eyes still fixed on his phone, his fingers flying as he texted...whoever. He sidled up to the older man and set his bag down. “S'that coach?”

The man didn't look up from his phone. “No. Phichit. He's working out last-minute details for a pick-up in Boston.”

“Car service?”

“No, a friend. Beka” he glanced up, “...uh, Otabek. Altin.”

Harry blinked. Otabek Altin. Oh god.

Sensei blinked back. “You know, the skater from Kazakhstan..?”

“I know who he is, sensei.” Oh god oh god OH MY GOD.

“Ah. Well, he wanted to take us out for an early breakfast anyway, so he's meeting us at the airport with a taxi.”

Harry stared blankly. So this is what death feels like.
“Harii-kun?”

“Yeah, uh. OK. Cool. Sounds good.”

Yuuri-sensei stared at him for a long moment, his brow furrowed. “You OK, Harii-kun?”

“Yeah, yeah. Fine. Just...Otabek Altin?”

“Yes..? Is that a problem?”

“Problem? No. No.”

The man shot him a flat look. “But?”

“But...I, uh, I'm a bit of a fan, and—”

“Really?”

“Just a bit, yeah—” If by 'a bit' he meant a he turned into a sobbing wreck of a human watching him skate, “—I saw him win gold at Four Continents the year I started Juniors, and he was so—and now you say he's MEETING US IN BOSTON, and I'm terrified I'll open my mouth and spew crazy all over.”

He paused, winced. “...kinda like that just now.”


Harry let out a huff. “No, it's fucking embarrassing, and I'd rather you not TELL him—” he scrabbled for his sensei's phone as his fingers flew over the keys, “ohmygod, WHY DO YOU HATE ME, SENSEI.”
The asshole grinned brightly. Harry fought the urge to stomp his foot. “I don’t hate you, Harii-kun.”

“Then WHY.”

“Because you're adorable—”

“I'm not adorable, fucking goddamnit.”

“—and Beka won't mind. He'll probably be flattered.” Flattered. Right. Fucking fuck my life forever, right now.

“You're a shit, sensei. A complete and utter SHIT...and...and you drool in your sleep. So there.”

The man laughed, scratching at the back of his head sheepishly. “So, I tagged you too?”

“Hah?!”

“That's what Phichit calls it. Tagging. I've done it to him and Celestino a few times, and Viktor more than that. Viktor, though...he thinks it's cute.”

Harry shot the man a flat look. “That's because your husband is gross, sensei.”

The man laughed, his gaze going soppy and fond. Harry wrinkled his nose. Sensei was just as gross as his pervert-husband. Fucking Christ.

_Time to change the subject before he starts waxing poetic about coach's fetishes. Gross bastard._

“So! Your friends. Can you see them, sensei?”
The man peered through the crowded sitting area, frowning. “Not yet.”

“Hn.” Harry dropped his bags by his sensei’s feet, darting around businessmen, frazzled parents with their wild brats, climbing atop a bench to look around. Yuuri-sensei piled Harry’s bags atop his and shuffled his way over.

“Hey, sensei?”

“Yes?”

“Your friend—he’s that Thai skater, right? Phi-something Chulanont?”

“You mean Phichit? Yeah...why, do you see him?”

“I—think so? Is—uhm, is his coach kind of...” Harry gestured towards his face, miming a heavy chin.

“Tall, cleft-chin, long hair?”

“If by long you mean a head of hair that would have your balding husband sobbing in envy, then yes.”

“Where?”

Harry pointed towards the back wall. The Thai man, Phichit, was lean, but solidly built, and wearing a tracksuit. He was also holding a little cardboard carry-out tray from Starbucks. That gorgeous darling.

“Please tell me that’s them, sensei? Please. He has Starbucks, and I need that to be him.”

The man snorted, staring down at his phone as it lit up. “Yeah, that’s Phichit.”
Harry didn't stop to grab his luggage, just zipping through the crowd, running full-tilt towards his hot, liquid salvation. *Verily I come, my darling. We will be reunited soon~!*

Pushing his way between a couple blocking his way with their PDA, he fought back a smirk. Served them right, the rude shits. Dark, warm eyes lit up when they zeroed in on his face Their owner beamed.

“Teensy!”

...what.

*What.*

No.

He didn't really.

Did he?

He fucking did.

He took a deep, bracing breath. *He bought you Starbucks. You can't hit him.*

“It's *Harry*, actually.” He didn't pout—he didn't—as the older (TALLER) man laughed.

“Yuuri's told me so much about you!”

“Yeah? What's he sai—” He blinked as a camera flash went off in his face, recovering just in time to keep from dropping his coffee as it was pressed into his hands.

“I didn't know what you'd like, but figured a venti skinny vanilla latte with soy would be a safe bet.
OH, and Yuuri said you don't eat meat, so I also bought you one of those yogurt cups with the granola and dried fruit,” he gestured towards his chin-tastic coach, “Ciao Ciao has the bag, if you're hungry.”

Marry this man. Marry him and have his babies immediately.

Ignoring the other skater's startled oof as he latched onto him, Harry buried his face against Phichit's shoulder.

“What..?”

“You're my new favorite person.”

Phichit laughed. “I am~?”

“Yes.”

“What about Viktor? Or Yuuri?”

“Don't talk to me about Viktor fucking Nochillforov. He stalks me with his camera phone and then posts all that shit on Instagram. And he keeps stealing sensei while we're in the middle of dance class because he's too impatient to keep it in his pants for twenty fucking minutes. He's an ass.”

The older skater gave a howl of laughter.

“...and Sensei drooled all over my neck then ratted me out as a fanboy to Altin, so he's on my shitlist, too.”

“Yuuri! You didn't.”

Harry shot a glare over his shoulder at his sensei as the man laughed. “Guilty.”
“...which is why you're not my favorite anymore. Phichit is.”

Another camera flash, but this one from his sensei's phone. “I'm sending that one to your father...and Viktor.”

“...you know he's going to have it blown up into a poster and framed, don't you.”

“Which 'he' are you referring to?”

“Either, both.”

“Then yes, I'm aware.”

“You're a shit, sensei.”

“So you tell me.”

The Thai skater squeezed him tighter, his chin resting against the side of his head. “Waaah~! Tag me in that when you post it!”

Harry stared, appalled at his sensei. “Wait, you're not going t—”

“And, done!”


2 New Texts from Papa.

Yuuri Katsuki tagged you in a post on Instagram.
**Papa [12:35 a.m.]:** I'M SO PROUD OF MY BABY, MAKING FRIENDS.

**Papa [12:37 a.m.]:** Make sure to message me when you get to Boston, and I'll see you in a few days.

---

Phichit was beaming at the camera, his eyes nearly closed in laughter. He had an arm wrapped around Harry in a loose hug. The coffee he was holding was perched carefully on one of the shorter skater's shoulders. Harry was nearly glued to his side, one green eye visible through a curtain of dark hair as he glowered over his shoulder at his sensei. His own coffee was clutched possessively to his side.

**katsudon-nikiforov** It was Love At First Starbucks for @hjp-skates and @phichit+chu #coffeejunkies #toocute

Harry let out a huff, pulling away from the hug and flopping down onto the floor. “Fuck you both.”

“Awww, but...I thought I was your favorite?”

Green eyes glared death up at the older skater. He wasn’t phased. “You betrayed me.”

“Poor Teensy.”

Harry flipped the man off, glowering as he let out a peal of laughter. They were assholes—both Phichit and sensei. Massive, fucking jerks. No wonder they were best friends.

He glowered down at his phone, hesitating as did the math. 1:43 p.m.

**Harry [12:43 a.m.]:** I should have just flown out w you two instead of being nice and flying w sensei. (;/ A ;/)
Hani-San [12:45 a.m.]: (* O *) What happened, Harii-chan?

Harry [12:47 a.m.]: Everyone here is a jerk. Except for Celestino.

Harry [12:48 a.m.]: Sensei ratted me out to my favorite skater and posted embarrassing shit on Instagram. His friend made fun of me and egged on his shit-posting.

Hani-San [12:50 a.m.]: That wasn't nice of Katsuki-san.

Hani-San [12:51 a.m.]: What did his friend say~?

Harry glowered up at the man he was gossiping about, huffing as fucking Chulanont beamed down at him and pet his head.

Harry [12:51 a.m.]: He called me Teensy twice and now he's petting me like I'm fucking Makkachin. He's a jerk.

He jerked, nearly dropping his phone as the speaker crackled to life over-head. “GOOD MORNING, LADIES AND GENTLEMAN, AND WELCOME TO AEROFLOT AIRLINES. BOARDING FOR FLIGHT 6542 FROM DETROIT METRO TO LOGAN INTERNATIONAL WILL BEGIN IN 15 MINUTES, SO FOR THE SAKE OF CONVENIENCE, WE ASK THAT YOU REMAIN BY THE GATE.”

Harry [12:53 a.m.]: I have to go. We're boarding soon.

Hani-San [12:55 a.m.]: OK~! Have a good flight, and Takashi and I will see you soon~!

The flight into Boston was—thank fucking god—only an hour and a half. It was also blissfully free of drooling sensei and their troll best friends, mostly because Harry'd been quick to claim the window seat next to Celestino and refused to move. The older skater had pouted at him, but had seemed happy enough to spend the flight whispering to and laughing with sensei.
Harry frowned, ducking away as sensei and fucking Chulanont glanced over at him and giggled. Again. For the fifth time in so many minutes, he considered that maybe...just maybe...leaving his sensei to scheme with his best friend was an extremely bad idea.

Troll sensei and his troll friend aside, it wasn't a terrible flight. Even Celestino snoring like a goddamn asthmatic bear hadn't been a big deal, since he'd been decent enough to keep his slobber to himself.

It was pouring when they landed in Logan International, the sound of the rain almost seeming to drown out the crackle of the loud speakers, and the hushed shuffling of the foot traffic through the main concourse. Harry, literally left holding the bags as the three older men popped into the restroom, shuffled into the only open store—a glorified news stand, really.

With the shop being all over fucking gossip rags and International news, the spark of interest Harry had felt sputtered and died. He honestly had no interest in depressing himself with the news, but it would have been nice if he could've found a goddamn map.

As if the newspaper gods were mocking him, green eyes landed on exactly what he'd been looking for. An 'A to Z guide to Boston, MA.' Harry yanked it from it's slot, flipping through it til he got to the actual street maps. He stared.

what.

W h a t.

One of the women behind the counter—short, graying, and with a face like tanned leather—gave a howl of laughter at the look on his face. “You look like a cat just shit in your dinner, kid.”

The second woman—younger, earnest-faced—choked. “Marjorie! You can't just say shit like that—he's a goddamn kid.”

Harry shot the younger woman a look. “I've heard worse.”

Marjorie crowed. “You see! You're just too damn uptight, Pegs.”

“Pegs” scoffed, but let it go. Her eyes went soft as they met his. “What's wrong, sweetie?”
Harry fought back the urge to sneer at the nickname, waving the map at her. “Not to be rude, but...what the fuck is up with this map.”

“What d'ya mean?”

“I mean, like...who even plans out a city like this.”

Marjorie howled again, wiping her eyes. “Honey, that's just part of Boston's charm.”

“Charm. Right.”

Pegs blinked earnestly at him. “No, seriously. Our unofficial motto is 'because fuck you, that's why’.”

Harry froze. Blinked. His mouth twitched up into a grin. “That's...actually kinda awesome.”

He dug in his pockets, pulling out his bank card. Pegs gaped down at the black mastercard for a moment, her eyes going wide. Her voice squeaked. “C-can I see some ID, please..?”

Harry tugged out his passport, handing it to her. Wide eyes went even wider, darting back and forth between the card and passport. Slowly, she handed his passport back, staring.

He stared back, daring her to make the comment he could almost see hovering on the tip of her tongue. She kept her mouth shut, but her hands shook as she ran the card. “U-uh, there you go, hon. Hope you enjoy your stay.”

“Thanks.”

Harry tucked his passport and bank card away, the map going into the outer pocket of his side pack. Celestino, Phichit and Yuuri-sensei wandered out of the restroom as he was slowly maneuvering their amassed luggage back out into the concourse. All three hurried over to help him.
Yuuri-sensei shot him a confused look. Harry smiled tightly. “I...thought a map would help,” his smile twisted into a grimace, “I was wrong.”

The man laughed. “Boston takes some getting used to.”

He snorted.

Phichit—and Harry swore the man must eat amphetamines for breakfast—fucking bounced over to them. Well, it was more of a bounce-skip, but even so. Bounced. “Are you ready to go? Beka's waiting with our taxi.”

Harry swallowed, hard. Dear god, kill him now.

The trip to the South Street Diner was agonizing. For Harry, anyway. His neck ached with the strain of holding back his nervous trembling. Every instinct in him was screaming at him to look up, soak in the fact that he was here with his skating idol, with Otabek Altin.

He kept his eyes locked out the side window, the not-so-subtle teasing from fucking Chulanont and sensei making it all too easy to ignore his desire to engage with his favorite skater.

“Aren't you at least going to say hello, Teensy? I promise Beka doesn't bite—you don't, do you, Beka?”

“No.”

“See~? Come on, say hello...you know you want to.”

Harry blinked, fighting against the angry tears building up. He wanted to say hello to Ota—to Beka, to tell him how much his skating had meant to him. He honestly did. He had just hoped that it would have been on his own terms.

He could feel sensei's eyes on the side of his face, burning as hot as his blush. The man touched his shoulder lightly, but didn't call him out. Thankfully. No, instead he pulled out his phone and distracted his best friend with Instagram and twitter posts.
I take back everything I said about sensei...he's a goddamn gift to mankind.

Harry and the Kazakh skater were the last out of the taxi, and they stood under the awning, out of the rain and out of the way as the other three unloaded the luggage and paid the driver. Chattering happily, Phichit wandered into the diner, sensei and his former sensei following behind. A warm hand on his shoulder kept him from following, too.

He froze, a shudder moving up him, as he finally lifted his eyes to meet dark, dark brown. They were...well, they were fucking hard to read, but they weren't cold. Just sort of...calm, like there was nothing in this world that could fucking phase this man.

“Hey.”

Green blinked. “Uh...hi?”

A small smile tugged at the edge of Otabek's lips. “...is that a question or a statement?”

“I...don't know?”

The other skater snorted, but it wasn't mean. It seemed...maybe it was his brain pulling some fanboy bullshit, but it was fond. Almost. Maybe?

“It was mean, what they did. Sorry.”

Harry faltered. That was just...unexpected. “Ah, uh...thanks, Mr...er, Altin. Otabek..?”

“Beka.”

He squeaked.

“Right. B-Beka,” Harry took a bracing breath. “It's true, though...I like your skating. I just didn't
want—want you to think I...”

A small smile. “It's fine. I like your skating, too.”

_Ye gods of mercy, take me home. I'm dead._

Harry let out an incoherent warble. Beka rubbed at the back of his neck. “We should probably get you some food. C'mon.”

He was all too happy to trail after his idol, his soul still a million miles above him.

.. .. ..

Chapter End Notes

This should get us up to the start of Skate America. At last. I'd say sorry, but I'm not really because I had too much fun just playing with characters and character dynamic. It's like cake to me.

Also, I know Beka isn’t exactly as reticent as usual, but...a) Harry is both a fan of his and a fellow skater, and b) someone who he knows is feeling super embarrassed about being outed as a fan. If Beka wouldn’t bite the bullet to put him at ease, I’ll eat my goddamn dirty flip-flops.

Regarding the black mastercard thing: For those unaware, they have a BASE credit limit of 25K. So, to see a 16 year old kid carrying one around, one with his name on it? Hell fucking yeah, the average person is going to be surprised. I would be, too. Harry’s just a bit...a BIT...spoiled, so he’s going to have a bit of an attitude about people being so surprised about it.

Troll Phichit and his Troll Partner in Crime, Yuuri, give me life. It sustains me.
Chapter Six

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“Screw fucking Chulanont, you're my new favorite.”

Beka handed over the coffee, smirking as Harry cradled it like the holy relic it totally fucking was. He took a sip, letting out a happy little hum as the tang of steamed soy and Chai spices burst over his tongue.

He wriggled happily.

_Fucking yes._

Harry ignored Beka's snort of laughter, staring lovingly at his beautifully made Venti soy Chai latte. “Don't listen to him, bb. You're fucking gorgeous. He's just jealous.”

“Jealous of being digested and processed into piss? Not really.”

Green eyes glinted manically over the rim of his cup. “You ruin this for me, and I'll cut you with my knife-shoes.”

Beka rolled his eyes. “You won't.”

“Fucking _watch _me.”

The older skater snorted again, ruffling his hair. Dark eyes glanced around the hall, darting to the open doorway just behind Harry, then back down the hall. He didn't say anything, didn't ask to come in, nothing...because of course he fucking wouldn't.

Harry sighed, stepping aside to let Beka into his hotel room, only to pause...mortified...as he remembered why he'd been keeping him in the hall in the first place. His bed was a nest of tangled pillows and blankets, his skate bag tossed haphazardly on top of the mess. Sitting on top of his skate
bag like the goddamn cherry on top of his mortification sundae was a bright pink mesh bag, crammed full with a mix of dirty underwear, sweat-soaked leggings, and the worst smelling socks to ever exist.

“Um..?”

The older skater waived him off. “Don't worry about it.”

“No, but—uh? Did you want to sit down? I could—” he glared, dismayed, at sensei's garment bag, draped over the only chair in the entire goddamn room. “I could just move a few things, and...”

Beka plopped down onto Harry's unmade bed, not even blinking as he tossed aside the Mesh Bag of Foulness, nudging the skate bag aside with his hip as he settled down to enjoy his coffee.

Harry blinked. Well, uh...huh. OK, then.

“So...so, why'd you..?” He shook his coffee lightly at Beka.

“You didn't come down to breakfast.”

Harry winced, rubbing the back of his head. “Ah, yeah. I don't—I don't eat meat, so there wasn't really anything for me to—”

“C’mon, then.” Beka rose to his feet.

“...where are we going?”

“Breakfast.”

“But...I just fucking told you the hotel doesn't—”
“We’re not eating here.”

“Then where are you taking me?”

Beka shrugged. “Little place down the street. ’s nothing fancy.”

“And it's vegetarian?”

“It has vegan banana bread.”

Harry laughed. “That's...banana bread for breakfast?”

“Yes.”

“I'm not supposed to eat breads, Beka. Coach Nikiforov and Nastya-baba would find out, and they'd murder me. I'm not even kidding.”

“You're...not supposed to eat bread.”

“No.”

“Allergic?”

“...not as such.”

“What's the problem, then?”

Harry flushed. “I kinda turn into the Stay-Puft Marshmallow Skater when I eat bread. It-it's my Katsudon, if that makes sense. I lose control, and...” he mimed blowing up like a balloon. “It's a Thing.”
Beka gave him a long look. “One piece should be fine.”

“No, but—”

“I'll make sure you don't go on a banana bread rampage.”

He ran a hand through his rat's nest and winced. “At least let me brush my hair.”

Another quick once-over from the older skater. “It's fine.”

Harry shot Beka a flat look. “It looks like I stuck my finger in a socket. And got stuck in a wind tunnel. And let birds nest in it.”

The man frowned. “It doesn't. C'mon.”

Green eyes took in the impatient set to Beka's face. He blinked. “What's with you?”

“What's with me what?”

“Rushing me out the goddamn door.”

The older skater shot him a look. “Short program's today.”

“Yeah, and..?”

“You don't eat enough.”

“Says who?”
“Nikiforov.”

"Coach texted you about-?"

Beka shook his head. "The other one."

Harry grunted. Of course Yuuri-sensei fucking would.

Beka shot him a stern look. “I want you to at least have breakfast before your practice slot.”

That...was ridiculously thoughtful, actually. He sighed. “Fine, but—if people look at us funny because my hair's a mess—”

“—it isn't—”

“—and because I look like shit in my sweats and sensei's tent-sized sweater—”

“—you don't—”

“—it's fucking on you, Beka.”

“Fine with me. C’mon.”

Harry sighed, rolling his eyes at the fucking stubborn ass. He snatched his room key off his side table, slipping into his flats before following Beka out the door. They didn't talk as they shuffled down the hall, but that was fine. The silence wasn't the kind of silence that hovers awkwardly, that you need to fill, but can't. It was a weirdly comfortable silence.

Not a bad, weird, though. Just...weird.
“Sonuvashit.”

Beka shot him a look out of the corner of his eye. “What?”

“Uh, Hani-san and Mori-san. I think I was supposed to meet them in the lobby for breakfast.”

The other skater shot him a flat look. “I know. It's how I knew you hadn't eaten yet.”

Harry winced. “I should probably apologize for flaking.”

“Don't bother.”

He lifted a brow. “I know I'm a shit, but I'm not fucking rude.”

Beka grinned. “They're coming with. As soon as I said I was taking you to a bakery, Hani-san offered to have his driver take us.”

He rolled his eyes. “Of course he did.”

The older skater quirked his brow.

Harry snorted. “The thing you need to know about Hani-san is that he's a fucking sugar hedonist. Cookies, cake, pastries, candy...it doesn't matter. If it's sweet, it's going down his throat.”

Beka's lips twitched.

Harry flushed. “That's not—! I mean, I don't know, but...that's not what I meant, Beka.”

He trailed behind the silently laughing Kazakh man, shoulders hunched forward in utter fucking mortification. God, but now he wouldn't be able to get that thought out of his goddamn head, and he really really didn't want to think about that. Beka shot him a look, snorting at the flush creeping up
his face.

He felt no remorse driving an elbow into the other skater's side. “You shit. I can't stop thinking about Hani-san's sex life now, and it's fucking creepy.”

“He's eighteen, isn't he?”

“Yeahhhh, but he looks fucking ten...and that's being generous...and I'm not into that Loli-Pedo bullshit.”

The lobby was buzzing with activity when the two stepped out of the elevator. Coaches and their skaters were milling around in clusters as hotel staff and regular guests seemed to just orbit around the familiar faces. Fucking Phichit was chatting up sensei, his chin-tastic coach smiling indulgently as his skater practically vibrated in place. The Czech skater, Emil Nekola, and the infamously surly Michele Crispino were huddled together by the entrance, looking bored as they chatted. Hani-san and Mori-san were engaging a sour-faced Seung-gil Lee, who looked like he'd rather be getting a lobotomy than having to interact with people like the goddamn professional he was supposed to be.

Harry grimaced, partially hiding himself behind Beka as they made their way toward sensei and Phichit. It didn't do him any good, as goddamn Chulanont bounced over to him, his eyes practically sparkling.

“How's my favorite tiny dancer this morning?”

“Still with the short jokes? It's getting old, Phi...shit.”

The Thai skater glommed onto him, nuzzling the top of his head. The fucking troll. “Awww, but Teensy! You know I love you.”

“I know you're obnoxious. Get off me.”

The man only clung tighter. “Why won't you let me love you, bb?”

“Because it's illegal.”
“My love for you could never be illegal~”

“Yeah, OK. Tell that to Child Protection Services. Seriously, get off me.”

A moment more of nuzzling, and the man finally released his death-grip. He blinked up at Beka. “You two going somewhere?”

The Kazakh skater nodded. “Harry's friends are treating us to breakfast.”

Sensei shot Harry a look, his brow lifting. “And you're going to actually eat it, right Harii-kun?”

He slumped, his face flushing as Phichit shot the man a startled look at his sharp tone. “Yes, Yuuri-sensei.”

The man's gaze softened. “Good. You'll need the energy for later.”

“Yeah, I know. I'll eat, OK?”

“OK.”

Phichit looked like he wanted to ask his sensei what the hell had just happened, but the man just waved him off. Harry let out the breath he hadn't noticed he'd been holding. With a muttered “later,” he turned on his heel and shuffled towards the two Hosts and the very trapped-looking Seung-gil Lee.

“Morning, Hani-san, Mori-san.”

Two pairs of eyes lifted, brightening as they landed on his face.

“Shall we? I think Seung-gil needs to get to practice.”
The surly man shot him a begrudgingly thankful look before making his escape. Harry just gave him a tight smile, shifting at Beka's side as the two Hosts bounded to their side.

Hani-san beamed up at him. “So, breakfast~?”

“Yeah, uh...breakfast.”

Breakfast...was a fucking shitty-ass idea.

Harry's stomach roiled, feeling heavy and tight as it swooped and dove. It wasn't even that he was nervous, or anything. He'd had his skate routines nailed down for months, and his jumps were solid. It was just—the wait was over. It was time.

Green eyes stared, enraptured, as Beka landed another fucking gorgeous quad lutz. Well, it would BE time, as soon as Beka was done.

He flinched, glancing up at sensei as he tugged on the delicate gold netting clinging to his shoulder till it sat just right. Harry flashed him a tight smile. “You look worse than I feel, sensei.”

The man let out a choked laugh. “Sorry about that, Harii-kun. I'm just worried.”

“Worried?”

“Yeah.”

“For me or for you?”

Sensei shrugged.

Fierce green met anxious brown. “D'you think I can't fucking do it, or something?”
The man jolted. “Of course not. I know you can do this.”

“And I don’t look as ridiculous as I feel?”

The man snorted. “You look fine—perfect, actually.”

...and he did. Harry had dressed up coach's old skating outfit, adding his own twist to it with slicked-back hair and smoky-eyes done in gold shadow.

“OK, then. I'm fine—We're fine, sensei.”

Yuuri-sensei nodded tightly. “OK. Yes. You're right.”

He shifted his eyes back to the ice, letting out a gasp as Beka nailed his last jump. It was just so fucking beautiful. More than he could imagine. It took every ounce of stubbornness not to just let go and ugly-cry, watching as Beka moved into a beautifully emotive combo as his short program came to a close.

*Christ.*

Harry shifted. “OK, so, I'm kinda glad coach changed up my jump combos for this. I'm going to need every goddamn point I can get to beat that.”

Yuuri let out a little hum. “Maybe, maybe not. You may not have the quad sal in your program anymore, but you have the axel combos.”

“Yeah, but—”

Yuuri sensei quickly herded him to the edge of the rink as Beka got his scores, holding out his hand for Harry's jacket. He slipped it off, draping it over the man's arm.
“And your footwork is a level four, if nothing else. Beka's, at its best, is a solid three.”

Harry slipped off his skate guards, handing them off to sensei as he stretched his arms over his head.

“True, I guess.”

Whatever he would have said slipped from his mind as the speakers crackled to life.

“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. REPRESENTING JAPAN, PLEASE WELCOME...HARRY POTTER.”

Harry stepped out onto the ice, ignoring the screams of the crowd as the lights caught the gleaming white feathers and shimmering gold netting of his infamous outfit. He slowly looped his way to the center of the ice, working his shoulders loose as the announcers rattled off his Junior Division stats and gushed over his famous coaches.

“—fortunately, Coach Viktor Nikiforov couldn't join them, but I'm sure he's watching anxiously from Hasetsu—”

Amidst the chaos of the stadium, the familiar shhhkt of his skates on the ice was almost soothing. Almost.

Honestly, he didn't want to be soothed, calmed, sedated.

What he wanted was mania.

Sharp figures and energetic footwork and dizzying spins. He wanted all that...everything his sensei and his sadistic coach had pounded into him. Everything he'd quietly promised himself, if only to prove that he didn't need any kind of nostalgia for his coach's glory days to pad out his score.

He took a deep breath. As he let it go, the music began.

It was almost surreal, how natural it felt. Every miserable fifteen-hour day, every evening of carefully
cleaning and wrapping his bruised, blistered, bloody feet, it was all worth it.

The deeper, more graceful bend to his spine as he arched into his turns, his spin combos.

The effortlessly graceful arch to his arms.

The unforgiving tightness and speed of his spins.

The smooth slide of his feet through the familiar steps of his skate.

Everything—fucking everything—spoke to the endless ballet practices, the merciless endurance training, the dizzying hours spent practicing spin combos over, and over, and over again til he was nearly sick with vertigo.

The cold was bracing, stinging his lungs, as he moved into his final jump-spin combo—THE combo his coach and sensei had beaten into him through hours of intense practice, til he could do it effortlessly.

Triple Axel. Triple Loop. Triple Toe Loop.

The crowd screamed, but Harry didn't react. Didn't smile. He still had his flying sit-spin combo left, and it was a monster. The sort of monster you could have written off as a *Specialite de Stephane*, if only because nobody else would be stupid enough to try it.

Harry held himself still and tight, praying that this wouldn't be the time he wiped out. That he could pull it off. He bit back his wince. It was good, but...he felt himself lose a bit of speed as he transitioned into his Biellmann spin.

Ah, well. Something to work on for France.

He kept the frustration off his face as he moved into his final position as the music faded away.

Green eyes focused on the stadium, taking in the noisy crowd and his sensei and Phichit, hopping
like deranged rabbits at the Kiss and Cry. Plastic-wrapped roses were tossed onto the ice as Harry skated past, waving and smiling.

“MY BABY!”

He barely had time to brace himself before he was lifted into a smothering hug by his sobbing papa. Tears and snot were streaking down his face as he beamed at him. “THAT WAS SO BEAUTIFUL, I'M SO PROUD OF YOU.”

Harry fought back a sniffle, burying his nose against the familiar bony shoulder. “Thank you, Papa. When did you—?”

“My flight was delayed, so I just made it. I'm so glad I did...I'm so, so proud of you, Bambi.”

He glanced back as he felt his skates slide into their guards. Sensei beamed up at him, mouthing 'Very well done, Harii-kun' at him.

Harry mouthed a 'Thank you' in return, turning back to cling to his papa as he carried him over to his seat.

He breathed, feeling both ridiculous and ridiculously proud, as he took in his glowing sensei, and the giddy Phichit, and his beaming papa. He didn't even listen as his score was announced, he couldn't. He was just too...too. Even so, the smile on his sensei's face told him that it was good.

Phichit pouted at him playfully. “No fair, Teensy! You bumped me!”

“Hah?!?”

His papa elbowed him, nodding towards the scoreboard. Beka, no surprise, had held on to his solid first, but...he had tied for second. With Seung-gil Lee. Phichit, as he’d hinted, was hovering at fourth, his score trailing theirs by a little more than a point.

Wha—
“Harii-chan, Harii-chan~!”

Harry glanced up at the older boy, bouncing towards him from his spot in the stands. “Hey, Hani-san.”

“That was super pretty, Harii-chan~!”

He kept pace with the bouncing senior as he headed toward the locker room. “Thank you, Hani-san.”

“Takashi thought so too, didn't you Takashi~?”

“Aa. And Kyoya, too.”

Harry jerked. That's right. Ohtori had said he'd be watching.

“Thank you, Mori-san,” he hesitated for a moment. “You two spoke to Ohtori-san, then?”

“Yep~! He said to tell you that he was impressed, and that he's looking forward to seeing you skate in person for the Trophee de France.”

Harry's smile went a little tight.

“A-ah. Tell him thank you for me.” Harry gestured back towards the locker room. “I'm going to go clean up, I'll meet you in a bit?”

His papa ruffled his hair before sidling over to talk to sensei and Phichit. The Hosts nodded, shuffling over to join the little group. Harry sighed, slipping into the locker room.
He nearly tripped over his goddamn skates as he saw Beka sat with elbows on knees, his eyes fixed onto the wall-mounted TV. He glanced up at him as the doors banged shut behind him.

“U-uh, hey. Beka.”

“Hey.”

Harry rubbed at the back of his neck, wincing as it slid through a layer of drying sweat. “Congratulations. Your skate was...I was worried about ruining my eye makeup for bit, at the end.”

“Thanks.” Dark eyes bore into his face for a long moment. “You too.”

“Huh?”

“You should be proud...you skated beautifully.”

“Oh, uh. Well. I mean, I lost a bit of speed in the end—but that doesn't...thank you.”

Beka snorted. Harry flushed. “I heard you talking to Katsuki and Chulanont. You going out to celebrate?”

He shrugged. “Celebrate? No. It's just dinner, I think. My dad just flew in, so...yeah.”

“That's nice.”

“Yeah.” Harry glanced up at Beka through sweat-slicked bangs. “You're welcome to come. If you want to.”

“It could be fun.”
It *was* fun, but more for the coaches than the skaters who had to be sober for their Free Skates.

Harry, after a bit of nudging from Beka and a Puppy-Glower from his papa, had indulged himself in a giant veggie burger with cheese on a gluten free bun. He’d refused the offer of onion rings, but had compromised with a child-sized order of sweet potato fries to go with his steamed carrots.

Everyone else went to town, Phichit with his saucy grilled Reuben and heaping plate of onion rings, and Beka with a...some sort of steak thing? Maybe? The less said about the amount of food consumed by the coaches, his papa, and the Hosts, the better. Harry would be perfectly fine forgetting the fact that at least two cows worth of meat and dairy were consumed by their little party.

And then there was the booze. All the booze.

*So. Much. Booze.*

It radiated out of his papa and Celestino and even sensei like a miasma, filling the area with the smell of whiskey. Harry gagged, pouting at and elbowing Beka until he’d switched seats with him, his bulk acting as a human shield against the funk. It had taken all his and the Hosts’ and even Beka’s effort to shuffle his very, very drunk papa, Celestino and sensei into a taxi.

Beka had bent over the driver side window, muttering lowly to the older woman for a long while, before handing her a few folded twenties. He stepped back up onto the curb as the taxi drove away.

“So, uh..? Are we going to get a call from the drunk tank in the morning, or..?”

The older man snorted. “No. I told the driver to drop them off in the lobby. The hotel staff can handle them from there.”

Harry shot Beka a side-eye. “...so you’re dumping them on hotel management?”

“Yes.”

“Dick move, Beka. Genius, but...a dick move.”
He shrugged. “They can sleep it off in your dad's suite, and you can get some rest.”

“Fair enough.”

Harry's eyes fluttered, his head bobbing, during the ride back. He slid against the wide backseat of the Host's limo, grunting as he fell against Beka's side. He shushed him, his large, warm hand petting his head til he settled.

When he blinked open his eyes again, he was bobbing through the hallway, head resting on Beka's shoulder as the older man carried him, piggy-back style, through the corridor. “Wha”

“Nn, it's fine. You can take the second bed in my room.”

His eyes fluttered shut again. “M'Kay. Than'ou.”

Beka's weirdly fond snort was the last thing he heard before he was out again.

Harry slept through the night, barely stirring even when the rumble of unfamiliar snores cut through the stillness of the hotel room. A thought—as fleeting as coach's bed farts—crossed his mind, and he half-woke, taking in the room stupidly, searching out the bears lurking in the dark corners. With no bears in sight, Harry flopped back onto the mattress and drifted off, again.

“—OH, DADDY, you're so DIRTY~!”

He woke with a jerk, half falling off the bed as his eyes zeroed in on...on... The TV flashed as the other skater turned it off.

“U-uh, Beka?”

“...yeah?”
“Were you watching *porn?!*”

A faint red flush crept across the other skater's cheeks. “It wasn't supposed to be porn.”

“What was it supposed to be, then?!?”

“Some sort of vacation romance, I think.”

Harry scoffed. “I know romance. THAT, at best, some badly-acted erotica.”

Beka shot him a side eye. Harry flushed.

“Not that I watch erotica—! I mean...look, my godfather loves romance novels and papa is a rom-com addict, so I know a romance when I see one. That's all I'm saying.”

“Hn.”

His face felt hot enough to catch fire as the older skater shuffled toward the little breakfast table, plopping down into his seat. He nodded towards the other chair, pushing a styrofoam take-out container towards the empty spot.

“You...bought me breakfast?”

“Yeah. A protein scramble.”

Harry shuffled over, drawn in by the smell of grilled onions and peppers and buttery toast. He popped the lid, breathing deeply as a the savory-smelling steam billowed escaped. “Smells good. What is it?”

“Tofu scrambled with shallots, caramelized onions and bell peppers.”
“And the rest?” He poked at a little paper envelope and a tiny lidded container nestled in next to the scramble.

“Rosemary home fries and Russian Rye toast with vegan butter substitute.”

Blinking up at the taller man, Harry gave a happy little sigh. “You're my favorite.”

“You keep saying that.”

He gave Beka a serious look. “You feed me and my coffee addiction. Of course you're my favorite.”

The man snorted. “Eat.”

Harry saluted the older man, taking a hearty bite of the scramble.

By the time he'd finished, Beka had left for and returned from his shower, and had pulled on his track suit and official skating jacket. Harry stared. “You have a photo shoot, or something?”

He shrugged. “No, but my practice slot's in a few hours.”

“Ah.”

The man fiddled with his phone, flipping through who even knew what before music burst from the speakers. He set it down on his bed, flopping down next to it. Harry froze, tilting his head to consider what he was hearing.

It was...it was rock, but not? It kind of reminded him of Visual Kei, but also of House music, flavored with the synth and guitar riffs of 80s hair metal. “Who is that?”

Beka glanced over at him. “A few different people.”
“Yeah?”

“Hn. I did the mix for a thing a year ago.”

“Oh shit, that’s right—you were a DJ. Are a DJ?”

He nodded. “Am, yeah.”

“That must be a bit—tricky? Trying to do that with you skating.”

Beka shrugged. “I love it, so I make time.”

Harry fiddled with his hands. “I...I'm not a musician, or anything, but I get that.”

Dark hair flopped in front of the older skater’s eyes as he turned to look at him, again. “You’re a dancer, then.”

“Good guess.”

Beka shot him a look. “Not really; most skaters are, and you make it obvious with how you skate.”

Harry shrugged. “I guess.”

“So, you still dance?”

“Not professionally, or anything, but most of my training with sensei was in the ballet studio.”

“You any good?” Beka's lips were pulled up into a teasing smile.
Harry huffed. “Sensei had me dancing Odile in The Black Swan for fucking ages. I better be fucking good.”

Beka snorted, grabbing up his phone as it pinged. “You should finish up.”

He glanced up at the Kazakh man, his cheeks puffed out with toast and potatoes. “S'hup?”

The man shook his phone at him. “Last minute meet and greet with the Press before tonight.”

Harry gulped down the rest of his breakfast, waving frantically to Beka as he headed towards his hotel room. Only a few more hours, then...showtime.

Everyone...his papa, Phichit and Beka, the audience, coach back in Hasetsu, the Hosts...

Every last one of them was going to lose their shit. Harry couldn't fucking wait.

... ...

Chapter End Notes

ASDF%$#*%&

FINALLY, I got through Harry’s Short Program for Skate America. I didn’t quite manage to get to the Free Skate, but it’s a-comin’.

Like, literally. I started outlining the shit leading into it before I posted this. Also, can I have a moment to be embarrassingly fan-girlish about my OWN THING and just say that I am in love with Beka + Harry’s budding bromance? Seriously, there's a reason I added the FriendshipGoals tag for these two.
Chapter Seven

Chapter Summary

Free Skate Tiiiime

Chapter Notes

OK, so...Fair Warning?

I have no how complex is too complex for a spin combo. I tried to keep them reasonable, so there wouldn't have to be any breaking of the laws of physics. Even so, if there are actual YOI readers who also figure skate and/or know a LOT about it, feel free to give me your opinion.

I'm literally pulling these routines out of my arse. XD

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Harry hunched over the small vanity counter, trying not to blink as he slowly, carefully started to smoke gold and bronze power along his lash-line. Yuuri-sensei, just as carefully, snatched the make-up brush from his hand. “No.”

“Buh—”

Sensei's brandy-colored eyes glinted at him, stubborn and unyielding. “No makeup til we take care of that's rat's nest.”


“WELL YOU'RE A GRAND ONE, HAVE YOU NOTICED~!”

“...really, Harii-kun.”
Harry grinned, unrepentant, as Shudder To Think's 'Hot One' blared from his cellphone's powerful speakers. “C’mon sensei, you know you love it.”

“Not really.”

“What do you have against glam rock?”

“Nothing, but—”

“But nothing, sensei. Tell me this isn't, like, the perfect music for right now.”

A smile tugged at his sensei’s lips, but he just hummed as he tugged a comb through Harry's messy hair.

He let out a triumphant little crow, peering back over his shoulder at the older man. “You can't say anything because you know I'm right~”

Sturdy hands gently tugged his head back into position. “I know you need to sit still so I don't get hair oil everywhere.”

“Whatever, sensei...changing the subject 'cause you know I'm right. Tch.”

Reflected brown eyes met his. “Yes, yes, you're right...now sit still.”

Harry picked at his nails, trying not to squirm as sensei slowly, carefully worked the oil into his hair, from root to tip. A oil-slicked hand reached down, tugging his fingers away from his cuticles. “Stop it.”

“What..?”

“You're going to make them bleed. Stop.”
He blinked, folding his hands into his lap. After another minute of trying not to fidget, he started picking again. Sensei let out an angry little Che. “If it helps keep you still, and stops you from picking at your nails, you can FaceTime one of your friends.”

Green lifted to meet warm brown. “Really?”

“Yes.”

“Even if it's, like, Beka?”

Sensei rolled his eyes. “If he doesn't mind FaceTiming you while he's trying to get ready, I don't mind you calling him.”

Harry flashed his sensei a grin, scrabbling for his phone. He closed his playlist and opened up FaceTime. He paused. Shit.

“Uh...”

“What?”

“I don't have his number.”

Sensei shot him the flattest of flat looks. “In my front pocket. You can use my phone.”

“Really?!”

“If it lets me do this without you squirming, yes.”

Harry twisted on the stool, reaching into his sensei's pocket and pulling out his sleek phone. He politely ignored his New Text and Instagram notices, opening up FaceTime. There, nearly at the top of the contact list, Beka. He gleefully hit the call button.
For a long moment, the only real sounds in the cramped bathroom nook was the sound of his breathing, and the ring of the app, and the slippery sound of fingers working oil into his hair. Finally, the blank little window dissolved into an extreme close up of Beka's face.

He...really needs a shave, damn.

“...Harry?”

He waved, trying to keep his head still as sensei brushed out his well-oiled mop of hair. Green eyes watched for a moment as the man twisted the top chunk into a bun and pinned it out of the way as he brushed back the sides.

“Hey, Beka. Do you have time to talk? Only...sensei needs to work on my hair and I'm bored.”

The older skater let out a little snort. “Yeah, I have time.”

“Good. So, uh...excited about the Free Skate?”

The man shrugged. “Excited enough. I have an event I'm hosting with another DJ tomorrow, so I'm just working on a last minute playlist.”

Harry let out a little whine. “Awwww, I wish I could come! That sounds fun.”

He could almost feel the frown burning into the back of his head, one matching the one Beka was shooting him. “You're too young.”

He huffed. “I'm legal to drink, like, anything in Germany. And beer and cider and shit in the UK, you know.”

“You're not legal here, though.”

Harry fought the urge to slump, but he puffed out his cheeks in a pout. Beka rolled his eyes. “Don't pout.”
“I'm not.”

“You are.”

Yuuri-sensei tapped him on the back of the head. “You really are, Harii-kun.”

Harry whined. “Fine, I'm pouting, but it's not like I wanted to go for the liquor.”

Beka shrugged. “I didn't write the law, Harry.”

“I know, I know, I'm just—”

Sensei tugged his head back into place. “What you're doing is fidgeting, and I need to spray the sides.”

He sighed, but obediently covered his face when Yuuri-sensei whipped out the hair spray. For a stretch, the only sound was the *shhhhhhhhh* of the hairspray.

“...how much of that are you using, s'sei?” His voice was muffled by his palms.

“As much as I need to to get it to do what I want it to.”

“M'kay.”

Another moment, and he was done. He shot a critical look at the sides of Harry's head, using his fingers and a small comb to brush back a few smaller, stubborn strands. He stared some more. Grunted in approval.

Then, he took the rest of his hair in hand. Literally. Pulling the top of his hair out of it's messy little bun, he attacked it with an alarming amount of styling putty.
Beka was staring, intrigued, over Harry's shoulder, watching sensei's hands industriously work the styling product into his shiny-slick hair. “That seems like a lot of product.”

Yuuri-sensei scoffed. “Try styling this cowlicked nightmare first, then come talk to me.”

Harry huffed. “Fucking rude.”

“Maybe, but also true, Harii-kun.”

Sensei slowly combed back his stubborn bangs, frowning as a few stray strands kept on popping forward. The man snarled at his hair, and Harry tried not to flinch. He wisely kept his mouth shut, covering his face again, as sensei attacked it with even more hairspray than he'd used before—“Just to make fucking sure it stays put.”

Finally, the man stepped back. Harry looked up and gasped.

The finished product was very...well. It was very David Bowie. Honestly, it reminded him of a photo—The Iconic Photo—of Bowie, cigarette in mouth, with his hair slicked back. It was perfect.

“You're a fucking rockstar, sensei.”

Harry could hear Beka politely clapping on the other side of the line.

“No, I'm just married to a man who was a hairdresser in another life.”

Harry snarked. “I should tell him you said that, the next time he shows up to practice with bed-head.”

Sensei slapped at his shoulder. “No, you shouldn't, because he'd whine at you as much as me.”

“I...see your point.”
Beka let out another snort. Harry smiled at the man. “I think we're almost done, here, but thanks for keeping me company.”

“Of course. I'll see you on the ice.”

“Yeah, see you.”

Harry ended the call and handed the phone back to sensei, who was wiping his hands on a grubby hand towel. He moved to stand, squawking as his sensei yanked him back into his seat. “Not yet.”

He scoffed. “No offense, but I'm pretty sure my hair is as solid as it's going to get. Spraying it again isn't going to do shit.”

The older man tsked. “Honestly, you're worse than Vitya, sometimes.”

He squawked. “How rude! I am not.”

“You are.”

“How am I worse?”

Brandy colored eyes laughed at him. Fucking laughed. “The gold hairspray...you know, the hairspray you begged Vitya to rush order so it would arrive on time..?”

Green eyes lit up. “Oh—OH. Shit, yeah. I did forget.”

Harry turned the stool towards his sensei, settling down and covering his face. Yuuri-sensei knelt between his feet, angling upwards, and...spritzed. Once. Twice. Four times, along Harry's hair-line. Sensei tugged his hands away from his face, tutting.

“What..? Does it look bad?”
“No, it's fine but you have eye shadow all smeared around your eyes—here.” Sensei whipped out one of coach's fancy-as-shit Chanel face wipes, carefully cleaning away both the smeared shadow and stray flecks of gold spray.

Harry shifted. Yuuri-sensei poked him in the side, snorting as he twitched away from his finger. “And this is why I'm in charge of your makeup, Harii-kun, not you.”

“Yes, yes...you're High King of all things cosmetological, and I'm a dumb pleeb. Happy?”

“Ecstatic.”

Harry stuck out his tongue.

Yuuri-sensei rolled his eyes. “Oh, that's nice. Very mature, Harii-kun.”

“I aim to please. So, makeup?”

Makeup was interesting. No worse than usual, just...different. Sensei carefully applied sculpting putty over his brows, taking his time smoothing it out so it looked as smooth as Harry's skin.

Then came the foundation. His eyes drifted shut, and he basked in the oddly soothing sensation of the damp blending sponge on his skin. It was strange feeling the sponge pressing across his covered brows, but not bad.

He blinked as sensei pressed an oddly heavy piece of cardboard into his hands. It was a long, narrow rectangle with a smaller, narrower rectangle cut into it. Well, almost a rectangle. Instead of boxy ends, the rectangle tapered off into sharp points. It was just wide enough to expose his brow line and upper lids, and just long enough to stretch from temple to temple. Harry's hands cramped as he strained to keep the stencil both perfectly aligned and perfectly still.

“Try not to move, Harii-kun.”
That was all the warning his sensei gave him before he came at him with the gold cosmetic paint. It was...well, not bad, but weird? He could feel it there, feel it settling across his browline and upper lids and the bridge of his nose. The feeling faded as the paint dried, leaving almost...nothing. It was weird. A good weird, but...weird.

He took a moment to shake his hands out while sensei tucked away the first stencil, digging around for the tiny gold set of brow bindi. Harry turned in his perch, leaning back against the vanity and tilting his head back. He pointedly ignored his sensei straddling his waist to get at his face.

That way lie nightmares. Also, if he thought about it too much, he might accidentally blurt about it to coach, and coach...well. He got violently jealous of fish statues. Enough said.

“Almost done, sensei?”

The man hummed, trading out his angled blush brush for the mascara wand once more. “Almost. Just the makeup fixer, and you should be good.”

“Good.”

Harry tried not to scrunch up his face as the cool mist tickled across his skin.

“You're good, Harii-kun. Take a look.”

Harry opened his eyes, slowly turning to look in the mirror. He gasped.

If coach should have been a hairdresser, then Yuuri-sensei absolutely should have gone for a career in makeup artistry. Smoky gold and gray shadow faded up into the bold strip of gold warrior’s paint accenting his brow line. His cheekbones almost looked higher, sharper, glowing warm peach and gold and bronze...but a bronze that actually brought out his pale skin, instead of just making him look orange. His lips were painted a deep, brilliant red that stood out like a spray of blood on the snow.

Harry hiccuped, feeling very fucking emotional. “Sensei, I...”

“Hm?”
“I...kind of fucking love you right now.”

The man patted his shoulder, his reflected image smiling serenely. “I know, Harii-kun.”

“No, but really...”

“I understand, Harii-kun,” warm hands tugged at the neck of his bathrobe. “Come on, let's finish up, yeah?”

Usually, 'finishing up' meant an embarrassing amount of deodorant slathered under his arms, along the small of his back, between his thighs, and then arduous process of climbing into a complicated, clingy costume. This time, there was more hairspray, first. Glitter hairspray. On his chest. Harry was extremely glad he'd remembered to take out his nipple rings last night, because having your sensei discover them, mid glitter-spritz, was not the way to go about having that conversation.

Harry winced, fighting the urge to scratch at his tight, sticky skin as the spray dried. Yuuri-sensei grabbed at his hands, yanking them away as they inched toward his chest to just fucking scratch.

“No.”

“But—”

“Unless you want me to have to spray you again, no.”

“It's sticky—”

“It would be worse if you had chest hair, so consider yourself lucky—”

“—and it fucking itches.”

“It'll itch more if I need to spray you again.”
“...yes, Sadist-sensei.”

A sharp brow arched over a gleaming pair of eyes. “What was that?”

Harry wilted. “Nothing, er, Yuuri-sensei.”

“Good.” Sensei prodded gingerly at his chest, humming. “It should be dry enough, now.”

“So I can scratch?”

“No, you can get dressed.” The man shoved his skate outfit at him, grabbing up his skate jacket and draping it over his arm. “Hurry up.”

Harry skittered after Yuuri-sensei as he cut a sharp path toward the men's locker room. He didn't blink, didn't fucking blush, even as a few of the other skaters and their coaches just...stopped...as he passed them.

...and they hadn't even seen what was under the jacket, yet. Fucking Christ.

Sensei hefted Harry's skate bag over his shoulder and picked up his pace. There was nobody in the locker room when they shuffled inside, so Harry felt no shame about setting his skate bag down on the bench next to him and sprawling out.

Yuuri-sensei frowned down at him. “You sure you want to do this?”

“What, my Free Skate? Yes, I'm sure.”

The man waved him off impatiently. “I'm talking about your jump combos, Harry. Even if you downgrade the two quads to triples, you'd still earn a place on the podium with your other skate elements.”
Harry shrugged. “Maybe I would, but I don't want to settle for just any place.”

“You want gold.”

Harry grinned. “Yes.”

“Even if it means potentially destroying your knees and hips?”

“Even then.”

Yuuri-sensei frowned. “You know...there's nothing wrong with a Silver or a Bronze.”

“I know.”

“So, why the career suicide?”

“It’s not-”

“It could be, if it goes badly.”

Harry sighed. “I honestly do want gold, but...”

“But what?”

“I also want every last one of those fuckers who said I’m coasting by on my 'pretty face' and nostalgia to eat their goddamn words...and a mangy, unwashed dick, while they're at it.”

Rich brown eyes went dark, dangerous. “...what?”
He waved him off. “It's stupid, just...a few jealous internet trolls. It still pissed me off, though.”

“And, what, they think Vitya coaching you helped pad out your Short Program score?”

“Some do, yeah.”

“And the others?”

“...think I only did as well as I did because I made 'back alley bargains' with the judges.”

Sensei went still, but it wasn’t because of shock. No. This was the stillness of a wolf right before it went for the jugular, teeth first. Harry tried not to stare, but couldn’t look away. He'd seen his sensei impatient and angry; He lived with the man, and he was not a morning person...of course he'd seen that.

But this? This...wasn't like that at all. Everything about him—the menacing hunch of his shoulders, the clench of his jaw, the sharp glint of his eyes—screamed 'righteous fury.' Harry gaped, watching his sensei practically vibrate with his anger, his breath leaving him in short, sharp little pants.

Sensei took a deep breath and closed his eyes. And again. In a blink, the man was rifling through Harry's skate bag like nothing was wrong.

“A-ah, sensei? You...OK?”

The man beamed at him, but...it wasn't a nice smile. It was cold, fixed, intent. “I'm fine, Harii-kun. Let's get you in your skates, OK?”

“...sooooo, you're not gonna try to convince me to downgrade my jumps?”

“No, I'm not.”

“Even though you think I’m committing career suicide?”
“No.”

“Do I wanna know why not?”

Harry flinched backwards, catching himself on the bench as dark eyes darted up to meet his. Their gazes held for a long time. “Because they’re wrong about you. You deserved your score yesterday and you’ll deserve your winning score today—and you will win, Harii-kun.”

A lump rose in Harry's throat, one that didn't go away as the man slowly, carefully guided his feet into his skates, fingers deftly tugging at the laces til the boots hugged his feet just right. Harry had to keep his eyes fixed on his sensei's hands, because he knew...he fucking knew...if he met Yuuri-sensei's eyes, he'd be gone.

Ugly sobbing, forever, with not a care to ruined makeup.

*He believes in me. Really, truly believes in me...and I absolutely will fucking NOT let him down.*

Harry peeled off his jacket, biting back a guffaw as skaters and audience members alike just...lost it. He stared at his skates, breathing through his nose as sensei adjusted his collar til it was back where it was supposed to be—roughly ear level. Green darted up to meet shaded Brandy.

Two mouths twitched with mirth.

“God, sensei, I can't even look at them or I'll lose it.”

Sensei let out a choked little snort. “Me, too. I can hear Phichit and I—”

On cue, Phichit let out another happy shriek, which was immediately followed by the flash of his cell camera going off again; Sensei let out a little hiccup of laughter.

“-and I just can't.”
He snorted, passing off his skate guards as he stepped out onto the ice. “I'm just lucky I'll be too busy to look at anyone, or I'd literally end up ‘R O F L,’ well...ice, anyway.”

“Y-yeah.”

Harry snerked, choking back the laugh at the last minute. “Oh god, I'm just glad coach is in Hasetsu. Can you IMAGINE.”

Yuuri-sensei let out a little wheeze. “Oh dear god. Viktor probably has poor Makka in a stranglehold.”

Harry let out a little warble, biting it back. Sensei snorted, but bit his lip when the younger man shot him a desperate look. “Please. I'm trying to hold shit together.”

“Sorry, sorry.”

With a pained little wheeze of hilarity, Harry stepped out onto the ice. He stared hard at the ceiling, really really grateful that the stadium lights and the intensity of his skate made meeting anyone's eyes unlikely.

He was just too close to losing it, and he couldn't...just couldn't.

He took a shuddering breath, and then another, taking his brief 'warm up' window to calm the fuck down.

Lose it later, it's time to do this shit.

He did a slow loop around the rink, stretching out his shoulders. He made a point not to look at his sensei as he passed the rink entry, because he’d really rather not fall on his ass. Another loop, and he felt his hilarity die down, his heartbeat steady. He was OK. He wasn’t going to fuck this up with laughing. He was ready.

On his last loop past, he nodded to his coach. Ready when you are.
Yuuri-sensei returned his nod with a brief smile, and Harry drifted toward the center of the ice.

“-Potter will be skating to Midnight Radio from Hedwig and the Angry Inch. An interesting choice for a skater known to favor Classical works throughout his time in Juniors.”

“Very true. It’ll be interesting see if he pulls it off--OH, it looks like Katsuki is giving the signal-”

A deep breath...two...and then the first chords kicked in, slow and steady as a heartbeat. His skates cut a looping path across the ice, serpentine and beautiful as a dance as he felt the music take over. Another breath, and...the drums. His heartbeat fluttered, soaring in time with the beat of the drums, the thrumming chords. Harry let out a little breath, a tingle of pleasure going up his spine as the music filled the stadium, filled him, vibrating him down to his bones.

His lips pulled up into a joyful smile as he glided into a...fucking spectacular Ina Bauer, his feet cutting sharp, graceful lines across the Ice. A breath and a step, and his body twisted into a Layback Bauer, his back arching so sharply his fingers could have brushed against the ice, if he’d let them.


Harry took another deep breath, his muscles tensing as he moved into his first entry and...

A cry went up as he landed his quad loop with a clear shhkkkt of blades on ice, his body extending gracefully.

 Fucking nailed it.

He had a split-second to just bask in the victory, feel the pulse of euphoria, before he moved into his second jump. A mother-fucking gorgeous triple toe-loop.

“I LOVE YOU HAVE MY ICE BABIES”

Harry snorted, fighting the urge not to look and see who’d shouted. His mind drifted.
What even is an ice baby? A snow man? An ice cube? Who wants to give birth to an ice cube? That would just be weird...no. Focus. You need to Fucking. Focus.

The music carried him along, making the arch and bend of his spine sharper, deeper, as he slid cleanly from another Ina Bauer into an Arabesque Spiral, then just...dropped down into a Candle Spin. The crowd screamed again.

“Male skaters aren't flexible enough for these spins,” they’d said.

“Their musculature makes it look awkward and graceless,” they’d said.

Well, they could eat a dick, every last one of them, because just look at him now.

He took a deep breath, holding the pose. Feeling the comfortable stretch. Preparing himself.

He had another Layback Bauer coming up, moving into a jump entry. A jump combo with three fucking jumps. Three fucking triples. Jesus Christ, what was I even thinking.

And...Triple Axel. Triple Loop. Triple Toe Loop. Harry held his breath as he wobbled a bit on the landing of the Axel, over-extending as he tried to hold it together. He did, but just barely. The other two were fine, but...that was a hit to his score he hadn't wanted to take.

Harry held his smile, feeling it stretch uncomfortably tight as he fought the urge to let lose a string of curses that would have even Giacometti flushing. Well, flushing and tittering, and sensei fussing, and both his coach and his papa squawking and clucking at him like scolding hens.

“You're too young to talk like that,” they'd say.

“You need to act like a professional,” they'd say.

“Fuck off and bite me,” Harry'd say, because he was better than that. Better than a stupid, flubbed jump that he'd nailed ages ago.
His spine arched and limbs bent as he slipped into his spin combo. Harry, still rattled from his near fall, kept up his quiet mantra of flyingsitspin-switchfoot-camel-biellmann, repeating it to himself over and over and over, even as he moved through the spin elements, even as he carefully grabbed his blade, mid camel-spin, to move up into his Biellmann.

Why. Why had he done this to himself. Goddamn it mother fucker. He'd make it through the season, but then next season? Yeah. Fuck this monstrous shit, he was going back to classical, elegant...i.e., routines that were less likely to kill him

After all, sensei had never needed any of the technically complex shit Lambiel, or coach, or fucking Plisetsky pulled off. He was a dancer, and owned that shit all the way up to the podium. Harry would too. He let out a little wheeze, feeling the deep ache of exhausted muscles, of the need to just drop onto the ice and not move for a bit. He wouldn't drop, though. He'd keep going, take a literal fucking leap for his last jump combo.

Even if he didn't land a ratified jump, even if he touched down, as long as he got in all four rotations, he'd be good. He'd still have a shot at gold.

His heart pounded in his ears, and time seemed to slow. In that fraction of a second between launching himself off the ice and landing, he prayed. To the god he didn't believe in. To his mother back in London, who he hadn't seen for two years. To everything and nothing. *Please let this work.*

One...two...three...four rotations. His skates impacted the ice, and he wobbled. For a heart-breaking moment, Harry could see himself falling, feel the impact of his body against the ice as his skates slipped out from underneath him. He braced himself, but...he didn't fall.

It was even shakier than his Triple Axel had been, but...but that didn't even fucking matter. A Quad Axel. He'd landed a Quad mother-fucking AXEL.

Delirious, ecstatic tears streamed down his face, even as he finished his jump combo with a simple, uncomplicated Double Loop. He was just going through the motions, brain buzzing with manic euphoria, disbelief, too many fucking emotions. He barely registered the chill of the ice on his fingers, the stretch of his muscles, as he slid from his Hydroblade into a sharp, high Solo Cantilever.
He was done.

He'd done it.

He...needed a minute because he couldn't fucking move right now.

The *shhhkkkt* of blades sliding across the ice had him blinking open eyes he wasn't sure when he shut. One of the rink employees...and Beka, too, his Team Kazakhstan jacket half-zipped...hovered over him.

“You OK, son?”

Harry stared stupidly at the stranger. Beka tsked, nudging the employee to the side, and...goddamn lifted him off the ice, pulling him into a huge hug.

Harry clung to his friend, ugly-sobbing happily into his shoulder. “Beka! Beka, did you see?”

Arms tightened around his back. “I did.”

His face was a mess of tears, and snot, and slobber. His mascara ran, leaving dark smudge of black under his eyes. His lipstick was a red smear across his mouth where saliva-slippery lips had pressed against Beka's tracksuit jacket.

He was a gross, hot mess. Finally, Beka set him back on his skates. Harry let out a shaky breath, waving at the crowd as they called out to him. Flowers and stuffed animals rained down on him as he wobbled past. Harry paused, stooping to pick up the...

...what the fuck even was it? It...it kinda looked like a rainbow colored cat, but with...dragon wings...and a unicorn horn?! The fuck?!

Harry stared blankly, slowly turning to look at the pig-tailed little girl who'd thrown it. After a moment, a grin split his face. “THIS IS THE MOST AWESOME THING EVER, THANK YOU~!”
She bounced in her beaming father's lap, squealing out garbled “Love You”s and waving. He laughed, wriggling his fingers at her as Beka lead him towards the Kiss and Cry.

The older skater paused just long enough to tuck him into his tracksuit jacket before settling him onto his lap. Papa and sensei, their faces flushed and tear-stained, pressed in close on either side of them.

Harry tilted his head back, peering up at Beka. “Won't you get in trouble—?”

He shrugged. “Don't think so.”

“You're not sure?”

“No, but...I don't care. You're my friend first, competition second.”

Harry slumped back into Beka's hold, his head resting on a broad shoulder as he waited for his score. It would take a minute for the judges to ratify—or not—his Quad Loop and Quad Axel, so...no harm in just relaxing a bit. None at all. He yawned.

His phone vibrated inside his pocket, and he twitched, blinking his eyes open.

Ohtori [07:40 p.m.]: Congratulations on your impressive skating, Potter-kun.

Ohtori [07:42 p.m.]: Your coach looked seconds away from pulling you away from your...boyfriend?

Ohtori [07:43 p.m.]: I confess a bit of concern over the age gap.

Ohtori [07:44 p.m.]: Would it not be preferable to find someone closer to your own age?

Oh...oh, no. No.
Ohtori [07:45 p.m.]: Enough of that. I just wish my schedule could have allowed for me to be there, if only to give you a congratulatory embrace of my own. I dare say you've earned one.

Ohtori [07:48 p.m.]: ...more than one, really.

Harry stared down at his phone in distress. “...uh.”

Beka shot him a concerned look. “What?”

He passed his phone to his friend. Green eyes stayed fixed on the side of Beka's face as he read the text. He didn't...frown, per se, but his jaw sort of tightened, which seemed to pull at the corners of his mouth. “This is a friend of yours?”

Harry shook his head. Paused. Shrugged. “Honestly? I barely know him, but he knows Hani-san and Mori-san, and likes my skating enough to have signed on as a sponsor after seeing me practice. Once.”

The older skater grunted. Harry nodded in agreement. “Yeah, it's really fucking awkward.”

Beka didn't say anything, just handed his phone back. In a blink, he had his own out and was shifting Harry and posing him as he took a flurry of selfies. His fingers flew over the keys as he posted them on his private Instagram, and on Twitter, and his Official Facebook page. Harry phone buzzed again, but this time with notices that 'otabek-altin' (Instagram) and 'Otabek_Altin_Official (Twitter) and 'The Real Otabek Altin' (Facebook) had tagged him in posts.

Harry stared. Every last pic—literally every single one—was tagged with some variation of #skatingfamily or #skatingbrothers or even #babybrothersarethebest, with Harry in a possessive teddybear-hold, clutched tightly to Beka's chest.

He shot him a look. “You're kinda passive-aggressive, aren't you.”

Beka shrugged, but didn't look sorry. “Maybe.”
Sensei jolted next to them as his own phone pinged. He pulled it sluggishly from his pocket, darting glassy eyes down to stare at the screen like he didn't know what to do with a phone.

Harry snorted, pulling it out of his sensei's hands. It was a FaceTime request...from coach. He took a deep breath and accepted the call.

Wide, watery blue eyes and a mouth pulled up into a manic, heart-shaped smile greeted him. “MY YUUURI, DID YOU SEE OUR LITTLE BOY ON THE ICE, DID YOU? HE WAS SO BEAUTIFUL, I'M SO PROUD. I CRIED ALL OVER MAKKA AND SHE RAN AWAY FROM ME AND HID, WHICH MADE ME CRY MORE. I ALMOST HAD A HEART ATTACK WHEN HE DID THOSE QUADS, BUT HE DID SO WELL, AND I'M SAD I CAN'T GIVE HIM A HUG—”

Finally, after so long holding back, Harry gave into laughter. “Coach, it's me. Harry.”

Coach blinked, looking startled to see his student instead of his husband staring back at him. “Oh, hello, Harry~!”

He snorted. “Hey, coach. You liked my Free Skate, then?”

“Yes, I DID~!” His expression flickered, shifting from pure pride into something a bit more...parental...and scolding, “Though you and I will be TALKING about your choice in costume when you get back, young man.”

Harry all but shoved his sensei's phone back into his hands. “Nuh-uh, blame your husband. It's his old costume, I just borrowed it.”

Sensei had a split-second to shoot him a betrayed look before he turned to his phone. Harry ignored the mild squabble, closing his eyes and relaxing back into Beka's loose hold, again. Less than two seconds later, Beka jostled him. He tilted his head to pout up at his friend.

“I'm tiiiired, Beka.”

Beka snorted, nodding towards the scoreboard. “I think they're about to announce your score.”
Harry perked up. Stared as his numbers flashed across the large screen. Pointed to them in shock, turning to look at Beka, if only to make sure he wasn't fucking seeing things. “I...that...you...”

The man nodded, a small smile tugging at his lips. “Yeah. You beat Katsuki's old Free Skate record.”

He turned to stare at his sensei, still pointing. “Sensei...I beat your record.”

Sensei beamed proudly. “I see that, Harii-kun.”

“But...how did I beat your record?”

The man laughed. “Well, you skated beautifully, but I think you landing two ratified Quads helped.”

Harry let out a little laugh. “They-they ratified them? BOTH of them? Even the Axel?”

Sensei nodded. “Yeah, they did.”

His breath left him a squeaky wheeze. “...oh. Well, uh. Fuck. That's...that's good.”

Beka snorted into his ear. Sensei nodded. “Yes, it is very good, Harii-kun.”

He barely had time to react before Beka was sliding him into his sensei's lap. Harry blinked up at him. “You're going?”

Beka's smile curved into a wide, sharp grin. “It's my turn next, and...Harry?”

“Yeah..?”

“I'm proud of you, but I'm not giving up the gold without a fight.”
Green eyes sharpened. “I’d be insulted if you did, Beka. Go, skate.”

The older man nodded, heading towards the edge of the rink where his coach was waiting.

“Hey, Beka?”

The older skater paused, glancing over his shoulder. “Yeah?”

“DAVAI~!”

Beka smiled, returning his cheerful wave with a simple thumbs up, before turning and walking away.

Harry ignored the chill coming off the ice as he stood on the podium, waving dazedly at a crowd he couldn't see through the glare of the overhead lights.

A quarter of a point. It was such a small thing, really, in the scheme of things. Too small to mean much in the context of Harry's every-day life.

His skating life, though...it was still so small, but it meant so much. It had made all the difference, in the end.

He trembled, clutching his medal to his chest. Every cell of him was aware of Beka and Phichit bracketing him on either side of the podium, but he couldn't quite turn to look at them. His hand shook as he lifted his gold metal to stare at it.

That small, insignificant quarter of a point was why he was standing here instead of Beka. Tears trailed down his face; He didn't try to fight them. He'd won gold...

...by the skin of his teeth, but he'd won it.

Part of him was terrified of what this meant, what would happen now. But, mostly, he shook with
anticipation.

Soon, he'd be in France.

Soon, he'd be competing against the likes of Plisetsky, and Leroy, and Popovich. He'd need every last point he earned, every last point he WOULD earn, to make it through.

I can't fucking wait.

.. ..

Chapter End Notes

FREE SKATE, DONE. I F*%KING MADE IT THROUGH THE TECHNICAL BITS.

OK. Deep breath.

Quick Notes:

I wanted to add in the backstage bits because they appeal to the part of me that was a ~theatre~ actress/backstage person, as well as a Film Major.

The FS still feels a bit technical, but I wanted to make it VERY CLEAR that Harry gives no shits about which spin elements male figure skaters are or are not supposed to be able to pull off. Also, I Don’t Even Care (TM) that I had him land two Quads that are infamous--the 4Lo for only being ratified ONCE, and the 4A for NEVER HAVING BEEN ratified. EVER. To. This. Date.

This is also the last of the technical aspects til we get to his Season Two skates.

Also? Over-Protective Yuuri is Best Yuuri (or, on the Top Ten list of Best Yuuris).
Chapter Eight

Chapter Notes

Harry's long-suffering melodrama sustains me. Consider yourself warned.

ALSO, warnings for over-heard sex that broadcasts a LOT of kinks that Harry would rather not know about.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“O-OH, VIT~YA~!”

“Mmmmm, my sweet Yuuchan~!”

“Give me your babies, Vit'ka, pleaaaase!”

Coach let out a deep, guttural moan and Harry gagged.

The groans picked up, and he burrowed his head under his pillow, failing utterly to block out the kinky-ass shit going on in the next room. A breeding kink. His sensei had a fucking breeding kink, fucking Jesus, and he didn't need to fucking know that.

“FUCK YOUR BABIES INTO ME, VITEN'KA!”

Harry jack-knifed in his bed, glaring murder at the wall. “ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME RIGHT NOW.”

There wasn't so much as a pause in the fucking, or a drop in volume, and so he could only sit and glare red-hot murder at his wall. He couldn't even...why. WHY. Harry grabbed his sensei's old digital clock off his side table, hurling it at the wall. It hit with a loud thunk, rolling as it hit the tatami floor.

Harry regretted everything.
He regretted ever thinking he was SO FUCKING LUCKY snagging sensei and coach out from under all those other skaters.

He regretted taking sensei’s old room, thinking that the privacy from guests and small en suite was worth having to share a bedroom wall with his coach and sensei.

He deeply regretted waving his papa off, telling him to wait til the end of the season before he found them a place in Hasetsu.

His hands fumbled as he reached for the phone, his green eyes squinting against the glare. 03:15 a.m. So, only a little after midnight in Almaty. He'd probably be OK.

The low, electronic beeping of the Skype app cut through the hopefully-not-temporary silence.

“Hello..?”

It took a moment, but finally the tiny picture dissolved from deep black to heavily pixelated skin tones. Beka. His chin was scruffy, his hair a mess, and...he was shirtless. Harry took in the rumpled sheets around him, and narrowed his eyes at his friend.

“Hey, Beka—ahhhh, am I...interrupting something?”

The older skater stared at him blandly. “No.”

“Are you sure..?”

Beka shot him a dry look. “I wouldn't have answered if I was in the middle of something, Hala.”

Harry tried not to flush at the term of endearment. “I'm just making sure because—”

“Yes—YES. TAKE IT. You want my babies, Yuuchan? You want me to breed you with my cock?”
“A-AH, VICCHAN~!”

Harry grimaced. “—because I've been traumatized enough.”

Beka blinked, his dark eyes going wide for a moment. A smirk tugged at the edge of his lips. “That's one way to give you The Talk, I guess.”

“Excuse you, but I've already had 'The Talk'.”

A dark, heavy brow inched slowly up the older man's forehead. Harry flushed. Beka's dark eyes seemed to burn through his forehead.

“I...don't want to talk about it, OK?”

“That bad?”

“I don't want to talk about it, Beka.”

Beka snorted, the utter dick. Harry barely registered the older skater's laughter, his eyes fixing on the man and woman—the very, very naked man and woman—who'd wandered into frame. The room was just dark enough to obscure their faces, but the thatch of dark pubic hair between the woman's legs and the rather...shapely...penis that the man sported was perfectly clear. Embarrassingly so. Letting out a high-pitched shriek he'd deny forever, Harry slammed his hand down over his screen. He couldn't see the alarm in Beka's eyes, but could hear it in his voice.

“Hala?”

“Y-you...”

“My? What is it?”
“Your, err, company. They might want to put on clothes.”

Through the gaps in his fingers, Harry can just make out Beka slowly craning around to look into the room behind him. His voice pitched low, almost like he was flirting with them, Beka growls out...something...in Kazakh. The man and the woman laugh, their vague silhouettes sliding out of frame as they leave the room to (hopefully) get dressed.

Slowly, Harry slid his hand away from the screen. Beka's face is twisted up in sleepy amusement, but Harry couldn't find it in him to care just then. His stomach was still doing flips, thinking about that man's frankly impressive junk because...GOOD LORD, SIR.

HOW DO YOU FIT SOMETHING THAT BIG IN A PAIR OF TROUSERS, EVEN. IT'S NOT POSSIBLE.

He tried not to think about the woman or her...bits. Not because she was unattractive, but because...well. He's very, very gay, and...no. Just no. He must have made a face, because Beka's smile slid from his face. He stares, head tilting as if to consider him.

“You OK?”

Harry waves him off, flushing an unattractive tomato-red. “F-fine, just...fuck, but I'm so very, very gay.”

Beka snorts. “Pavel will be flattered. Not so sure about Aya, though.”

“Oh, shut the absolute fuck up, Beka, you ass. You could have told me it was a bad time.”

“It's not a bad time. We were already done when you called.”

“OH MY GOD, BEKA. T.M. FUCKING. I.”

The utter shitcock just smirked at him. “You're such a virgin.”
Harry scowled, shooting the camera an emphatic middle finger.

“Viiiirgin.”

“You shut your goddamn mouth. I'm just sick to fucking death of having to listen to coach and sensei going at it like bunnies all evening. And all night. FUCK, but I've had to bribe Minako-san with booze TWICE to get her to fill in as coach after fucking Nochillforov dragged sensei off to bone him in a storage closet, or some bullshit.”

Beka let out a howl of laughter.

“It's not even funny! We weren't even gone a week, and—”

“Come for Daddy, Yuuchan~! Come for Daddy so he can fill you up with his babies~!”

Sensei let out a frankly appalling yowl.

“—and it's been nothing but TubeHentai with those two for five goddamn days. FIVE. We have to leave for Bordeaux in a little less than three weeks, and those two have been so caught up in being perverted dickstains that we haven't even talked about how I'm gonna handle the Trophee de France.”

The older skater frowned. “Yeah, OK. That is a problem.”

“Thank you.”

“Grab them tomorrow, before they have a chance to slip away. Talk to them about it.”

Harry grimaced, swiping tiredly at his face. “That's the thing. Minako-san and I leave for Sapporo tomorrow.”

“What's in Sapporo?”
“A three day fashion shoot for Chanel—”

Dark eyes blinked at him, shocked. “You signed on for a Chanel shoot? When?”

“Apparently, coach set it up while I was at Skate America.”

“Harry, that's...that's a big deal—”

He shrugged tightly. “Honestly, I think the only reason they agreed to take me on was so they could call in a professional favor from coach later...maybe get him to do another makeup promo. His last one was ridiculously fucking popular.”

“Doesn't matter why they agreed, just that they did.”

“Yeah, maybe. I mean, the extra money won't hurt, and it's not like getting my hair and makeup done and pouting at the camera is any harder than figure skating.”

Beka made a vaguely disagreeing sound.

“It's a different sort of hard. Not easy, but not like doing suicides around the rink because sensei is being a petty shit.”

“True.”

Silence fell for a moment. Well, between the two of them, anyway. Harry pointedly ignored his coach's low, animalistic grunting as it echoed through his room.

Beka let out a deep breath and just kind of stared at him. “...Chanel, huh.”

He seemed kind of flat-footed by the whole thing, which was an odd relief; Harry hadn't liked being the only one kind of losing his shit over the whole deal.
“Yeah, I know. Surprised the fuck outta me, too.”

The older skater dragged a hand roughly down his face. “And it's a three day thing. In Sapporo. Mid-season.”

Harry let out a little warble of frustration, arms flying. “Which is why I'm extra-pissed,” he clutched his phone, embarrassed that he'd nearly tossed it at the wall in his flailing. “Coach was the one to set the dates for the whole goddamn thing. He knew I was going to lose rink time, and yet he's wasted almost half a week of my practice time playing Hide The Bishop with sensei.”

The older skater snorted. “Well, it'll be over before you know it.”

“I'M THERE, VITYA. SO CLOSE, DADDY. SO CLOSEEE.”

Harry let out a weak moan. “God, I hope so.”

“I meant the shoot, but that too.”

“I'm sure it'll be fine,” Harry waved it off, “I think they have another skater coming in, so I won't be bored, but I still wish it could have fucking waited. I need all the rink time I can get.”

Beka let out a little sigh. “...I'll handle it.”

Harry shot his friend a careful look. “...how're you gonna handle it?”

The man smiled tightly. “You trust me?”

“Of course..?”

“Then trust that I'll make sure you have plenty of rink time when you get back.”
He smiled carefully at the oddly intense look Beka was giving him. “Thanks.”

Beka waved him off. “Just...get some rest.”

“Y-yeah. OK. Night, Beka.”

The flight from Fukuoka to Sapporo wasn’t anything special. With only two hours and change to kill, Harry had slept in a last-ditch attempt to “get a handle on those goddamn steamer trunks under your eyes” (Minako-san's exact fucking words). Minako-san, in the meantime, had apparently decided to take full advantage of the fact that Chanel had booked them First Class, and proceeded to get rip-roaring wasted.

Harry sighed, frowning at the woman and shoved another strong, bitter cup of coffee into her hand. “For fuck’s sake, Minako-san.”

“What?”

“You couldn't have waited til I didn't have a meeting to get shit-faced?”

The brunette grimaced, knocking back her fourth coffee, chasing it with two aspirin. “Yeah, sorry. Wasn't expecting for it to hit me so hard; guess I'm used to the cheap shit.”

He sighed, running his hand through his hair. “Just...coach told me what to say, so maybe just don't talk to anyone and let me work out the details?”

Thin lips pulled up into a wry smile. “Sure, kid.”

Harry snorted. Brown eyes shot him a curious look. “If you think I'm ever letting you live this down...”

Minako-san groaned. “Oh god, Yuuri is never going to let this go.”
“No, he isn’t. You’ll be lucky if Hiroko-oba-san doesn’t cut you off, in the meantime.”

Another groan. “Tell you what; if I manage not to embarrass you, can we keep this between us?”

He shot the woman a considering look. “That depends, Minako-san.”

“On?”

“On how well you hold your liquor.”

“I'm listening.”

“Here’s the thing...if you embarrass yourself in front of the Chanel reps, Yuuri-sensei is going to hear about it. Coach Viktor is going to hear about it. Hell, a lot of people will hear about it...that's just how this shit works. So, you manage to make it through the entire shoot without causing a scandal, then...and only then...you'll have a deal.”

The brunette grimaced, looking pained at the idea of a mostly-sober three day weekend. Harry pulled her out of the flow of foot traffic, turning to stare her down. “Do we have a deal, or not?”


They shook on it briefly, shoving their way back into the crowd. The clusters of travelers had thinned out by the time they made it to curb-side pick up. Harry's eyes slid along the long row of taxis, searching. He pulled out a slip of paper, squinting at coach's loopy scrawl.

“The Chanel rep will meet you at curb-side pick up when you land. She'll be holding up a sign with Minako-san's name on it.”

Harry glanced up, searching for...there. A short, sharply curved woman in a fashionable pants suit was holding what looked like a laminated print-out with “Okukawa, Minako” spelled out, first in English, then in Hiragana, and finally in Kanji. They don't fuck around, I guess.
He nudged Minako-san. She looked at him.

“There.”

She nodded, taking the handle of his carry-on from him and shooing him along. Harry waited just long enough to make sure she could handle both roll cases and her purse before hurrying over to the woman.

He peeked down at the slip of paper in his hands. “Yamamoto-san?”

The woman met his eyes. The sweep of her white bangs was a sharp contrast to the black of the rest of her hair, and the deep, deep red lipstick she wore. Still, lovely as her hair and lipstick wore, both paled in comparison to her beautiful, beaming smile.

“Potter-san! A pleasure,” she sketched a quick bow, which Harry returned politely. “Forgive the abruptness, but we need to get going. Nikiforov-san neglected to send us your measurements or your makeup colors, so we need to get that taken care of before the shoot tomorrow. We can talk business in the studio.”

Harry let the human cyclone that was Yamamoto-san usher him into the car. The woman handed him a small stack of paperwork as she slid into the front passenger seat. “That's your copy of the agreement your coach and my employers worked out for the shoot, as well as the model release form.”

“Do I need to sign anything..?”

“No; As you are underage and he is currently acting in loco parentis, he's signed for you.”

“Ah, OK.”

The woman gave him a tight nod, gesturing to the paperwork. “Please hold onto those for your records.”

He shot a look at Minako-san, who took the paperwork from him and carefully tucked it away into
the front pocket of his case. Yamamoto-san smiled tightly, turning around and muttering to the driver. Slowly, they pulled out into traffic.

“So, do you understand what you’ll be doing for us over the next few days?”

A flush stained his cheeks. “Well...coach mentioned you wanted me for a few clothing spreads.”

“Anything else?”

Harry blinked. “He said there might be a few other skaters there, too.”

The woman peered over her shoulder. “Anything else?”

A small smirk tugged at his lips “...'make sure to bring home more Chanel wipes, if you can, Harry. They're my favorite.'”

His impression of his coach's rather pronounced accent wasn't amazing, but apparently good enough to startle a laugh out of Yamamoto-san.

“We'll keep that in mind,” she cleared her throat. “Mostly, your coach was right. In addition to a few handbag shots for regular publications, we plan on having you and the other model—” she flashed a smile over her shoulder, “—well, skater, do a few Vintage Chanel spreads for the December issue of Harper's Bazaar.”

Harry let out a little breath “...which is why you need me for three days instead of two. Suddenly, it all makes sense.”

Yamamoto-san let out an amused hum. “Yes. For now, though, we need to get your fittings and makeup taken care of.”

Harry let out a little breath. “If it saves you time, I can give you Yuuri-sensei's contact information. He handles all my makeup for my performances, so would be able to tell you my shades.”
“Excellent. I'll grab his number from you once we get to the studio.”

“Sounds good,” he shot a look to the tired-looking Minako-san. “...would it be possible to get some coffee for Minako-san while we're there, or maybe get her a ride back to the hotel? She didn't sleep well, and I don't want to keep her up, if it takes a while.”

The Chanel rep shot Minako-san a polite look. “Which would you prefer, Okukawa-san? We could set you up with coffee and maybe food from craft services, or I could have the car bring you back to the hotel. Pierce-san would be happy to drop you off once he drops Potter-san and I off at the studio.”

The brunette woman turned to look at him. Harry gave her a subtle nod, letting her know Yes, I'm fine and It's up to you, what you want to do.

“I think I'll go back to the hotel, if you don't mind.”

“Not at all,” she turned to their driver. “After the studio, please take Okukawa-san to Keio Plaza Hotel.”

“Of course, Yamamoto-san.”

The woman turned back to smile politely at Minako-san. “I'll make sure to give Pierce-san your reservation information, so he can help you with check-in.”

Minako-san dipped her head into a tiny, polite nod. “Thank you.”

The rest of the ride was short and quiet. Harry didn't even bother looking out the window, taking a moment to rest his eyes a bit more. If his experience with his Papa's tailor was anything to go by, the fitting could take a while, and he'd rather not fucking face-plant when the designers and their various assistants were messing with sharp pins near his privates.

He blinked his eyes open, staring at Minako-san as she peered down at him. “We're here, kid,” she leaned in close to whisper. “Good luck.”
“Yeah, uh...thanks.”

Harry bit back a yawn as he stepped out of the car.

Staring down at his newly-waxed and moisturized and bestockinged legs, he blinked, bewildered. Apparently, both his coach and Yamamoto-san had forgotten to mention the part where he'd be modeling women's fashions. He sighed.

“Too tight, Potter-kun?”

Harry glanced down at the tailor, his mouth stuffed full of pins as he carefully folded and secured the fabric of the black dress.

“No, it's fine. Just...kind of wondering what even my life is right now.”

“Having a bit of an identity crisis?”

He rolled his eyes. “Aside from the whole flamboyant figure skater thing? The entire internet has seen me dance...drunk, topless and in high heels, to Single Ladies; it would be real fucking stupid if this gave me a crisis of masculinity.”

The man snorted. “What is it, then?”

He let out a little hum. “It's just...I never thought a day would come where I'd be getting paid to dress up like Audrey Hepburn. I mean, I'm gay, but...a bit of a stereotype, isn't it, the flamboyant gay boy playing dress up as Holly Golightly...”

The tailor cackled, spitting out the pins to stop himself from accidentally choking on them. After a moment, he wiped his eyes on his sleeve, peering up at Harry. “To be fair, you're modeling Hepburn-inspired fashions created to evoke Breakfast At Tiffany's, not dressing up as Holly, herself.”

Harry shot the man a Look. “Which is why all the sets look like production stills...and why everything I've been fitted for looks exactly like something Hepburn wore in the movie...because I'm
just 'evoking' her.”

He squawked as the stylist poked his side. “Smart-ass.”

“No, I'm just not buying what you're selling.”

The man sighed. “Well, you do have the right coloring for it—”

“Oh, coloring. That's a good excuse...”

“—And not many people have the right shape to pull off this dress, in particular.” He tugged playfully at the hem of the shin-length pencil shirt that tapered up into the tightly ruched waistline and bodice.

“...the 'right shape'?”

A flash of teeth. “Legs for days, with no hips, no ass, and no shoulders to speak of.”

“You leave my ass out of this.”

“I would, if I could find your ass, skinny.”

Harry scowled. “And I do too have shoulders.”

A snort. “Shoulders delicate enough to pull off a Hepburn dress and not look bulky, so I stand by what I said.”

He didn't even have time to let loose the blue-streak hovering at the tip of his tongue before he was interrupted. “Harii-kun!”

Green eyes went wide as they locked onto placid, inky black. Watanabe Ryota. He looked taller than
when he'd last seen him, at Nationals, which would explain why his skating had been so off. If he'd been in the middle of a growth spurt...Harry bit back a wince.

“Ryota-kun, hello. Are you here for the photo shoot as well?”

Dark eyes looked almost startled at his weirdly polite tone. The other skater straightened, returning his greeting with a bland smile and tight nod that made dark hair flop into his eyes.

“Yes. I just finished my last fitting.”

Carefully polite tone aside, Ryota-kun's gaze burned as they slowly skimmed up Harry's legs like a hot caress.

Harry fought the urge to blush. “O-oh?”

“Yes.”

Green eyes peered up through dark lashes to take in the elegant swoop of Ryota-kun's neck, the sharp outline of his jaw, the curve of his thin mouth. Yes, he definitely had grown, and was...well. He didn't look like a baby deer with a bowl cut, anymore. True, the bowl cut hadn't been traded out for anything remotely stylish, but it didn't seem nearly as out of place on his matured face.

“So, uhm...I think I'm about done here, so—”

“—please accompany me to lunch, Harii-kun.”

“—maybe we shoul—wha. Oh. Yes. I-I'd like that.”

Ryota-kun gave him another tight smile and a little bow before wandering off...somewhere. It was hard to tell with him. Even when they'd been together in Juniors, constantly in each other's space, Ryota-kun had been rather close lipped about how he spent his time outside the rink.

Harry squawked as the tailor nudged him. “You have a daaaaaate.”
He moaned. “Oh god, I doooo, and I don't even have nice clothes to wear.”

The man snorted. “As long as your pants show off your legs, I don't think he'll care.”

He let out an embarrassed little warble. “Oh god, I don't even know what I'm doing...I mean, it's Ryota-kun.”

“So you don't like him?”

A hot lump rose in his throat, and he swallowed against it, hard. His skin felt tight where the flush crept up his neck. “Uh, no...that's not—we were always kinda,” he waved his hand awkwardly, “even when we skated together in Juniors, but...”

“But what?”

Harry snorted. “We were thirteen, and both happened to be gifted with extremely over-protective parents. What do you think happened?”

“Nothing?”

“Exactly. My Papa was polite to him and his coach, but always made sure not to leave us alone for more than five minutes, and not even that when there was privacy to be found.”

“So, you're worried you'll do something you'll regret later?”

Green eyes shot down to meet teasing brown. “I'm pretty sure I wouldn't regret anything Ryota-kun and I got up to, but—”

“But..?”

He gave the curious man a flat smile. “...I'm guessing you've never met Viktor Nikiforov.”
“Can’t say I have, but I’ve heard things.”

“Everything you’ve heard about him being extra as shit, and kind of pathologically absentminded is 100% true. But rampant idiocy aside, he can be scary-intense when it comes to protecting me. Yuuri-sensei is even worse because he doesn’t get loud or weird, he gets quiet. And then there’s Beka...”

“Beka?”

“A sorta friend-slash-adopted older brother? I guess? Anyway, yeah...Beka. He doesn’t look it, but he’s totally That Guy who will destroy your world with a smile if you piss him off.”

Harry tried not to think about the shit that had gone down online the day after he’d got back from America. He was glad Beka had taken on the trolls, but...well. He never, ever, ever wanted to make an enemy of Beka, that’s for goddamn sure.

“So, you’re not worried about what you and Ryota-kun will get up to so much as what the people around you would do about it.”

“Right.”

“Maybe don’t do anything, then..?”

He snorted. “I mean, I can try, but...no promises. Even after months of not talking to him, just seeing him, I...” he let out a quavering sigh, “...there’s just something about him that gets me all...”

The man patted him consolingly on the hip. “Well, I'm not your father or your uncle or anything, Potter-kun, so I can't tell you how to behave. Whatever you decide to do, just be safe.”

Harry beamed down at the man. “Thank you—”

“Uo Takeshi.”
“—thank you, Uo-san.”

The man waved him off. “Please, everyone calls me Take.”

“Alright then, Take-san.”

The man sighed, finally leaning back. “I think we're done here. Just let me double-check with the photographer, and then you can go get ready for your date.”

Harry groaned again.

Ryota-kun was waiting for him by the entrance, all 175 cm of him looking lean and gorgeous in his tidy suit. His dark eyes were fixed on the phone in his hands, rapidly typing out a message to...someone. A parent? A sibling? A coach? A harem of lovers?

He looked up when Harry sidled up next to him, dark eyes lighting up with pleasure. “Ready?”

“Yes.”

The taller boy shot him a weak smile, leading them outside. There wasn't a car waiting, and Ryota-kun didn't seem to be expecting anyone. Harry turned to look up at him. “Where are we going?”

He pointed vaguely down the street. “There's a cake shop just down the road.”

Harry hesitated for a split-second. A very, very small part of him wanted to blurt out an apology, explain why he couldn't go eat cake with him—“my coach would kill me if I ruined my diet”—but the much, much larger part really just wanted an excuse to spend some time with Ryota-kun. In the end, there was no contest. He followed the much-taller boy as he hurried down the street.

“Have you been to this cake shop before, Ryota-kun?”

The other skater shrugged. “No.”
He passed Harry his phone, their fingers brushing as he flipped through the pictures to show him the well-lit images of decadent pastries piled high with cream and fruit. Harry's mouth watered. “Oh, that looks...”

“Hn.” The other boy took his phone back, tucking it back into his pocket. Dark eyes considered him for a long moment. “I...saw your Free Skate.”

Red. He was certain his face was a bright, fiery red. His face certainly felt hot enough for it to be on fire. “O-oh.”

“You skated beautifully.”

Nope, he was wrong. Now his face was on fire. “Thank you, Ryota-kun.”

The taller skater stopped, sighing. “If you're being this formal because I didn't qualify this year—”

“I'm not—”

“You are.” Dark, passionate eyes pinned him in place, daring him...challenging him...to lie to his face.

“OK, maybe I am being a bit awkward.”

Ryota-kun let out a harsh snort. “More than a bit, Harii-kun.”

“I just...I don't know what you want me to say; you lost your chance to compete in the GP because of a fu—a ridiculous growth spurt during what should have been your Senior Debut season.”

“Yes, it is fucking ridiculous that I had my growth spurt now, but that doesn't mean my career's over. I still practice, and work with a physical therapist between practice, to make sure I can stay limber enough to pull off spin combos and jumps without straining myself. This season's a bust, but I'll be back for the next one,” Ryota-kun turned to stare at him, “but that's for me to worry about, not you.”
Harry let out a reluctant little laugh. “Point taken. I'll stop being so...”

“...stupidly uptight?”

“Yes, that.”

For the first time since their reunion, a smirk—The Smirk that had been Harry's Gay Awakening™ once-upon-a-time—graced Ryota-kun's face. Harry flushed. Again.

“Oh god.”

A thick brow quirked at him.

“Full disclosure?”

Dark eyes gleamed. “This should be good.”

“Well, I don't know if I'd call it good, but...it was that fucking smirk that was responsible for my first awkward public boner.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah. I think you were smirking at Minami-ahou about...something. He'd said or done something dumb after reading about Katsuki-san's retirement, and you just...you smirked at him. The blood rushed to my dick so fast I almost passed out on the ice.”

Ryota-kun didn't respond aloud, but his smirk widened, his eyes gleaming darkly. Harry swallowed. “Oh, fuck you, that's just...that's not fair, Ryota-kun. I want to kiss you now, but I can't, and—”

“Why can't you?”
Harry blinked. “Wait, what?”

The taller boy stopped walking, turning to look at him full in the face. “Why can't you kiss me?”

He sputtered. “I mean, wouldn't it be weird for you? I know PDA really isn't—it isn't really a thing you do in Japan.”

“So?”

“Well, I mean...if you don't have a problem with it, I jus—” Harry's words died on his tongue as Ryota-kun tugged him close, dipping his head down to press a greedy kiss to his lips. Harry let out a quivering little sigh.

Well.

After a long moment that was all grasping hands, and damp lips, and just a hint of tongue, Ryota-kun pulled back. Harry's hand shook as he lifted it to his kiss-swollen mouth. Every inch of the other skater radiated satisfaction. “Fuck public morals. Next time you want to kiss me, just kiss me.”

Harry felt his breath hitch in his chest. He licked his lips, staring at Ryota-kun's mouth. With a murmur of agreement, he rose to his tip-toes and pressed a long, lingering kiss to his maybe-boyfriend's lips before pulling away.

Green met inky black. “...you said I could whenever.”

The older boy smirked, his rasping laugh lingering in the space between them as they headed towards the cake shop.

.. .. ...

Chapter End Notes
Here we are, friends, back into EVEN MOAR between-competition plot. Or, well, plot-essential filler. Potato, Potahito.

Here’s a few things that may be of note:

Hala: Hal is one of the small handful of nicknames for Harry; I thought it would be cute if Beka called him by a Russian pet variant of this nickname.

Kyushu to Almaty time difference: No, this wasn’t just plot device. According to the great and powerful Google, Kyushu, Japan and Almaty, Kazakhstan are only separated by a 3 hour time difference, with Kyushu being three hours ahead.

Flight time: Again, thanks to the power of the internet and the availability of online flight booking, I was able to determine that a direct flight from Fukuoka to Sapporo ranges in time between 2h05 to 2h20.

Harry’s time frame til the Trophee: With loss of time to international travel, and when I head-canon that they actually arrived back in Kyushu, Harry has exactly 21 days between his return date and when he plans to arrive in Bordeaux. So, he’s understandably feeling pressed for time. That doesn't mean he isn't being a melodramatic brat. BECAUSE HE IS.

Keio Plaza Hotel, i.e. Keio Plaza Hotel Sapporo: A real-life, airport convenient hotel in the higher price bracket and with nice views that I could see them being booked into. It’s not super high end, but undeniably nice.

The cake shop: I used a real-life Sapporo cake shop as my basis for their date, LeTAO. The pictures of the cakes alone convinced me it was perfect.

THE KISS: I'm...not even sorry. Not even a little bit.

So. No promises that I’ll get all the way through the 3 weeks and to the Trophee next chapter. I have PLANS for Harry and dear Ryota, and am not sure I can or want to try to squeeze that into a chapter covering a GP event.
Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

Quick warning for this chapter:

This chapter DOES contain references to/implied sex acts between two 16 year olds. There is absolutely nothing graphic, but I thought it only fair to warn you before you read. I expanded more on this topic in the end notes, so please make sure to check them, if you feel you need more information before proceeding.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Harry flopped, belly first, onto his hotel bed, fighting the urge to squee aloud. He took a few deep, shaky breaths. He exhaled on a squeaky wheeze. Took another few breaths, slowly letting them out. Rinse, repeat, til he could exhale without sounding like a deflating balloon.

Even so, the struggle was real. Though the part of him that was pure, stubborn pride wanted him to keep his shit together, the rest of him was actively telling his pride to fuck off because OH GOD. Oh my actual fucking god.

His face was still painted a blazing red, hot to the touch, and...his lips. His tongue darted out to taste. Yep, they still tasted like castella cake...the castella cake Ryota-kun had been eating. His stomach did another happy flip, and he dropped his face into his pillow, finally letting loose a strangled little squeal. Jesus fuck what even was his liiiiiife.

Five minutes of rolling around on the nest of messy blankets, periodically letting out happy little wheezes, and Harry finally regained his chill. Not all of it, but enough to scramble for his phone. His breath hitched when he saw he had a missed message.

Ryo-kun [05:15 p.m.]: ( ˘ ³˘)♥

Harry clutched his phone to his chest, and let out a shaky breath. He would not pull a Viktor “so fucking extra, I changed my middle name to Extravich” Nikiforov move. He'd be calm. C o l l e c t e d.

His fingers flew over the screen, tapping out a mass of utterly sappy kissy-face kaomoji and XOs. By the time he finally hit send, there were more kiss-emoji than actual words in the return text. He winced. OK. So maybe he wasn't so good at the whole “being chill” thing.
Speaking of chill...

FaceTime was open and he was calling Beka before he could stop to think about it. If he thought too long, he'd freak out and not do it, and this wasn't something he wanted to hide from his friend. True, there was a very real chance that his coach would find out and lose his absolute shit, but. He needed to tell somebody.

Out of the black, Beka's face emerged in a mass of warm brown and black pixels. He was holding the phone very close to his face, making it super obvious he'd not been shaving as much as he should have been. Again. Honestly, he was starting to suspect Beka had something against razors.

“Hala. Hey. How was it?”

Harry shrugged, biting his lips to keep in the squee. “It...it was good. Today was really more like day zero, fitting and stuff.”

“Ah. You got everything done, though.”

“Yeah.” He squirmed on the bed, cheeks puffing out a bit as he held back on the word vomit sitting just at the tip of his tongue.

Dark eyes blinked. “Are...are you OK? You seem a bit...”

He let out a gusty sigh...and spilled. He spilled about his embarrassing near-swoon when he saw Ryota-kun, all tall and solemn and so grown up omg. He spilled about their spontaneous date and the kissing and the cake—“seriously, don't tell Yuuri-sensei about the cake, he'll give me that Look if he knows I broke my diet”—and the more-kissing.

Beka waited til he had stopped to catch his breath to say anything. “So, you're dating then.”

“I...yeah. I think so. I mean, he made it really clear he wants to, at least.”
“Hn. Just make sure you're clear about what you both want before you get too caught up.”

“I should probably do that, huh.”

Beka shrugged. “It's up to you, but it wouldn't hurt.”

Harry dragged a hand through his hair. “You have a point. I mean, I still have the rest of my season, and he has physical therapy to deal with, so he might not be looking for something permanent.”

“Speaking of skating,” Beka shot him a chiding little look. “I had a talk with your coaches.”

“And?”

“They were both really surprised that you'd think they forgot about your competition. Viktor, especially.”

“Really?”

“Yes. He said to remind you about the promise he made to you.”

The promise that he'd help him win gold. Right. Harry huffed. “Then, I don't understand. Why—?”

Beka sighed. “They were worried you’d push yourself too hard practicing quads if they were around. So, they made themselves scarce so you'd stick to footwork.”

Harry blinked. “But, the competition...I can't just not practice my quads.”

The other man scoffed. “Hala. You broke a world record on your first Senior skate. You landed a ratified Quad Loop and a Quad Axel. That's...nobody's landed a ratified quad axel in competition, ever. I don't think either of them think you need to obsess over your jumps.”
“I do, though. You know who I'm skating against! Leroy's still a fucking stamina monster, and Plisetsky...fuck. He's your friend, you know he was landing six quads when he was a year younger than I am, now...and he's gotten better. At the very least, I need to worry about staying competitive against him.”

Beka shrugged. “Yura is...Yura. He's good, but that doesn't mean you can't compete.”


The older skater sighed. “Just concentrate on smoothing out your Axel landings. Maybe upgrade your last jump for your Short Program. You'll be fine.”

“If you say so,” Harry flopped dramatically against the mattress. “Ugh, god. All the stress. I'm going to just die, I know it.”

The other skater laughed. “You're fine. Breathe. Relax. Have fun with the shoot and your new boyfriend.”

Harry bit back the urge to squeal and kick his heels in the air excitedly. Jesus, the loss of chill was practically a Pavlovian response. He was such a fucking trash disaster. “I will.”

“Oh, and Hala?”

“Yeah?”

Dark eyes locked onto him with a serious look. “Take care of yourself, OK?”

Harry nodded, his chest feeling warm and fluttery. Shit, but he was getting the warm and fuzzies, now. The actual goddamn warm and fuzzies, and he was going to cry, and it was all stupid, lovely Beka's fault. “I will. Thanks.”

“Later, malenkiy brat.”
He beamed at the phone, practically bouncing. Little brother. Beka thought of him as his little brother.

Well, he'd known that before. The absolute clusterfuck of social media posts post-Free Skate had spoke volumes. BUT. This was different. This wasn't him fending off a thirsty boy sniffing around where it wasn't wanted. This was just the two of them talking.


The fond look in Beka's eyes was the last thing he saw before the call ended, and Harry let out a happy sigh. He could feel the squee building up again. “Goddamnit, I'm such a hot mess right.”

He only hoped Ryota-kun didn't run screaming the minute he found out just how much of a hot mess Harry actually was.

The sun wasn't even fucking up yet when Yamamoto-san was at his hotel door bearing a tribute of freshly-brewed coffee, and looking extra classy in her white Chanel skirt-blazer combo of Win. Harry, on the other hand........well, he had showered. And brushed his teeth and hair. That's pretty much all he had going for him at the moment.

He sat limply in the makeup chair as his face was carefully layered with foundation and concealer, then contoured into near-unrecognizable fae androgyny. Two sets of false lashes and more pearl cream than any one person should ever have on his face, and he was let loose. Only for the hairdressers to descend, en masse.

Harry sat very, very still as his thatch of black was brushed, and gelled, and sprayed into submission. Somewhere after the third set of product-covered stylist's hands had disappeared into his hair, he'd lost track of just what they were sticking in there. He winced, imagining just how much shampoo it was going to take to get all that shit out. It was going to be a nightmare, worse even that what he'd had to deal with with his Free Skate hairdo.

Another two rounds of coffee made it into his otherwise-empty stomach before he was rushed off to change. His brain, not quite awake yet, could only just stare stupidly at the embarrassingly large rack of clothes—helpfully labeled “HJP 1”—waiting for him...and. He peered into the depths. That's what he'd thought.
This. This was only for today. Two more racks, just as big, were pushed further back, large pieces of paper taped to their sides reading “HJP 2” and “HJP 3.” Mother fuck.

Beka had been right to scoff at him calling this shit easy. It wasn't as difficult as landing a quad axel, sure, but it wasn't easy, either. He actually felt a bit like a barbie doll—his hair was put through hell, his clothing swapped out willy-nilly, and his body manipulated into all sorts of random poses to suit the photographer's whims.

“Good! Now, I want Emilee—” the photographer gestured to the very, very tall blonde with wondrously thick eyebrows, “—to squeeze in close to Harry, and—”

He tried not to grimace as flurry of camera flashes went off. Honestly, the model was so close and so tall that Harry's face would be buried in her cleavage if he turned his head even the slightest fraction to the left. On the right and just behind him—Ryota-kun. His presence was a like a warm weight. They weren't quite close enough to touch, but Harry could still feel him there.

“Ryota-kun! I want you draped across Harry's shoulders—like that, thank you.”

Harry flushed. Ryota-kun's bangs brushed across his cheekbones, his nose pressing into the side of his neck, as he draped himself over Harry's shoulders. His breath sent little shivers down his back. He wanted to press back into his hold. He wanted to turn his head and just...brush his lips across the curve of his brow.

He peered over at the photographer. She was busy. Good. He turned his face towards his boyfriend, pressing a delicate kiss to Ryota-kun's brow. It was more of a careful caress, and less of an actual kiss, since he was wearing lipstick and didn't want the makeup artists to KILL him, but...

Ryota-kun let out a little hum. On his other side, Emilee let out a soft laugh. “You two are too cute.”

His face went hot. “Uh, thanks.”

“Hm. Makes me miss my girlfriend.”

Harry peeked over at Emilee. She was smiling wistfully. “What's she like?”
“Cara? She's a model like me, but also the biggest dork you'll ever meet in your life. I love her.”

He beamed at the taller model. “She sounds nice.”

Emilee, beaming, opened her mouth to reply, but a shout from the photographer interrupted her. “OK! Thanks, Emilee. You can go take a break.”

The blonde woman waved at them as she hurried off. Harry braced himself as the stylists and photographer's assistants converged on them. Five more outfits, a dozen-plus more poses, and literally a few hundred more shots, and they were finally done. By the time Harry was staggering out of the studio, back in his street clothes, he felt exhausted and punch-drunk.

Harry didn't even flush when Ryota-kun pulled him close. He just closed his eyes, content to use him as a human pillow. Fuck, but there was still another day of this before the Big Day. He felt like crying.

“You up for dinner, or you want to just go back to the hotel?”

“Mmmmm, sleeep.”

Ryota-kun snorted, brushing his hand lightly through his stiff hair and down his shoulders. He leaned down to press a kiss to the side of his face. “Hn.”

“What?”

“You taste like sweat and foundation.”

“Ew. Sorry.”

Another kiss was pressed to his temple. “Not your fault.”

Harry was already half-asleep when the car showed up, and refused to open his eyes as he was steered into the backseat. He felt no shame making Ryota-kun buckle him in, nor in slumping over to
use his side as a pillow. Almost immediately, he dropped into a sleepy doze.

He barely woke as Ryota-kun tugged him from the backseat and into a piggyback ride, carting him through the lobby and up to his hotel room. He only really woke when Minako-san tugged him from his place on his boyfriend’s back. “Mmm, bye Ryo-kun.”

“Bye, Harii-kun.”

His eyes felt heavy, and he flinched when he rubbed at them. Mascara...and, ugh, lash glue. Minako-san laughed, steering him into the bathroom. “Wash up, then I'll let you go to bed, OK?”

“...but my hair.”

Thin fingers carefully tugged at his stiff locks. “Yuck. OK, new plan. Shower first, then bed.”

“M'kay.”

Harry slept deeply that night.

For all that he wore different clothes, the second day of the shoot was pretty much a rerun of the first. This time, however, Harry made sure to load up on coffee during his brief lunch break. He only a few days with Ryota-kun and didn't want to waste another evening too exhausted to do more than use him as a human teddy bear.

Maybe it was the caffeine. Maybe it was the fact that he just wanted to have the chance to be a gross teenager with his boyfriend. Either way, Harry felt no shame sneaking in kisses when the photographer wasn’t looking, or openly encouraging Ryota-kun to press warm, greedy kisses to every inch of his neck that he could access.

Harry suspected that the photographer wasn’t as oblivious as she pretended to be, as she kept shifting the two of them into poses that required close contact. He only hoped she wasn't actually taking any pictures of them necking, because he'd rather not have a magazine spread act as his “Official” coming-out announcement.
If his Papa didn't kill him first, then Phichit “Social Media is My Life” Chulanont would.

When the two of them left that evening, Harry did so on his own power...well, on the caffeine's power, but he wasn't sleepwalking, so that was all that mattered. He practically danced circles around Ryota-kun, who was busily typing away on his phone. “You have a car coming?”

“Yeah.”

“OK. You wanna just head back, or maybe grab something to eat first?”

Ink-colored eyes flitted up to meet his. “Food. Please. Where are you thinking?”

Harry shrugged. “I don't know if there's anything good here, but I'd be happy just eating cold soba at the hotel, if that's what you want.”

“Do they have soba at the hotel?”

“Uh...no idea. I mean, it's the Keio Plaza Hotel. They probably have something good, right, even if they don't have soba. OH—do you think they'd have soup curry? I know sensei has had it, and really likes it, and I can probably get them to make mine without meat if I ask—”

Ryota-kun snorted, ducking down to press a soft kiss to his lips, interrupting him mid-ramble. Harry let out a little gasp. “I'm not complaining, but what..?”

“You're cute.”

“You kissed me because I'm cute?”

“Yes.”

“Huh. OK.”
It was sheer, fucking luck that the car showed up before Harry could repay his boyfriend's sweet kiss with a less-sweet one. It was even better luck that the car was one of those classy sports-utility deals with so-dark-it's-barely-legal tinted windows. He was pretty sure he'd die if pics of him shoving his tongue down Ryota-kun's throat ever got out.

Knowing his luck, they would. Some rando on the street would happen to snap a shot and then post it to Instagram, or Twitter, or Facebook. Then, someone would recognize him, or Ryota-kun—maybe both of them—and the post would go viral. Next thing he knew, he'd have a worried Papa...worse, a worried coach and sensei...on his ass.

Harry's lashes fluttered as hungry lips traced their way up his jawline. Ryota-kun mouth was hot against his skin as he sucked a kiss to the delicate patch of skin just beneath his ear. He felt every inch like the heroine of one of Sirius' favorite romance novels. It was amazing.

Sighing, he leaned into the cold brush of fingers along his cheekbone. A little shiver danced up Harry's spine as Ryota-kun's lips slowly pressed their way up his jaw towards his mouth. A soft press of those fingers, and he happily turned into the kiss.

The taste of milky coffee lingered sweetly on his lips. It was almost funny, that...just how mild and sweet the remnants of hours-old coffee tasted in his mouth when there was nothing delicate or sweet about his kisses. They were heat and hunger, barely tempered by the impressive self-control Ryota-kun was known for on the ice.

The car pulled to a stop, but Harry didn't pull away. He clung to Ryota-kun, letting out a happy little moan as the other boy pressed deeper, greedier kisses to his lips, teasing at his tongue with his. There was a cough from the front seat. Finally, he pulled away.

Green eyes blinked open, startled. “Uh...shit. Sorry. Thanks.”

The driver met his eyes through his rearview mirror. They sparked with barely-repressed laughter. “No problem.”

Harry flushed, his eyes skirting the driver's profile. He didn't actually look that much older than him and Ryota-kun, which explained...a lot. Like, why he hadn't kicked up a fuss when Ryota-kun had latched onto his neck like a leech the minute they slid into the backseat. Harry slipped out of the car after Ryota-kun, leaning into his hold.
“Make sure to give him five stars, yeah?”

Ryota-kun snorted, pulling out his phone and opening up his Uber app. ¥755 stood out in bold relief against the white background of the digital receipt. Harry winced. Ryota-kun didn't even blink, his fingers flying across the keyboard as he tapped out a raving review to go along with the five-stars. Harry peeked down at the screen through Ryota-kun's tapping fingers.

“Uh...”

“What?”

“His arrival was prompt and his manner adequately courteous. However, his four star service became five stars when he refused to comment on what my boyfriend and I did in his backseat.’ Fucking really, Ryo-kun?”

The taller boy shrugged. “It was a four minute drive, it's not like I can comment on his driving skills.”

Harry snorted, staring up at his boyfriend. “I don't even know what to say to you right now.”

Ryota-kun shrugged. “For ¥755, that's as good a review as he's getting from me.”

“We could have just walked, saved you the money.”

The other boy squeezed his hip, dipping his head down to press a kiss to Harry's forehead. “I would have paid twice that if it meant I could spend the entire time kissing you.”

Red burst across his cheeks, and Harry had to bury his face against Ryota-kun's side. He took a few shaky breaths before leaning back enough to look up into dark eyes. “You say shit like that and I just...”

“What.”
“I want to kiss you, again.”

“Then do it.”

He did. He kissed him until his lips were sore and he was gasping for breath against Ryota-kun's mouth. His heart was racing when he finally pulled away. “You're just too goddamn tempting.”

“You say that like you're not.”

A warm hand trailed possessively down his side, settling on his ass and giving it a little squeeze. Harry gasped, pressing into Ryota-kun's side. “Don't you dare.”

“What?”

“Don't start shit you're not ready to finish.”

The look Ryota-kun shot him was the flattest 'flat look' he'd ever seen. He pressed his hips against Harry's side. “Does that feel in any way 'not ready' to you?”

“Shit.”

The taller boy let out a little hum. “The only question is what you're ready for.”

“Uh...I'm not sure?”

Ryota-kun squeezed his hip again, but gentler. “Let me know when you are.”

“Right. Sure,” Harry considered his flushed boyfriend. “Does this mean our room service dinner date is off?”

The other boy scoffed. “Hell no. Though I'd rather be eating you,” Harry went reeeeeeed, “I'd happily
Harry smiled up at his Ryo-kun. “That...sounds pretty fucking perfect, actually.”

The hotel room was...actually a huge, fucking mess. Ryota-kun's suitcase was laid out on the second bed, contents strewn about the surface. The bed near the door was a tangle of blankets and pillows. Harry turned to look at his boyfriend. He shrugged. “I didn't think to pick up last night.”

“Ah.”

Ryota-kun's laptop was open on the messy bed, a mass of bubbles dancing across the surface. Dark eyes followed his gaze and flushed. Harry snorted. “Cute.”

“Che.”

“I'm not making fun, I just—didn't see you as the bubble screen-saver type.”

The taller boy let out a grumpy huff, but tugged him onto the bed next to him. Harry squawked when a strong hand caught his ankle. Green peered up through lashes to meet black. “Shoes, Harii-kun.”

“Shit, sorry.”

It took a bit of squirming and wriggling and shifting to get the nest of blankets just right. Ryota-kun, leaning half against the wall, and half against the head board, tucked Harry against his chest, settling his chin on his shoulder. Harry tugged his phone out of his pocket, dropping a quick text to Minako-san.

Harry [05:56 p.m.]: Shoot was exhausting. Ryota-kun and I are grabbing room-service and going to chill for a bit.

He shivered as a warm mouth pressed a kiss against his neck. His phone pinged.
Minako-san [05:57 p.m.]: Big day tomorrow. Don't stay out too late.

Harry [05:59 p.m.]: K. Later.

Harry slipped his phone back into his pocket before turning to press a kiss to Ryota-kun's cheekbone. The other boy let out a pleased hum, turning his face to press a kiss against his lips. “Harii-kun.”

“Hmm?”

“Food?”

Harry smirked, turning in his boyfriend's hold to press another kiss to his lips. “Maybe kiss me a bit more, first.”

Ryota-kun smirked, letting out a playful growl as he swooped in and caught Harry's mouth with his.

It was well past eight by the time they thought to order food. Both their shirts had been discarded and their denims loosened sometime in the middle of it all, so Harry could already see where hickeys were blossoming across his pale skin.

There were two on his left side. The first, just under his nipple, with its brother just a few inches lower. The one nearest his nipple was going to be a bright, cherry red, he could already tell. A beautiful contrast to the silver of a nipple ring. Harry's lips twitched.

Though its brother would be a pale shadow in comparison, it would still be almost violently red against the white of his rib cage.

Tracing the curve of his hipbone were a set of three, the last of which dipped just below his pants line. They gleamed in the light, the damp impression of Ryota-kun's mouth not yet faded. Harry wanted to stroke his fingers across them, almost imagining that he could feel the ghost of his boyfriend's lips on him as he did.

The last mark was covered by his denims, and was the freshest of them all. He could almost feel his love's lips as they traced down the arch of his hipbone to where it met both thigh and groin. He could almost feel the painfully good ache as a warm mouth sucked a mark into his skin. Harry shivered.
That same mouth pressed a kiss to his neck. He closed his eyes, the movie they'd turned on sometime between the hickeys and the food showing up flickering like candlelight behind his closed lids. Teeth dragged along the curve of his chin, teasing its way back up to that little spot behind his ear that was going to be suuuuch a bright red. So very bright. He only hoped his hair would hide it from Minako-san.

“Mmm, beautiful.”

Christ, but was this boy dangerous. His body shook as thin fingers traced delicate circles over his stomach.

Ryota-kun pulled back from his neck, nudging his cheek with his nose. “You OK, Harii-kun?”

Harry hummed. “Yeah, just...feeling a little...” he shifted his hips.

His boyfriend hummed. “Let me know if you want a hand with that.”

His laugh echoed loudly in the room. “I'll let you know.”

Harry's phone buzzed in his pocket. It was Minako-san.

Minako-san [09:45 p.m.]: Early day tomorrow. You coming back soon?

He swore, slowly sitting up. He took a minute to shift Ryota-kun's laptop and their empty plates to the side before sliding off the bed. He turned, pressing a kiss to Ryota-kun's forehead.

“You going?”

“Mm. Another early day tomorrow, and I don't think we want Minako-san hunting us down right now.”
Green eyes dragged deliberately down his boyfriend's stretch of bare chest and lingered on his semi-tented denims. The other skater smirked. He dragged a pale hand down Harry's chest, brushing fingers over the marks he'd left. He shivered as those fingers dipped inside the hem of his pants. Fighting back a full-body shudder, he twitched out of the other boy's reach. "Fucking tease. I'd rather not nut in my goddamn denims right before I have to face Minako-san, thanks."

Ryota-kun snorted, pinching his side. "Fine, go."

Harry moved to step back, almost tripping as his boyfriend tugged him forward by his belt loops. "The hell—!"

"Stay with me tomorrow?"

If his brain were a laptop, the screen would be a mess of flashing blue screen and scrambled code.

404 Error: Brain Not Found.

"You—wha—huh? You want to...but..?"

Ryota considered him seriously. "I've been really into you for a while. You know that...and I don't know when I'll see you again. It's up to you, though. Sleep on it. Let me know tomorrow."

"Yeah. OK. Sure."

Harry stumbled his way to his room. He wasn't sure how he managed to word without a working brain, but he did. Minako-san somehow didn't notice that he'd been struck down with a case of the dumb, and just ushered him into the shower, then into bed.

He would have liked to say that he was mentally present for the big *Harper's Bazaar presents: Breakfast At Tiffany's* shoot. Considering he was kitted out like the leading lady herself, every inch of him tugged and adjusted and manhandled til his body language, his poses, his expressions mimicked hers, he should have been mentally present. At the very least, he should have been paying enough attention to recount the experience for those who asked.
...and there would be people asking. Minako-san. Coach and sensei. Beka. Papa. Hell, probably even Chulanont, too. God only knew how he'd even found out. Probably sensei.

Still. He couldn't really force his brain to focus. How could he focus on swanning around in heels when Ryota-kun's offer sat so heavy between them? It was way too soon, yes. They were both a bit too young, yes. Their coaches, families, friends...they would all be upset if they found out. Y E S.

But?

Harry was tempted. He'd liked Ryota-kun for a long time...since fucking JUNIORS...and he was right. Who even knew when he'd see him again. Probably not til Nationals, at the earliest. Maybe not even then, depending on how competition-ready Ryota-kun was. Still.

Was he ready for...that?

Had Ryota-kun even meant that?

It's not like there weren't other things that counted towards...towards...sex. Hands and mouths and...between the thighs. All those counted, too, so. There was no real telling what Ryota-kun was asking from him.

A very large part of him really wanted to know, even though the rest was mildly terrified to hear the answer.

“Earth to Harry!”

Harry blinked, turning toward the photographer. She gestured towards the bed behind him, where Ryota-kun was already lounging shirtless, his legs draped with a sheet. He sighed. If he was the religious sort, he'd be suspicious that someone upstairs had a horrible fucking sense of humor.

He tugged at the hem of his tightly belted robe before gingerly climbing onto the bed next to his boyfriend. He inched closer and closer til he was pressed flush to his side, his head resting against his rib cage. He held himself loose as the photographer's assistants slowly moved his arms to rest just so, tilting his head back and angling his chin just so...shifting him minutely til his pose was perfect. Green eyes met calm black, holding the stare even as he was shifted around, even as the professional man-handlers finally stepped back.
The photographer clapped, excited. “OK, so—! Last bit for today, guys. *Real* easy. Just hold those poses for a few. Feel free to talk, whatever. I want it to look natural.”

*click FLASH*

“Let's see those mouths moving, you two! *Natural!* Real easy! *Relaxed!*

Harry smiled lightly.

“Yes, THANK YOU!”

*click FLASH click FLASH click FLASH*

“You too, Ryota-kun.”

Ryota-kun stared down at Harry. “Have you thought about it?”

Harry swallowed. “Yeah, I—what exactly do you want?”

“That's a loaded question.”

*clickFLASH clickFLASH clickFLASH clickFLASH*

“Still, I'd like to know.”

“I want you on my bed. I want my face buried between your thighs. I want my tongue on you...*in* you. I want to fuck you...”

Harry choked.
“—I don't know what you just said, Ryota-kun, but keep it up!—”

“...but I only want that when you're ready. And if you're not ready for that, then I want what you are ready for.”

He let out a little breath. “OK. OK. I—I know I want to do...things...with you, but. Let me think about it some more, OK?”

Ryota-kun shot him a soft look. There was a flurry of clicks and FLASHES from the camera. “Take all the time you need.”

The rest of the shoot was silent (to the photographer's chagrin), as was the ride back to the hotel, his boyfriend happy to give him space to consider what he wanted. By the time they made it back, Harry pretty much knew what he wanted. Well, what he wanted for now, anyway. He told Ryota-kun as much. “I don't think we should...with the actual— with the you fucking me bit. Not yet. I have the Trophee coming up, and if we do that and I have to be on the ice the day after tomorrow for practice —?”

Ryota-kun let out an amused snort. “Fair enough.”

“...but.”

“But..?”

Every ounce of the blood not pooling in his dick rushed to his face. “I guess, uh...I read somewhere about how you can...between the thighs, with lube. That would be OK. Really, really OK. I mean, if you want to...you know. Between mine?.”

His boyfriend shot him a wry look. “...it was never a question of my wanting to or not.”
“OK then.” Harry smiled nervously. Coughed. Tugged at his collar. “So...uh. Where do you even get lube?”

Ryota-kun laughed.

His phone buzzed in his pocket and he picked up his pace. Fuck, but he was so late. Fuck, but Minako-san was going to fucking murder him. He pulled his buzzing phone out of his pocket. 11:15 p.m.

Fuck.

9 Missed Calls from Minako, Coach Nochillforov

4 New Voice Messages from Minako, Coach Nochillforov

FUCK.

Harry lifted hit play, lifting his mobile to his ear.

“You have FOUR new Voice Messages. To hear your messages, press the pound ke—” Harry’s pointer finger practically punched the screen.

“First new message, left 6:24 p.m.” BEEP “‘Harii, this is Minako. How’d the shoot go? You done yet?’ To repeat the message, press 1. To hear the next, press 2—”

BEEP.

“Second new message, left 7:20 p.m.” BEEP “‘Haaaarrry, Minako-san said you had your shoot for Harper's Bazaar today! Call me when you get done~!' To he—”

His finger stung he stabbed the screen so hard. BEEP.
“Third new message, left 8:45 p.m.” BEEP “Harii-kun, I know the shoot has to be done by now. Did you go out? Call me back, please, so Viktor will stop panic-texting me’ To—.”

BEEP.

“Fourth new message, left 11 p.m.” BEEP “Harry. HARRY. ARE YOU THERE. CALL ME BACK. MAKKACHIN IS WORRIED ABOUT YOU, AND I NEED TO KNOW YOU’RE OK’ End of messages. To save your messages, press—”

Harry groaned. He was dead. 100% dead. If he was lucky, death would come on swift wings. He doubted he'd be that lucky, however.

The brrrp of the keycard in the lock seemed almost obscenely loud in the hallway. The click of the latch like echoing like a death knell.

He closed the door gently behind him, but the sound of the door snapping shut was enough to send Minako-san toppling from bed. “Harii-kun? ’s that you?”

“Uh, yeah.”

His sensei's sensei crossed the room in a handful of steps, tugging him into a tight hug. “Your hair's wet! Why is your hair wet?”

“Uh, I borrowed Ryota-kun's shower...” after he made a mess of my thighs. And back. And stomach.

Thin fingers dug into his shoulders and he fought back a wince. “Do you know what time it is?!”

Harry waved his phone weakly at Minako-san. “Yeah...sorry. I lost track of time.”

“Doing what?”

He absolutely did not fidget. Minako-san was a bloodhound for bullshit. Any sort of fidgeting would have been as good as an admission of guilt. “Well, I mean...it was the last day of the shoot.”
“Yeah, and?”

“I didn't want to spend the last night hanging out in our room.”

“So you, what? Went out?”

“No. Sort of. Ryota-kun and I hung out in his room, ordered room service. I borrowed his shower.”

“So, you did just hang out, then.”

Harry shrugged sheepishly. “Yeah, I guess. I just...I'm probably not going to see him again til after the Trophee. So.”

Minako-san let out a little sigh. “Tell you what. Next time you want to hang out til after 11 p.m.? You fucking call someone. Let them know where you are. You scared the crap outta me, kid.”

His shoulders drooped, and he rubbed at his wet hair. Honestly, he felt like a bit of a dick for lying to Minako-san, and for worrying her, but it's not like he could admit what he'd been doing. “Yeah, sorry about that.”

“It's...well, it's not fine, BUT—” Harry peeked up at her through damp lashes, “we are absolutely calling it even with the whole ratting me out to Yuuri thing, unless you want me returning the favor.”

“Didn't you already? Cause the voice mails from coach kinda say that you did.”

The woman huffed. “I didn't say a goddamn thing. That was 100% Viktor being Viktor.”

Harry considered her for a long moment. “So, then...I guess we pretend tonight never happened..?”

“Sounds good to me.”
As Harry strapped himself into his window seat, tugging up the neck of his sweater, he only wished hickeys were as easy to bargain with as Minako-san.

Aaaaand, that’s it. Next bit, we will be moving into Trophee de France. At laaaaast.

(Note from future-me: Liiiiiiies)

Few Minor Notes:

Malenkiy brat: little brother

Bratishka: diminutive for brother, usually aimed towards an older brother, blood or otherwise.

The taxi fare was not random. I actually used the TaxiFare Finder Japan site for Sapporo. From my chosen starting location to the Keio Plaza Hotel, with medium traffic, 755 Yen is about what they’d pay. So. I do my research.

Less Minor Note:

So, um. In terms of the implied sex acts. I am all about consent. Enthusiastic, informed consent, at that. It is the driving force behind every sexual relationship I write. So, I wanted--first and foremost--to show Harry having that discussion. I wanted to show the process of him, a hormonal boy, deciding if the pros outweighed the cons for him.

i.e., him deciding Yes to sex in general, but No-for-now to penetrative sex, because he has to compete and would rather not explain to his skating-dads why he can’t land his jumps.

Also, in terms of showing versus telling--I don’t write graphic under 18 sex scenes. Ever. I just don’t. I will acknowledge, in text, the fact that teenagers are going to have sex, regardless of adult opinion on the matter. I will show them having discussions about consent and personal desires/boundaries. I will even have them mentally or verbally reference the fact that sex acts happened.

That said, you won’t be seeing anything graphic from me til smol and surly is AT LEAST 18 years old...probably closer to 19, depending on how things go. I just wanted to clear that up.
Chapter Ten

Chapter Summary

Poor, poor Harry.

Chapter Notes

This is the -last- of my pre-written chapters.

Don't let that scare you. This bunny is fierce and determined and stubborn, so hopefully it won't be too long til I have another one.

Still, this is BY FAR my favorite of all that I've written, so hopefully it makes up for whatever hiatus there may be between this chapter and the next.

Also: I am looking at you @Silencia20. You know why.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Dobro pozhalovat' domoy, Hala~!”

Harry gaped at his coach, stunned. “....ahhhh...s-spasibo.”

In the months since he'd first met his coach, there had been moments—countless fucking moments—when Harry would quietly admit to himself “...OK. Alright. Papa and Sirius have a point; there's no WAY anyone can be so...so...and get away with it and not be using magic as a cheat.”

Moments when the rules—not just of society, but of the universe—just...failed to apply to his coach.

Moments like The Naked Sake Incident, when his coach managed to get roaring drunk off two ochoko-worth of sake, stripped down to his skin in the middle of the restaurant, and then managed to get off scot-free, despite being quite literally naked in a goddamn restaurant.

Instead of being dragged off by the police (as is normal) and slapped with a public indecency charge (as was expected), his coach had spent the evening making friends with every goddamn server and chef in the place, flouncing around like his exposed cock wasn't giving little old ladies—and a few of the male patrons, to be honest—heart-palpitations.
OR...moments like The Kastudon Fiasco, when his coach had hurriedly shoveled five, heaping bowls of his favorite dish PLUS a plate of dango down his throat, dashed off to the rink to skate figures with Harry, and hadn't thrown up all over the motherfucking ice.

Instead of spending the evening sickness up all over his skates (as ANY OTHER NORMAL HUMAN WOULD HAVE) his coach had casually skated literal-circles around him, chiding him about over-eating before practice...HIM...as if Harry was the one who was utterly impossible.

Orrrrr, moments like...well, this one, when his coach seemed to have sprouted both a full beard and a massive chest rug in the few days Harry had been away.

OK, so.

That last one was a bit of an exaggeration.

A bit.

He had noticed his coach looking a bit...furrier...in the weeks leading up to Skate America. More scruffy in the cheeks, definitely. His chest...well. Harry made a point not to check out his coach's chest pubes, because that way lie nightmares. Still, he could assume that it had been getting...fuzzier...too, now that he'd finally given up on the whole chest waxing thing.

...god, but sometimes he wished he didn't know the things he knew.

ANYway. Aside from all...that, Harry was pretty sure his coach hadn't been that furry. Certainly not furry enough to have gone from slightly scruffy to the stereotype of the Virile Russian Man™, with his neatly trimmed blonde beard, and his forest of chest hair, within a space of a few days.

Honestly, it was impressive...and kinda bizarre.

He winced as the flailing idiot that was his coach yanked him into a tight squeeze, thanking every deity he knew that the man was wearing his jinbei shut for once, and not loose to the waist, as was usual for the unapologetic exhibitionist. Harry would rather not get rug burn on his face from his coach's newly-sprouted chest forest. That would be gross, and weird as fuck to explain. To anyone.
“I’m so glad you’re back, little Harry~! My Yuuri and Makka and I, we’ve all missed you so much~!”

Harry let out a little grunt as the obnoxiously strong Russian dork crushed him against his chest. His nose twinged as it pressed into the muscled plane of his coach's sternum.

“Did you like your hotel? My Yuuri said the Keio Plaza Hotel in Sapporo is much nicer than the one in Tokyo, but I've never been there, but the pictures make it look so pretty—”

Hands pressed lightly against his coach's stomach as he tried to free himself. It didn't work. The man was like a goddamn octopus...if octopodes had arms reinforced with goddamn titanium. Harry went limp, letting out a little whine.

“What was that—?”

His voice was muffled against his coach's cloth-covered sternum. “Yur skishin me, coosh.”

Finally...finally...the beaming blonde doofus let him go, practically skipping backwards. Harry took a deep, relieved breath, only to lose it in an oomph as Makkachin tackled him to the floor. His ass met tatami, hard. He let out a grunt, all but flopping onto his back.

This was, apparently, what his coach's demon furbaby had been waiting for, as the old poodle lunged for his face. Harry gasped, craning his head away from Makka's eager tongue. His hands braced against her furry face, trying to push her back.

No luck.

Her slobbery tongue flicked forward, faster than a striking snake, sliming him from chin to hairline. Harry let out a garbled moan of despair, swiping madly at the drool coating his nose. Uuuugh.

He gagged as the smell of dog breath invaded his nose. Harry was pretty sure this is what death and despair smelled like—old kibble, dog-ass, and his coach's sweatiest, smelliest dance belt. He tried to dodge the next swipe, turning his head just in time to miss a lick to the mouth. “Makka, nooooo. That's grosssss. Stop.”
His coach, the Living Goddamn Legend Viktor Nikiforov, a.k.a. Diktor Extravich Inalittleshitforov, just laughed at him. Like the troll he was. Harry scowled up at him, but the ass just shot him his signature wide, beaming smile.

“Ahhhh~! My Makka loves her little brother so much~!”

“...I'm not your fucking child.”

His coach gasped, faking a dramatic swoon. “Are you...are you saying you don't love your dog-sister?!!”

Harry stared, dead-eyed, up at his coach as he wrestled with the wriggling Makkachin. Jesus Fucking Christ, but Viktor Nikiforov was such a shit.

“Don't be stupid, of course I love—Makka, no—love her, just not her—I said NO—slobber, so could you getheroffmeplease?!”

Yuuri-sensei tsked, coming to the rescue like that angel he was, all-but-dragging the aging shag carpet off his sore chest. Harry winced, letting out a little wheeze as the old girl stepping on his stomach and thighs as she scampered towards her asshole human father. He rolled slowly onto his side, clutching his ribs and taking a few deep breaths, now that he could actually breath again.

He ignored the Russian troll as he crouched down next to him, poking at his forehead and pouting at him. “Haaaaaaaarry.”

Oh my god, how even was this his fucking life. Harry let out the most long-suffering sigh he could manage, slowly turning his head to stare at his coach. “Whaaaaat.”

“You never called me, and you were supposed to call me.”

“Uhhh...I was..?”
“Of course you were.”

“I'm...sorry?” Harry wasn't really sorry.

His coach tsked, but didn't actually seem bothered by the way he was chattering. “Did you have a good shoot, at least?”

“It was fi—”

“Did you get to do the handbag shoot, or just the fashion one? I told Chris you might be doing something with the new line of bags, and he just about died.”

“Yeah, I—”

The man let out a honest-to-god squeal. “—what about the makeup. Did they send you home with any, or the wipes I wanted?”

Harry slapped one of his hands over his coach's mouth, waving vaguely towards his bag with the other. “Now that I have your attention. Yes, the shoot was fine. Yes, I did a few shots for the handbag promos, but they mostly had me doing fashion stuff. No, I didn't bring home any makeup for you, but they did give me a small pack of the wipes...they're in the side pocket of my bag, before you ask. And no, the second lip balm isn't for you, it's for sensei. They know he likes it, so sent some for him, too.”

Yuuri-sensei quirked a brow at him. He held up a limp hand to interrupt. “Don't ask me how they knew, they just did.”

Harry watched as his coach scrambled over to his bag, pulling his clothes out the duffle and dropping them to the tatami in a messy pile to get at his gift. What an ass. Bright blue eyes peeked over his shoulder for a second as he continued to make a mess in the entrance hall.

“Oh—that reminds me. Minako-san said you made a friend! Did you, really? I'm so proud of you~!”

Harry frowned at him.
“You say that like I don’t have friends.”

Both his coach and his sensei stared at him a bit.

“I do have friends, you know.”

His sensei gave a slight nod, murmuring something about Beka and the Host Club seniors under his breath to his husband. Yuuri-sensei turned to flash him a slight smile. “So, you did make a fr—er, another friend, then.”

He let out an impatient huff, nodding reluctantly. His coach crossed the distance between them surprisingly quickly, petting at his hair like he was a puppy who’d done an impressive trick. Harry batted at the man’s hands. “Sort of. I—seriously, coach, stop that—didn’t make a new friend so much as—stop poking at me—run into someone I already knew from Juniors.”

Yuuri-sensei beamed at him. “That’s nice, then.”

He reached down to help Harry up, shifting his Extra husband to the side with his foot. Harry stumbled to his feet, only sighing a bit as his sensei tugged him into a brief hug. It was awkward and loose and no less sincere for being little more than him leaning into his sensei’s loose hold for the split-second it lasted.

Harry stepped out of the hold as soon as he was let loose. He was suddenly very, very aware of just how vivid the hickey behind his ear was...and how visible it would be from where his coach was sitting, if he chose that moment to look up at him. The last fucking thing he needed was for the fucking drama queen to—

He twitched as the fair-haired twit let out choked warble. “Hala, what...young man...”

Oh no.

His coach’s arms flapped dramatically in distress. “HARRY JAMES NIKIFOROV POTTER—”...wait, what?! “WHY DO YOU HAVE A HICKEY ON YOUR NECK?”
Hold that thought.

Lying his ass off to protect his boyfriend was a biiiit more urgent, at the moment.

Harry turned on his heel, taking in his coach clutching at his chest dramatically, all but swooning. His hands scrambled to pat his hair down over his neck. “It's nothing. Just a bruise.”

Yuuri-sensei shot him a flat, disbelieving look. Harry's hands flailed wildly as he tried—and failed—to lie. “It's the...from the makeup. The wipes.”

“...the makeup wipes gave you a hickey.”

“It's--! The makeup artists put a lot of foundation and shit on me, OK, and they had to scrub it off, and I bruise easy, and—”

His coach scrambled to his feet while he was mid-stream of his case of verbal diarrhea. Strong, thin hands fought with Harry's as he tried to brush the hair off his neck. A long finger poked at the spot. Harry winced.

“Haaaaaaarrry. That's a hickey,” the flailing twit turned to stare, teary-eyed at his husband.

“Yuuuuuuuri, our little boy has a HICKEY,” aaaaand, it was back to him with that teary stare. Wonderful. “WHY do you have a hickey?”

Harry could almost feel his sensei’s dark stare burning into his face. “...was it that friend of yours, Harii-kun? The one from Juniors?”

“Ryota-kun has nothing to do with this!”

Shit. Fuck. FUCK. Green eyes met sharp blue eyes. Backpedal, you ass. Backpedal NOW.
He skittered away from the grabby drama queen. “...and it's not a hickey, Jesus. So you can stop fucking pawing at me.”

Green eyes darted across the space between them. His coach had crumpled melodramatically onto the tatami, clutching Makka to his chest as he huddled at his husband's feet. He peered up at Harry suspiciously over Makka's crest of fluffy curls.

Harry tried not to snort. With Ryota-kun's life on the line, now was NOT the time to be laughing.

“...I think our son is lying to me, my Yuuri.” God, but his coach sounded like he was honestly sulking.

He let out a strangled scream. “For the last time, I'm NOT your goddamn son—”

His coach looked scandalized. “HOW could you say that to daddy?”

He gagged. “HOW do you not get how gross it is that you refer to yourself as daddy?!”

“You shouldn't be so mean to daddy...and lying is meaaaan.”

He shuddered again. “Seriously, stop. That's gross—and I'm not lying!”

Blue eyes locked onto his, and...gleamed. Harry felt his stomach drop. That was the same look he'd given him the time he'd sprung The Talk on him. He swallowed hard. He STILL couldn't look at bananas or donuts without getting mildly queasy.

For a long moment, Harry froze, like a deer about to be mowed down by an oncoming semi. Then, his knees unlocked and he booked it. Bare feet scrambled across tatami, almost bringing him down onto his ass as he scurried from the room. There was no hesitating, no looking back. He just ran.

Harry fought the urge to glance over his shoulder. He knew if he wasted even a single second, his coach would catch him, then all would be lost. For fucking ever and always, amen. R.I.P.
Biting back a curse at the soft *whump* of Makkachin's fluffy paws on tatami, and the *thud-thud-thud* as his coach hurried to catch up, he fled the onsen. He let out a little yelp as he nearly plowed into Mari-nee, not even stopping long enough to grab shoes as he darted out the front door. He barely registered Hiroko-ba-san's cry of surprise as he darted past where she was raking leaves.

“Sorry can't stop Vit'bakasgonnataktomeaboutsexagainbye!” He called out as he dashed through the front gates, headed towards the...well. Towards...somewhere.

The Ice Castle was out. If coach didn't check there first, then sensei would. Minako-san's studio was out for a similar reason.

...and on the off-chance they didn't check there first—well, second, there was a good chance Minako-san would figure out something was up, and then he'd have three adults on his ass. One of whom could actually confirm he'd been holed up with Ryota-kun...alone. In a hotel room.

So. That wasn't happening.

That pretty much left the market district as his only option.

Green eyes darted across the landscape as he dashed down the main road, weaving around the stands of the market district. He stumbled, his mind going blank as he tripped past a mostly-abandoned tourist shop he'd obviously missed the first few times he'd passed through. He blinked up at the sign.......and snorted.

The storefront was decorated in faded pinks and reds, looking every inch the tourist trap it was. The sign, a mass of tight, fat Kanji, and swooping, bubbly Hiragana and Comics Sans English, read *The Pink Plushy.* Harry just kind of stared for another moment, snorted again, then ducked inside.

The store was just as cramped and small as it looked from the outside, with walls of shelves overflowing with enormous stuffed animals—some of which were almost as big as Harry himself, if not bigger. The store's massive collection of Dakimakura, propped up in display against the far wall, practically spilled into the narrow isles.

Shoved in the furthest corner from the door were the Dakimakura for Hasetsu's “local celebrities,” or so said the tiny sign above the display.
Harry flushed, trying not to stare at the really fucking suggestive renderings of his coach, sensei, and even fucking Plisetsky. For a moment, he stared...considering them. Yeah, it would be awkward, but...it was also the least visible spot from the street.

Snorting at the ironic trash-fire that was his life, he ducked down to hide between the half-naked pillow versions of his coach and his sensei. He tried not blush as he set one of Plisetsky’s Dakimakura on the floor as a cushion, his butt settling over pillow-Plisetsky's head. What even was this.

What sort of massive asshole had he been in his past like that this sort of shit happened to him. All the fucking time. The sort of shit that had him barely escaping a sex talk, only to end up sandwiched between his half-naked sensei and equally as (half) naked husband, while sitting on Plisetsky's face.

Harry didn't know how long he sat huddled amongst dusty pillows, but his knees felt stiff. He dug in his pockets, pulling out his phone.

**Harry [05:47 p.m.]:** You couldn't guess where I am rn if you tried.

After a pause, there was the ping of a return text.

**Ryo-kun [05:49 p.m.]:** ...I’m afraid to ask.

**Harry [05:52 p.m.]:** I'm living the Dakimakura version of a skating otaku's wet dream.

**Ryo-kun [05:53 p.m.]:** ????

**Harry [05:55 p.m.]:** Not important rn. Just...if you're cornered by sensei or my coach, gtfo asap. They saw the fucking neck hickey, and are not happy.

**Ryo-kun [05:56 p.m.]:** Fuck.

**Harry [05:58 p.m.]:** And this is why you listen to your boyfriend when he says NO GDAMN VISIBLE MARKS.
Ryo-kun [06:00 p.m.]: (o;_ _)o

Ryo-kun [06:01 p.m.]: I promise to make it up to you.

Harry [06:02 p.m.]: If I don't die, I'm holding you to that.

Harry [06:03 p.m.]: (/ = 3 =)/

Ryo-kun [06:05 p.m.]: (= 3( // u // ) ❤❤❤

He grinned stupidly, clutching his phone. It pinged again, and Harry glanced down. It...wasn't a text. His heart dropped.

Oh god, please don't let it be—Fuck. He could only stare in horror as his Find My Friends app cheerfully notified him that one Katsuki Yuuri had used the app to locate him. The bit of solace he'd gained at texting with Ryota-kun was gone. All that was left was the distinct impression that he was being hunted.

Fingers fumbled as he disabled his GPS locator—too little, too late. He shoved himself back against the wall, holding his breath as two people...unmistakably sensei and coach...tripped into the store.

“He's not hereeee. Where's our son, my Yuuuuri? You said he was here!”

Harry bit back a snort. FOR FUCK’S SAKE, he was NOT their goddamn son, for the last fucking time. Sensei shushed his husband.

“It says he's here, he's probably just—” Footsteps approached the collection of Dakimakura—oh goddamn it—and Harry tried to make himself even smaller. “Harii-kun, you might as well come out.”

He didn't budge, because hell fucking no. He knew what was waiting for him. Sensei tsked, mumbling something to his husband. In the a split second before it happened, the air felt still, almost
Harry let a sound that was absolutely not a squeal as he was hauled out from his hiding space and thrown over one of his coach’s ridiculously broad shoulders. He went limp in defeat.

“Found you~!” His coach's voice went tight. “NOW. I think it's time for us to have a little talk, young man.”

Apparently, by a talk, his coach had meant *The Talk*. New and improved, version 2.0.

Harry was mortified, trying his best to squirm out from under his coach’s fat butt, where he had him pinned to the dining room floor. His back twinged, and he went limp again, flopping his face down onto the tatami.

He grunted as his coach bumped his phone against his forehead, but he refused to look. The man tsked. “How do you expect to learn anything like that, hmm~?”

“...I'm pretty sure I don't need to learn about—”

“Spit-roasting,” his coach chirped. Like an asshole.

“Yeah, *that*.”

“Nonsense~! Now, be a good boy for daddy and look at the teaching aids he found you!”

*Uuuuuugh*, but his coach was so fucking awkward and *grooooss*. Harry raised his head, shooting the man a baleful look over his shoulder. “It's a porn GIF. Porn GIFs aren't fucking teaching aids!”

The man laughed, taking the opportunity to shove the image in his face. Harry shut his eyes too late. He could still see the impression of the thin brunette being taken from either end. The image looped in his head like it had on the phone.

He let out a distressed whine. “WHY DO YOU HATE ME?!”
The man shushed him, patting him atop the head. “Don't be silly, Hala, you know I love you, that's why I'm doing this~! Sex is nothing to be ashamed of, as long as you and your partner are both of age and consenting. Now—look! Chris found an excellent GIF to demonstrate proper fisting technique.”

He squealed, clenching his eyes closed. “I HATE YOU, YOU AND YOUR FAT, SPINE-CRUSHING ASS.”

His coach tsked, and Harry could practically hear the hair toss. “Don't be ridiculous, my ass is fantastic. My Yuuri says it's my best feature.”

Harry let out a sob, dropping his head again. His feet kicked uselessly into the air. As if the angels above were finally taking pity, his coach unbalance and tipped back off his perch. He scrambled to escape, half-crawling, half-wriggling across the floor. He made it under one of the low tables just in time to miss his coach reaching for his ankle.

“Harry, wha—MAKKA?!”

He only had a second to brace himself before Makkachin's large, fluffy body was wedging itself under the table next to him. She was a bit big, so her butt stuck out from under the table. He cringed back as his coach's bony feet approached, but a loud, emphatic BOOF from Makka had his coach backing off with a betrayed whine.

He gently pat her side. Harry, trusting Makka to protect him for the moment, dug his phone out of his pocket.

Harry [08:15 p.m.]: OMFG, BEKA. HELP.

Beka [08:16 p.m.]: …Hala? Why are you ALL-CAPSing me?

Harry [08:17 p.m.]: COACH IS TRYING TO KILL ME WITH GAY PORN.

Beka [08:19 p.m.]: ...say again?
Harry [08:20 p.m.]: THIS IS NOT A DRILL. HE HAS GIFS AND IS UNAFRAID TO USE THEM. HE SAT ON ME, EVEN.

Harry [08:20 p.m.]: I BARELY ESCAPED.

Harry [08:21 p.m.]: I'M UNDER THE TABLE WITH MAKKA, ATM. WELL, MOST OF HER. HER BUTT'S TOO BIG.

Harry [08:22 p.m.]: I'M SAFE FOR NOW, BECAUSE COACH'S ASS IS TOO THICC TO FIT UNDER HERE, TOO.

Beka [08:22 p.m.]: ...uh...huh.

Harry [08:23 p.m.]: I'M SERIOUS, BEKA. THIS IS AN EMERGENCY.

Harry felt his bladder give a twinge. He blanched.

Harry [08:24 p.m.]: NEW PLAN. I NEED YOU TO FLY OUT FROM ALMATY AND DISTRACT HIM OR KILL HIM OR SOMETHING.

Harry [08:24 p.m.]: WHATEVER.

Beka [08:25 p.m.]: Wait, what? Why am I killing Viktor?

Beka [08:26 p.m.]: You're my brother, I'll do what I have to do.

Beka [08:27 p.m.]: But I kinda want to know why I'm committing murder.

Harry frowned, feeling suspiciously made fun of. His fingers flew frantically across the keys.
Harry [08:28 p.m.]: I HAD, LIKE, A LOT OF TEA ON THE FLIGHT OVER AND NEVER GOT TO USE THE LOO AND NOW I HAVE TO PEE, BUT HE'S JUST SITTING OUT THERE.

Harry [08:29 p.m.]: WAITING FOR ME TO COME OUT.

Harry [08:30 p.m.]: I CAN PROB HOLD IT TIL YOU GET HERE, BUT TRY TO HURRY.

There was a long, loooong moment with no reply before Beka finally replied.

Beka [08:32 p.m.]: BRB, dying。°́(T *)(T)°́。

Harry scowled down at his phone. Fucking traitor.

His bladder gave another, more urgent twinge. He clamped this thighs together, tightly. He stared down at his phone, frowning. He...really didn't want to do this, but he was desperate and needs must, and shit.

Harry [08:35 p.m.]: Sensei?

It took a moment, and then...

Sensei [08:37 p.m.]: Harii-kun? What's wrong???

Harry [08:38 p.m.]: I, uh, I need you to come to the dining room and seduce coach.

Sensei [08:39 p.m.]: WHAT.

Harry [08:41 p.m.]: I never thought I'd actually type that, but I'm desperate. He has me cornered and is threatening me with gay porn GIFs.
Sensei [08:41 p.m.]: ...what.

Harry [08:42 p.m.]: I'm not joking. He has gay porn GIFs and I'm trapped under a table with Makka, and I have to pee.

Harry [08:43 p.m.]: Save me, sensei.

Sensei [08:44 p.m.]: ' =__=) I'm coming, Harii-kun.

Harry heard his sensei even before he saw his bare feet tamping across the floor towards his chosen hiding spot. Makka gave a happier boof than she'd given coach—which made coach whine, again—and wriggled out to go demand love and pets from her other human father. He waited for a split-second, just to make sure his coach was really and truly distracted.

...and then, he bolted.

His feet thudded against the floor as he fled towards the bathroom, cursing his tiny bladder loudly and vehemently in his head. His face flushed as he muttered out humble apologies to the onsen's guests as he darted around them to slip into the bathroom.

Afterward, Harry considered his options. He could go back and face both his coach and sensei—who may or may not be on his side in the whole 'Give Harry Another Sex Talk' thing. OR, he could just...hide out for a while. His fingers skated down his front, hovering over the spots where he knew there were other, more vivid hickeys.

Yeah, no. He couldn't exactly hang out in the baths, but. BUT. Harry eyeballed the guest lockers. They weren't exactly roomy, but Harry was skinny enough that he could probably wedge himself in there. He took a quick glance around the locker room.

Empty.

Moving quickly, he slipped into an empty locker, pulling the door closed behind him. It wasn't pitch black, the slats in the metal doors letting in a bit of warm, yellow light. Harry breathed quietly, shifting awkwardly to pull out his phone again. He held the phone in front of his face, fiddled with
the light filters a bit, and then snapped a selfie.

His rumpled hair and scowl made him look like an unimpressed cat, whose fur was in disarray because some dumb human had pet him the wrong way. He sent it to Beka via SnapChat with the caption: “See what you've reduced me to? I hope you feel bad, jerk.”

There was no response for a moment, then his phone lit up. Someone else must have been holding Beka's phone, because the older skater was half falling-over on his couch, laughing. The only thing he had to say for himself: “Cute, Hala. You make a good Grumpy Cat.”

Harry made sure his next Snap was him looking distinctly unimpressed, his middle finger prominent in the image. He didn't caption it, because...well. It spoke for itself.

There wasn't a reply for long moment, before finally Beka sent what had to be the worst stealth-shot, ever. As if he were trying to hide the fact he was taking a picture from the subject...which was probably the case. The man in the shot was only visible from the shoulders, down. His thin hands were clutching a phone, fingers caught mid-type. Aside from the Team Russia jacket that the stranger was wearing, there was nothing to hint at who he might be.

The caption was nearly as cryptic as its image: “We're handling it,” with two thumbs up emoji at the tail end of the sentence.

He let out a little sigh. Good. He hadn't wanted to sleep in the locker, but he'd been prepared. Almost as soon as he'd received the last Snap from Beka, Yuuri had sent him a string of text promising him that there'd be no more sex talks, if he came out of hiding. Harry made sure to clarify that both he AND coach were in agreement on this point, and that any and all GIFs were to be kept out of his line of sight, before he finally...finally...re-joined his coach and sensei in the dining room.

They weren't sitting in wait for him, like he'd half-expected. Instead, his coach was frowning down at his phone, fingers flying over the keys. Sensei was staring at his husband in concern. Every few seconds, he'd glance down at whatever his husband was typing, frown a bit, and then look away. That was...concerning.

Yuuri-sensei's expression cleared as soon as he stepped fully into the room. He nudged his husband with his elbow. The man jolted, startled blue eyes darting up to lock on his green ones. Harry swallowed nervously. “Uhhh...hey?”
Sensei smiled tightly. “Hey, Harii-kun.”

Harry took in the tight, distracted expression on his coach's face, and his sensei's weak smile. His stomach dropped. “Is...is everything alright?”

Yuuri-sensei waved him off. “Everything's fine.”

He darted his eyes over to his coach pointedly. The man had the phone pressed to his ear, his expression oddly serious, and when...whoever...picked up, his Russian was too rapid-fire for Harry to follow.

Sensei's smile faltered, but only for a second. “Well, OK. Not perfectly fine, but nothing to worry about right now. Just...we'll have a few things to talk about, soon. About next season.”

His stomach swooped. “...is it me? Do you-do you not want to coach me anymore?”

The man staggered to his feet, all but tripping over himself. He was pulled into a brief, tight hold. His sensei pulled back, bracing his hands on his shoulders. He looked the most serious he'd ever seen him. “It has absolutely nothing to do with you. Not even close.”

“Then what—?”

He shook his head in frustration. “Nothing I can talk about right now. Just...we have a few things to consider, is all. Whatever is decided, you'll still be my student.”

My student. *MY*. Harry swallowed tightly, nodding. He let himself lean into his sensei's bracing hold for another moment. Yuuri-sensei's voice cut through his building panic.

“Heave you had dinner?”

He shook his head.

“OK. Well—come on. You can tell me all about the photo shoot while we make something.”
Harry smiled, happily trailing after his sensei.

He stopped...eyes narrowed on his coach's frazzled expression, the lines around his eyes looking tense. He wasn't speaking any louder, but his Russian was much more emphatic than before.

Whatever had happened, he had a feeling it had to do with Beka and his mystery guest's 'distraction.' He also had the distinct impression that the so-called distraction was going to prove to be much, much more effective than he'd anticipated.

Chapter End Notes

Furry Viktor= Thanks be to forochel and her 'i wanna feel you from the inside' which turned me on to the idea with Viktor with a full, albeit groomed, beard. This chapter would not be the same without that lovely contribution.

Pink Plushy Playground= I know, I know, I know, it sounds super suggestive, but that is the entire point. Anyone who has been to a Japan Town, or seen images of curiously-named boutiques in Japan, will hopefully appreciate my homage to the phenomena of relatively mundane shops with extraordinarily suggestive names.

The Name Thing= I headcanon that Viktor -sincerely- sees Harry as his skating son, so of COURSE he's going to throw his last name in there, when flustered and upset.

Translation Notes:

Jinbei= This is the name for what Viktor wears while at the Onsen in the anime.

Dobro pozhalovat’ domoy= Welcome home

Spasibo= Thank you

Again, I apologize for my faulty Russian. I only know a few spoken words, but not enough to spell them out. Also, if Duolingo didn’t require I download a Cyrillic keyboard, I’d just use that for cross-referencing. Alas. All that to say, feel free to correct my terrible, terrible Russian.
Chapter Eleven

Chapter Summary

Harry deals with the last minute necessary-bullshit leading up to the Trophee.

Chapter Notes

...heeeeeeey, there.

Yeah, so. I didn't abandon or forget about this. I just
a) got commissioned to write a movie
b) am planning a move, and
c) had to wrestle this chapter to get it to do the thing.

So. Like. RL shit.

Rest assured that I have this thing planned out long-term (at LEAST two more skate seasons, after this one), so will not be calling it quits anytime soon. I may, however, be delayed by paid writing shit and/or uncooperative muses. Fair warning.

On a side note: I appreciate everyone who has left me a review. Thank you so much for reading!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

In the hazy light of a winter afternoon, the rink nestled in the very heart of Ice Castle Hasetsu looked more like an ice palace from a fairy tale than a commercial skating arena.

Under the clear, sharp light of the overhead lights, the ice shone white. Neither a blinding nor a dingy white, nor was it the romantic white of fresh, powdery snow. It was just...white. Blank. Muted. Almost as if the ice were a canvas, waiting for that first transformative stroke, the sharp shhhkkkt of blades cutting into ice akin to that first coveted brushstroke, the splash of color, that would allow the canvas to become art.

However, with the over-head lights turned down low, the ice changed. It wasn't a blank canvas, waiting for transformation. The ice glowed. It had a life of its own, personality. It offered both solace and a challenge...the watery blues pulling you into its hold, while the gleam of gold sparkled like sunlight off skate blades, off gold medals.

Harry liked the rink best in its latter state. It wasn't some blank slate, some thing bereft of life. It challenged him, quietly daring him to bring it to heel. Stubborn shit that he was, he took up the challenge every time.

He fumbled with his iPod, skating gloves making his hands clumsy, and waited for it to sync up with the little bluetooth speaker perched on the low wall of the rink. His fingers drummed against his thighs. After a moment, the little light on top of the speaker went green. He grinned.
Sound filled the stadium—surprising as shit, for such a small speaker. Still, Harry wasn't fucking complaining. His skates sliced through the fresh ice...powerful, demanding. His turns were sharp, clean, but his blades left a spray of ice in his wake as he cut his way across the rink.

Slowly...slowly...the nervous energy filling him ebbed, and the sharp, clean figures softened, carrying him into lazy spirals. He didn't bother with jumps; Beka hadn't been lying when he said he'd guarantee Harry plenty of rink time for practice. And...he may be driven, but he wasn't stupid enough to risk an injury with the Trophee so goddamn close.

He drifted across the ice, happy enough to play with footwork for a bit, only really picking up speed again once Bauhaus' “She's In Parties” became Iggy Pop's “Funtime.”

His lips twitched. Harry could almost see his coach startling at the blast of sound. It was too bad the sound booth had mirrored glass; he would have liked to see that shit.

The bite of cold cut across his skin as he slid across the ice, his skates cutting dizzying patterns across the slick surface. Liquid footwork carried into dizzying upright spins, leaving him breathless with the speed of their rotations, which gentled into almost lazy laybacks, then sharply-angled candle spins.

Honestly, it was just for fun, just the dancer in him wanting to move to the music and be moved by it. Still, the part of him that was a stubborn-as-shit skater couldn't help quietly adding up the PCS points for his little bit of ice improv. He snorted to himself as he slowly glided towards the edge of the rink to grab a sip from his water bottle.

There was a clatter from within the control booth that was loud enough to be heard on the rink, and Harry tossed a look over his shoulder. He should probably check on his coach, but...well. The man was just that...a grown-ass man. If he couldn't handle himself by now, there was nothing Harry could do to help him.

His phone, tucked away in his tracksuit jacket, let out a little ping, and Harry swore.

...he should have fucking guessed.

[video.mpeg]

The music sounded muted from within the control room, but it was unmistakably Iggy Pop. His coach, Instagram-Ninja Adept that he was, had managed to keep his phone steady as he tracked Harry across the ice. Like the music, the lime green of his leg warmers was muted from behind the tinted mirrored glass. As Harry went into another upright spin, it was only the size of the print on his midriff shirt that made it visible, WORLD'S HOTTEST TRASH flashing in and out of frame with every rotation.

A muttered “Davaaaaiii~!” from his coach cut over the music with every 90º drop into a candle spin.

v-nikiforov My #skatingson is the best #skatingson #punkPRIDE @hjp-skates

190 Likes 20 comments

phichit+chu: O!!M!!F!!G!! Teensy!! <3 Σ(  kao ’ o’ ) J #punkPRIDE

otabek-altin: (=_=)b
He let out a little sigh, slumping forward over the rink wall. At least there'd been no sit-spin ass close-ups, this time. He glanced over his shoulder, toward the sound booth as his coach stepped out, mouth spread into a beaming smile. It was no less brilliant for being half-hidden by his neatly trimmed beard.

“Haaaaaaala~! When did you come up with that? Have you been holding out on your coach, hmm?”

He rolled his eyes. “Of course not, that'd be stupid.”

A pale brow quirked at him.

He tsked. “I was watching a movie and there was a bit where someone was roller skating to it, and thought I could probably do something with it on the ice, so,” he shrugged. “I did.”

The man tapped at his lips, his eyes unreadable. “Well, it's something to keep in mind for the future. Maybe an exhibition skate?”

Harry shrugged. “I guess. I mean, I was just doing it for fun...”

His coach’s cellphone ringing interrupted him. The man shot him an apologetic look, but picked up. “Hello, Mr. Potter!”

His brows shot up his forehead.

“He's on the ice at the moment, but I could have him call you back—”

His coach stiffened ever-so-slightly, the pleasant smile on face freezing a bit.

“Oh, that. Well, both my Yuuri and I will be in France for the Trophee, so let's make plans to meet for drinks and discuss it then.”

Green eyes narrowed on his coach's face. Icy blue met his stare, but gave away nothing.

“—no, everything's fine. We'll discuss it over drinks, yes~? Good! See you soon.”

His coach hung up, but Harry didn't look away. He took in every twitch, every flickering expression. Of course, his coach being as utterly fucking impossible as he was, none of these micro-expressions gave away what was going on behind his Mona Lisa smile. He let out an annoyed huff.

“I won't fucking ask, because you'll just lie to me—”

His coach frowned, “Harry, I haven't lied about any—”

He scoffed. “Yeah, well, you haven't told me the goddamn truth either.”

There was an uncomfortable pause. Harry let out an impatient little noise and carried on. “That wasn't my point.”

“What was your point, then?”

“Just—I know something's going on, and I know you can't or won't tell me right now, but...as soon as you can?” He rubbed awkwardly at his sweaty hair.

His coach's gaze went soft. He nodded. “As soon as I can, I promise.”

“OK. Cool.” He shifted awkwardly, crossing his arms across his chest. “So, uh. France.”
His coach’s head flopped to the side, curious. “What about it?”

“Have you spoken to Ohtori-san?”

“...Ohtori-san?”

“About the flight over? I gave you his number. He wanted to double-check with you before he confirmed anything with his pilot.”

The man perked up, eyes wide and blinking, and smile suspiciously mild. Harry scoffed. “...you fucking forgot again, didn’t you?”

A blank smile was his coach’s only response. He tsked, tapping out a quick text to Ohtori to apologize for his flaky coach, suggesting broadly that he be the one to reach out, lest the Legendary Trash-Disaster forget, again. Harry hovered by his coach’s side just long enough to hear him greet Ohtori, before starting up his music, again—The Go-Go’s this time, because fucking yes. He could see his coach nodding along to whatever Ohtori was saying as he pushed back on the ice, letting the bright, poppy beat of “Head Over Heels” carry him across the ice.

He couldn’t catch much over the sound of the music, but his coach nodding like a dashboard bobble doll was...well, not reassuring, but a good sign, at the very least.

He caught the tail end of a sentence as he drifted past his coach. “—have him call you back?”

Harry tsked, making grabby hands for the phone. He lifted the phone to his ear as he coasted to a stop. “Hello?”

“Potter-san. Hello.”

Harry was sure the pause was meant to be courteous, but it came off as...well, kinda...really sort of awkward-as-all-fuck.

“Oh...was there anything else you needed? Sorry—not trying to be rude. I'm literally on the ice, but don't trust the resident Space Cadet,” he shot his coach a dry look, “to remember to pass anything along before the literal last minute.”

Ohtori laughed politely. “I understand, I won't keep you long. I just wanted to confirm with you that the Hani-senpai and Mori-senpai and myself will meet you and your party at the air strip at 8 a.m. on the 18th —”

“—Just my coach and Yuuri-senpai, this time. My pa—erm, my father, mother and godfather are already in France.”

“Oh?”

Harry shrugged, catching himself mid-action, and flushed. He coughed, ignoring his coach’s fond smile.

“My godfather lives in London, and ma—ah, my mother works in Alsace. We don’t—we don’t see them much, because of work. So. I think they wanted some alone time before we all descend on Bordeaux.”

“Ah, I see. I look forward to meeting them in France, then.”

He let out a vague little hum. He swayed on his skates, the cold sinking into his bones the longer he
stood still. “Was there anything else?”

“No, no. Just make sure you call before you head out, so I know to have security to let you onto our air strip.”

“Will do. Thanks, Ohtori-san.”

The older boy let out a little hum of his own. “It really is no trouble. I look forward to seeing you in person, again.”

Harry's expression was...complicated. Not horrified...not really, but not exactly pleased, either. “Yeah. Ah, you too, Ohtori-san. Bye.”

He hung up, passing the phone back to his coach. The man's lips curled into a completely smarmy smile, and Harry flinched away from it. “Does little Hala have an ad-mir-er~?”

“Uhhh...”

“Or, maybe a crush~?”


His coach tilted his head to the side, considering him. He let out a little “Hmmm,” but didn't say anything. It was unnerving. And worrying. He fidgeted, sliding backwards away from the man and that Look.

The absolute last thing he needed was his coach bringing up the hickey (or the horrorshow that followed) in front of his mama and papa...or, worse yet, Sirius or Ohtori-san. Ugh.

It was almost dinner time by the time Harry wandered back into Yu-Topia, his coach trailing quietly behind him. His eyes glided dismissively over the over-full dining salon as he slipped past. A gentle tug on his wrist stopped him.

Harry turned, his tired eyes meeting serious blue. “You need to eat, Hala~.”

He whined a little bit under his breath. “I will.”

His coach quirked his eyebrow at him. “Will you?”

“...yes?”

The other brow joined the first. Blue eyes gleamed down at him. Unreadable. Pleasant. Daring Harry to Just Try to bullshit him.

Harry didn't exactly wilt, but...he kinda felt like he collapsed in on himself a bit at that look. His eyes slid over his coach's shoulder, staring wistfully in the general direction of the outdoor baths.

“That's what I thought.” His grip firm around Harry's wrist, his coach pulled him into the bright, noisy dining area. Tipsy, reticent regulars and cheery, overly-loud foreign guests alike were filling the cozy room, and it was almost too much for him, after hours upon hours with just the ice and his playlist for company.

He rubbed at his eyes, letting out a squawk as he was abruptly pushed onto a floor cushion, wedged between Minako-san and Yuuri-sensei.

His Sensei's eyes blinked up at him widely for a moment, before his expression tightened and he shot
his Extra-As-Fuck husband a look. “Vitya! You couldn't have let him get cleaned up first?”

Harry tried not to smirk...well, no, he didn't try. He was too tired to try, honestly. He did, however, keep the smirking to a minimum.

Minako-san peered at him out of the corner of her eye and snorted. Harry met the smirking woman's gaze. His lips twitched up into a grin. “You ruin this for me? I'll make sure Hiroko-ba-san hides your sake.”

Minako-san let out a tipsy guffaw. A whine from his coach had his gaze darting over to lock on the flailing Russian, who was draped over Sensei's shoulders like a limp shawl.

“But Yuuuuuu-chan~! Our little boy is still so smaaall—”

Harry sputtered. “Excuse you! I'm not fucking small—and I'm not your goddamn child, idiot!”

“—and he doesn't eat enough. I just want our baby to be healthy.”

Yuuri-Sensei let out a considering grunt, his warm brown eyes turning to take him in.

Shit.

Fuck.

Harry swallowed back another whine. *Fuck everything.*

His voice wobbled a bit under the combined stare of his Sensei and coach. “I...I wasn't planning on skipping, or anything. I...I just—I wanted a bath first jesus stop staring like that please.”

Sensei made a vague sound under his breath, but didn't start in on his lecture about how “Nutrition is vital for growing adolescents, and especially adolescent athletes, and...,” so he considered it a huge win.

Minako-san, the gorgeous, heroic, chronically boozy Matron of Mercy that she was, came to the rescue. “Maa, I'm sure he's not gonna starve to death in the next hour. Just put aside some Miso soup and rice for him, and there's no problem, yeah?”

Harry nodded enthusiastically, perking up at the thought of all that lovely, hot water on his stiff muscles. Sensei gave another little grunt, then waved him off. “Fine—but I expect you back in an hour and a half—no later—and I don't want to hear any complaining about eating a full dinner, after.”

This time, he was the one nodding like a ridiculous bobble head, but it was worth it. Harry stumbled to his feet, nearly tripping as he scrambled out of the room and towards the baths.

Between the days spent fucking about on the ice, and the evenings spent submerged in the bliss that were the outdoor baths, time seemed to slip away from Harry. It was less a matter of losing track of time, and more a Thing That Happened for him around competitions. Something about them just fucked with his sense of time in a way that nothing else in his life did.

The week right after Skate America and right before the Trophee, were, by far, the motherfucking worst.

For Skate America, it had been a matter of too much to do and *TOO LITTLE TIME.*

What with his worrying to the point of obsessing about being booked for the Chanel shoot, and
fretting about getting enough rink time, and despairing over his coach and his sensei detaching
their...bits...long enough to let him get a good night's sleep, he had never felt like he had time for
anything.

The lead up to the Trophee, on the other hand, was more a matter of excessive time...to obsess over
his competition, to worry about his jumps and whether the minor tweaks would be enough, to
languish in the painful boredom of 'God, can we just get ON with it already, please.'

Time hadn't stopped so much as it had slowed down to the point that the days stretched. And
stretched. And. S T R E T C H E D. To Infinity and Beyond, and shit.

That, of course, was before the sudden influx of phone calls from his excitable godfather. Everyday,
it was a jumble of “I can't wait to see you skate again, in person, last time was hilarious, do you
remember?” And, “Are you inviting anyone special along? James said you might have a boyfriend
now.”

*What even is this fresh hell,* he'd thought.

He'd been naïve, because it could and it *DID* get worse.

His mother had apparently seen fit to invite along a few of the junior partners from her Law Firm,
and had forgotten to tell him. That wouldn't have been so bad if these weren't the same Purist
assholes Harry had once heard snidely discussing the deficiencies of his mother's background, and
how she was probably at fault for breeding a “defective” child.

Harry, small and quiet and often ignored, had protested loudly, staunchly defending his mother even
as his small voice pitched and warbled in fear. “Like a proper Gryffindor,” Sirius would have said
proudly.

He had paid for his bravery.

After all, Squibs had no defense against magic, in general, let alone from a group of grown wizards,
and a Geas was *powerful* magic. Powerful magic that could cover up any manner of sins, from
indiscreet words to torture curses tossed at a five-year-old “Squib half-breed” for a lark.

So, to say that he wasn't looking forward to seeing that batch of sadistic twatstains again was a vast
understatement.

In comparison, his anxiousness about having to skate against fucking Plistesky barely registered,
save for the few nights when the thought of choking and face-planting on the ice woke him.

It was in this uber-fucked bubble of time, as his panic had peaked, as he was finally starting to
appreciate the time dragging by, that it sped up again. Suddenly, everything was a constant blur
nervous energy and last-minute preparations. His general state of
OMGWHATEVENISMYLIFERIGHTNOW wasn't helped by his coach announcing, literally the
day before they were set to leave for France, that he had changed their reservations.

Struck with the sudden desire for Makka to see France again, the infuriating drama queen that was
his coach had canceled the JSF's reservation for two suites at a decent, but not pet friendly, rink-
adjacent four star. Instead, he'd spent...Harry didn't even want to know how much, if the *Look* Sensei
gave his husband said anything...to book the penthouse suite at a pet-friendly five-star a half-mile
from the rink.

This was fine. Really, it was all fine. He wasn't even mad.
As long as Harry wasn't expected to fucking deal with the fallout from the JSF, he didn't care, but...this left him with the happy duty of stuttering his way through a frazzled, awkward conversation with Ohtori-san regarding pet accommodations on his family's very clean, very expensive jet.

Well, to be fair, he was pretty sure it was him blurtting “I hope you can stand dogs, because my coach is a fucking diva and will legit cry if you don't let him bring Makka” that made it awkward, not the fact that he had to have the conversation, in the first place.

Considering all that...the huge, steaming pile of a clusterfuck that had been the past few days...it probably wasn't that surprising that he just barely remembered to text Ohtori-san as his coach, Sensei, and Makkachin piled into the hired car after him.

Harry [06:45 a.m.]: We r finlly headed out. BTW, plz tell me u have coffee.

Harry [06:45 a.m.]: Srry bout textspeak. 2 tired 2 brain rn. {zzz}°°°( -_-)>c[_]

Harry tried to stay awake long enough for Ohtori-san to respond, but his eyes were heavy, and kept slipping closed every few seconds. His head bobbed towards his chest, startling him awake, and he nearly threw his phone at Sensei when it vibrated in his hand.

Ohtori-san [06:53 a.m.]: No worries, Potter-san. My staff will make sure you are well provided for.

He grunted, letting his hand fall into his lap. Were he more awake, he was sure such a response would have earned Ohtori a few points in his favor. As it was, he was too fucking tired to fall into his regular habit of swooning over the provider of holy nectar.

His head bobbed forward again and Makka, opportunist that she was, took a swipe at his lowered chin with a raspy tongue. Harry furrowed his brow, letting out a whine of protest, but didn't bother pushing her face away. Because too tiiiiiired.

With a wriggle of her massive, fluffy butt, Makka plopped herself into his lap, butting her head up against his chin before settling down. Harry tugged her close, burying his face in the side of her neck.

He could almost swear he heard his coach cooing about his “precious babies,” but couldn't be sure, which was probably the only thing that saved the man from a Harry's patented glare of I Am So Very Done With This Horse-Shit.

Maybe it was the low, steady hum of the car, or Sensei's soft snores, or even Makka's soft, wuffling exhales against his cheek, but Harry quickly drifted off. He didn't dream, but instead just kind of floated in a sleepy, thoughtless haze of cuddly poodle, and thin fingers stroking through his hair, and tires quietly gliding across a well-paved road.

The next thing he knew, Sensei was shaking him awake, an intensely fond smile on his face as he blinked up at him. Harry grunted, patting Makka's fluffy butt vaguely as he moved to tumble out of the car.

Harry squinted against the light, sliding off to the side with Makka as Ohtori's staff were lead around by his imperious coach, fetching bags and equipment, and taking careful note of what bags needed to be handled more gently than others. Yuuri-Sensei sidled up to his and Makka's sides, looking a bit embarrassed as his husband swanned about, obviously pleased at the opportunity to boss people around.

“He...he gets that he doesn't get to keep Ohtori-san's staff on retainer, right?”
Sensei let out a long-suffering sigh. “God, I hope so.”

He let out a little grunt. “I just hope they're delicate about it; the last fucking thing we need is coach in a sulk.”

Sensei let out a weak laugh. “I'm crossing my fingers, Harii-kun.”

As chaotic as the settling in had been—and it very much had been, when Makka bounded onto the jet, only to realize there were more people for her to smother in slobberly kisses—the flight itself wasn't terrible. Yes, coach had been sulky, but less about the whole staff thing, and more about the fact that Makka seemed to have fallen in love with Morinozuka-san.

Yes, she had liked Haninozuka-san well enough, but not as much as she liked his cousin. Luckily, Haninozuka-san didn't seem to mind that, despite his effervescent cooing and coddling and generous belly rubs, Makka seemed to have really imprinted on his cousin.

He'd smiled serenely, petting at the poodle's fluffy ears, and said “Most animals prefer Takashi.”

And that had been that.

Makka had flopped up onto Morinozuka-san's lap, sprawling out happily before quickly dropping off.

And that lead back to his coach sulking like a toddler denied his favorite toy. Harry snorted, looking away as his Sensei grabbed his husband's hand and giving it a little squeeze. Honestly, and he calls ME a child.

Somewhere between the drama of the Coach-Makka-Morinozuka-san love triangle and lunch service, Harry dropped off. His sleep wasn't particularly restful, until it suddenly was. Thin fingers brushed hair back from his forehead, a soft rumble of murmured Russian Harry couldn't quite make out, and then his seat was slowly reclining. Another soft ruffle of his bangs, and a warm coat smelling like Sensei dropped over his shoulders.

And then, he did sleep. Deeply. For a long time.

He woke slowly, blinking sluggishly as the fog of sleep left him feeling almost hung-over. Makka was sprawled across a few seats next to him, her fluffy face nestled against his stomach.

Coach and Sensei were lain out in their seats, visibly curled towards each other, even under a pile of blankets. The baby pink of coach's eye mask was just visible, peaking from behind the lumps of his covered shoulder. It was obvious he was deeply asleep, as he was snorting and snuffling like a wild boar, the sound punctuated by the unmistakable bfftttt of a muffled bed fart.

Harry snorted, watching as Sensei let out a slurred “G'd'annyou, Vit'ka” as he clumsily patted down the blankets around his neck, to trap the smell. Better you than me, Sensei.

“Finally awake?”

He flinched, twisting in his seat to lock eyes with Ohtori-san. He was curled up in his own seat across the isle from him, but didn't look like he'd been sleeping. Lap blanket aside, he had his tray table across his lap, and his laptop looked like it had been in recent use.

“Uh...yeah. How long did I—?”

Ohtori-san checked his laptop. “About 10 and three-quarters hours, I'd say.”
Harry forced his sleepy brain to focus on the math. A 22 hour flight, and he'd slept 10 3/4, so...about 11 1/4. Give or take. He let out a little moan. “And it's eight hours earlier there, god. I'm going to be a mess, not to mention Sensei.”

Ohtori-san gave a little hum. Dark eyes considered him for a long moment, before he shifted his laptop and tray table out of the way. Harry stared at him, confused, as he rose to his feet, paused, and beckoned him to follow. Careful not to wake Makka, he stumbled to his feet to follow.

“Where are we—?”

“You need to stretch your legs, and maybe get something to eat, before you sleep again.”

Harry considered this, flushing as his bladder let out a twinge. “Ahh...bathroom?”

Ohtori-san gestured elegantly towards the curtained off area just ahead of them. “You go on, I'll see about finding you something to eat.”

Bladder empty and face still damp from the splash of cold water he'd treated it to, Harry stepped out and joined Ohtori-san in the small kitchenette. The older boy was industriously setting out a tray of tea—chamomile and something floral; maybe lavender—and debating his snack pantry when Harry joined him.

“Anything appeal to you?”

He considered the pantry, stuffed to overflowing with a mix of canned delicacies and squid-flavored snack puffs, alike. He tilted his head, eyeing up the stack of instant noodles. Mostly ramen, but...his eyes lit up. “The black soba with with daikon sounds good.”

Ohtori-san gave a little nod and set to work. Harry just watched him, the way he seemed almost relaxed, his hands sure. Maybe it was exhaustion, maybe it was their relative privacy, but he seemed a lot less...high strung than he was used to seeing.

Green eyes darted up to meet intense gray. Harry gave an awkward little smile, darting his gaze away. The kitchenette seemed so very small with the way that Ohtori-san was looking at him. “So, is there anythin—”

His brain blanked out, the question on the tip of his tongue ripped from his mind as Ohtori kinda just...fell onto his mouth. That's what it felt like, anyway. Their teeth clacked, and the older boy's nose pressed into his cheek awkwardly.

Harry jerked his head back, wincing as it slammed against a cabinet behind him. Ohtori-san pulled away. Harry just sort of...stared...and tried not to panic. “Uhhh...”

Oh god. What the fuck do I do? I don't like him, but he's a sponsor, and Vit'baka will kill me if I insult a sponsor, and ohgodwhatdolndo?

Ohtori-san gave him a distant, concerned frown. His fingers brushed delicately over the back of Harry's head. “Hm. I don't feel any bleeding, but you might have a bump if you don't ice it.”

Harry just kinda...slowly backed out of the kitchenette, putting some space between them as Ohtori-san added some cloth-wrapped-ice to the tray he was putting together. His hands fidgeted, quietly cursing that he couldn't text Beka right the fuck now, because he wasn't sure he could handle this shit right now.

He didn't even really register the taste of the soba or the tea, trying to act casual despite his growing
desire to burrow in between his coach and Sensei, and just hide under the weight of their blankets and smothering affections. He waved Ohtori-san off, quickly cleaning up after himself. Another bathroom trip and a murmured, so-very-bad mumbled excuse about feeling tired later, and Harry was giving in to his urge to curl up with the two men.

“I'm cold,” he'd mumbled, ducking his head. Harry bit back a wince. Even he wasn't convinced by his lie.

Whether the two caught it or not, they didn't say anything. Instead, they blinked up at him tiredly, but happily shifted so that there was a seat between them for Harry and Makka to curl up. With Makka snuggled against his back, Sensei's shoulder to his front, and his coach's fingers petting at his hair, he'd quickly drifted off, buried under a nest of blankets.

Save for the brief shuffling when coach, or Sensei, or Makka, or he needed to use the bathroom, or grab some water, or a bit of food, the little group passed the rest of flight in their huddle of blankets and snoring and truly rancid bed-farts (“God damn it all, coach—Sensei, you can't let him keep eating that fucking cheese”).

Though it was about a quarter to midnight when they finally stumbled out of the jet, Harry felt wide awake. Sensei was all but slumped against his husband's side, looking half-dead and so very done with traveling, despite their luxurious accommodations. Harry quietly sidled up to his side, letting him lean against him as his husband darted off to help load their belongings into one of the two limos.

Makka let out a whine and flopped onto the tarmac, her head pillowed on one of his feet, as she watched her ridiculous human father flit around like a goddamn butterfly.

By the time everything had been separated out, and hotel addresses had been exchanged, and tentative plans for brunch had been made, even the ever-energetic Haninozuka-san looked exhausted. His coach, the ridiculous human, seemed to be the only one truly awake. Harry shook his head, but didn't say anything as he was quickly ushered into the limo with Sensei and a sleepy Makka.

The ride to the InterContinental Bordeaux was relatively short, and Harry dozed against the window, staring at the muted glow of the street lamps through the darkly tinted glass. He was still so tired, but he had to stay awake a little longer. Just a little. Just until...

The limo pulled to a stop in front of the palatial five star hotel, and Harry scrambled to get out. He didn't even pause to gape at the beautiful building. His eyes were fixed on the three adults waiting out front for them.

A lanky figure, half slouched, with his arms crossed over his cardigan. Glasses that were too big for his face magnified his hazel eyes. His black hair was just messy enough to look like he'd stuck his finger in a socket. Papa.

An imposing man, lanky under his loose clothes, with his shock of dark hair falling over his shoulders. Eyes that seemed to laugh at a joke he wasn't telling glowed under the street lamp—a startlingly grey to put Ohtori's to shame. Sirius.

A well-suited, generously curved woman about Sensei's height. Red hair was piled on top of her head in a loose bun. She seemed to be looking around, impatient, and pulled out a pocket watch to check the time. Mama.

Harry let out an excited squeal he'd be mortified by later, when his laughing coach pointed it out.
“MUMMA.”

His mama whipped her head in his direction, stepping out of her heeled boots, and dashed forward to meet him. Strong arms pulled him into a tight hug, hefting him up with no issue, as if he weighted as little as a feather pillow. “Bug! Oh baby, I've missed you so much.”

Harry buried his face against his mother's neck, wrapping his legs around her waist as she carried him back towards his papa and Sirius. His eyes drooped as he took in the familiar, much missed fragrance of pipe tobacco and peppermint. Before he had a chance to greet his papa or godfather, he'd drifted off against his mum's shoulder.

Chapter End Notes

A Few Quick Notes (for those who give a shit):

1. The movie Harry references: The Hunger (1983). It's the most 80s vampire movie to ever 80s, complete with David Bowie, Catherine Deneuve, Cliff de Young, and Susan Sarandon. So, like...more billowing curtains than the Total Eclipse of the Heart music video, soft lenses for days, vocal reverb, lesbian/bisexual vampires. The works.

2. Yes, that IS Viktor petting at Harry's hair in his various half-asleep moments. Viktor loves his smol skating-son so very much, and is smart enough not to try that when he's awake enough to get grumpy about it.

3. The flight from Fukuoka to Bordeaux: I looked this shit up. Depending on the flight, it takes 20-29 hours to get there, with a minimum of two stops, and a time difference of negative 8 hours (going into France). So. I had it take 22 hours with two stops for a refuel, but no delayed layovers.

4. Viktor, spoiled Skate-Daddy that he is (...don't tell Harry I called him that), booked them into the InterContinental Bordeaux. It is a pet friendly 5 Star with ridiculously lavish penthouse suites.

ANDDD, lastly.

5. In the original incarnation of this story, James was a widower. I, however, needed Lily, so I brought her back and now she calls her tiny son "Bug." I am not even sorry.
Chapter Twelve

Chapter Notes

Where, Oh Where, did the ~whimsy~ go?
Where, Oh Where, could it be~?

Seriously, though, some Super Serious Plotty Things happening, this go around. The pushy buggers just kinda...showed up, all at once, and hip-checked my whimsy and sass off the goddamn stage. So. Fair Warning.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

There was light.

Pouring in from a gap in the heavy curtains, burning its way across his skin, stabbing into his eyes through the thin skin of his eyelids.

Harry whined, the sound humiliatingly high-pitched and crackling—because fuck you, puberty—as his eyes throbbed behind his lids. *Fuck this fucking bullshit. In the ear. With a jelly dildo. And cheap lube.*

He didn't wanna get up and he'd fight anyone who tried to make him.

Grumbling under his breath, he tugged at the stiff blankets with clumsy hands, slowly pulling them up and over his head. Sleep-numb fingers pinched and tugged and dragged at the blankets, pulling them in close, til only the faintest hint of daylight could be seen through the thin weave. Wrapped securely in this cocoon of blankets, Harry let out a huff, rolling limply onto his stomach, his hair crackling with static as he wriggled across the mattress til his head was buried under a mountain of dense hotel pillows.

Mmmm. At last. Blissful dark.

He sighed, content. His breathing had just started to even out again when an unwelcome tap on the shoulder jolted him from sleep. There was a pause, as if the Rude Shoulder Tapper actually expected him to respond. Not fucking likely.

Instead of responding, he just pulled the blankets in tighter around himself. Unless someone he loved was dead or dying, he wasn't moving.

Another tap, more insistent than the first, came a moment later.

“Guh'waaaaaaaaaaaaay.” Harry's voice may have been muffled by his blanket cocoon and the mound of pillows crowning his head, but still he felt he'd made his unhappiness clear by the way he'd kicked his feet and...not-whined, but *emphatically voiced his displeasure* at the intrusion.

The was a quiet snort from the intruder, quickly masked by a polite cough.

That was...huh.

He knew plenty of people who'd be rude enough to interrupt his sleep. His papa, for one. Coach,
definitely. Sensei...well, he wasn't shy about dragging him out of bed early, but tended to be less of a troll about it then Coach.

The whole “cough to hide the fact we're making fun of him” thing, though. Not even Sensei bothered with that, and he was literally the most polite person Harry knew.

Soooo...who, then.

Curiosity finally winning out over his jet-lag, Harry slowly wriggled himself loose from pillow mountain. With a grunt of effort, he flopped onto his back, only realizing his mistake too late. Well. Shit.

Arms pinned to his sides by the tangle of blankets, Harry let out a little huff, pouting up at the layers of sheets and duvets. So. This was it, was it? How he bit it? Suffocating in a blanket burrito gone horribly fucking wrong? How...embarrassing.

Another politely masked laugh from...whoever the fuck...jolted him out of his pity party. No. No. Fuck this. He wasn't going out this way. To hell with that.

Harry put every ounce of sleepy strength into wriggling his shoulders and kicking his feet, fighting for life and pride and all that honorable bullshit. The intruder—whoever they were—seemed to finally pull their head out of their ass in time to help free him from a humiliating death, and with a harsh tug of the blankets, freed Harry's arms enough that he could push the rest of the blankets away from his face.

He squinted against the sudden light, letting out a warbled moan of pain. It took a moment, but his eyes finally adjusted, and Percy Weasley's politely smiling face swam into focus.

He blinked up at him, surprised. That...well, he didn't know who he'd expected his savior to be, but not Percy. Although...on second thought...maybe he should have?

After all, where his mumma went, Percy was sure to follow. She said fetch, he fetched. She said jump, he politely asked her how high she'd prefer. Harry wasn't even being mean; with his mumma being as busy as she was, dogs-body was pretty much at the top of the list of requirements for those aspiring towards the lofty position of Head Secretary.

Though, yeah, the blood purity issue had played a part in some of the bullshit she'd dealt with, it wasn't the main problem his mumma had had with her past Head Secretaries. No, it was the fact that they were expected to pull their own goddamn weight that had put most people off.

With a title like Head Secretary, there had been an expectation of position within the firm, of power, of a small army of underlings to whom they could delegate, and on whom they could blame their failings (while simultaneously claiming their victories as their own). Goddamn dickstains, every last one of them. And every last one of said dickstains had left, egos flayed and served up on a platter, a la flambe, within three days.

So, it said a goddamn mouthful about Percy Weasley that he'd not only lasted as long as he had, but had also flourished. Like a missing puzzle piece finally slotting into place, Weasley had slipped into his mother's sphere and made himself at home. If she had a meeting, he was the one who scheduled it. If there were payments due from clients, he was the one who wrote up the invoices and made sure they mailed out on time. If she decided, on a whim, to see her only child compete in an International Muggle-Sports Competition, he was the one who politely told anyone who had something to say about it to kindly go fuck themselves.
He was ridiculously fucking competent, was Harry's point.

Swiping at his crusty eyes, Harry peered up at Percy. “Uh—hey.”

The polite smile flickered, as if the older boy was struggling to stay professional after the whole...thing...with the blankets. “Good Morning, Mr. Potter. Madame sent me to wake you for brunch.”

Green eyes blinked, and he craned his head to search for a clock. “Whu—what time is it?”

The tall redhead pulled a shiny pocket watch out of his waistcoat, checking it with a deft flick of the lid, before snapping it shut and sliding back into its pocket.

“Half-eleven. The Mssrs. Nikiforov and your parents should be wrapping up their meeting shortly —” Harry twitched, his eyes zeroing in on Percy's face. “—and I expect they'll be done, by the time you're ready to meet with them.”

He let out a little hum, trying not to glare at the wall. Of course they'd let his parents in on the secret first. It's not like it involved him, or anything.

Percy's smile looked a tad more lively, either ignoring or oblivious to Harry's souring mood. “Honestly, it's all very exciting, isn't it.”

Harry shot the older boy a tight smile. “Yeah. Exciting.”

The redhead beamed before straightening back into his professional, detached stance. “Now! If you'd like to get dressed, I do believe your guests will be joining us for brunch.”

He slipped out of bed, freezing as he remembered who else may be here. Travers. Greengrass. If he was really, really unlucky, Smythwyke. ‘And—and will my mother's, er, guests be joining us?’

Percy's polite smile soured. A muscle in his jaw twitched, like he was trying very, very hard to keep shit professional and not just...go the fuck off. Not that Harry would blame him for it. “Ah...unfortunately, Mssrs. Travers and Greengrass were delayed arriving til this evening, but I do believe they plan to join our party for dinner.”

“A-and Mr. Smythwyke?” It took every ounce of Harry's remaining chill not to let his voice crack and quiver as he said That Man's name.

“He arrived this morning—” Harry felt his stomach drop, “—but he's declined to join us for brunch. I do believe he'll be joining us for dinner, however.”

Funny that, I suddenly don't feel like eating dinner. Ever again.

Harry's hands clenched around the night shirt, his fingers twitching as he fought the urge to panic-text Beka. If he texted Beka, then Beka would text Sensei, and Sensei might confront him in front of his papa and mumma. With literally no way to explain himself, he'd end up looking like an irrational goddamn child.

Though he wouldn't mind his papa or Sirius thinking he was acting like some dumb kid, he would mind his mumma, or Sensei, or coach, or Beka thinking the same thing.

With plans made to meet Percy in the Lobby in exactly twenty minutes, Harry rushed to get ready. A lukewarm shower was just enough to wake him up, and his scramble to find some goddamn clean clothes finished the job. He rubbed at his face, his brain all but begging for coffee as he swiped the
key card off his side table, pocketed it and his phone, and headed out the door.

Percy was, in fact, waiting in the Lobby for him, pocket watch in hand, staring at it with the beginnings of a frown. He was the only one who looked up as the elevator doors slid open with a cheery *ding*, and he gave Harry a quick nod before tucking the watch away. A bit further away, deep in conversation with his mumma and papa, was his Yuuri-Sensei and Coach Viktor. Sirius was standing conspicuously apart from the small huddle, keeping Ohtori-san and the Ouran seniors company.

*Well that's...not obvious at all.*

Harry swallowed hard, shooting Percy a tight smile of his own as the older boy patted him on the shoulder and beamed.

*OK. So, it can't be fuck-awful if he's smiling, right.*

*...Right?*

Papa stepped forward, all but beaming at him, and pulled him into a hug. Harry let a little wheeze—and it was a wheeze, not a squeak, goddamnit. “P-P'pa! Can' breev.”

His papa didn't let him go, but he loosened his grip, and Harry took in a pointed, dramatic gasp of air. Green eyes darted up to meet hazel, and the man smiled, dropping a kiss on his forehead. Harry blinked, letting his papa hold him close as he lead him towards a quiet little circle of armchairs and a low table, already laid out with coffee and an overflowing plate of almond croissants.

*...the fuck?*

He watched quietly, an eyebrow sloooowly inching its way up his forehead, as his papa nervously pushed two croissants and a decadent cafe au lait into his hands.

“So. Bambi. We have something to talk to you about.”

His eyes darted down towards his breakfast—i.e., a smorgasbord of things he wouldn't dare touch during competition—and back up to his fidgeting papa. “Yeah, *I figured*.”

Harry stared down at the croissants, sighed the sigh of one hard-done-by by fate, and set them to the side. His coach shot him a wry look, half-amused, half-apologetic. Harry shrugged, quietly waving off the apology. It wasn't like they weren't going to brunch, anyway. He'd live.

Sensei cleared this throat, surprising Harry as he shot his papa a sharp *Look*. “Though I would have preferred we hold off til *after* you competed,” his papa wilted a bit, “I also understand that it would have been unkind to surprise you with the news. Aside from that, there are decisions to be made about the future that should be made before the exhibition, so here we are.”

Harry blinked slowly. “You've...already lost me. What news...?”

Coach cleared his throat. He looked oddly nervous, rubbing at the back of his neck, scratching at his beard. “Understand that nothing official has been announced—and it won't be, not til the end of the competition, so please exercise discretion—but...Yakov's retiring.”

He swallowed his sip of coffee carefully. “Uh—Oh. OK.”

The flighty Russian looked anything but flighty as he rubbed slowly at his knees. “You probably know that Yakov coached me.”
Harry...really didn't think he needed to respond to that; even those only peripherally aware of who Viktor Nikiforov WAS knew that Yakov Feltzman had been his long-suffering coach.

Blue eyes locked with his for a long moment. “Technically, we shouldn't even be telling you this, not without consulting with the RSF, but...you're my student, so.”

His coach took a deep breath. Let it out in a gust. “Yakov's asked me to take over his coaching contract, and the RSF has agreed. The law team is working on it as we speak.”

Harry leaned back in his seat, staring at his coach. If his eyes were swimming with the beginnings of tears, he ignored the fact. “So, what. You're—dropping me? Just like that?!”

His coach fumbled with his coffee, barely saving himself and Sensei from a crotch-full of hot coffee. “No! Nonono. Unless—unless you decide you don't want to be coached by me anymore, nothing's going to change.”

“Then, what—?”

Sensei leaned forward in his seat, grasping his husband's shaking hands in his. “This is what we wanted to discuss. Viktor is going to have to move back to Russia...before Europeans, ideally.”

“Fuck, that's...that's soon.”

Coach nodded. “Ideally, I'll be in place as coach by Worlds.”

“So...so, would we have to move? That's—I don't know if I can...not right now.”

Sensei shook his head. “And you wouldn't have to, Harii-kun. I already planned on staying in Japan with you til the end of the Gran Prix series.”

Harry felt the creeping sense of panic wane before it could do much more than make his palms a bit sweaty.

Yuuri-Sensei sighed, pushing his hair back off his forehead. “However, we'd still need to make a decision. Madame Lilia is getting...older...and will need someone able to assist her with choreography and dance instruction; I'd like to be able to give her an answer before Nationals, if possible. Either way, I'd be joining Vitya in Russia by Worlds.”

“Speaking of...what about Nationals? 4C??”

“That depends on what you want to do. If you decide you want to follow us to Russia, you'd be welcome to use Vitya's old home rink.”

Harry frowned. “But—I skate for Japan. It's not the same as it was for you, with him coaching you and also skating for Russia. That was whatever—his failures or successes were on him, and how he budgeted his time between coaching and skating. This...this could be a big deal conflict of interest, him coaching a JSF skater AND the majority of Russia's olympic medalists.”

Coach shot a besotted smile at his husband—which...OK???—before turning back to him. “There are ways around that. In fact, it was my Yuuri who came up with a solution.”

He pushed the hair off his forehead, feeling exhausted by this entire conversation. “OK, shoot.”

“My Yuuri, as long as he doesn't sign on with the RSF in any official capacity, could technically take over as your coach and still help my students with choreography. There's no rule that says competing
skaters can't share a dance instructor. So, yes, you'd be sharing a rink and a ballet studio with RSF skaters, but you'd still be under the JSF's purview.”

“Sounds tricky, but OK.”

Sensei bobbed his head. “It would be, and we'd both have to be careful not to step on either the JSF or the RSF's toes, but it's doable.”

His coach perked up, beaming at him. “There IS another option, too~!”

Harry braced himself. “...and what's that?”

“Skating for Russia~! Yakov has offered to speak with the JSF, RSF and ISU on our behalf, if you think you might want to switch over. It's part of why we're bringing it up now—if you decide that's what you want, Yakov has agreed to bring it to the table during the contract negotiations. A sort of 'all or none' deal.”

Harry knocked back the rest of his coffee, slumping into his seat. He stared up at the ceiling for a long moment, gathering his thoughts. He took a deep, slow breath and let it out.

His tongue darted out to wet his very dry lips.

After another deep breath, he opened his mouth and...let loose.

“But, like, have you thought about wHAT THIS EVEN MEANS, THOUGH? I'd be fucking bailing on the JSF before the end of the season—I'd HAVE to, right, to be able to take part in Russian Nationals. So, like...COULD THE CONTRACTS EVEN BE READY ON TIME? And, like, WHAT IF THEY AREEEN'T READY ON TIME? Could I even skate for Europeans, without the paperwork saying I skate for Russia, or would I have to default to skating the 4C, because I'm still technically with Japan? OR, would they not let me skate EITHER, because I was in, like, FUCKING SKATE LIMBO?! AND IF I COULDN'T SKATE FOR EITHER AND MISSED OUT ON RUSSIAN NATIONALS, WOULDN'T THAT MEAN I COULDN'T QUALIFY FOR THE NEXT GRAND PRIX? Or, like, would it be like if I just BOMBED Nationals, and had to start from the ground up in Regional competitions?”

Question after question spilled out, an endless torrent of confusion and arm flailing and verbal diarrhea. His mumma and papa looked at him, a bit wide-eyed, not at all prepared for his complete loss of all Chill. His coach and Sensei, however, looked completely unphased by his flailing.

The shit you grow used to, and all that.

Viktor pulled his hands from his husband's grip, reaching forward to grasp his smaller hands in his. Harry, wild-eyed and panting, darted glassy green up to lock with his Coach's blue.

The man was smirking, but not like he was making fun of Harry. This smirk was slow, confident. It was the smirk of a man who was used to getting what he wanted, when he wanted, and in exactly the manner in which demanded he get it. It was the smirk of a man with an ace up his sleeve, an ace that would guarantee that when he said jump, people would all but do back-flips off a goddamn cliff to make sure he got what he wanted. Harry found it ridiculously reassuring.

“Hala. The thing you have to understand about Yakov is that he has a reputation.”

“I've heard. Didn't the reporter he ball-checked for grabbing at Plisetsky have to have his testicles re-descended?”
Sensei politely tried to hide his snort of laughter behind his hand. Coach laughed outright, his lips pulling up into a wide grin. “I wasn’t talking about that reputation, though a little fear can go a long way towards getting what you want.”

Harry snorted, his coach smiled guilelessly. “I was talking about his reputation amongst the higher-ups at the ISU—he’s known, first and foremost, for cultivating talented skaters and turning them into internationally celebrated gold medalists. If he speaks on your behalf? As my student? You shouldn’t have any problems getting the paperwork pushed through—you’ll have to decide quickly, though. Even if you don’t decide in time to bring it to the table for my contract negotiation, both Japanese and Russian Nationals are in a little more than a month from now.”

Harry hummed, pulling away to slump back against his seat again. He stared blankly up at the ceiling, counting the tiles, quietly leaning into his mumma’s side as she tugged him close. She didn’t say anything, didn’t try to convince him either way, but her presence was a comfort, all the same. If anything, her silence spoke of her deep, sincere trust in his ability to choose for himself what was best for him and his career, with the knowledge that she’d support him, regardless.

His papa smiled serenely, petting his hair off his forehead.

“Bambi?”

Slowly, he let his head loll to the side so he could meet his papa’s eyes. “Hmm?”

“It’s your decision, but—don’t discount the idea, yeah? The lease on the Tokyo apartment will be up for renegotiation soon, so I could just...let it expire, and move back in with your mum for the rest of the season. That way, your mum could help me find us a place in St. Petersburg.”

Harry nodded tightly, swallowing around the lump in his throat. He ignored the glassiness of his eyes as he made eye contact with Yuuri-Sensei and Coach, one after the other. “I don’t...I don't really do the whole...emotive thing...very well, but...you two are the best coaches I’ve had. Like, ever. All those other bastards? They fucking treated me like some dumb kid, like I didn't know shit about shit, or like I needed to be some warm-and-fuzzy house cat all the goddamn time to be any good on the ice.”

His coach’s smile wobbled, like he was holding back some snotty, emotional garbage-fire. Sensei’s gaze was steady, encouraging. Harry took a deep breath and pushed on. “You..? You get me, you get how to push me and make me better, and don’t treat me like I’m stupid, and—I know it’s fucking ungrateful, that the JSF took a big risk letting some...skinny little gaijin...skate for them, but—”

Harry let out a huff, his meaning getting lost in his flailing. “Point is: you two don’t suck as coaches, and aren't too horrible to live with, so. If...if sticking with you means uprooting my life again to go live in Russia, then so fucking be it.”

Harry let out a wheeze, feeling drained. He barely had time to hastily set his coffee cup on the table before his cry-baby coach was launching himself across the tea table to tackle-hug him. He let out a little oomph as the man collided with him, a mess of clinging limbs, wet cheeks and snot-streaked beard whiskers. Harry wasn’t even mad, though. I mean, yeah, it was awkward as fuck and kinda slimy, but he’d put up with it.

...for a moment, anyway.

When the moment had passed and he’d detached himself from his clinging coach, Harry had done his best to pull his shit together before joining his parents, Sensei and Coach, where they were drifting towards the anxious Sirius and politely curious Ouran contingent.
Turns out, their discussion hadn't been as discreet as they'd wanted it to be. Nobody was saying anything, but it was obvious by the side-eyes from Sirius, as well as Ohtori-san, Haninozuka-san, and Morinozuka-san, that, on a scale from 1 to Viktor fucking Nochillforov, their little tete-a-tete had ranked as a Chris Giacometti on the subtlety scale. Speaking of which...

His coach looked up from his phone, his signature heart-shaped smile aimed in his direction. He braced himself. “I just told Chris the news—he wants to join us for brunch~!”

Harry gave the man a flat stare, pointedly looking around at their table, already laid out with food. His stomach gave an angry growl. “As long as he doesn't expect us to wait.”

His coach waved him off, beaming as his fingers flew across the keys. He gave a sigh. He took a sip from his beautifully prepared cappuccino, eyeing the stack of lightly-buttered rye toast with something close to longing. He paused, foamed milk clinging to his lip; he licked it away absently. “But—I thought you say we were supposed to keep shit discreet. How is telling someone like Chris discreet?”

The man let out a happy laugh, waving away his concern. “Chris is fine. He can keep a secret. It's his boyfriend that's the gossip.”

Somehow, Harry found that...extremely hard to believe, but...fuck it. If Chris blabbed, then Harry would be all too happy to direct a fuming Yakov to his twitterpated coach. The same for any irate ISU, or JSF, or RSF representatives. It would serve the man right, for being so careless with The Big Secret™ after making Harry wait for weeks—months—before even admitting there even was a secret. He let out a little happy hum, setting his cup on its saucer. He stared into the frothy, caffeinated depths, eyes distant.

“Harii-kun?”

Green darted up to meet the brandy-colored eyes of his Sensei. Every inch of the man radiated compassionate concern, and Harry maybe sorta went squidgy inside. “Yeah?”

“Are you OK? I mean...I know we put you on the spot, but...if you don't want to move—we could work something else out, you wouldn't have to worry about us leaving you behind without a coach.”

Harry held up a hand. “Sensei, no. I'm fine. I want...I want to stay with you guys, I'm just...adjusting...to the idea that I'm gonna have rink mates, again. I haven't had rink mates since I first started Juniors.”

“Well, as long as you're sure—”

“No, really. It's cool. I'm fine—I want this, OK.”

The man nodded, patting his hand lightly, then turned back to focus on his own breakfast. It hadn't escaped Harry that this whole thing meant that, come Nationals, Harry'd be sharing a team, of sorts, with the likes of Babicheva, and Popovich, and fucking Plisetsky, but...fine. Whatever. He could put up with being the baby amongst the group of Senior skaters, no big deal, if that meant he still got to have both his coach and Sensei by his side.

Harry cried out, small hands clasped to his stinging lip. His fingers shook as they prodded his sore lip gently. It was beginning to swell, and there was a bit of blood where the Stinging Hex had split the skin.
He gave a little hiccoped sob, tears dripping down his cheeks.

“Careful, idiot!”

Travers sniffed, turning to look at the cold-eyed Smythwyke. “What, suddenly feeling sorry for the little half-breed?”

The man glared. He looked...offended. “Of course not, but the Geas is only useful if you don't leave marks.”

Harry’s stomach heaved, again, his back bowing painfully as he hunched over the toilet. He clutched at the cold porcelain, leaning his forehead against the rim as bile and drool just...dripped from his mouth.

Oh god. Ohgod.

He thought he would be OK, that he could fucking do this—show up to dinner and face down those...people—like they hadn't left him a terrified wreck as a child.

Like he hadn't had night terrors and wet the bed for months afterwards.

Like the mere fucking thought of facing them wasn't enough to make him violently ill.

Harry grimaced, spitting into the toilet one final time before flushing. He groaned.

Well. It's not like he hadn't been looking for an excuse to back out of dinner. His phone gave a happy little chime. And another one. Harry whined, loud and pitiful, flopping down onto the tile.

His phone was so far away. It almost made him wish he had a bit of magic, if only so he didn't have to move to get it.

Another chime, and he pushed himself up. Wincing and whining, Harry wriggled his way across the cold tile, over the threshold into the room, scooting across the carpet on his knees. Energy all but sapped, he flopped forward against the edge of the mattress, his cheeks squishing out over the lip of the bed.

Mumma [04:00 p.m.]: I hope you're getting ready, love.

Mumma [04:00 p.m.]: Travers set the reservation for 5:30, and it's a bit of a drive, I'm afraid.

Mumma [04:01 p.m.]: I'm sending up Percival in 20 minutes to fetch you.

He groaned. His hands still shaking, he angled the camera at his pale, sweaty face and snapped a picture. Normally, he'd never let such a fuckawful selfie see the light of day, but...desperate fucking times, and all that shit.

Harry [04:02 p.m.]: I don't think brunch agreed with me, mumma.

Harry [04:02 p.m.]: [image.jpg]

Almost as soon as he hit send, his phone nearly vibrated out of his hand with message after message from his worried mumma.

Mumma [04:02 p.m.]: Oh, baby, what happened.
Mumma [04:03 p.m.]: Did you get sick?

Mumma [04:03 p.m.]: I'm away from the hotel, at the moment, but I'm sending Percy to you, now.

Mumma [04:04 p.m.]: I'll have him order you some soup from room service and get you settled.

Mumma [04:04 p.m.]: I still need to have my meeting with the Junior Partners, but we can reschedule the dinner for tomorrow.

Harry felt his stomach lurch.

Harry [04:05 p.m.]: No, mumma, you don't have to send Percy. I can order out for soup. And I have practice tomorrow. So. Just enjoy dinner. Don't worry about it.

Mumma [04:05 p.m.]: Are you sure, sweetheart?

Harry [04:06 p.m.]: Yes, mumma.

Mumma [04:06 p.m.]: As long as you're sure. I'll stop by after to check on you, later. Try and get some sleep, alright?

Harry [04:07 p.m.]: Alright, mumma. Love you.

He swiped the tears from the corner of his eyes, sniffling wetly. He let the phone slip from his fingers, his forehead flopping forward against the bed. His stomach, which had still been clenching and spasming, finally seemed to settle a bit. He twitched as his phone buzzed again. Slowly, he lifted his head to squint at his phone.

Oh. Beka.

Beka [04:15 p.m.]: Hey. You get to France OK?

Harry stared at his phone for a long second, feeling both numb and dumb. It took his sluggish brain a minute to wade through the clusterfuck of the last few days—hell, weeks.

The mad-dash of having to make last minute travel arrangements thanks to his Extra-As-Fuck Coach being so goddamn co-dependent on his (admittedly adorable) poodle.

That Plane Kiss, which he was still determined to pretend didn't happen, because he had no goddamn TIME to think about how he was going to handle that garbagefire.

His Sensei and Coach finally coming clean...and, well, there was SO MUCH to unpack in that whole scenario, on it's own, god.

And, then, just this morning...That Fucking Brunch (OMG).

So, he thought he could be forgiven for just dropping Beka a quick “Yes,” and call it good. But...but...he didn't want to lie to him, and with so much going on? A simple “Yes” would definitely be leaning towards a lie-by-omission.

At the very least, he could clarify some shit for himself. Like, whether or not he'd known about the Russia Thing and had neglected to tell him. Harry didn't want to assume he'd been keeping secrets, but if he'd been keeping secrets, he was gonna fucking kill him.

N.D.A.s were one thing—and one of the main reasons he didn't blame his Coach or Sensei for
keeping quiet—but he doubted anyone would have thought to make Beka sign one. So, if he’d known and still let them spring that on him?

**Harry [04:18 p.m.]:** So. Too much shit to sum up in text. Will catch u up in Skype later.

**Harry [04:18 p.m.]:** More importantly: did u know about this shit with Coach and Yakov???

There was a pause before Beka responded.

**Beka [04:19 p.m.]:** I expect a full update on this...'other shit,' Hala.

**Beka [04:20 p.m.]:** ...you mean the coaching thing? No. I just found out.

**Beka [04:20 p.m.]:** Yura texted me about it. 5 minutes ago.

Harry frowned.

**Harry [04:20 p.m.]:** Then...what the hell. The timing, Beka.

**Beka [04:21 p.m.]:** Yeah. I know.

**Beka [04:21 p.m.]:** The day, when u asked for a distraction, I was w/ Yura.

**Beka [04:21 p.m.]:** He took my phone and left to make a call. When he came back, he said he’d handled it. And Yura is Yura, so I didn't ask questions.

Harry's fingers flew over the keys, even as his phone vibrated again.

**Beka [04:22 p.m.]:** Are u going to do it?

**Harry [04:22 p.m.]:** Fucking Plisetsky, lmao.

**Harry [04:23 p.m.]:** Yeah. My papa is already talking to Coach about finding us a place near the rink.

**Beka [04:23 p.m.]: ^_^ b

**Beka [04:23 p.m.]:** So. The other shit you mentioned..?

Harry choked on a laugh. Oh god.

**Harry [04:24 p.m.]:** OMGLMAO. Skype me. Will fill u in.

He didn't even try to hold back his laugh as Beka's face swam into view. Oh god. He wasn't prepared. He didn't even know.

“Why are you laughing, what happened.”

“Well, what do you want to hear about first? Me getting force-kissed by my fan-slash-sponsor, or Chris making friends with a bookish, sexually repressed legal secretary?”

If Harry took a page from fucking Chulanont's book and screencapped Beka's expression as he told him the story of the unlikely friendship between Christophe “What Is Subtlety” Giacometti and Percival “I Daydream About Spreadsheets” Weasley, then...well. Nobody could fucking blame him. No.body.
Some Notes:

Percy: I wasn't canon Percy's biggest fan--let's face it, you guys, he was a tool that turned into a massive twat--but I wanted to see if I could maybe shift his shitty narrative into something more fun, more approachable, by adding the indomitable Lily Potter into the equation.

Mssrs. Travers, Greengrass, and Smythwyke: These three (well, two--I couldn't actually find, in canon, a Smythwyke) are of no direct relation to the Travers or Greengrasses from canon. At best, they are second or third cousins. I did this for a very, very simple reason: to avoid the deep dive into the backlog of obscure canon, in which I'd have to read conflicting think pieces and supposed "verified notes" that clarified whether or not they were bigots or Death Eaters. So. Yes, they are bigoted fuckwits, but discreet bigoted fuckwits, and also not Death Eaters, which is why Lily didn't say "Fuck you, NO" about making them Junior Partners. After all, canonically, Lily doesn't give a fuck about House when it comes to who she makes friends with, so I assumed that extended to the people with whom she worked.

Lily not Somehow Knowing Shit Happened: This...has been the topic of a few private and some public questions/comments. Why hasn't she done something about what they did? How does she not know? The answer is simple...she's not perfect. As amazing and competent as Lily is, she is also human. She isn't an omniscient, omnipotent being. Her Junior Partners are not the canon version of Slytherin--sly and cunning, only in name. They are the real deal. They are Those People who keep their prejudices and bigotry behind closed doors, and find ways to silence those who'd expose them for the monsters they really are. So. Yes, it is tragic what happened to Harry. Yes, it is going to keep coming up. No, I cannot guarantee anything will come of it, because you have to know a Geas exists to find a way to get rid of it.

Harry's Stress Ramble: I've done this, many a time, and let me tell you...the only thing that can cut one off is running out of air. So, sorry for the text block, but I wanted to keep his ramble in one, overwhelming mass of losing his shit.

Harry going squidgy over Yuuri: Totes not a crush, so lemme stop the questions here. He just...really loves his skating dad, OK.

N.D.A.: Non-Disclosure Agreement. Most people may have heard of these, but most might not know just how big of a deal they are. There usually are BIG DEAL CONSEQUENCES for breaking one, to the point you are encouraged to make shit up to cover up any inconsistencies that would potentially falsify the official narrative. In terms of entertainment, that would be like saying "So and so quit a while back, and stole x-thing when they left" instead of saying "the show hired paid extras and bought props to make shit look more lively." So, yes. Harry isn't going to fuss, now that he knows contracts are involved, because he is probably aware how big of a deal these N.D.A.s
are.
Chapter Thirteen

Chapter Summary

Everything Happens In France.

(subtitle: The Trophee Eric Bompard is a Shit-Show)

Chapter Notes

So, a few chapters ago, one of my readers mentioned in one of their reviews that they'd had to skip a bit due to personal triggers, and I felt horrible that I'd forgot to add an Implied/Referenced Child Abuse tag to my story, so it's there now.

On that note, this is a very, very long chapter (28 pages versus my normal 15ish) that gets very, very heavy in some places. It also might be Triggering, so please...read with caution, and take care of yourself.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Harry squealed, twisting away as he tried to escape the omnipotent stink wafting from under the blankets, but it did fuck-all to help. It was in his nose, now, like his Coach had taken a red-hot branding iron made of butt funk and shoved it up his nostrils. Harry gagged, flapping his hand frantically in front of his face, as the sticky-sour scent of hot, sweaty feet joined the party.

Good Lord.

He glared as his Coach let out a huff, still asleep, and flopped onto his stomach, the blankets billowing around him. Harry held his breath, because—well. He wasn't stupid. And he didn't want to fucking die, thanks. He was still young and had plenty to live for. A high, whining fart blasted from his Coach like an air raid siren, and he...uh...he kinda lost it. Just a bit.

To be fair, he was tired and still kinda queasy, but—yeah. His arms and legs flailing like a toddler having a tantrum, his voice pitchy and crackling, Harry let him have it.

"FOR FUCK'S SAKE—THIS SHIT NEEDS TO STOP. AS IF YOUR STANK-ASS FEET WEREN'T BAD ENOUGH, YOUR ASS-BLASTING IS GONNA GODDAMN KILL US ALL. LIKE, WHAT ABOUT LACTOSE INTOLERANCE ARE YOU NOT GETTING?!—GOD."

He cut off with another gag, slapping a hand over his nose. “Jesusfuck, it smells like a fucking sewage pipe exploded.”

The blonde man let out a dopey little giggle, but—astonishingly—didn't wake. Luckily for him—before Harry could convince himself that homicide was a perfectly valid solution to the problem of his Coach's ass—Sensei did. He too kind of rolled away from the lingering smell, even as he blinked sleep out of his eyes.
“Morning, Harii-kun—kusō, is that Vitya? Tch, I told him not to have so much Brie.” His voice crackled, rough with sleep and however many cocktails he’d had last night. It had to have been a lot, as the distinctly skunky scent of alcohol sweat hovered over him like a pungent cloud.

Harry winced, pressing his hand tighter to his nose. “Morning, Sensei.”

Brandy-colored eyes blinked at him, glazed over with sleep. He met the gaze, staring kind of dumbly as the man narrowed his gaze at him, trying his best to focus through his morning fug. Harry appreciated the intent, but knew it was for shit. Sensei wasn’t a morning person, at the best of times, and without his glasses? Well, he’d be lucky to find his ass with both hands and verbal directions.

“How’re you feeling? OK?”

He blinked. “...uhhm?”

Sensei stared at him, gaze compassionate and soft enough that—normally—it would make his stomach feel fuzzy and warm. Now, though? Harry just felt like he was missing something.

“Ah—your, uh, your mother told us you got sick last night.”

He winced. “I remember, yeah.”

“But, uh—when Vitya and I came to check up on you, it—it didn't seem like you were sick. It...kind of looked like when I used to have panic attacks, so—”Sensei shifted awkwardly on the bed, clearing his throat a few times, even as he kept their gazes locked.

Harry's breath hitched. Ah.

That... 

...that would explain the impromptu sleep-over, wouldn't it?

Bile, sour and bitter and ugh, stung the back of his throat. His stomach tightened, threatening to rebel—not like there was anything even in it—but...well. Dry heaves were the fucking worst. His stomach clenched again, hard, and Harry had to swallow around a mouthful of thick spit.

Please, no. Please, god, fucking no, not right now.

He was already the unwilling meat in a stink sandwich. He really would die if he added his own sick to the equation.

Harry let out a startled sound as he was abruptly tugged to the side, Yuuri-Sensei dragging him into an awkward sideways-hug under their mound of shared blankets. He barely had time to blink before the man was folding him against his side.

“A-ah, no. Please don't cry, Harii-kun—” He started. Did he...really look like he was going to cry..? “You don't have to talk about it if you don't want to. I just want to make sure you're OK.”

Harry swallowed hard...and let out an unhappy squawk. His Coach, an attention whore EVEN IN SLEEP, had all but glued himself to Harry's other side, face pressed way too fucking close to his.

“Do you mind?” Harry scowled, digging his bony elbow into the man's ribs.

It wasn't even that he was claustrophobic, just...he didn't want the sweaty, stinky mess of a man-child that was his Coach fucking clinging to him, and ohgod his BREATH. It hovered like a damp, musty fog over his face, and...no. Just no.
Harry twisted in his hold, turning his face away from the hot-damp-musty breath. “Seriously?! Don't fucking breathe on me, you shit—your breath smells like ass and death.”

Yuuri-Sensei shot his husband a fond look before focusing back in on Harry. “We don't have to talk about what triggered it, or anything...not if you don't want to—I've been living with my...with anxiety most of my life, and am still learning how to,” he gestured vaguely. “ah, use my words—”

Sensei grimaced, looking intensely uncomfortable, like he was just barely pushing his way through this deeply personal confession.

...well. Save for that last bit, the bit about using his words. That he spit out like it was a phrase specifically created to insult his parents, his sister, Makkachin, his husband, and his mama's Katsudon.

Harry admittedly felt like a shit, struggling not to let out a snort of laughter. It wasn't like what he was saying was funny, or anything—literally the only funny thing about it was the way his face twisted up like a cat's ass—but Harry had distinct memories of the loud, dramatic fit his Sensei had had over his husband saying that exact, fucking thing. Though, come to think of it? It was probably less the words themselves that did it, and more the fact that Coach was a goddamn troll and had said them in a patronizing, sing-song voice.

The dying whale noises Coach had made when Sensei had coldly thrown down a two week sex-ban were absolutely haunting, in the best way.

He coughed, barely choking back a sound that was absolutely fucking not a giggle. Nope. No giggling, here.

Sensei cleared his throat pointedly, shooting him a look when their eyes locked again.

“I'm trying to be serious, Harii-kun.”

Harry ducked his head. “...sorry, Sensei.”

“No, don't—I was trying to make a point, but I kinda forgot what it was.”

“Uh...something about using your words?”

Sensei let out a breath, face twisting up into a sour look. Harry had to bite back another laugh. “Right, that. I, uh...I think I just wanted to say that talking helps? Or not talking, too—damn it, that sounds weird,” the man took a bracing breath, swiping tiredly at his eyes. “You don't have to talk, but you can if you want to. And maybe, even if you don't, knowing that there's someone who will listen can help.”

Harry took a deep, bracing breath. “I'm—” he let out a wheezy little laugh as he exhaled. “I'm not feeling sick anymore, but I'm still a little...” he pulled a hand out from under the blankets to show his Sensei. It was trembling a bit.

Yuuri-Sensei tilted his head to rest against Harry's in a brief acknowledgment. “That's fine, Harii-kun. It can take time to feel settled again, especially if you're not used to having panic attacks.”

Harry let out another little snerk of laughter. “Yeah.”

The man pulled back to shoot him a soft smile that widened into a grin as his Extra-As-Fuck husband started to snore like a goddamn rusty tractor in Harry's ear.
Harry snarled, twisting in the tangle of sheets to try and shove the clinging man away from him. “For fuck's sake, would you please—”

Sleep-crusted blue eyes flew open, and he only had a split second to recoil as his startled Coach flailed, his lanky body dragging most of the blankets with him as he toppled off the bed.

“Sonuvashit, it's cold!” Harry grasped at the quilt, trying to heave it out from under his Coach's heavy ass. He let out a squeak, his teeth chattering, as the full blast of the room's AC hit him.

Good Lord. Any colder, and he'd be tempted to check his pants to see if his balls had retracted.

He stared down at the awkward pile of sprawled limbs that was his Coach, flailing and sputtering as Makka—banished to the floor half-way through the night, after stepping on her papa's crotch for the third time—all but belly-flopped across his chest, yipping as she covered his face in dog-ass-scented slobber...and smirked.

Karma is a beautiful, beautiful bitch.

Sensei gave a little snort, ignoring his whining husband as he tugged Harry out of bed. “Come on. Up. You need to eat before practice.”

Harry let out a whine, but quietly shuffled off to do what his Sensei said. He felt a bit better about things when the Extra Russian flailed his limbs in a tantrum, still on the floor.

“Why does he listen to you, but not me? It's not fair. Why doesn't he like me?”

Unable to resist, he paused in the doorway to the bathroom. He took a minute to wipe the smirk off his face before turning to stare at his Coach from over his shoulder. “I like you just fine, but I like him better.”

Harry flounced off into the bathroom. The thin press-board of the door and the hum of the overhead fan were just enough to drown out his Coach's wail of despair.

Huddling down in the seat between Yuuri-Sensei and his Coach, he shoved another bite of lumpy oatmeal into his mouth and grimaced. He was admittedly spoiled for the home-made, baked oatmeal loaf his papa used to make for him, but the quality of his breakfast wasn't the problem. The problem was seated across from him, posture impeccable, as he fed Sensei and the Ouran set an...utter load of horse-shit about his recent “jaunt” to Côte d'Ivoire.

A...jaunt. To Côte d'Ivoire.

Right. Sure.

If this xenophobic, muggle-hating Elitist shitcock of a man had ever set foot outside of Western Europe, let alone to “take in the sights” of West Africa, then Harry'd fucking eat his skates, blades first. As it were, he had distinct memories of this very man spewing bile to both Greengrass and Smythwyke about a wealthy, established pureblood client of his mumma's because she had—gasp, shock—Welsh grandparents.

So, yeah. Like he said...horse-shit.

Honestly, Harry wasn't even sure what he was trying to prove. That he could get along with muggles?

(He couldn't)
That he could make nice with people less rich than him?
(Admittedly, he could...unless they were muggles)

That he could come up with a pretty lie to impress the people in his mumma's personal life?
(Sadly, he was doing a pretty good job of that).

That he was deserving of a higher position and a pay raise?
(Ugh)

Knowing the slimy shit like he did, Harry was pretty sure that was what he was aiming for with this whole...thing. But...he was also pretty sure that his talent at bald-faced lies weren't going to earn him any points with his mumma. Probably the opposite; mumma, prized honesty and integrity in her employees, much more than guile. So, unless the bastard twisted it around, like he was a goddamn Saint for lying...

Harry could almost see it, though.

“I feel terrible about misleading them, truly, but it would have been terribly rude of me not to engage in conversation with your guests, what with those Ouran boys being so inquisitive.”

The man let out a peal of laughter that was all money, and breeding, and manners on the surface, but slid across Harry's skin like oil and acid. Slick, burning. Clinging in a way that felt like it would never wash off, even as it left his skin feeling prickly and over-sensitive to the touch.

Harry grimaced, hand clenching around his spoon as Travers did it again—and he really needed him to stop, because he remembered that laugh, and it was terrible.

“Do be a good boy and mind your betters, hm~?”

A quiet scoff pulled him from his memories of that awful laugh. Green eyes carefully slid to the side, meeting with chilly blue. His Coach looked...

He didn't look angry, per se, at least not as angry as he'd looked that one time he'd scared the literal piss out of Suou-san. He didn't look particularly jealous, either which Harry was thankful for, as he really didn't want to get crushed if the man decided to drag his husband into a white-knuckled octopus hold.

He just...he was wearing the same look he wore in front of the press. Politely bored and carefully, guilelessly blank.

It was a look that said “I'm polite and amiable and don't mind at all when you ask me intrusive, bordering on rude, questions regarding my marriage, sex life, or any other subject that really is none of your business.”

Harry knew better than to trust that look.

The man shot him a horribly fake smile. “What's the matter, Hala? Aren't you having fun, catching up with your mama's guest~?”

His voice was soft and his tone light, but both were lies in the same way that his carefully practiced media-face was a lie. Harry had no interest in lying to his coach, not about this, so didn't bother forcing a smile.
“No.” His hand spasmed around his spoon as he stabbed it down into his oatmeal.

His Coach's expression flickered, tightened, and he gave a small nod. “Alright, then.”

He turned away, carefully setting his silverware aside before pushing back from the table. The group fell silent, startled. “Sorry to interrupt, but Hala and I need to be going, now. We want to get in some good practice time before the competition~”

The surprisingly inscrutable Russian carefully did not meet his husband’s gaze as he stared down Travers, his eyes glacial. Harry shivered, really fucking glad Coach had never looked at him that way. It was...creepy. Travers smiled back, but...it looked wrong. His mouth was pulled wide into a kindly expression, but there was no smile in his eyes. Harry shivered again and looked away, pushing back from his seat in a rush.

His mumma made a chiding sound. “Are you sure you don't want to eat more, love?”

Harry waved her off. “I'm sure; don't want to skate on a full stomach. I'll make sure to eat again after practice, alright.”

She let out a little hum, but nodded. Percy leaned over to murmur to her, and she nodded, waving him off. “By all means; this is your vacation too, Percival. Do tell Christophe hello for me, would you?”

Harry lifted a brow in surprise, but didn't say anything. Honestly, he had, like, a million questions—specifically, about the faded imprint of a unicorn stamp he could see just barely peeking over the collar of his starched Oxford—but the sooner he got away from Travers, the better.

Yuuri-Sensei, still trying to meet his husband’s gaze and failing, glanced over at him. He shrugged tightly. The man gave out a heavy sigh, staring sadly down at his unfinished breakfast, and reluctantly pushed it away. He felt his stomach swoop in guilt.

“No—Yuuri-Sensei, you don't have to...Coach and I are just focusing on spins, today. So. I'll be OK if you want to stay and finish your breakfast.”

Warm brown eyes stared him down, and he tried not to blink. If he blinked, then Sensei would know something was wrong. He was exactly like Minako-san that way. Sensei let out a little hum, but pulled his plate back towards him. “If you're sure.”

“I am. Seriously.”

“Fine, but I'll be dropping by later—your leg coming out of your last quad is a bit sloppy, and—”

Harry waved him off with a laugh. “Sure, Sensei. See you later.”

With a tight nod to the table, he turned to follow his Coach. A high, thin voice stopped him in his tracks. “Yes, see you later, dear Harry.”

Green eyes glanced over his shoulders. Travers was staring at him intently, a gleam in his eyes. Harry pressed his lips into a tight smile, if only so nobody would see them tremble. He swallowed tightly, turning on his heel to scurry off.

He'd just barely managed to pull himself together by the time he caught up with his Coach. The man looked unsettled, brow furrowed and lips pursed in an unhappy moue. “I'm not sure I approve of that Tribbles—”
“Travers.”

Coach waved him off, like it was utterly unimportant, and Harry kind of loved him for it. “Yes, him. I just...something about Traboobles felt...”

The man frowned, carding his fingers through his neatly trimmed beard, tapping at his lips.

A quivering sigh rattled through Harry, and he swallowed. He could feel the Geas pressing down on him, constricting his lungs and making his tongue heavy even before he realized the thought of telling someone, telling his Coach, had began to form in his mind. He swallowed heavily. Another second, and the pressure lifted. Harry rubbed tiredly at his forehead.

Coach was staring at him out of the corner of his eye. He lifted one shoulder in a limp shrug. “Yeah, uh...I'm not really a fan of his, either.”

The man gave another considering hum before ushering him towards the elevators.

Harry shifted, staring at the wall as he tried not to meet the older man's gaze. He knew he was staring at him, could feel it, but didn't know how to make him stop.

“Hala...”

His throat felt tight, and he just barely managed to squeak out an airy “Hmm?”

“You'd tell me if something was wrong?”

His breath caught in his chest, and his green darted up to meet somber blue. “W-what?”

“If something was wrong...I want you to know that you could tell me, and I'd keep you safe.”

You'd try, anyway.

Harry gave the man a tight smile. He wasn't going to fucking cry, or scream, or any of the bullshit he wanted to do. Not because he particularly cared if Coach saw him looking a hot mess, just...there was nothing he could do to fix it, so there was no point putting what little he could get away with saying onto the man's shoulders.

So instead, he gave a tight nod and scurried down the hall towards his room. The sooner they got to the rink, the better.

... ..

“GANBATTE, HARI-CHAN~!”

He winced, holding on to his spin, even though he just really wanted to bash his head against the wall a few dozen times. It wasn't that he didn't appreciate the fact that the two Ouran third-years and...urk...Ohtori-san had pulled strings so that they could be here to cheer him on during the otherwise closed-to-the-public practice time. He did, honestly.

It's just...

“SO PRETTY~!”

They...well, Haninozuka-san, specifically...were a bit too high-strung for the otherwise quiet practice space.
“Hey. Pipsqueak.”

Harry blinked, pushing his sweaty hair from his eyes as Plisetsky cut to a stop in front of him, spraying his track pants with ice. “I'm sorry, but are you talking to me? Because I'm pretty sure my name isn't fucking pipsqueak.”

The lanky blonde man rolled his eyes. “Tch. Whatever. Can you tell your little fanboy to tone it the fuck down? Some of us are trying to practice.”

He slumped, shooting the blonde a dead look. “I've tried—been trying, for hours. There's no shutting him up.”

Plisetsky's pale eyes glinted down at him, his lips pulling back from his teeth in an impatient snarl. “Try. Harder.”

Harry wanted to ask the snippy blonde what, exactly, he didn't fucking get about 'I've been trying for literal hours to shut him the fuck up.' He wanted to give a snide little bow, and wave him on to try, if he thought he could do better. But—

—Harry ducked as a skate blade flew past his face. He had a split-second to catch his breath before Plisetsky yanked him backwards by the collar of his shirt. He choked, but wasn't going to fucking complain as he just barely missed the blade coming back around as Leroy continued to spin out of control.

He didn't even fight as the surly Russian all but dragged him off the ice. His eyes were fixed on the Canadian man, looking genuinely panicked, as he slid across the ice in his uncontrolled spin, colliding painfully with the English kid Harry'd beat out at last year's Junior GPF.

The two skaters impacted with a flash of blades and a loud, meaty thud...and then came the blood. So much blood. He didn't...he didn't think they'd managed to do more than nick each other with their skates, but...jesusfuckingchrist.

His heart pounded in his ears, and he didn't even realize his knees had gone out til Plisetsky was tugging him up to drop him onto a bench. “Oi, pipsqueak. Fucking breathe, OK. Nobody's dead.”

Green eyes darted frantically around the rink, landing on the shocked Ouran seniors, Sensei and Coach, who were scrambling off the bleachers to grab the medics, presumably. And...Travers. Travers was conspicuous in his stillness, seated primly on the bleachers, as the rink dissolved into chaos.

The man looked up, meeting his gaze, his eyes gleaming. That look...it was a look that told him Leroy's accident wasn't an accident. A look that promised 'next time, those blades won't miss.' Harry let out a wheeze, folding limply over his knees.

“Shit, kid. What—” Plisetsky let out a hard sigh, slapping on his skate guards before pushing to his feet. “Just...wait here, I'm getting fucking Katsudon for this shit.”

Harry's hand snapped out to grab Plisetsky's wrist before he could drag Sensei into his meltdown. “No, just...give me a second. Maybe—fuck, where are my skate guards, I should...”

The blonde rolled his eyes, but stomped off to snatch the bright pink blade guards off the side of the rink, dropping them onto the bench next to him. Harry let out a sigh, hands shaking as he clipped them on. “Thanks.”

“Tch. Whatever, pipsqueak.”
He let out another sigh, but didn't say anything. Plisetsky had saved him from getting cut to shit by Leroy's knife shoes; He could fucking call him pipsqueak if he fucking wanted to. After another minute the older skater muttered something about 'finding fucking Yakov' and stomped off, leaving Harry to stare at the ice.

Stare at the medics, as they slid across the ice. Stare as they slowly cleaned up the two prone skaters. Stare as they carefully examined the two, to see if their injuries required an EMR team or an ER visit.

“Ah—Harry, is that..?”

Harry blinked up at the brunette looming above him, his smile weak and wobbling. He looked...well, not unfamiliar, but...

Oh.

“...Pavel. You're Pavel, right?”

“Yes, from The Skating School of Switzerland.”

Harry gave him a tight nod. “Yeah, uh...so you're competing?”

Pavel gave a tight nod, his wobbly smile tightening into a grimace. “Yes.”

His warm brown eyes were fixed on the ice, taking in the same scene Harry was.

“That was...rather frightening, yes?”

Harry gave a tight nod. “Yeah. I don't...I don't think it's as bad as it looks, or the EMR team would be here, but...”

Pavel shrugged. “I dunno...I was skating next to the other one...Peters? Peterson? when he collided with Leroy. It was...it looked pretty bad close up.”

He winced, awkwardly patting the other skater on the arm. They didn't talk as the medics slowly, carefully helped Leroy and Peter...son(?) off the ice, both skaters looking half-dead with exhaustion and pain. Harry let out a shaky breath, slowly pushing himself to his feet. “I don't think I can...not after that. I'll see you around, right?”

Pavel pushed to his feet, too. “Oh, but—you can say hello to mon entraîneur, can't you? Before you go? You were, what, twelve when you saw him last?”

His..?

But, the only one he'd known was..? Oh. OH, fuck. Harry's eyes blew wide. “Entraîneur Lambiel? He's here? HERE?”

Pavel gave another tight nod, his grimace finally relaxing into a smile. He turned to look around the rink, his eyes landing on...on...him. Harry swallowed as the taller boy waved at his coach, beckoning him over.

Harry didn't even notice the little frown on his Coach's face as the man trotted over to join him and Pavel, his expression tight with worry. “Pavel. Comment ça va?”

Pavel shrugged again. “Comme ci, comme ça.”

Pavel's coach—Stephane fucking Lambiel, oh my fucking god what even—patted him on the
shoulder. Kind eyes, the same warm brown of his hair, darted over to land on Harry. They considered him for a minute, like he was searching his brain for something.

Harry gave a sheepish little shrug. “Uh, bonjour, Monsieur Lambiel. I don't know if you remember me, it's been a while, but I used to take classes at the skate school when I was a novice.”

The man beamed at him, giving his hand a friendly shape. “I thought I recognized you, but—oh, you're Viktor's student, yes?”

He nodded wildly, feeling like a bobble doll, but not giving a fuck, because this man, oh god. This was the man that had inspired him to work so hard at perfecting his spins, above and beyond his jump combos. And he was here, and he remembered him, and—

A warm hand clamped down on his shoulder. He blinked, staring up at his Coach, who was beaming at the other skater. Harry stared, head tilting. His Coach's smile was friendly, but his eyes burned the same way they did when he was confronted with his husband's more, er, amorous admirers. “Ah, Stephane. Sorry to steal Hala, but I think I should bring him back to the hotel, for now.”

If the man could sense the edge in his Coach's voice, he didn't show it. He gave Harry another kind smile and a farewell, before steering his own student away. Harry could only stand there, confused as hell, because what even.

What even was that.

Green eyes blinked up into stubborn blue. “Uh...what—?”

The man gave him a beaming smile, and Harry sighed. Whatever that one-sided pissing contest had been about, the man wasn't talking. Well, he wasn't talking yet. He'd see how long he held out, once Yuuri-Sensei heard about it.

Yuuri-Sensei never heard about it, and it was completely Chris's fault. Well, Chris and Percy's fault.

“...ammph with a unimmmph dimmphh, too!”

Chris's chortle of laughter and Percy's resulting wail of mortification were drowned out by the hands clamped down on either side of his head. Harry didn't even try to fight it; after the first few times of being blind-sided by OMG, TMFUCKINGI YOU BASTARDS, he'd stopped trying to duck away from his Coach's hands when they moved to cover his ears.

Percy was red, gesturing wildly in a way that had Harry flushing and ducking his eyes. Nope. No. He really didn't want to know. Thin fingers fidgeted with his phone, turning it on for, like, the millionth time in so many minutes to see if Ryota-kun had texted him back yet.

He hadn't.

...why hadn't he?

Harry casually slid back in his seat, letting his Coach's forearm block him from sight just as Smythwyke's gaze slid across the table towards him. Yet another reason not to fight the man's hold; if nothing else, it gave him an excuse to hide away from the trio of assholes seated across the table.

Travers, the few times he'd caught a peek of him, looked noticeably withdrawn, but that wasn't a surprise. The man may talk a big game while alone, but there was no questioning who was really in charge. Smythwyke, however, held himself with the lazy, self-assured posture of a man with nothing to fear. It wasn't even arrogance, really. That was Greengrass—nose tilted so high that Harry was
surprised he could see where he was going.

No. Smythwyke had the same sort of lazy self-assurance as his Coach. A self-assurance that came from years of getting what he wanted, when he wanted.

Harry shuddered, shifting in his seat. He blinked at the rush of sound as his Coach pulled his hands away from his ears. Green eyes darted up to meet calm blue.

“Bathroom?”

Harry nodded tightly, sliding quickly from his seat as his Coach moved his arms out of the way, scurrying towards the toilets. He didn't really have to go, but—well, now he had at least ten minutes away from them all, before someone would come looking.

He gasped, cold water dripping from his face and into the sink. His hands clenched around the porcelain, and he grit his teeth. He could do this. He could. Just a few more days, and then he'd never have to see any of them again, never.

The rush of the water was almost enough to drown out the soft *swish* of the bathroom door swinging closed behind someone. Harry splashed his face once more, and turned.

A cry caught in his throat. Smythwyke.

The man didn't move to approach him, didn't reach for a wand. He just stood there, posture almost lazy, eyes sweeping over Harry as he came apart under that look.

When he finally opened his mouth, the sharp, cultured lilt was almost sharp enough to cut. “Funny thing about the Geas spell...as convenient as it is, it has its downsides.”

Harry's voice caught in his throat. “…o-oh?”

“Mm. It leaves a mark on the person who cast it as much as the person under it. So, say, if someone under a Geas were tempted to break it, then the backlash would go both ways. Well—I'm sure it was probably worse for you, but...”

He swallowed hard, shaking his head. “I-I didn't.”

The man waved him off, his kind smile belied by the dangerous glint to his eyes. “I know that, child. If you'd actually *tried*, you'd be dead.”

Harry barely held back a flinch. “…then, what—?”

Smythwyke inspected his nails, as if it meant nothing that he held Harry's life in his hands. “Travers.”

“…what about him.”

“His little stunt today was—unfortunate. You can rest assured that he will not be doing anything so foolish again.”

He blinked, hesitant. “...thank you?”

The man let out a snort. “He's of no use to me if he's in prison for muggle-baiting. Don't get any ideas about me doing you any favors.”

Harry shrugged tightly. “Still. Thanks.”
The man considered him for a long minute, head tilting. Whatever he would have said was lost as the door swung open, Percy and Chris stepping through.

Percy's eyes went hard and cold as they met Smythwyke's, but Chris ignored the rising tension and flounced to Harry's side, throwing an arm over his shoulder.

“There you are~! So like Yuu-chan, hiding away in toilets—come on!”

He stumbled as he was all but dragged from the bathroom. The blonde man paused as they passed Percy, Harry just barely catching the fleeting look they exchanged, before he was moving again and they were stepping out onto the restaurant's main floor.

“Our Percy's a sharp one, isn't he?”

“Chris, what—”

The man shoot him a sly look, lips turning up into a Mona Lisa Smile. “He thought you needed some rescuing. Looks like he was right—”

Harry let out a strangled sound. He was thankful for the rescue, but Jesusfuck he didn't need this drama in his life right now. The competition and the mess with Ohtori and his boyfriend going AWOL out of nowhere was enough to be getting on with, without any of his Traumatic Backstory Bullshit™ showing up to make shit so much worse.

It made him wish Beka was here. If nothing else, he'd let him face-plant into a hug for a little bit. And maybe he'd do that deadpan glare thing at the Shitcock Trio, and send them running. That would be nice.

He fidgeted with his phone. “Uh, I think I need to go back to my room for a bit, actually.”

Chris cocked a brow at him.

“Not that you guys are boring or anything, but today has been a fucking DAY, and I just need—”

his flapped wildly in a way he hoped emphasized how so very fucking done with everything he was.

“You want me to send up Yuu-chan or Vitya?”

“Nah, let them enjoy themselves. I'm probably going to crash out.”

The man gave him a little smile, but waved him on. “I'll let them know.”

“Thanks.”

“Of course. Take care of yourself, little Harry~”

Harry waved him, heading for the elevator.

Hot water and foam from his bath slid off his knees as they crested the mountain of bubbles. “...and on top of all that? I think Ryota-kun's mad at me, or something?”

Beka's pixelated face blinked back at him from his phone's tiny screen. “Why do you think he's mad?”

“I told him about the kiss—and, yes, he for-sure knows it wasn't me who did the kissing. He seemed a bit annoyed at Ohtori, but not mad-mad, at least not at me. But, like, he's suddenly decided to stop answering my texts, and I don't know if it's because he's pissed, or if he's planning Ohtori's murder,
or what.”

Beka snorted.

“This isn't funny, Beka. I'm living in a goddamn daytime drama, and it's the worst.”

The snort became a guffaw. “I'M NOT EVEN KIDDING. It's not even a good one, either—it's like those shit-show crack-fests that Coach binge watches. It's AWFUL.”

The older man stopped snorting after a few more seconds. “Do you want me to try calling him?”

Harry let out a huff. “No, don't do that. I'm not even that worried.”

Beka quirked a brow at him.

“Maybe a little worried, but whatever. I'm just—this has been awful and dramatic and I hate it, and...and I wish you were here.”

He tried to hide his flush by ducking his face into the bubbles. Beka's soft look told him he'd only partially succeeded.

“I miss you too, Hala.”

He let out a little strangled noise. Beka ignored it. “Just...if you need anything, don't forget Yura's there.”

Harry nearly dropped his phone into the water, streaking bubbles across the screen as just barely saved it from watery doom. Green eyes stared dumbly into pixelated gray.

That...

What...

“...Hah?!”

The older skater's lips tugged into a grin. “I asked him to keep an eye on you.”

Error Code 404: Brain Not Found.

“You did what, now?!?”

Beka smirked. “He's my best friend, but you're practically family, Hala. I'm not above emotional blackmail.”

He was pretty sure this was what an out of body experience felt like. He blinked stupidly at the wall for a long, long moment, then...

“OhmYGOD, iS THAT WHY HE WAS SO NICE TO ME ToDAY?!”

The other skater laughed, but Harry couldn't even be mad.

“NO, but BEKA. YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW. I mean, I didn't say anything, but it was weird cause he was nice, and I didn't know whY? Ohgod, I'm kinda happy now, because I know I haven't totally lost my mind?”

And it was true. The fact that Plisetsky had been conned into being nice...ish...was almost a relief. It
gave Harry a bit of stable ground amidst the clusterfuck of the past few days. He slumped against the back of the tub.

He closed his eyes, his arms dropping as the tension finally started to bleed out of his shoulders.

“Hey.”

Green eyes blinked open, staring blearily at Beka's pixelated frown. “Sorry. Tired.”

The man let out a little snort. “Sleep, then. Don't need you falling asleep on the ice.”

“...shit, that's tomorrow.”

“Yeah.”

“Fuck.”

Beka tsked at him. “And that's why you should be in bed, Hala.”

Harry grumbled at the the older skater, put mumbled a quick good-bye and hung up. His eyes fluttered as he sluggishly went through the motions of brushing his teeth and pulling on pajamas.

He peeked at the clock—barely six, but whatever. The more sleep he got, the better. He flopped onto the bed with a grunt, not even bothering to wriggle under the blankets as he drifted off.

...They say that anticipation has a way of slowing time.

Well, whoever the fuck “they” are, they didn't know what the fuck they were talking about.

Harry frowned, wrapping his laces tightly around his fists before pulling, hard. Thin fingers tugged and pulled, loosening and drawing the laces absently, well used to the practice. Despite all the drama of the last few days, it still seemed like a heartbeat ago that he was stepping off Ohtori's private plane, jet-lagged as hell, and shell-shocked from the unexpected kiss.

And now...now...he was about to step onto the ice for group two's warm up slot.

Guang-Hong Ji and Plisetsky had both skated in group one, and done terrifyingly well, as was expected. Popovich and Leo de la Iglesia, who'd skated fourth and sixth, hadn't done as well, but had dominated the ice, none the less. And that was terrifying.

Not because Harry didn't think he could match Popovich and de la Iglesia in technical skill. He absolutely could.

What was so terrifying about them was the possibility they represented.

Popovich, who was the same age as his Coach...had, in fact, been his rink mate, was not only still competing, but still fucking medalizing. Even the skating greats usually tapped out by twenty-nine, with few lasting til their thirty-first year. Popovich was thirty-five and still going.

De la Iglesia, though younger tha Popovich, was still old for a skater. He was, in fact, only a year younger than his Coach had been when he returned from his year-long hiatus...the same year long hiatus that had been followed by him utterly destroying both Yuuri-Sensei's and Plisetsky's World Records.
So. He could be forgiven for finding them fucking terrifying.

Green eyes slid across the tightly focused faces of the other skaters in his group.

Of the skaters in group two, only Leroy, Pavel, and Peterson were instantly recognizable. He didn't discount the latter two, per se, but knew that the base score of his skate was well above theirs. He'd have to miss most, if not all, of his quads to have to worry about them.

It was Leroy that was going to be the real challenge. He'd very nearly destroyed his competition at Nationals, winning by well over 100 points. He'd also done very well in previous 4CC and World's competitions, despite years and years and years of relying on quads to get him to the podium.

Even with the collision the other day, the man was in top form, and Harry knew it.

It wasn't that he was scared, or anything. Honestly. There was no way he was going to fail to qualify for the Free Skate. He'd been practicing the 4Lz-3A for a reason; both he and his Coach knew that, at least for the Trophee, a higher base score would be necessary.

Still, even with a high base score, there were no guarantees. Leroy, at twenty-five, was at the top of his game, and an absolute quad monster.

He blinked.

...except, maybe not? Harry stepped out onto the ice, eyes trailing the Canadian skater as he popped a jump. The man frowned, slowly letting himself pick up speed and move into another jump entry, and...landed it.

Huh. Maybe it was a fluke...

“THE GROUP TWO WARM UP PERIOD HAS ENDED. PLEASE CLEAR THE ICE.”

Harry rolled his shoulders, grabbing his skate guards from his Coach as he stepped off the ice. He grabbed the water bottle from Yuuri-Sensei, taking a swig, as he focused on stretching his hamstrings as the first skater took the ice.

He was next, then Leroy.

...he was really, really glad he didn't have to skate after him, or he might just psych himself out, because holyfuckingjesus. He said he wasn't worried, and he wasn't, but he'd also seen the man's short program, and...fuck.

Fuck.

He took a deep breath, and bent in half, tucking his head between his shins as he stretched.

Breathe in...one, two, three.

Breathe out...one, two, three.

Breathe in...one, two, three.

Breathe out...one, two—

“Harii-kun. You're up.”

He exhaled, slowly rising from the stretch. His heartbeat pounded in his ears as he hurried towards
the edge of the rink, slipping off his coat and skate guards, and slid out onto the ice.

The lights were near-blinding.

Harry blinked the spots out of his eyes, staring out at the crowd. The writhing mass of shadows, silhouetted against the white-hot-bright flare of the spotlights, slowly dissolved into slightly more human shaped masses of black. He swiped at his eyes, letting them adjust as he did his last lap around the rink.

Normally, the sight of a large crowd wouldn't have stalled him, but nothing about these last few days were normal, so it was almost...reassuring...to have the blinding wall of overhead lights between himself and the audience.

One deep, shaking breath, he moved to the center of the ice.

His heart pounding in his ears, Harry took a deep breath, and let everything else fall away.

Sweat dripped into his eyes as he clomped into the locker room, exhausted. His Coach held out his water bottle. Harry took a deep breath, nodding along as the man dissected his skate.

“...and we'll need to clean up your quad lutz, if you want to keep using it in the second half; you came out of it a bit low, and almost mistimed your entry to your triple Axel, which isn't good. At least they were clean landings, so you should still manage to qualify despite—”

Harry tuned out his Coach as commotion on the mounted TV caught his eye. A slow-motion replay of Leroy coming out of a jump, and his knee just...going. He blanched.

“Coach.”

“—and higher...hm?”

He nodded towards the TV. It was muted, and the captions were turned off, but it was clear that the rink was in chaos. Leroy was on the ice, curled up over his knee, and not getting up. Coach frowned. “What—?”

“Not sure. Replay made it look like he tore something in his knee, though.”

The man stood up. “I should find Yuuri. I know he'll want to make sure he's alright.”

He paused, staring back at Harry, whose skates were half unlaced. He waved him off. “Go, I'll catch up.”

His Coach frowned. “Are you sure? I can wait...”

“But Sensei won't; I can catch a ride with some of the others. Go.”

A quick nod, and his Coach was out the door, phone already glued to his ear as he tried to get a hold of his sure-to-be-frantic husband. Harry sighed, bending over his skates to finish loosening them. Half way through the second skate, the locker door creaked open. He ignored it, only jolting a bit when a warm hand settled on his shoulder.

“Seriously, I can catch up with you—”

The grip tightened, and Harry twisted to stare up at...Smythwyke. Harry's breath left in a frightened whoosh. “Wh-what...”
Fingers dug into his shoulder, and he let out a cry as his arm spasmed in pain. “Not dead, I see. Still, I wonder...how much you would have had to say to tip off Weasley and not trigger the Geas.”

Harry sputtered. “What are you even talking about?”

“Weasley. He hasn't stopped glaring at me since yesterday.”

“I didn't say anything. I didn't even talk to him after he came looking for me.”

The man dragged him to his feet, hand tight on his shoulder as he slammed him against the lockers. “Don't you lie to me, you muggle-bred piece of shit.”

Harry let out a little hiccup at the pain, tears catching in his throat. “I didn't say anything!”

“No? Well, that's too bad—I guess your little friend got hurt for nothing.”

Bile rose in his throat. “You—you did that to JJ?”

“I've told you before, boy...there are consequences for crossing me.”

He let out a little sob, drool streaking his chin as he tried to swallow back the urge to sick up. His face felt hot, and his eyes crackled with black spots like they had the few times he'd soaked too long in the Onsen and overheated.

“The fuck do you think you’re doing, you utter piece of shit?!”

Harry jerked in Smythwyke's grip, twisting around to see an utterly livid Percy Weasley staring down the taller wizard. The man's grip loosened, and Harry slowly slid to the floor.

“You fucking dare lay a hand on him?! You dare?! I will fucking end you, just see if I don't you rat bastard.”

Smythwyke took an involuntary step back as the redhead closed in on him, but jerked to a stop as the looming form of Christophe Giacometti clamped his hands down on his arms, tight.

“Yes. I'd like to know that, too. Just exactly what the hell you were doing to that boy, hmmm~?”

Chris's voice was soft, light, but edged with steel and murder.

Smythwyke wasn't really struggling, he noted. Not surprising. If he attacked Percy, there'd be no going back. His mumma would hear of it, and he'd be done for—not just at her firm, but in general. Jail time would be a mercy after she was done with him.

He let out a hysterical little giggle, barely even twitching as the pureblood twisted to snarl at him. Well, he tried to. He barely managed a second of eye contact before Chris took him out with an elbow to the temple. He crumpled to the floor.

Harry laughed again, huddling over his knees. Chris stepped over the fallen man, and dropped to his knees next to him.

“Harry?! Harry—honey, talk to me. Where does it hurt?”

Hurt? If he was hurt, he couldn't feel it anymore. Adrenaline. Or maybe it was endorphins? Whatever. He was shaking though. He could feel it. Shaking so hard it felt like his bones were rattling.
Chris pet at his hair, or...at least it felt like he was petting his hair. Harry wasn't sure. He just...he couldn't stop shaking. Even though he was more warm then cold, he was just...shaking.

“Shhh, honey. I've got you.”

He let out a vague noise, eyes vaguely drifting around the room, skipping across everything, but not really—not registering. Percy was on the phone, talking to—security? Must be security, because he was mumbling about attack and police and securing the building.

Chris was...he was texting. Harry peered down at the screen. Vitya. He was texting his Coach, but he didn't know why. His Coach had left to find Yuuri-Sensei, so he could go make sure JJ was OK. JJ who had got hurt because Smythwyke thought he told, and god it was his fault. He shuddered.

He shuddered and shivered, even as Chris tucked him under his arm, fingers flying across the keys. “Vitya's coming, honey. You're gonna be OK. I won't let anyone hurt you.”

Harry nodded against the man's shoulder, staring blankly at the floor.

He stayed huddled there, shivering against Chris' shoulder, til familiar arms hefted him up into a strong hold. Harry buried his face against his Coach's shoulder, clinging to him. He clung even as he murmured quietly in his ear, slowly rocking him side to side. He clung even as Plisetsky stumbled into the locker room.

“ThE FUCK HAPPENED?”

Harry buried his face in his Coach's shoulder, shaking, and ignored the other skater. “We've got it covered.”

“LIKE HELL—”

“Yurio~” The other blonde fell abruptly silent. Harry didn't blame him. His Coach's voice was light, but sharp enough to cut through steel. Or was it diamond? He didn't know—couldn't remember how that whole thing went. Was it a thing?

“Tch. You want me to call the brat's family?”

“They're already at the hospital. His godfather is trying to get a hold of a surgeon.”

“Hnf.”

“What about Katsudon?”

“He's on his way to the hospital—Travers and Greengrass offered to drive him.”

...Travers and Greengrass?

Travers and Greengrass were with his Sensei? Alone?

No. Nononononono.

He started to keen, low and loud, breaths coming out in panicked gasps as he twisted in his Coach's arms. Tears and snot slicked his face as he sobbed, keening with every exhale. He needed to find his Sensei. He wasn't safe. Not with them.

He could just hear Plisetsky's panicked voice over his crying. “WHAT THE HELL'S WRONG WITH HIM?!!”
“I don’t know—Hala? Hala, talk to me. What’s wrong.”

Harry let out a little panicked hiccup. “S sei. S sei no’ safe.”

“What, I—can’t…”

Plisetsky tsked, whipping out his phone.

“Fucking useless old man—” He pressed his phone to his ear, plugging his ear as Harry continued to sob. “—fucking FINALLY, Katsudork. No, shut up. Wherever you are, you gotta turn around. Your brat is losing his shit, and Viktor’s too fucking useless to handle it himself.”

Harry’s breath hitched. Sensei. His Sensei was...OK? He was coming back?

Plisetsky nodded, swiping at his face. “Yeah, sure—got it.”

He hung up.

“Sensei?”

“Only made it about five minutes down the road. They’re turning around, now.”

Harry nodded against his Coach’s shoulder, clinging to him. He didn’t loosen his grip, didn’t let go, til his frazzled Sensei pushed through the door. He scrambled out of his Coach’s arm, all but climbing into the other man’s arms.

“Yer OK. Yer OK.”

“A-ah, Harii-kun! Yes...yes, I'm OK.”

He collapsed forward into the man’s arms, shutting out the world around him.

Sweat beaded his forehead as the last strains of “The Man Who Sold The World” faded even as he came out of a deep layback spin.

Silver.

It wasn't the gold he'd wanted, but was more than he hoped for, after everything. And it meant that he was moving on to the Grand Prix finals.

Biting back his grin at the reaction he knew would follow, Harry took a deep breath. “This is for you, JJ!”

He curled his fingers towards his chest in the familiar pose, chanting “It’s...JJ STYLE” with the crowd.

...he could almost swear he heard Plisetsky gagging over the sound of the JJ Girls losing their mind.

Normally, he’d be right there with Plisetsky. Gagging. Forever and ever. But—well. There was no telling if JJ would ever skate again, and...just in case? The least he could do is dedicate his Exhibition Skate to the flamboyant Canadian.

Stepping off the ice, he dodged the lazy swat Plisetsky aimed at his head. “Disgusting. I am disgusted.”
“No you're not.”

“I fucking am. I think I threw up in my mouth a little.”

“...ewww.”

“Tch. It's your fucking fault, you sappy shit.”

His Coach, like the troll he is, popped up over Plisetsky's shoulder, beaming at him. “I don't think you have room to call anyone sappy, Yurochka.”

Plisetsky...snarled at the man, reaching for the phone that Coach was waving in his face. Harry blinked.

“I'm...missing something.”

His Coach beamed at him. “I'll have to show you pictures, Hala—”

Plisetsky let out a screech. “—I TOLD YOU TO FUCKING DELETE THOSE—”

The older blonde beamed. “Ahh, but, they already have so many likes on Instagram, it would be a shame to—”

“YOU POSTED THEM ON INSTAGRAM?! YOU SHIT!” The blonde dove for Coach's phone, all but clawing at him to get at it.

The troll wasn't even phased. “Aren't you supposed to be doing something right now, Yur'enka? Go on, now.”

Plisetsky snarled, even as he ripped off his skate guards and stomped onto the ice.

Harry backed away from the fuming blonde, slowly, making sure to keep his phone out of sight til the older skater was safely on the ice. He shifted nervously as Instagram loaded.

He stared.

Blinked.

Stared some more.

What...

What.

WHAT.

.

[image.jpg] [image.jpg] [image.jpg]

The trio of pics showed a progression in the death of Harry's pride. In the first, Plisetsky looked torn between panic and awkwardness as a sleepy Harry snored against his shoulder. In the second, Plisetsky seemed to notice that their mutual embarrassment was being documented. In the third and worst, Plisetsky looked half-way between lethal awkwardness and murder as he glared into the camera. His shoulders were hunched half-way up his neck, which was flushed red in embarrassment. Harry, dead asleep and drooling, was clinging to his arm. His face was half buried in Plisetsky's
bicep, cheek squishing out.

v-nikiforov BRB, ODing on cute. @yuri-plisetsky @hjp-skates #PodiumFamily #PreciousSons #HeartEyes #Squee

“Oh my god. I'm dead. Kill me now, because I'm dead.”

His Coach, the evil troll, let out a happy laugh and pulled him into a hug. “You were so cute~”

He bit back a snort. Yes, and now he was going to have a pissy boyfriend and an uncomfortably possessive Ohtori on his hands, thanks to this bullshit.

“You really shouldn't get in the habit of posting pictures of minors without parental permission. My mumma's a lawyer. She could sue you for that.”

“Hala—! YUURI, DID YOU HEAR WHAT OUR SON SAID TO ME?”

Harry tuned him out, eyes drifting over the crowd. His smile faltered. He wanted to be happy about making it this far, for finally qualifying for the Grand Prix Final...and in his first senior year.

...but too much had happened.

And even when his mumma followed through on her promise to utterly bury Smythwyke, and Travers, and Greengrass—and he didn't doubt that she would be utterly ruthless about it—there was no promises that the Geas could be removed. And even if it could, what then? Would he be forced to talk about what happened?

It had been so long, he wasn't sure he could, even if he wanted to.

A cheer went up in the crowd, and Harry turned in time to see Plisetsky go into a dizzying spin combo from a flying spread-eagle.

He rolled his eyes. Smiled.

_Fucking show off._

Chapter End Notes

A few quick translation notes, for those who don't know French.

Comment ca va?: How are you
Comme ci, comme ca: so-so
Entraîneur/mon entraîneur: coach/my coach

(forgive the lack of appropriate accent symbols; I still don't know how to add them to the Notes)

re: Yura = Before you @ me. He's 22 here, not 15 going on 16. He can person a bit better and is a -little- more chill. He is also weak to his BFF’s emotional manipulation, and Harry's grumpy-cat demeanor.
re: Percy = I have no regrets about him going off like that. None. Ambitious swot he may be, he is also a big brother.

re: Chris = YOU NEVER, EVER, EVER FUCK WITH A SKATE-BABY. HE DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE. YOU DON'T TOUCH THEM. NOT EVER.

For those curious about Trophee rankings:

Gold: Yura  
Silver: Harry  
Bronze: Guang-Hong Ji

4th: Leo de la Iglesia  
5th: Georgi Popovich  
6th: Pavel

12th, by default: JJ Leroy
Chapter Fourteen

Chapter Summary

An Ode to Shitfic, in Honor of the resplendent Patron of Shitfic, Silencia20. She knows why.

Sub-title (Sub-summary???): Not all ills have been mended or addressed, but there are other things to be getting on with, for now.

Chapter Notes

So. Chapter 13 was written before the Winter Olympics, i.e. before I could bear witness to the glorious pageant that is the parade of Skating Coaches playing musical jackets, switching them out depending on which country their skater was representing. Going forward, I will try and make it clear that the Russian Skating Federation's deal with Yakov, now Viktor, is the exception, not the rule, hence Harry wondering how it would work.

I could go back and change it, but...that was a long chapter, and I barely survived writing it the first time, so. NO.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

If anyone had told him, six months ago, that skating under Viktor Nikiforov would be akin to being both a nanny to a toddler with a chronic drinking problem and a professional cat herder, Harry would have scoffed.

No, not just scoffed. He would have channeled fucking Plisetsky, at his most scathing, and told said person to “Stay the fuck away from the fucking skating forums, jesusfuck,” and flounced off—not quite offended, but almost, on behalf of the Living Legend.

In retrospect, it was probably a good thing that nobody had ever told him, because he wasn't so good with apologies, and he would have definitely owed one for that mistake, good lord.

He pinched the bridge of his nose, a hunched, pained statue standing solid and true amidst a cyclone of chaos.

...and he'd thought the lead-up to the Trophee had been a clusterfuck hotmess of a trashfire.

“Yuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuu.”

“No, Vitya.”

“But, Yuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuu
“But I’ll miss youuuu—.” The man pouted at his husband from his spot on their bed, curled around Makka. The poodle, unlike her human father, didn't seem to care either way, busying herself with covering said father's whiskery chin in slobbery kisses.

Harry sighed. A soft, raspy laugh had him darting a look over to Christophe, who shot him a playful wink when he met his gaze. He rolled his eyes, turning on his Coach, who had flopped himself out in the middle of his hotel bed in a sulk. “For fuck's sake. You'll see us in two weeks. Can you not be a child for two fucking minutes—or, like, at least long enough to be useful?”

He gestured to the hotel suite, which was a stray sock short of a disaster zone. His and Sensei’s clothes were scattering in multiple piles next to their bags, waiting to be folded and packed away. His skate bag lay open and mostly empty, save for his two pairs of skates and two pairs of rolled up leg warmers. Makka's dog bed and pillows were scattered around the room, her travel food and water dishes nowhere in sight.

…and, mixed up in the explosion of clothes and shoes and random shit was his Coach's shit, which—well, if the ass thought Harry was going to help him with last-minute packing when he'd done fuck all to be useful now, then he had another think coming.

His Coach sniffed, but ignored him, going back to cooing Russian endearments into Makka's fluffy top-knot. “Don't listen to your brother, Makka. He's loves us, really…he's just a grump.”

Harry pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed, tuning the man for as long as it took him to track down his cupcake leggings. He was carefully rolling them up and tucking him into his duffle when he picked up on the ongoing ramble again.

“—and I'll make sure you have the best, warmest puppy bed waiting for you when I see you in Russia, with the warmest blankets and pillows, and your favorite toy…”

Tossing his Coach his judgiest look, Harry pointedly turned his back on the moping drama queen, pulling out his phone.

“And then I'll brush out your beautiful curls, and we'll cuddle up under your favorite blanket with your dolly, and I'll never leave you again—!”

Harry [09:52 a.m.]: omg, Beka. I hope ur up, cause I need you to stop me from committing a gdamn murder.

He twitched, waiting and hoping he'd get a reply, because there was only so much squealing over Makka's kukla he could stomach without screaming.

Beka [9:55 a.m.]: …???

Harry [9:55 a.m.]: I didn't think someone could have, like, a negative amount of chill.

Harry [9:55 a.m.]: I was wrong. So wrong.

Harry [9:56 a.m.]: If you could see him rn. No jury would convict me.

Beka [9:56 a.m.]: What's he done this time.

Harry shot a scathing look at the man, draped across the rumpled comforter like the heart-broken, woebegone heroine in some cheesy 90s serial drama.

Harry [09:57 a.m.]: He's sulking because Sensei is packing instead of cuddling him.
Harry [09:57 a.m.]: Nvm that we fly out at 12, and don't have time to fucking baby him.

Harry [09:58 a.m.]: And that he still hasn't bothered packing up his own shit.

Setting his phone down atop his suitcase, he carefully wrapped his medal up in a clean t-shirt, before tucking it into the front pocket between two clean pairs of skate socks. He was just zipping it shut when his phone pinged, lighting up with a text.

Beka [10:00 a.m.]: You're right. No jury would convict you.

Beka [10:01 a.m.]: Dick move aside, you're too cute to convict.

He let out a strangled noise, fumbling with his phone.

Harry [10:02 a.m.]: OMG, BEKA SHUT UP (# / o /#)

He fumbled it again as it vibrated in his grip, his face nearly throbbing with heat.

Beka [10:02 a.m.]: Like I said. Cute. (^ y ^)b

Beka [10:03 a.m.]: Seriously, tho. If you need me to, I can have Yura sick Yakov on him.

Harry winced.

Harry [10:03 a.m.]: ...that's almost too mean, tho?

His Coach let out a triumphant cry, tugging his flailing husband onto the bed and cuddling him close, ignoring the half-packed suitcase he sent spilling off the edge of the bed and onto the carpet. His lips pressed tight.

Harry [10:03 a.m.]: You know what? Nvm. Fucking go for it. The shitcock has it fucking coming.

Cruel or not, calling in Yakov was absolutely the right move.

He hadn't come in, bellowing or stomping or any of the shit he was infamous for, rink side. He'd knocked—politely, quietly—like he wasn't there to tear his former skater two new assholes. Chris, still laughing at his best friend, had opened the door before Harry could think to warn him...

...and he probably should apologize for that, later...

He'd blanched, scrambling away from the older Russian in clear fear—and it wasn't exactly funny, OK. He got that Yakov had a reputation, and that Chris knew Vit-baka well enough to be familiar with it, but even so, the older man was, like, half the Swiss man's size, so seeing him stumble away was maybe a bit funny. A bit.

Still staring at an unimpressed looking Yakov, the blonde man had murmured out a few vague excuses and slipped away. Meeting Coach Yakov's gaze, Harry couldn't blame him. He kinda wanted to hide, too, and he was the one to call him in. Well, indirectly, but still.

But back to the yelling...he'd half expected it to pick up, the minute the door clicked shut behind Chris. It hadn't. Well, not from the older man, anyway.

“WAH—YAKOV? COME SAY HI TO YUURI, it's been forEVER.”

“VITYA—!”
He could only guess what followed, Coach Yakov's Russian too accented and too rapidfire for him to follow, but it got the goddamn job done. His Coach, pouting like a kid who'd had his favorite toy taken away, he released his husband and slipped off the bed. He'd whined under his breath the whole time, tossing sappy-as-fuck looks at Sensei, but he'd pulled up his big girl panties and packed his shit.

“THERE. Happy now?”

The older coach's flat tone belied the Basilisk Stare he had aimed at his former student. Harry shrank away from the stare. Yeah, it wasn't aimed at him, but it was fucking terrifying; he could see where Coach got that from.

[Harry briefly, in the back of his mind, pitied past-Suou, who'd known not what Beast he'd awakened]

“You're right, I don't. Hand it over, Vitya.”

“Ahhh, Yakov. It's like you have no faith in me~”

“Rude.”

A quick glance had him tripping over his own shit to help the man move the bag into the halls, and —“when you're done, have the front desk send up the bellboy with a luggage rack, yes? We'll be needing one, I think.”

In literally no time at all, the older Russian was ushering them out onto the street, and into the small fleet of rental cars. Papa, mumma, and Coach into the first. Chris, Percy, and Ohtori into the second. And, with one sharp glance with his dark eyes, Yakov had climbed in after he, Sensei, and Makka had scrambled into the last.

The fact that he'd managed that, and without Coach making too big a fuss about not getting to ride with Makka and his sleepy husband was a goddamn miracle. Harry could have kissed him.

Well, maybe not really.

Yeah, he was a fucking badass, but wasn't really grandfatherly enough to make kissing him anything other than creepy. Like, he knew May/December was a thing, but it wasn't his thing, and even if it were, he was way too fucking young for that shit, and Yakov way too fucking old for him.

“I spoke to the FFKKR.”

He startled, the low, raspy timbre startling him out of his brain breaking thoughts of Yakov as the gruffest sugar daddy in the history of gruff sugar daddies. Sensei let out a wuffling snore, his cheek sliding against the glass of the window, but didn't wake.

“...you, uh, did?”

“Hn. Everything's set for your transfer. You'll be set for Nationals, when the time comes.”

“Ah. Thanks.”

The man waved him off, his stare unwavering. “Of course, no guarantees you'll be chosen for Europeans or Worlds this year. Even if you skate like you have been, they'll more than likely choose Yura or Gosha.”
Harry tried not to feel bitterness; he'd fucking beaten Popovich to the podium—and while he may not have taken the gold from Plisetsky, their point margin hadn't been that wide. Well, it was still pretty wide, but not as wide as was usual where the blonde skating demon was concerned.

The man must have read the expression on his face, because his went hard. “Don't forget, all this that I'm doing? It's for Vitya. You're a decent skater, kid, but I'm not going to stick my neck out for you, when there are tried and true skaters who've earned their spots over years of hard work. You want a spot at Europeans—at Worlds—then you'll have to earn it. Work hard—harder. Bring home a Grand Prix Final medal, and a Nationals medal. Maybe then they choose you, but maybe not.”

The bitterness fizzled, and he slumped back into his seat. “I get it. I do. I'm practically a baby in terms of experience, and first-time Seniors competitors don't usually make it to Europeans or Worlds—but they also don't usually make it all the way to the Grand Prix Final, either, and I wish they'd just fucking remember that, instead of treating me like a dumb kid with a big head.”

Yakov shot him a dry look. “You think I don't understand this. I do. You don't coach the likes of Vitya or Yura and not know this. And you remind me of them. A bit more rough around the edges, but you do. It is part of why I agreed to help you—if you had been mediocre, I would not bother, Vitya's boy or no.”

A bright, hot flush swept across his cheeks. “…thanks.”

He waved him off again. “You are young still—enough so that you can smooth out those rough edges,” dark eyes narrowed in on him sharply. “—which is why I expect you to lay off that Axel. It is a good jump, yes, but only for a boy who has had his growth spurt. You have not, and you'll ruin yourself if you keep pushing it.”

Harry didn't roll his eyes. As much as he fucking loved that he was the only one to have that jump under his belt—and ratified, thank you ever so fucking much—he knew Coach Feltzman had a point. The 4F, as physically demanding as it was, was not nearly as hard on the body as the 4A, and yet Coach's knees still bared the scars of multiple Emergency surgeries, still swelled and sent arthritic pangs through the damaged tissue when it rained.

He met the old man's steady gaze, a gaze that burned into his face, daring him to weasel his way out of a promise. “…I like the quad Lutz-Triple better, anyway.”

The rest of the ride to the air strip was quiet, which was a mercy, because their last minute good-byes were not quiet. Not at all.

There was whining and pawing and whimpering...and then there was Makka, energetically weaving around and between her pitiful father's legs as he all-but-clung to his husband.

Chris was speaking in bright, rapid French to a flushed Percy, who was...was.....

Well.

Huh.

He knew Chris had a boyfriend—had been dating him for years, even—but...well. Their respective Instagram accounts boasted a bevy of pics of one or the other with other men. Not that you couldn't be gay and committed and have close, intimate queer-platonic friendships, but. BUT. There was nothing platonic about most of those pics, and...

He shook his head. No. Never mind. Whatever agreement they had, it wasn't his business, especially if it meant he had to put serious thought into how Percy and sex fit into the equation.
If it made them happy, fine. Whatever. Fucking wonderful. He just—it was bad enough that he knew what Chris looked like when he nutted, thanks to that crotch close-up from his final performance. He'd rather not compound that brain-breaking image with thoughts about him dicking Percy.

Harry deliberately turned his back on the two, quickly ducking behind the car as Ohtori looked his way. Fucking Sonuva Shit. No. No, no, no. Screw manners, there was no way in hell he was letting Ohtori corner him while everyone was too distracted to notice him being awkward and creepy.

That was one can of awkward? Can of worms? Can of awkward worms? Whatever it was a can of, it could stay vacuum sealed, please and thanks.

“...you fucking hiding or something?”

He jumped, barely biting back a high-pitched screech. Plisetsky slouched against the side of the car, quirking a brow at him. Harry frowned. “Don't fucking sneak up on me, christ. Goddamn ninja-skater. Someone should get you a fucking bell.”

The blonde rolled his eyes, lazily craning his head to follow Harry's gaze when it drifted back over the roof of the car to track Ohtori. “Seriously, why the fuck are you hiding?”

Harry hesitated for a moment, but...fuck it The blonde had already seen him ugly-cry and snot all over Coach. What even was pride anymore. “The one with the glasses...”

“What about him?”

“Did Beka tell you about him?”

Plisetsky shot him a flat look. “Why would he tell me about your fucking friends? Do I look like I care what some fucking teenager I don't even know?”

Harry met his flat look with an even flatter one. “You think I'd be hiding from him if he was a fucking friend? He's a sponsor.”

Blue eyes blinked at him in surprise, and he whipped his head around to glance at Ohtori, again. “What, seriously?”

He nodded. “Yeah. He's a second year from the rich-kid high school my old ballet instructor worked at. I was using the school's ice rink—seriously, don't ask—while he was there for a club thing. He ended up signing on as an official sponsor after seeing me skate all of once, so now he flies me out on daddy's private jet to all my competitions and does...whatever...while I skate.”

“Wait, really?”

Harry nodded, glancing pointedly at the jet slowly being loaded up with baggage. “Behold—daddy's private jet.”

“Huh.”

“Yeah. I probably wouldn't really care about the whole awkward crush thing, but he cornered me on the flight over and kissed me.”

Plisetsky grimaced. “That's...”

“...a fucking shit-ass power-move, thinking you can kiss someone because you're doing them a favor they didn't ask for in the first place? Yes. Especially since he knows—or at least assumes—I'm
“...what.”

“Yeah. He got really goddamn weird after Beka hugged me at Skate America, saying shit about how I should be with someone closer to my own age. I’m just glad he couldn’t fly out for that one.”

“Gross.”

“A bit, yeah. And, I...don't remember if I ever actually corrected him? I was a bit too creeped out, at the time.”

The blonde grimaced again, shooting Ohtori an unimpressed stare. “Does Beka know?”

Harry snorted. “Of course he fucking does.”

“Good.”

He snorted, biting back a curse and ducking behind the side of the car again as Ohtori’s dark eyes darted in their direction. Plisetsky snorted again, pulling him up by his collar. “Just—if it looks like he's coming over here, I'll handle it.”

He nodded tightly, slumping back against the side of the car. “Thanks.”

The blonde shrugged, tilting his head to glance over his shoulder, his sharp glance belying his almost lazy posture. “Tch.”

Harry finally let himself relax, let the bunched muscles in his shoulders unwind for fifteen minutes before slowly, reluctantly pushing away from the car. “I should—”

He gestured vaguely back at the clusters of people saying last-minute good-byes. Sensei and Coach, lips locked in an Epically disgusting battle of PDA, with Makka sandwiched between their knees. Chris waving at Percy as he slowly made his way back to where the rental cars were parked. Ohtori shaking hands with his papa and mumma as he glanced around, trying to catch sight of him.

Plisetsky grunted. Harry shuffled his feet. “I...guess I'll see you at the Final.”

The older man nodded.

“Don't kill Coach in the meantime.”

The blonde snorted. “No fucking promises.”

Harry let out an awkward laugh, lifting his hand in a weak wave as he made his way across the tarmac. He pulled out his phone, dashing off a quick text to Beka.

**Harry** [11:55 a.m.]: About to take off. Will text you when I land.

He grimaced, turning his face away from the show Sensei and Coach were putting on.

**Harry** [11:56 a.m.]: Correction. Can only take off after someone surgically detaches Coach's mouth from Sensei's.

**Harry** [11:56 a.m.]: Hopefully sooner rather than later. It's gross.

**Beka** [11:56 a.m.]: He's allowed to miss his husband, Hala.
Harry [11:57 a.m.]: Well, obviously. Doesn't make it any less gross.

Beka [11:57 a.m.]: You're allowed to miss him, too.

Harry froze as a deep, deep burning flush spread up his chin and across his face, making it feel tight and hot. His fingers tapped loud and emphatically against the keys—

Harry [12:00 p.m.]: That wasn't even the point Shut up Beka

— but he was cut off, mid-text—before he even had a chance to hit send, even—by his Coach flopping himself over his shoulders. He let out a humiliating squawk and his knees buckled. His phone slipped from his fingers, clattering screen-first onto the tarmac.

“Jesusfuck, really?”

“Oops~! I hope it didn't break...” Harry snorted; half-assed apology aside, his Coach sounded about as sorry as Makka had been all those times she'd flopped on top of his math book to get tummy skritches. Read: not at all sorry. “But you shouldn't be on your phone right now, anyway.”

Harry leaned away to meet his Coach's gaze. “Why's that?”

“Because you're leaving, and you haven't even said good-bye, yet.”

He rolled his eyes, shrugging out of his Coach's hold to pick up his phone. Thin fingers gently inspected the screen—it was a bit scratched up, but not cracked, thank god. “Tch. S'not like I'm not seeing you again in, like, two weeks.”

The older man whined. Loudly. In his ear. And then glommed onto him, wrapping him even tighter in his arms. Like a stubborn, fussy octopus. “So rude, Hala. You shouldn't be so rude to daddy.”

He shuddered. “Seriously, don't fucking do that.”

“Do what~?”

“Call yourself daddy like that. It's fucking creepy.”

The man beamed at him like the troll he was, pressing a bristly kiss to his forehead. He swatted at his face.

“The fuck was that for?!”

“I'll miss you too, Hala~”

With a twist of his narrow shoulders, Harry finally pulled himself loose. “WHO'D EVEN FUCKING MISS YOU. TCH.”

He stormed off, face burning as his Coach's delighted laughter trailed after him. Green met blue briefly as he stormed past, and for a moment, Plisetsky looked almost...hunted. The look lingered for a split second...just a second...before it collapsed into an awkward mix of chagrin and...not quite existential despair, but whatever it was, it was definitely flavored with a bit of “how is this my life.”

Harry, for his part, ignored the look, hunching his shoulders as he stomped his way up the ramp and disappeared inside the jet.

Well, he ignored it for as long as it took him to flop into his seat, pull out his phone, and pretend that it—everything—hadn't happened. Pretend that he hadn't just had a goddamn strop in front of the older
skater, because god. Why. Why would he even do that.

*Because I'm a fucking dumbshit drama queen with a masochistic streak, apparently.*

He snorted, fingering the scratches on the screen; they looked a bit deeper under the overhead lights, but at least he hadn't found any cracks, yet. He sighed, tapping out a quick text to his stupid boyfriend, who'd not even stopped being stupid long enough to congratulate him on his Silver. The stupid.

Harry [12:03 p.m.]: Don't know why I'm bothering because you obvs don't care, but we're on our way back now.

Harry [12:04 p.m.]: Just wanted to let you know. Ya know. In case you give a shit anymore.

His phone vibrated. Speak of the stupid devil...

Ryo-kun [12:05 p.m.]: Hey. Sorry. Let me meet you?

Harry [12:05 p.m.]: Fuck u, really. That's all you gotta say?

Harry [12:06 p.m.]: And we flew out on Ohtori's jet, remember. We're flying in by way of Fukuoka, not Sapporo.

Ryo-kun [12:07 p.m.]: I'm an asshole. I know. I want to apologize in person. Tell me when you're landing, and I'll meet you.

He blinked.

Harry [12:08 p.m.]: Why aren't you in Sapporo?

There was a brief pause, then...

Ryo-kun [12:09 p.m.]: Wanted to surprise you, to make up for being a dick. Maybe stay at the Onsen til you left for the Final.

Harry [12:10 p.m.]: And you think that's going to make up for you acting like an ass?

Ryo-kun [12:11 p.m.]: No, but. I saw your texts. I know you're leaving for Russia soon. I just want some time with you before you leave.

His shoulders drooped, and he swiped at his face.

Harry [12:11 p.m.]: ...gimme a sec.

He looked up from the screen, zeroing in on Ohtori where he was stretched out, laptop perched on the tray table. He moved to stand, but felt the floor shift as the jet began to taxi, and slouched back in his seat.

“Uh, Ohtori-san?”

The older boy looked up, a smile stretching his face as their eyes met. “Yes, Potter-san?”

“Would it be alright if my friend met us at the airstrip in Fukuoka? Apparently, he flew out from Sapporo to surprise me.”
Ohtori's smile went a bit bland, but he nodded. “Give me his name, and I can have security add his name to the list.”

“Watanabe Ryota.”

“Like the figure skater?”

He shot Ohtori a look; considering how monofocused the other boy seemed on him, he was surprised he was familiar with other skaters, let alone those Harry hadn't competed against. “...yeah, like him.”

The older boy shot off a quick text, his fingers freezing for a moment. “Should I presume that's who we're meeting, or is the name just a lucky coincidence?”

“No, that's who we're meeting.”

The fingers resumed their quick typing. “And sent. You may let him know when and where to meet us.”

Harry [12:18 p.m.]: We're taking off, so I gtg, but if you want to meet us, we should be there abt 12 tomorrow. The Ohtori air strip is gated, so make sure you bring ur passport so his security lets you through. He added you to the list.

Ryo-kun [12:18 p.m.]: And am I staying with you, or should I find somewhere else?

He shot a glance to his sleeping Sensei, who was all but drooling into Makka's fur.

Harry [12:18 p.m.]: Let me handle it, OK. Ttyl.

There was a pause, and he almost thought he wasn't going to get a response. His phone buzzed.

Ryo-kun [12:19 p.m.]: See you soon. Love you.

... ...

The flight was fine, as far as flights go—if so much better than the flight there, because there were no surprise kisses, thank god. Harry suspected that had a lot to do with the fact that he spent most of his time buried behind his phone, pretending not to see the glances the older boy kept tossing him.

Smart Ohtori may be, but subtle he so fucking was not, and he was so not giving him any opening to corner him this time around.

His eyes darted back towards his phone, pretending he hadn't almost been caught staring. Oh god, please don't let him have noticed. Please.

“...n show wen' well. Th' mi'phone and hea'phones werked well...”

Harry cleared his throat, focusing back on Beka. “So they were the right ones, then? Good.”

The other skater let out a grunt, his voice muffled by his comforter. “Mmm. Tho'......” there was a long pause, where he almost thought Beka had drifted off, before he shook himself awake with a snort and continued on “......the pil din't wear his konkï so 'e couldn' skate.”

Harry blinked down at Beka, face pixelated and discolored—because fuck in-flight wifi even when it's fancy—and stared. That was...he knew Beka's Russian was much, much better than his, so either
his brain had mistranslated that, or...

“......uhhhh...what?”

“Th' pil...elephant. He fr'got his skates, so he had to sit out practice.”

He felt an eyebrow slowly creep its way up his forehead.

“Have you...have you been sleeping alright, Beka?”

“Nnn. T'busy. DJ thin' til 5, th'n up to skate at 6, an' jus' got home an' you called.”

“Jesus, Beka...maybe I should let you go so you can get some fucking sleep...”

“Nnn. Don’ get ta talk to you as much 'nymore. Missit.”

A small smile flitted across his mouth. “Yeah, me too. But you gotta get some rest, yeah? We can talk when you're more awake.”

Beka let out a deep, hearty snore, his nose and cheek smashed flat against his phone. Harry bit back a howl of laughter, carefully screencapping the image for later.

Oh, his kingdom for a horse...

Or, should that be his knife-shoes for Plisetsky's cellphone number?

Whatever. Point was, he had a feeling the older skater would fucking love it, if only so he could hold the damning pic over Beka's head for the rest of his fucking life.

“I'm gonna hang up now, 'k? Bye, Beka.”

The older man let out a little dual-toned grunt that Harry assumed was supposed to be good-bye, then went right back to snoring like a congested boar. Harry didn't even try to bite back his howl of laughter this time, ending the call before he woke his ridiculous friend.

“Good call?”

Harry's eyes flickered over to meet Ohtori's, and he nodded. “Yeah.”

He stifled a yawn of his own, blinking in surprise. He was actually—maybe he was only tired because Beka was tired, but he was tired now and hadn't been so tired before...

He yawned again, wider, his jaw cracking with the force of it. Green eyes cracked open as Ohtori's light laughter rang out.

“You should probably try and get some sleep, Potter-kun. You've had a trying few days.”

Harry nodded muzzily, snuggling down next to his snoring Sensei. It had been a tryering...no, tiretryering......no, wait. Tiring. Tiring. Few days, and a nap sounded great. He let out a little hum, curling up close to Makkka to pillow his head on her fluffy back.

He drifted off, not sure if Ohtori had actually called him Potter-kun instead of Potter-san, or if he imagined it, and not sure if it matt—Zzzzzz.

He didn't dream, or at least he didn't remember if he did. Maybe? Either way, it was dark, and floaty, and warm, and he just wanted to drift in the lovely cotton dark for a while longer.
He twitched.

Harry cracked his eyes opened, flinching away from the ODGOD POODLE FACE TOO CLOSE WITH THE Slobber, UGHHhhhh.

He jerked his face away as Makka did her best to cover his face with enthusiastic kisses, slobber matting the curls around her muzzle, staining them a dark, poo-y brown. “Noo. Stahhhp. Makka, gross—nüüuuuuuuu.”

He pushed her face away just long enough to glower at her. Makka, slobbery Love-Floof that she was, paused just long enough to give him her best grin, then dove in for more kisses. Harry arched his neck back, doing his best to keep his mouth away from her tongue, because NO. He loved her, don't get him wrong, but he had his fucking limits, and letting her lick his mouth was one of them.

“Finally awake?”

Harry's gaze jerked up to meet Ohtori's, and—that was all the opening Makka needed. Darting forth with a gleeful *boof*, her tongue slimed up his chin and across his mouth, catching his nose just right so a bit of smelly drool went straight up his goddamn nose. He squealed, turning to rub his face violently across his sleeve.

Oh god, it felt so gross and he wanted it off, and the goddamn smell—eugh. Dog-ass meets kibble-breath meets Satan's sweaty ball sack. It was the fucking worst.

He shot a look to the pleased looking poodle, and grimaced. First fucking thing, he was buying her a doggy toothbrush. First. Goddamn. Thing.

He let out a snort against his arm, trying to get the last of the smell out. “Well, I'm awake now.”

Ohtori's lips twitched into a smirk, which was barely masked as he used one of his long, thin fingers to push his glasses up the bridge of his equally thin nose. “We should be arriving shortly, so it's probably best you gather yourself, now.”

Harry huffed, slumping back into the seat. He wasn't nervous; He had no reason to be, not with Ryota-kun.

*But.*

It had been so long...since their time in Sapporo...since he'd been able to do more than send him sappy texts and emoji. Since he'd been able to touch him...to kiss him.

And as far as 'buts' went, that was a pretty big but.

He flipped open his phone, shooting off a text to the boy in question.

**Harry** [11:45 a.m.]: Should be landing soon. You there yet?

**Ryo-kun** [11:45 a.m.]: Security just let me past the gate. Taxi should be pulling up soon.

**Ryo-kun** [11:45 a.m.]: You have a chance to talk to your sensei yet?

He shot a quick side-eye over towards Ohtori, who was carefully pretending not to notice what
Harry was doing. Somehow, knowing that he would be carefully listening to everything he said made it even harder to work up the courage to open his mouth. Which was kind of ridiculous? Because it wasn't like he had the power of veto over anything in his life, let alone who he invited over.

It was still unnerving.

...if only because he knew Ohtori would fucking jump at the chance to come stay at the Onsen, and that was just not happening. Not if he was given any say.

“...hey, Sensei?”

The man turned to him, eyes bleary as he carefully cleaned his glasses on his shirt. “Yes, Harii-kun?”

“My, uh, my friend—you remember I told you about Ryota-kun?”

“I think so, yes? The one you ran into in Sapporo?”

“Yeah, him. Well, uh...he flew out. From Sapporo. You know, to see me.”

“That was kind of him.”

“...Uh, yeah. Totally. Anyway, he wanted to know if you'd be alright with him renting a room at the Onsen?”

Startled brown eyes blinked at him, sliding into focus as the man slid his glassed onto his face. “I don't see why not, if he came all this way, but—Harii-kun...”

Harry swallowed hard, bracing himself.

“...if he's your friend, I'm sure kaa-san can just set him up with you. That is, if you don't mind sharing. He shouldn't have to worry about paying for a room, if he's come all this way to see you.”

He let out a breath, a relieved smile tugging at his lips. “Yeah, no. I don't mind. Thanks, Sensei. I'll let him know.”

The man beamed at him. “Of course, Harii-kun. I'm just happy to know you have such good friends, who'd come all this way to support you.”

Harry fought back a flush, ducking behind his phone to tap out a quick reply.

**Harry** [11:52 a.m.]: Sensei is going to have Hiroko-ba-san put you up in my room.

**Ryo-kun** [11:53 a.m.]: What, really?

**Harry** [11:53 a.m.]: Only because he still doesn't know about us.

**Ryo-kun** [11:53 a.m.]: Ah. That...makes more sense. “(-_-)

**Harry** [11:54 a.m.]: "/_(^_^)_/" I can tell him, if you wanna be open about it, but he'll probably not let you alone with me lol.

He watched impatiently as the three dots signaling Ryota-kun typing started and stopped a few times, before finally a message came through.

**Ryo-kun** [11:56 a.m.]: As long as that Ohtori-baka doesn't try anything, I'm fine w keeping it quiet.
Harry rolled his eyes, doing his best not to squeeze his phone like it was his stubborn boyfriend's neck.

**Harry** [11:57 a.m.]: OMG, you know I'm not into him, so please don't start drama.

**Ryo-kun** [11:58 a.m.]: No promises.

**Harry** [11:59 a.m.]: ──ノ(_■_■)ノ, THO!!!

**Ryo-kun** [12:00 p.m.]: It would be 1 thing if you had made him think you were into him.

**Ryo-kun** [12:01 p.m.]: I'd fucking hate it, and we'd have to have -A Talk- about shit, but I'd get why he did it.

**Ryo-kun** [12:01 p.m.]: But u haven't sought him out. Haven't flirted. Fucking nothing to make him think you'd be OK with it.

**Ryo-kun** [12:01 p.m.]: And he did it anyway.

**Ryo-kun** [12:02 p.m.]: Like an entitled little fuckboy who thinks it's OK to force his attentions on some1 because he's rich.

**Ryo-kun** [12:03 p.m.]: Like him paying to fly u places means u owe him ur time, or attention, or a gdamn thing u don't want to give.

**Ryo-kun** [12:04 p.m.]: I fucking love you, and him pulling that shit pisses me the fuck off.

Harry would probably deny it if called on it, but...he maybe...sort of...just a bit...possible...fucking swooned. But, like...could you blame him? Ryota-kun had used The “L” Word, and oh god, he wasn't sure he could even handle that without turning into an emotional hotmess.

His fingers shook as he tapped out a quick message.

**Harry** [12:05 p.m.]: Ohgod, how is that even fair. You say that when u know I'll have to wait to kiss u and, ugh. Goddamn u. \(\TT\sim\TT\) (ε´)♡

**Ryo-kun** [12:06 p.m.]: (^_~) You can make it up to me later.

**Harry** [12:06 p.m.]: #ThatTimeWhen BB is SO UNFAIRLY HOT, goddamn. ( ■ )

Harry may have...possibly...perhaps...all but floated down the ramp, drifting into the waiting arms of Ryota-kun. He didn't kiss him, but it was a very, very near thing. As it was, he could most definitely say that their reunion glom was a bit on the intense side.

Sensei, luckily, was just tired enough not to really notice how intensely he was clinging, which gave him enough time to gather his shit and introduce them...which was about the time that shit went a bit south.

While Sensei had obviously missed the memo about them, it was obvious that Ohtori had not. He had, in fact, received it in triplicate, in 60 point TNR bold-faced font. It was just as clear that he was very, very put out about it.

No. Not put out.

As fucking pissed off as if Ryota-kun had spit in his mother's face, trashed his house, and then pissed
on his beloved pineapple laptop while giving him a double two-finger salute. Luckily for Ryota-kun, Harry refused to budge from his glom, shooting the Ohtori a flat look over his shoulder. That, at least, had the Glower of Imminent Death™ leveling out to a less-murderous sulk.

It took everything in him not to roll his eyes, because fucking really. This bullshit? This bullshit right here?

He had no time for this bullshit. Ohtori had sought him out, not the other way around. If he didn’t like how shit turned out? Not his problem; Harry had no problem severing ties and letting him go back to being yet another weirdly territorial fan.

...OK.

So.

Maybe he was feeling a bit salty, but only because he took this shit seriously, and really fucking wished Ohtori would too—or, at least take it seriously enough to put his crush to the side.

Yeah.

Anyway.

He kept his voice bland and level and polite as he bid the Ohtori fairwell, biting his lip to keep in the scoff that wanted to come out as the older boy slunk into his limo without so much as a side glance...or a goddamn word.

No “Good-bye, talk to you later.”

No “I’ll be seeing you in two weeks for the Final.”

If worse came to worse, he could put some of his prize money towards plane tickets. Sensei, at least, had had enough experience budgeting for last-minute Economy seats on discount flights to help him work something out. Or, if they had enough money to spare, he could ask his papa or mumma, but...

...they were already putting everything on hold to help Coach find a place with a spare room for him to use during the skating season, on top of searching for a space of their own with enough room for all of them, so Harry could live at home during the off season.

And his mumma still had to go be an amazing lawyer, when she wasn’t busy helping Percy search out property for their new offices, as well as a space for said Weasley to stay since he was uprooting his life, too.

God. Honestly, with all that, he’d feel like kind of a shit asking for another favor. He would if he had to, but he didn’t really want to unless he had no choice.

And all this added stress was his to shoulder because a presumptuous rich-boy sponsor was feeling butt-hurt over Harry not returning his case of teenage pants-feels.

For fuck’s sake.

He was a goddamn professional athlete. He had not signed up for this mess.

In fact, this mess could go fuck itself. In the ear. With a jelly dildo. And cheap lube.

In the meantime, he had other things to think about. More important things. Things like figuring out
what to do for Sensei's birthday on the 29th.

...and deciding how he was gonna handle his unfairly hot boyfriend's love confession, on the top of the fact that said boyfriend was going to be sharing his room.

...and despairing over the fact that he had two weeks to cram in as much practice, as much maths and science homework, and as much prep for Russian Nationals as he could, before he'd have to fly out again to compete in the Final.

Harry let out a groan, already exhausted, and slumped sideways in his seat, face-planting in Ryota-kun's musty armpit.

It was going to be a Hell akin to Quad Bootcamp, he just knew it, but—his glanced up, his eyes catching Ryota-kun's—if he survived it, it would be so fucking worth it.

Chapter End Notes

So. That Chris x Percy ship kind of sneaked up on me like a bedfart in the night, and I am not sorry. Really, really not sorry. It probably won't get much air time, as it were, because Harry is our protag and he DOES NOT WANT TO KNOW THANKS, but you can rest assured that it will probably be a thing. However, it was such a fun surprise for me writing it, that I probably won't add a tag for it (Troll-Face).

In terms of the speech in Italics...I don't know Russian. Not even a little. I find translations for individual words and phrases, and then try to cross-reference them at least three separate places, to make sure I'm not fucking it up. I would have no time to do anything else if I tried to do that for entire conversations. So. You get convos in Italics.

...which brings me to translations.

Kukla: (Russ) doll, dolly
Pil: (Kaz) Elephant
Konki: (Kaz) skates

One last note, so nobody @’s me re: in-flight texting. I know that most commercial flights don't make that possible, unless you have a network configured to allow that shit and a super cool phone, which I do not. However, I imagine that Kyoya spared no expense making sure he could text whenever the fuck he wanted in-flight. TL; DR: JUST GO WITH IT. ^_^
Chapter Fifteen

Chapter Summary

The lead up to the Grand Prix Final~

Chapter Notes

::gingerly presents chapter::<br>
This took...a lot longer than I expected it to. As in, 7--count 'em 7--variant, discarded versions before what I have for you here. I can only say that HOPEFULLY THAT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.<br>

Side Note: Read End Notes for Chapter Warnings

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It was loud. Jesusfuck. Way too goddamn loud to hear the click of the camera shutter before...

*Flash!*

Harry wobbled, mid-pirouette, only just catching himself on his Sensei’s shoulder as he whipped around to face the culprit.

Ryota-kun.

The deviant photographer.

...and his own personal *paparazzo*, apparently.

He was pretty sure it was the *fuckton of sake* that had him striking a pose, a la Gaga—with added duck lips—instead of flipping the sneaky bastard off.

His phone buzzed near his foot, and he stooped down, scrambling through the mess of empty sake bottles to snatch it up.

Harry snorted.

*Well.*

The pervy little twat had known exactly what he was doing, angling his phone like that.

His legs looked long as fuck, disappearing into the hem of his Coach’s old practice shirt, which kissed the top of his thighs, showing off his not-so-secret-anymore pair of Sailor Moon cotton sleep shorts that he absolutely had NOT bought in the Junior Girl’s section of Hot Topic.

Noooope.
Not him.

His cupcake knee highs, kinda dorky and super fucking worn out in the knees—and not for any sexy reason either, fuck you very much—made him look like some kind of cross-dressing school boy fap fantasy.

The pink shutter shades sliding down the bridge of his nose, and the Minnie Mouse ears perched crookedly atop his head were, like, both the icing and shiny red cherry topping his mortification cupcake.

F-uck.

...Coach was totally going to murder his boyfriend, and there would be no way to stop him.

Scratch that—Coach would only kill Ryota-kun if Beka didn't get to him, first.

[image.jpg]

watanabe_ryota That Time When ur bae kills you w hotness @hjp-skates #boyfriendgoals #hearteyes #thoselegsthos #livingthewetdream

2,056 Likes 20 Comments

phichit+chu Oh, myyyy ( /▽̄ )/

v-nikiforov @hjp-skates YOUNG!!! MAN!!!! Σ(ﾟ▽ﾟ“)

Ohjesusfuckingoddamnit.

If he were sober, Harry was pretty sure he'd be fucking pissed off about being outed by his drunk-ass boyfriend, who may or may not be even doing it to fuck with Ohtori. Luckily for the shitcock, he wasn't sober enough to really give a shit. So. Nevermind.

Strong arms yanked him into a surprise side hug, and he let out a little squawk.

“Ne, Harii-kun~! I's m'biiiiiirthday!” Sensei blinked down at him through shochu-glazed eyes, his mouth pulled up into a dopey smile. “Didja know?”

Harry beamed at him, flinging his arms around the older man in a tight hug. “Ohmygod, I knooow! I's so great. Yur so great, S'nsei~!”

Sensei sniffled emotionally. Harry blinked, feeling his own eyes well up, too. He just...he just had so many feelings, god, and wow but this sake was strong. Must be from Toshiya-ji-san's super-secret private stash.

The older man sniffled loudly in his ear, clinging even tighter. “’m so happy yer here, Harii-kun! You're my favorite,” he swayed forward on the balls of his feet, flinging out a hand to catch himself on Harry’s shoulder before he could eat shit on the slippery tabletop. “Ssshhhhh, don' tell, tho...i’s a secret.”

“Assec...a seeecret?”
“Hn. Y’can’t tell V’tyuh or Y’ra. They’re delicate, see?”

Harry nodded solemnly, giving a sloppy salute to his most favoritest person, ever. “I promise.”

He blinked. That...didn't sound quite right. Had he said that in English?

“Obeshchaniye.”

Nope. Not right, either. He worked his jaw.

“Proooomise?”

That...sounded a bit better. At least it was in Japanese. Mostly. Probably? Whatever.

He let out a startled yelp as he was bodily lifted off the table and set onto unsteady feet by a smirking Mari-nee. He let out a happy yell, latching onto her in a hug, because jesusfuck it had been forever. Literal minutes. “Mari-nee-s~an!”

The older woman let out a snort around the butt of her cigarette, rolling her eyes. “How much have you had, kid?”

Harry frowned. That...was a very, very good question, and one he wasn't sure he could answer. “Uhmmm. Not a lot a lot, but still a lot, I think? I dunno...”

He whirled to face his Sensei, who was being carefully helped off the table top by Takeshi-san.

“Hey, Sensei?”

“Ohi, Harii-kun!”

“Ohi, Sensei~! Hey, Sensei, do you know how drunk I am?”

The man blinked his glassy brown eyes, face going slack in deep thought. After what felt like forever, his face cleared. “No idea, Harii-kun!”

Harry let out a peal of laughter, whirling back to face a smirking Mari-nee. “I dunno. Sorry.”

Mari-nee snatched the drink out of his hand, lifting a brow at him when he let out an offended squawk, because fucking ruuuuude. “Sorry, kid. I'm cutting you off before you make an ever bigger mess.”

Harry pouted up at her, his glare pretty fucking useless since he was still wearing his fucking gorgeously pink shutter shades. Still! It was the principle of the thing—or something.

Mari-nee rolled her eyes again—and they were gonna get stuck if she kept doing that—ducking behind him to clear the empty dishes and sake bottles and shochu bottles off the table. “Your head will thank me in the morning, brat.”

He let out a little sniff, Minnie ears sliding back as he lifted his nose haughtily. Just like that Malboy-twerp (or whatever his name was) had the one and only time he'd met him. “I'm sure I don't know what you mean. I'm...perfectly sober.”

The older woman let out a guffaw. “You're sober. Really.”

Harry hesitated, trying to focus on the older woman's face, but kept failing because her secret ghost-twin kept trying to crowd in next to her. “I'm...moderately functional.”
Mari-nee rolled her eyes, grinning around the filter of her smoldering cigarette stub. “That's a no.”

He would have retorted—he really would have, because he sooo wasn't drunk—but he was interrupted by Ryota-kun before he could give his amazing clever response of “Nuh-uh!”

...he probably should be a bit glad his boyfriend was a rude interrupter. Green eyes slid across the other boy's face before locking on glassy, shaded eyes. They were half-lidded, and his sweat-slicked hair was clinging to his face and neck.

“Ha.rii-kuuuun.”

Harry climb him like a tree, or stick his tongue down his throat, or both. Probably both. “A-ah?”

Ryota-kun didn't say anything, just kind of...pressed in close, burying his face against his neck with a happy hum. He settled his weight against the taller boy, who had all but draped himself over his shoulders.

Harry's face exploded with red, and he tried really really hard not to meet the judging gaze he could feel Mari-nee sending the both of them. So. There went all those hours trying to convince her that, no, the two of them were totally platonic, really!

Ryota-kun let out a happy grumble, lips curving into a smile against his neck. Harry tried really fucking hard not to shiver, because there was no way he'd be able to live if he got turned on in front of Mari-nee-san, of all fucking people. No. goddamn. Way.

“...uhm???”

Mari-nee shot him a deeply judging look, before pointedly gathering up the dishes and vanishing into the crowd. Well. OK, then.

His boyfriend let out another deep, grumbly noise. Harry blinked, feeling the muscles of his inner thighs tremble. Huh. That...was interesting. He'd never thought that a sound could do...that. He'd have to test that out a bit more, just to see. For science.

Harry tilted his head towards his growly boyfriend, his lips just brushing the line of his jaw. “You're the worst.”

“Mm?” He totally didn't shiver again as the noise vibrated against his skin.

“We were going for subtle, and you just—! I mean, what even was that post? And now this...totally the worst.”

Ryota-kun's teeth scraped across the line of his neck before a warm, wet mouth latched onto the spot he'd just bitten. Harry let out a little hiccup of surprise.

Goddamn him.

“If you give me a fucking hickey in front of a room full of Sensei's friends, I fucking swear—!”

Ryota-kun detached his mouth long enough to sigh like he was the most long-suffering boyfriend, ever. Harry was pretty sure he should feel offended. “No sense of romance, I swear.”

Harry scoffed. “—oh, fuck you, too. Fucking exhibitionist.”

“Oh-ho? I thought I'd be doing the fucking, but if you wanna give it a go—”
“Ohmygod, not what I meant, you shit.”

Ryota-kun snorted against his neck, pinching playfully at his sides; Harry twitched away. His boyfriend’s lips curved up into a grin. “Ticklish..? Good to know.”

“Don’t. You. Dare.”

The utter shit just bit at his neck, fingers pinching at his sides again til Harry was all but squirming and crowing with laughter, trying but not really trying to pull away from his boyfriend’s hold. “You’re a shit.”

The older boy let out a pleased hum. “I know.”

Harry snorted. “That wasn’t a compliment, you...assface.”

A snort. “Assface?”

“Fine. You...utter shitcock. Better?”

Ryota-kun pressed a kiss to the side of his neck, ignoring him. “I hear you complaining, but I don’t see you pushing me awaaaay.”

“Tch. Fucker.”

“Are you offering..?”

Harry was pretty sure his face had just exploded. A gain. He was actually pretty surprised not to see bits of skin spattered across the room.

Ryota-kun nudged at his jaw with his nose, before pressing a warm kiss to the same spot. “Harii-kun? Are you offering?”

Harry...hesitated. Not because he didn’t want to. Fuck no, he was down for whatever, but..? The Onsen...the rooms, with their thin-as-shit walls, weren’t really the best place for that kind of thing; Sensei and his idiot husband had proved as much so, so many fucking times.

So many times.

...and gods, but there were things he could have lived forever without knowing about those two ridiculous shits.

“I...what do you have in mind?”

Ryota-kun swayed forward a bit, and he had to brace himself as a bit more of his boyfriend’s weight pressed into him. He could feel the smirk curving his lips. A smirk that he really, really wanted to kiss off his lips, oh sweet minty lord, yes please. “I think...you an’ me should go and find a dark corner, and...”

His voice trailed off suggestively. Harry swallowed hard.

“...if you say 'fuck against a wall,' like some goddamn porn cliché, I will absolutely cut off your dick and feed it to you.”

Ryota-kun laughed. “Change of plans, then.”

“You bet your ass ‘change of plans.’ Fucking exhibitionists, I swear.”
His boyfriend laughed, pinching at the inside of his thighs. His fingers, still slippery and cold from his beer, sent a shock up his spine. Harry yowled, dancing back out of his grip. “Jesusfuck, you asshole. That was coooold.”

He rubbed at his thigh, glowering at the other boy. Ryota-kun just smirked. “I know a quick way to warm them up.”

Harry gave him a flat glare. “If you try and touch my dick with those cold fingers, I will absolutely fucking kill you where you stand.”

“...and cut off my dick and feed it to me?”

Green eyes narrowed, and he bared his teeth in a snarl. “Also that, yeah.”

Ryota-kun let out a bark of laughter. Harry's eyes darted around. Luckily, nobody was really paying too much attention to them. Well, Mari-nee was, but she was just as busy pretending not to notice them and cleaning off tables. He bit back a grimace, because he really didn't want to think about how much she knew about his sex life, oh fucking christ, talk about eternal boner killer.

Harry shot a look at his still-cackling boyfriend. He almost couldn't wait til he got the shithead alone. He'd see who was laughing, then.

...Neither of them.

Neither of them were laughing.

Well, yeah, they were, but not because of anything sexy. Sexy was pretty much the opposite of everything that went down in there.

Harry was pretty sure he’d never be able to think about the whole...thing without dying inside, because porn had fucking LIED TO HIM, and he—a sweet summer child—had believed those terrible, awful lies. It had taken all of two minutes to figure out that he'd been conned, and it was with no little amount of brain-melting embarrassment that he'd had to put shit on pause so that he could dig up an appropriate chart from The Joy of Gay Sex Wiki.

A chart they could have on hand...well, on phone...as they worked out the details of the whole “Insert Tab A into Slot B” clusterfuck.

...and why had nobody told him lube could stain sheets? Or that it could send you sliding off a goddamn bed. He knew it was supposed to be slippery, but...he'd almost knocked over his side-table with his face.

Anyway.

They’d been OK once they got past the minor Lube Crisis™ and the whole...Tab A into Slot B part, only...Harry was pretty sure he'd never be able to watch gay porn again without feeling betrayed.

Harry had fallen into an uncomfortably sticky sleep, mourning the fact that he hadn't thought to put down towels, because wet spots were truly a product of evil. Moist, gooey evil.

He awoke feeling not quite bitter, but really not fucking pleased about all the goddamn sunshine and cheery birdsong.

Everything ached—literally everything. From his eyelids to his fucking toenails, he felt like a giant goddamn bruise. Even his teeth ached.
Fucking hell.

He'd heard that sex would make you sore, but he'd thought they'd been talking about the obvious bits, not, like, his hair.

Harry grunted as he cracked open a lid to look for his phone. Perched on the edge of the side table, it looked seconds away from toppling into the puddle of lube. He stared at the puddle, dubiously.

Hm.

...he really hoped that was only lube.

He lunged, ignoring Ryota-kun's pained grunt as he body slammed him into the mattress in a mad scramble to save his poor phone from messy, slippery doom.

“Th’ fuuuuuuhhhhck?” He let out a wheeze, pushing weakly at him even as he scrambled back to his side of the bed.

“Sorry, sorry.”

His boyfriend grunted unhappily, giving a hard turn onto his side, yanking the blankets up over his head. Harry bit back a snort of laughter, but immediately regretted everything as his head, and neck, and goddamn eyelashes gave a painful throb.

God, but he was going to kill Beka. In all the times he'd teased him about doing the do with Ryota-kun, he'd never thought to warn him about this bullshit? That was not on.

Harry [09:34 a.m.] : O!!M!!G!! BEKA

Harry [09:34 a.m.] : I kind of love and hate u rn???

...there was a few minutes pause, just enough time for him to realize that he was intensely glad he had the day off. It probably wouldn't kill him, but he also didn't really feel the desire to do a plie, let alone a Biellmann, anytime soon.

It also gave him a few minutes to add to his hit list.

Beka would be first, yes, but he was only the beginning. Ryota-kun was cute, but his cock was to blame for his inability to sit, so...he would need to go, too. Coach, definitely, was on there too, because really. He sat him through two versions of brain melting embarrassment, but didn't think to mention the bone deep ache that came after? Yeah, he was dead, too, for sure.


Beka [09:48 a.m.] : Cause I'm pretty sure I didn't do it.

Harry [09:49 a.m.] : I'm sticky and sore and why didn't u tell me eyelashes could hurt.

Beka [09:52 a.m.] : If you mean what I think u mean, I guarantee that's definitely not my fault.

Beka [09:53 a.m.] : I mean, I love u, but not like that.

Harry scoffed, his fingers flying across the keys.

Harry [09:54 a.m.] : First of all? Fucking ew, Beka.
Harry [09:55 a.m.]: Secondly? It is so totally your fault. I was not prepared.

He bit his lip, a blush lighting up his face.

Harry [09:56 a.m.]: Well, no, I was prepared, but not -prepared-

He grimaced.

Harry [09:57 a.m.]: U know what? Ignore that last text.

He could almost see the smirk on Beka’s face, and really really wished he could go back in time a few seconds and slap the shit out of his past self, because fucking REALLY.

Beka [10:00 a.m.]: LOL

Beka [10:01 a.m.]: Was it good, at least?

Harry considered.

He considered the goddamn mess of dried spunk and lube, and the pile of tangled, torn condoms they’d gone through before deciding *fuck this shit*.

He considered how long it was going to take to get this shit out of everything.

He considered how he was going to explain his sudden desire to do laundry to Mari-nee, or...ohgod...Hiroko-ba-san.

He grimaced.

OK, so, maybe they didn't have to worry about the health issues, because of the whole virgin thing, but he still had regrets. Specifically, regrets of the 'I have dried spunk in my hair and I don't know how it got there' variety.

Harry [10:02 a.m.]: I mean, it wasn't bad.

Beka [10:02 a.m.]: But???

He sighed, staring balefully down at the mess their enthusiasm had wrought.

Harry [10:03 a.m.]: Buuuut. I mean. TMI maybe? I didn't know anyone could cum that much, omg. It's fucking everywhere.

Beka [10:03 a.m.]: ROFLMAO 🅱️ (TI T) 🅱️.

He fought the urge to throw his phone against the wall.

Harry [10:04 a.m.]: I'M SERIOUS, BEKA. I AM LEGIT SHOOK. HOW DOES THAT EVEN HAPPEN.

Beka [10:05 a.m.]: Either ur boy is polyorchidic, or was backed up from chronic blue balls.

* Poly...

* ohgod.
Beka [10:05 a.m.]: I mean, if you don't know either way, I'm sure he wouldn't have a problem with u checking his shit to find out for yourself.

Harry's blush burned across his forehead and nose, staining the tips of his ears bright red.

Harry [10:06 a.m.]: Fuck u, your horrible.

Harry [10:06 a.m.]: I'm serious, though. I need to clean this shit up before Sensei sees, but I don't think there are enough towels in all of Hatsetsu for that. And this is a goddamn Onsen resort town. This is where towels come to settle down and have their towel babies.

Beka [10:07 a.m.]: Poor Hala. I'm sure you'll figure it out.

Harry gave into the urge to blow a massive raspberry at his phone. He didn't care that it was childish. Nobody would ever know.

Harry [10:07 a.m.]: Thanks for that. Dick.

Beka [10:07 a.m.]: Seriously, tho. You're OK?

He took a deep breath. Let it out. He was still too sore and tired to take proper stock of himself, but...

Harry [10:08 a.m.]: Yeah, no. I'm fine. No regrets. Well, I mean. I regret that I'll have to find a way to get all this spunk off literally everything. But, aside from that? I'm good.

Beka [10:09 a.m.]: Good.

Beka [10:10 a.m.]: Now, the important question. Honey-fuck or Bunny-fuck?

Harry, staring at his phone in disbelief, tried his best not to scream.

.. ..

Thumb deftly scrolling past Instagram post after Instagram post, he leaned into his stretch. Initial pain aside, there hadn't really been any issues with soreness; he was pretty sure studio time and on-ice practice would have sucked, otherwise. Whoever had started the shitty rumor in the first place, about not being able skate after fucking, was an utter twatwaffle of the highest order.

Or a troll operating on the level of his goddamn Coach.

Either way, they were a liar—which, not gonna lie, was a good thing for him, because he really hadn't wanted to explain to Sensei why he suddenly couldn't do a plie, let alone a basic Candle Spin.

Harry's thumb froze a half and inch above his screen. He blinked, staring down at his phone in disbelief before gingerly hitting play.

Though the video feed was—thank fucking god—muted, he was still stuck trying to figure out why the absolute fuck Phishitfucking Chuladon'teven was doing the thing he was doing. It was just...why.

[video.mpg]

phichitchu Working on something special for the GPF Exhibition Skate #PodiumGoals #BabyBabyBabyOHYES
“I’m sorry, Sensei, but I’ve absolutely lost all respect for Chulanont.”

“How?” Despite the obvious surprise in his voice, the man didn’t falter as he continued pressing him into his side split, easing him forward till his rib cage touched the polished floor of Minako-san’s studio.

Harry let out a happy groan as he settled into the stretch, not even looking at his Sensei as he waved his phone in the air.

“Did you know he’s planning an exhibition skate to ‘Baby’?”

“...what, really?”

“Yes, fucking really. I mean, I knew he was cracked, but this is beyond.”

Sensei hemmed and hawed, obviously torn between agreeing and defending his troll of a best friend. “I mean, Bieber isn’t really—but it was a pretty popular song..?”

Harry turned slowly, leveling a flat stare at his Sensei. “There’s never an excuse for Fuckboy-Jesus. Not ever.”

The older man blinked at him for a long, long moment, then...he snorted.

He tsked at the man, whose eyes were crinkled up in laughter. “Fine, fine. Take his side. Mark my words, before you know it, he’s gonna be posting post-workout close ups of his bared abs. We’ll see who’s laughing, then.”

Sensei scoffed, pressing him even deeper into the stretch. “Joke’s on you, Harii-kun. He already does that.”

“What, really?!”

“Yes. I can’t tell you how many times he had us post for those when we were training under Celestino-san.”

Harry wrinkled his nose. “Oh, ewww, Sensei.”

He could almost see the man's sheepish shrug. “Yeah, well, he bribed me.”

“With what?”

“He, uhm...he maybe...founda Japanese restaurant that, er, that made Katsudon?”

It took a second to untangle the rush of Japanese, but he twisted to shoot the man another flat look once he did. “You posed like a goddamn fuckboy for Katsudon?”

Sensei rubbed the back of his head awkwardly, eyes crinkled up in a smile. “Heh, yeah. Celestino-san found out, and he made us do fifty laps around the rink and sooo many suicide drills.”
Harry shook his head. “I don't even know what to say to you right now.”

The man laughed. “If it makes you feel better, the most ridiculous thing I skated to was Call Me Maybe, but never as an Exhibition skate. We got...uh, well, we went to a frat party, and there was beer, and one of the frat guys was a hockey player—”

“You—with a hockey player?!”

“Nothing like that...well, not really? But, he had a key to the rink, so we kinda broke in? Maybe? Luckily, the guard on duty knew us, so she called our coaches instead of the police.”

Harry crowed with laughter. “Does Coach know about your criminal, hockey player loving past—?”

Sensei swatted lightly at the back of his head. “You're a brat.”

He cackled.

Silence settled between the two of them, and his eyes drifted closed as he let his Sensei guide him through the rest of his cool down stretches. Somewhere in the back of his mind, he knew what was coming. He could tell by the way the man kept clearing his throat.

And he was pretty sure he knew what it was about, too. Even if he hadn't seen Ryota-kun's Instagram post, he was pretty damn sure Vit-baka would have told him about it.

“So, uh...” Sensei paused, cleared his throat.

Harry let out a resigned sigh.

“Ryota-kun seems like a nice young man.”

“He is. We, um, we met at a summer skate camp thing when we were in Juniors.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah. We weren't rink mates or anything, obviously, but we hung out.”

The older man gave another hum. “And...and when did you two—?”

He felt more than saw his blush spread from neck to forehead. “When we met up in Sapporo.”

Sensei let out a resigned sigh. Harry was pretty sure he was putting two and two together about his little vanishing act, and he really fucking wanted to sink into the floor and never come out, again.

“I'm...I'm not going to give you the talk again, Harii-kun—”

*Oh sweet fucking christ, thank you.*

“—but? I *am* going to ask Ryota-kun move into another room,” he raised a hand as if to stop a protest...a protest that wasn't coming. “I don't want to assume that you have, or, uh, haven't, but under the circumstances, I'm not really comfortable with him sleeping in the same room with you knowing...er...”

Harry nodded. “Yeah, uh, I figured.”

The man let out another resigned sigh. “I know that I can't really stop you if you two are determined to...do things...but, at least promise me you'll be safe about it, OK?”
“...sure, Sensei.” He was absolutely not admitting to the man that they'd been too tipsy and impatient to bother with safety that first time. And the one time the afternoon following the morning after. Yeah. Not ever gonna mention that.

Silence settled again, not as comfortable as before, but not nearly as tense, either, now that shit had been said. A loud clap startled him, and he pushed himself up from the floor to look at the older man.

“So! The final. Have you heard back from Ohtori-san, yet?”

He frowned. “A few days ago, yes. Finally.”

Sensei shot him a concerned look. “Is everything OK?”

Harry shrugged. “I...don't know? He was already kinda being weird about the thing with Ryota-kun and our moving to Russia, and I think he might have seen the post from your birthday?”

“Oh?”

“Yeah,” he shot the man a considering look. Well. Might as well, since he was already fucking mortified. “He kinda has a crush on me—he even tried to kiss me, once. With everything that's been going on, I don't know if it's a really good idea for him to be a sponsor.”

Whiskey brown eyes darkened. “He kissed you?”

“...yeah.”

“I wish you would have told me, Harii-kun.”

“I don't think he was being a skeev on purpose, necessarily, but” He pushed the sweaty hair out of his eyes. “I don't know if I can work with him if he's gonna be more interested in dating me than helping my career.”

“Intentions aside, I wish I would have known. I never would have put you in a position where you had to be alone with him.”

Harry smiled up at his Sensei. “Well, now you know, so no worries, yeah? And Suou-san and the rest are coming this time, plus a few of his Club regulars—that's how he's getting the trip comped, he's making it a Club Event—so he'll probably be too busy to corner me.”

A dark look sparked through the other man's eyes. “I'll make sure he doesn't, busy or no.”

He beamed up at the man. “Thanks, Sensei,” he snatched up his phone, opening up his music file, and shoving it towards the older man. “Anyway, enough about that. I have some ideas for programs for next season that I think you'll like...”

Harry had thought, like the sweet summer child he continually proved to be, that the preparations to fly out for the Trophee de France had been batshit. Apparently, he didn't even know what he didn't know. With less than five days before they flew out, Yu-Topia had all but turned itself inside out in the mad rush.

Skates were polished and packed away with his official JSF jacket, which he'd be surrendering at the Gala, once his transfer over to “Team Russia” was finalized.

Suits were picked up from the tailor—specially commissioned by his Extra as Fuck Coach for the Gala, after he'd qualified for the final—and packed away into separate garment bags.
His skating costumes were dry cleaned and carefully packed away, along with a truly monstrous amount of makeup. Seriously, he probably had more than enough gold cosmetic paint to gild himself from head to toe. Twice over.

And, of course, Makka had made an absolute menace of herself, running in gleeful circles around all the busy, scrambling humans. Nobody was safe from her enthusiastic affections, and she took a strange pleasure in flopping down atop open suitcases, half packed boxes—whatever you most needed her to not be napping on, really.

As they loaded their suitcases and duffles and garment bags and Makka's carrier into the hired cars, Harry felt oddly grateful for Ohtori, if only because he knew he wouldn't have to pay to check this shit in. He wasn't even half as miserly as his Sensei, but even so—he was pretty sure the fees for overweight luggage alone, let alone for additional checked luggage and pet transport, would have made him weep. Very, very bitterly.

It was half-four in the goddamn morning by the time they made it to the air strip, and already he was feeling so very done with the whole day. He didn't even care if it was rude, he was totally going to take advantage of the fact that there were porters to load up shit so he could go crash.

Ohtori, looking ridiculously lively, stood amidst a cluster of limos and Bentleys, clipboard in hand. Harry stumbled out of the car, heading straight for the ramp. The other boy lifted a brow at him as he passed.

Harry shot him a flat look.

"I have been up since roughly yesterdayish, and if I don't lie down right now, I'm gon' fall asleep literally where I'm standing."

Ohtori quirked a grin in his direction, but waved him on. Awkward fuck though he was, he was at least competent enough to be trusted to make sure all their luggage made it aboard, and without hassle. Eyes drooping, Harry gave a halfhearted wave to the obviously caffeinated Hosts and their handful of guests as he stumbled toward the back of the jet.

He was out before his seat had finished reclining, barely noticing as a blanket was draped over him, or as the warm weight of Makka settled against his back.

He drifted. In dark, blissful dark. Too tired to dream. Too tired to do much more than just...exist...amongst the warm, happy darkness.

...poke...

He twitched, jerking his face away from the thin, cool finger pressing into his cheek. Already, the blissful dark was retreating, and that just wasn't on; absently, he wondered if visualizing the details of a murder in his head seconds before he committed it technically counted as 'pre-meditated.'

Hm.

Something to ask, next time he saw his mumma.
He twitched away, again.

Even if the deviant poker, were, say, Morinozuka-san, who could snap him like a twig, he imagined he could maybe manage to break his finger before he was squashed underfoot like a bug. Probably. If he, like, surprised the older boy. And managed to put his entire weight behind the finger snapping...which he'd need.

He twisted away from the evil finger, refusing to open his eyes. He wasn't in the habit of pterodactylly screeching, but the sound that left him was an impressive first effort.

“Harii-chan~! Ne ne, Harii-chan!”

Harry grumbled, swatting at the dick poker........wait, no, that wasn't right. Dickish poker? Yeah, that was less...

Anyway. He swatted at the little shit poking at him, not even caring that he looked like a demented kitten batting at a string, as he pointedly yanked his blanket over his head.

Haninozuka-san, the fucking troll, didn't even have the decency to act offended. Instead, he giggled —fucking giggled—at him. Like causing him misery was some sort of goddamn game. Harry glowered death at the older boy as his beautiful, lovely, warm blanket was carefully pulled from his white-knuckled grip.

“Kyo-chan said it's time for lunch, and your Sensei said you need to eat, so you should come eat now, ne~?”

Harry stared at Haninozuka-san for a long moment, took a bracing breath, then deliberately flopped over onto his side, burying his face in the sleeping Makka's fuzzy top-knot. He pointedly ignored Haninozuka-san's long suffering sigh, curling tighter against the snoring poodle. There was a moment—a single moment—where he thought the older boy would just...walk away, let him get away with the whole choosing sleep over a stuffy lunch of finger-foods Thing.

He was wrong.

“MorinOZUKA-SENPAIIIIEEEEEE?!” Harry's voice pitched up into a glass-shattering skree as he was bodily lifted from his seat and thrown over the stoic behemoth's shoulder.

He flailed, but the taller boy didn't so much as trip or stumble or anything as he slowly made his way down the isle towards where Ohtori had—apparently—set up a little luncheon for the other Hosts, their handful of guests, Sensei, and himself. Harry had a single moment to appreciate just what the tailored Ouran trousers did for the older boy's butt—good lord, sir—before he was set on his feet again.

“Good afternoon, Potter-san~! Daddy has missed you so—have you missed daddy? I'm certain you have...OH, but you're hungry. Here, let me just—”

Harry pinched the bridge of his nose. He hadn't forgotten that Suou-san was a headache, per se, so much as he'd repressed the memory, because dear unmerciful lord, why was he forever with the talking.
So. Much. Talking.

Endless. Talking.

At. Him.

He just didn't understand.

He blinked down at the heaping plate he was presented with, lifting a brow at the beaming blonde.
“...you know I can't eat that, right?”

Lavender-blue eyes glistened at him. Harry swallowed back the urge to flinch away from the look.
“Surely you're hungry?”

He sighed. “Yeeees, but I am also a competitive athlete. Mini quiches, and butter croissants, and croque madames aren't really...”

“But you must try them, at least. My chef—”

“I'm sure they're excellent, but my Coach would literally kill me. And!” He interrupted the blonde before he could squawk at him some more. “I don't eat meat...or pastries. At all.”

Suou looked seconds away from crying on him before Ohtori—thank god he was good for something, because he was beginning to wonder—reeled him in. “Tamaki. Please do remember that you are here as an indulgence, and Potter-san is my...ah, business associate—”

Harry ignored the coy side eye the older boy shot him, because NOPE. He wasn't about to cause a scene over the unintentionally intentional deception, but he absofuckinglutely wasn't going to play into it, either. He wasn't here for mind games or emotional fuckery, and if Ohtori didn't know that yet, he was in for a rude fucking awakening real fucking soon.

Suou waved Ohtori off, but took the plate back. “Yes, you're right—I apologize, Potter-san.”

He smiled tightly, snatching up a bit of fruit and watercress salad before scuttling over to join his Sensei, away from the chattering Host Club and their guests. The man didn't look up from his croque madame, just pushed a small cup of fragrant, orange soup towards him. Harry shot him a look.

“It's yellow squash and leek potage. Ohtori-san made sure Suou-san's chefs included it on the menu.” Sensei's voice was wry. Harry wasn't surprised. This whole...everything...had to be physically painful to his minimalist soul.

He snorted, picking slowly at his food. He sighed.

“What's the matter?”

“Nothing? Just...I didn't expect to get dragged into the whole...thing...with Suou-san's club.”

Sensei shot him a wry look. “Neither did I.”

Harry snickered around a mouthful of the potage. “We could always sneak away and curl up with Makka.”

Whiskey-dark eyes shot him a flat stare. “Not before you finish your soup. Don't think I haven't noticed you picking at your food these last few days.”

He grumped, taking a big, hearty spoonful of the potage, swiping at his chin as a bit spilled out of the
corner of his lips. He ignored his Sensei's dry look, and swallowed. “After, then.”

“—would be my greatest pleasure, my darlings, to sweep you away in an ice dance of love, just as the dashing matador sweeps his senorita away in a passionate tango.”

Harry wheezed.

*Ohdearfuckingchrist.*

There was just...so much wrong with everything that had left Suou's mouth that it was almost painful to consider.

He and his Sensei exchanged a mildly nauseated look before hurriedly finishing their food and scurrying as far away from Suou's bucketload of issues as they could. If they practically buried themselves under blankets and a mildly confused Makka, well, no sane person could blame them.

Between his rather spotty sleep, nineteen-plus hours of travel with the fucking Hosts and their guests clucking and crowing like noisy hens, and losing eight hours to time zone fuckery, Harry was the hottest of hotmess garbage-fires when they finally landed in Lisbon. His eyes were crossing, and he had to smush between Makka and his Sensei to put one foot in front of the other.

Harry was pretty sure he maybe had fallen asleep walking down the ramp, because one moment he was half-stumbling into the early afternoon air, and the next he was blinking open his eyes to a close-up of Beka's amused face. He was all but wrapped around the older boy like a baby koala, a bit of drool crusted to his chin.

Oh, ewww.

Also, embarrassing.

“Tch. Disgusting.”

Harry ignored Plisetsky, too exhausted to even with his grumpy ass.

“I think it's cute~! Teensy's missed his big brother Beka.”

Fucking Chulanont. He didn't even look up from where his face was planted in Beka's chest, just lifting his heavy arms to give him the double-bird over the other skater's shoulders.

He pointedly ignored the squawking from Suou about “propriety” and there being “ladies present,” lifting his arms higher as Chulanont crowed with laughter. The troll.

Plisetsky scoffed at the sputtering Suou. “Seriously, kid? If you came all this way for delicacy and shit, you're gonna be fucking disappointed—we may look pretty in our costumes, but we're still athletes. We fucking swear. Get over it.”

His Coach, his voice pitching happily into what Harry thought of as his 'I'm a total troll, but also charming enough to get away with it' tone, butted in. Because of course he did. “Now, now, Yura~! It never hurts to be patient with new fans...” his voice pitched slightly lower as he addressed Suou, but Harry wasn't fooled; once a troll, always a troll.

“Though...Yuri does does have a point, Suou-kun. We do look lovely, true, but there is no arguing that we are as much athletes as we are artists. Incidentally, Suou-kun, you and your lady friends should look up my dear friend Christophe Giacometti's final performance. I think you'll find it exceedingly educational as to how *artistic* we athletes can be.”
Harry buried his snort against Beka’s shirt. *Because jizzing so hard on live TV that you nearly cause an international scandal was artistic. Sure.*

He didn’t want to judge based on looks, but...he was pretty sure Suou was a virgin, and about as naïve as it was possible to be, living in a world where the internet was a thing. The blonde would probably combust from sheer embarrassment if confronted by Chris’ notorious performance boner, let alone his, ah, *big finish.*

...he tried not to be surprised when one of the Hosts muffled a laugh—Morinozuka-san, from the sound of it. Even so? He couldn't lie, he was still a bit surprised.

*Guess it's true what they say about it always being the quiet ones.*

Harry let himself drift as the crowd of Hosts, and guests, and other skaters, and his Coach and Sensei buzzed around the tarmac, unloading bags, and loading up the rental cars, muttering about who was traveling in which car, and all the while talking over each other, trying to make early dinner plans.

Ugh, he didn’t even want to think about that right now. Despite his phone telling him it was half-four, both his brain and his body were insisting that it was past midnight, and he should be asleep. He just...he needed a shower, and pajamas, and a bed, and *quiet.*

“—want to do, Hala? I know my Yuuri needs some sleep...would you rather go with him, or come out to dinner with the rest of us?”

He whined, long and low under his breath. “Bed. Please. Tired.”

His Coach chuckled, petting at his hair. “Alright. I’ll bring you both something for later.”

“Hn.”

He didn’t manage to stay awake long enough to hear the reply.

.. ..

*Shhhkkkt*

His eyes lit up, heart racing, as he carefully laced his skates. Just one more day. One more. He almost couldn’t...

His fingers shook, and he looped his boot laces around them tightly to steady the excited tremors. There was nothing to fear, here. He had made it so far, and in his debut senior season, too—one of the few to do so either before or since Plisetsky made his own debut.

There was no reason for him to be so nervous, or psych himself out. He could do it.

He’d be *fine.*

The bench groaned under the weight of another body. There was a dull thump of a skate bag as it met the rubber mat underfoot. Harry peeked over his shoulder, just to see—it was Seung-Gil Lee.

He hadn't actually been keeping up with his season, since they’d competed against one another at Skate America, but was glad he’d made it to the final. That one odd season aside—there were *still* memes being passed around Instagram and Tumblr about Ice Parrots—he was a fantastically talented, fantastically dynamic skater who’d done well for himself.

Harry blanched, feeling the rush of verbal diarrhea build up as the older skater glanced at him out of
the corner of his dark eyes.

“Uhm.”

Green finally made full eye contact with inky black, and he could almost cry, because here he was, about to spew hot molten cray all over him, and the poor man didn't even know.

“So, uh. I didn't say it before—last time, I mean. When we competed...at Skate America, you know. Uh. But. I...like your Instagram, and I think your programs are great and super profoundly artistic.”

Seung-Gil blinked at him slowly.

Was he sweating? Harry thought he must be sweating.

“And uhm......your dog, he's—really cute. I started following his Instagram. I like them. Dogs, I mean. But especially yours. The series of pictures you did, with him as a Hollywood action hero was my favorite. So. Yeah.”

The man's face was a blank slate, and Harry would have been impressed were he not dying a slow, mortified death. Why...why...was he babbling. He didn't understand. The older skater (thankfully) didn't say anything, but simply plucked Harry's phone up off the bench and started to type into it, rapidfire. He didn't have time to sputter, let alone complain, before the older skater was dropping it and wandering off.

Harry let out a breath.

What...had just happened. He didn't even know.

His phone buzzed, hopping against the slatted wood.

SG Lee [04:45 p.m.]: As long as you don't talk to me in public anymore, I think this could work out.

SG Lee [04:45 p.m.]: And I like your pictures, too. The ones with Makkachin in the flower crowns are the best.

Harry stared.

Stared at his phone.

Stared back at the crowd into which Seung-Gil had vanished.

Stared out at the ice.

He...had he just..?

He glanced down at the texts, again. Nope, not some sort of fever dream.

Harry sighed.

Harry [04:55 p.m.]: So, either Seung-Gil just asked me out, or we're bffs, now. I don't know, and I'm afraid to ask. Either way, he seems to find my flavor of crazy appealing, so there's that.

Beka [04:56 p.m.]: Wat

He sighed, his fingers dancing over his screen, absently keeping an eye for the other skater.
If the final continued on as it'd started, he was almost terrified to imagine what was in store.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter Warnings:

This chapter contains implied sex, specifically unsafe sex. Fair warning.

General Notes:

Guang-Hong Gi vs Guang-Hong Ji: Soooo, as I was including Guang-Hong's Instagram name in this chapter, I realized that I probably spelled his family name incorrectly somewhere in a previous chapter or two. I don't know exactly which chapter, so I'm not going back and fixing it, but going forward, I am going to spell it Guang-Hong Ji.

Ohi: For those unfamiliar, Yuuri and Harry are indeed speaking Internet. Since "Hai" is an actual Japanese phrase, I just dropped the "a," but this is supposed to be a reference to the internet greeting of "Ohai"

Polyorchidic: when you have more balls (as in testes, not metaphoric "balls") than you need; Beka is basically snarking that Ryota-kun has a cluster of balls to explain why he has so much...well, you get the point.

Obeschaniye: [Russ.] "Promise"

Justin Bieber as Fuckboy Jesus: I'm not even sorry, because he really kinda is.
Chapter Sixteen

Chapter Summary

The Grand Prix Final. At long fucking last.

(subtitle: when the author offers up 25 pages of Harry shenanigans to make up for a long absence)

Chapter Notes

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH.
I LIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIVE.

It just...it took me a real long time to figure out how I wanted to do this shit, considering this was always intended to be the penultimate chapter of Part One.

I already know what I want to do with Part Two and Three, so there's that, at least.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Is it hot in here? It feels hot in here.” Harry gingerly prodded the bridge of his nose, glaring death at his phone. It could just lay there...on the floor, in shame, for all he fucking cared.

What even was that bullshit, anyway? Trying to brain him, when he had his Short Program to get through today? Like...fucking really? It wasn't like his nerves were shot or anything, and it just...

Et tu, crappy mobile? ET GODDAMN TU?

His hands twisted in the hem of his shirt, fingernails plucking at the loose seams.

Beka coughed, shuffling awkwardly. “...warn me if you're going to take off anymore clothes, yeah? You're already making me feel like a dirty old man.”

Harry shot him a side eye, but ignored him in favor of pacing a hole through the scuzzy carpet.

It was a favor, really. If he actually managed to pace a hole through the carpet, they'd be forced to replace the godawful clusterfuck of beige-y, burnt orange catastrophe. And even if they just replaced it with more of the same eye-searing horrorshow, it would at least solve the problem of the crusty splotch of white at the base of his night stand.

...it was probably semen. Well, or paint. But...no. That was probably fucking semen.

He could probably test it with the old fingernail scratch test, to see if it flaked away, but...eww. No fucking thanks. The last thing he fucking needed was some stranger's well-aged jizz stuck under his fingernails.

He tugged at the neck of his sleep shirt, eyeing the stain. His skin was crawling, and he grimaced as
sweat dripped from his hairline, down the neck of his shirt, pooling in the small of his back. He tugged at it a bit more frantically.

*Someone should really clean that up. That shit was bad for business.*

“I'm serious, Hala. Nobody will ever find my body if Nikiforov finds out I saw you like...” Beka trailed off.

Harry shot him a look. “Like what?”

The older skate grimaced, gesturing at him.

“What, panicky? Cause I feel kinda panicky right now.” He swiped at the back of his neck with a shaking hand, wiping the cold sweat off on the chest of his nightshirt.

Beka shot him a dry look. “No, I don't think he'd care so much about the panic part.”

“No?”

“No. I'm pretty sure it's the you being naked part he'd have a problem with.”

Harry scoffed, fussing with the overlarge Twilight Sparkle tee he totally hadn't kidnapped from his Sensei. “s not like my shit's hanging out.”

“Somehow, I don't think he'd care.”

Harry let out a gusty sigh, flopping face first onto his hotel bed. “This is serious, Beka. I'm gonna die—or, like, throw up on myself and pass out, and then die.”

“You can't throw up. Nikiforov will cry if you get vomit all over his old costume.”

He let out a strangled noise against the mattress because his friend was an unsympathetic troll, but also *he wasn't lying.* Coach would totally cry—and then fuss at him forever for messing up his make-up. Harry's snort of despair was just barely muffled by the comforter.

*So. This was how he was gonna go. In a scuzzy motel, in his fat-days pants. Fucking beautiful.*

Harry didn't even have the will to fight as Beka pulled him back from the edge of ignoble death.

“Well, it's either shower now, while you have time, or wait til the last minute and have Nikiforov clucking at you while you shower.”

Harry shuddered. “Yeah, no. Last time that happened, he kept trying to wash my hair for me, and...ugh.”

“Which is why you should get up now, because you don't want that.”

“Nobody wants that, Beka—well, Sensei would, but I fucking don't.”

“Exactly.”

“You made your point. Ass. Just—make sure it's strong.”
“Sure.”

“And grab me another for later, if you can?”

Beka snorted, sounding amused. “Alright, Hala.”

He danced across the room toward the bathroom. “Thank you, you're the best, I love you~!”

“More showering, less talking, brat.”

Harry scrambled for the bathroom. Like hell was he going to drag his feet when he'd been promised coffee. He had the best friends.

...he had the worst friends.

Sensei let out a chortle, shooting him an amused look as Beka gleefully tattled on him. The traitor.

Harry, for his part, sipped primly at the passable soy latte Beka had brought back for him, ignoring the gossipy bastards.

“He really tackled you? Harii-kun!”

He took a pointed sip of his coffee. “I admit nothing.”

Sensei clucked at him, eyes sparkling. “But you're not denying it, either.”

Beka snorted. “It was more climbing than tackling, but I was a bit distracted trying not to brain myself against the wall, so...same difference.”

Harry shot Beka a betrayed look. “Excuse you—that's not what happened.”

Beka met his betrayed look with a flat one. “Hala. You body-slammed me, naked, to get at the coffee. I don't think you even turned off the shower, first.”

“You're twisting things.”

“You bit me.”

“Maybe you shouldn't hold people's fucking coffee hostage, then, should you.”

“I told you to put on a towel, Hala. That's hardly a hostage situation.”

“So says you, the coffee hostage-taking jerk.”

Sensei snorted, pinching the bridge of his nose. “You're ridiculous, Harii-kun.”

Harry took another pointed sip of the latte. Sensei sighed, hard. “Can we just...focus on more important things, please? Like your Short Program?”

“Fine by me.”

Sensei shot them both a look. “And I assume it goes without saying that none of us are telling Vitya about this.”

Beka grimaced. “Agreed.”

Harry huffed as the older men shot him pointed looks. “Well, obviously I'm not telling him shit. I
prefer to live, thanks.”

Beka rubbed at his face. “Great, because I'd rather pretend none of this happened.” The older skater shot him a very dry look. “No offense.”

He scoffed. “Like I want to see you naked either, eww. That's a bit too...I dunno, incest-y?”

“Yeah. It was. Which is why you're never going to make me grapple your skinny, naked ass ever again, are you.”

Harry wrinkled his nose. OK, so, he has a point...that was a little awkward. “Criss-cross apple sauce, and all that. Never again.”

Sensei rolled his eyes at them. “Great. Now that that's done, we should really—what happened to your nose, Harii-kun?”

He scowled at Beka, throwing a pillow at his snering friend as he scrambled from the hotel room, letting the door slam behind him. “Had a run-in with my phone, is all. No big deal.”

The older man sighed, but didn't ask. “Well, let's hope it doesn't bruise.”

It bruised.

Haha, of course it did, because fuck you too, Potter Luck.

Not enough to swell—thank the fucking skating gods on high, jesusfuck—but enough that he was pretty sure he was going to have to go full pancake-face to cover it up.

Sensei dabbed more concealer onto the bridge of his nose, Harry tried not to flinch. Even with a healthy coat of BB cream, two different concealers, and his full-coverage foundation, he could see a bit of mottled purple peeking through. Sensei leaned back against the counter and sighed.

“That's the best I can do, Harii-kun. Sorry.”

He grimaced. “At least it didn't get me hard enough to give me black eyes. That would have been stupid. 'Gee, sorry, Mr. Judge sir, but I can't skate because my phone attacked me, and I can't see, now'.”

Sensei snorted.

He rolled his eyes. “Laugh it up. You're not the one who was assaulted by a goddamn mobile.”

“Poor Harii-kun.”

Harry swatted at him. Sensei gently tapped him in the forehead with an eyeliner pencil. “Stop fidgeting.”

He blew a raspberry at his Sensei, but held still as the man touched up his eye makeup. A snort had him darting his gaze up to meet his Sensei's. “I said stop fidgeting, Harii-kun. You can still breathe.”

He blew another raspberry at him. Yuuri-Sensei laughed.

Harry let his mind drift, feeling oddly sleepy listening to his Sensei hum softly to himself under his breath as he touched up his eye makeup, gently swiping a makeup brush along his cheekbones, or adding a bit more powder highlight here and there.
“Almost done, Harii-kun.”

He grunted, lifting a hand to shield his eyes before he was even asked. Sensei's hand was warm atop his—larger—and Harry reached up to grab the man's wrist in a loose hold to keep it steady as he sprayed his hair. The quiet shhhhhhttttt of the aerosol filled the cramped bathroom, the scent of hairspray settling like a fog over him.

Harry wrinkled his nose, holding back a sneeze, as the acrid smell clung to the inside of his nose and the back of his throat.

Sensei mumbled a quick apology, but just aimed the spray slightly higher and away from his face. “Still feeling sick?”

Harry took a moment to consider the question. He probably should feel sick, drinking coffee on an empty stomach when he was so fucking nervous, but? There was something...soothing about the warm, steady presence of his Sensei. He let out a little snuffle.

“I think I'm OK.”

Sensei hummed. “You know...it would be OK if you weren't OK. Not that I'm saying you should be not-OK, just that I'd understand if you were, ah, not...”

The man let out a resigned laugh. “This isn't coming out right at all.”

He grinned. “It's fine, Sensei.”

“Just—I'm here if you need anything. That's all.”

Harry bit back a little wibble. Goddamn it.

“Goddamn it. ‘This mascara is super fucking expensive, and Coach's favorite, and he'll kill us both if you make me cry it all off before my program, so just know that I'm feeling a lot of things on the inside.’

Sensei let out a surprised bark of laughter.

He tsked at the man. “Seriously, any and all tears need to wait til after—so no making me ugly-cry on live television. Again.”

“No promises.”

“...not even if I bribe you with a Baba de Camelo?”

The man froze. “I'm listening.”

“Beka said that Leo told Guang-Hong that Coach bought you one to share, last time you were here. I'm pretty sure I could get Beka to smuggle you a whole one of your own, if you promise not to make me cry in front of the, like, fifty bajillion people watching the Final.”

Sensei let out a little hum. “Make it two, and I'll make sure Vitya's too distracted to fuss at you, too.”

“...do you really need two, though?”

“I don't know. How much is it worth to you that Vitya not baby you in front of everyone?”

“You'd—you'd use your own husband to blackmail me? Really? For food?”

“It's not food, it's dessert.”
“Not the point. Really?”

“Yes.”

“...I respect that about you, Sensei,” he held out his hand to shake a few of the fingers the man could spare without dropping the hairspray. “Deal, then. I'll let Beka know.”

“Focus on your Short Program for now, Harii-kun. The great dessert caper can wait til later.”

Harry let out a short, sharp breath. Right.

Right.

His stomach let out a loud, ominous gurgle.

...this was going to be an utter clusterfuck.

... To be fair, it wasn't an utter clusterfuck.

A minor one? Yes. The complete and utter clusterfuck he'd been expecting? Not really, but it was a near thing. A very, very near thing.

Maybe JJ's sudden, involuntary retirement was still a bit fresh in everyone's memory. Maybe it was the unusually large crowd of sports commentators and media reps in the audience. Maybe everyone had had a bit too much to drink the night before. Whatever the case, it was obvious that everyone was feeling the pressure to perform; and as shitty as it was to admit, Harry was kinda glad that he wasn't the only one.

The fact that Seung-Gil made the fucking ice his bitch with his beautiful goddamn Short Program didn't help. Not one bit.

Harry had known he was good—fuck, he didn't fanboy about just anybody, OK—but that? “Good” wasn't good enough. Even “great” fell short as an adequate descriptor. It had been...it was...

Holy fucking shit goddamn it what had he. Just. SEEN.

That's what it had been.

His edges were sharp, clean, and he'd looked like the goddamn Swan Princess, floating across a tranquil lake, not a human fucking being with a pair of professional-grade knife-shoes strapped to his feet. Harry had let out a little gasp when Seung-Gil had bent into a truly spectacular Ina Bauer, and then as he'd moved into a spin, because...what. Human spines aren't supposed to bend like that.

By the time he had landed the last of his quads, Harry had known he was fucked. Truly and utterly fucked, because. Well. He'd known that Sensei could end a program with a 4F—the man was a stamina monster, beyond compare and comprehension. And yeah, so, Seung-Gil had ended with a 3F, but that...that was still scarily impressive, after everything else.

And so, Harry had just stood there, blinking. Oh holy shit.

He...he'd planned for Plisetsky and Beka and Popovich and even Guang-Hong, but he hadn't planned for Seung-Gil, and he was hit by the sudden realization that that had been a really fucking stupid mistake to make.
Coach, his hand shaking a bit where it'd settled on his shoulder, mouthed wordlessly for a second. He had to clear his voice twice before he could get it together enough to speak. Harry knew the feeling.

“...Hala.”

“Yeah.”

“It's alright. It's fine. You just—”

“—have to skate a perfect program? Yeah, I'm starting to get that.”

The man gave him a tight smile. “It'll be fine.”

Harry let out a strangled sound that wasn't at all hysterical. He swallowed, hard. He tried reminding himself that Coach would cry if he threw up all over his costume; it didn't help. He could still feel the roiling surge of bile as his knees threatened to collapse under him.

The crowd roared, drowning the crackling of the speakers as Seung-Gil's score was announced, and Harry just kind of...

His ears were ringing, and his face felt hot and heavy with blood. He was only vaguely aware of his Coach helping him to the bench as he kinda...folded, like a wet napkin. The man's hand was warm and steadying between his shoulder blades as he hunched over his knees, wheezing into the gap between his thighs.

“Hala? You with me? Do you need me to get Yuuri?”

He let out a little warble. “Nope. 'm good.”

“You sure?”

“Yeah, just...I need a minute.”

“Alright. Phichit is about to skate, so I need to grab him him now, if you think you're going to change your mind.”

“Nope. 's fine.” He let out a raspy little laugh. Harry could almost feel the concern radiating from his Coach.

He let out another wheezy laugh. “Sorry. A bit busy having a heart attack. Just...tell me when it's over?”

The man had made a little tsking noise, but didn't push. Harry stared blearily at his knees, chest feeling tight, as the older skater took to the ice. He only vaguely registered the music—a bright, poppy Thai number—over the buzzing in his ears and the sound of the audience. He absently noted the gasps and cries, but ignored them...until he glanced up in time to see his Coach rear back, face twisting into a grimace.

Harry blinked. “...what?”

Coach shot him a side-eye, before his gaze flickered back onto the ice. He looked riveted, but not happy about what he was seeing. Like he was witnessing a train wreck, or a nuclear meltdown, or—someone being cruel to a puppy; Harry couldn't bring himself to look. “He stepped out of a jump.”

“That's not so bad—"
“—he also under-rotated three jumps, this last one severely. I don't think I've ever seen him scowl before, but—” His Coach shrugged tightly, his gaze flitting towards him briefly, then back towards the ice.

Harry felt a pang of intense sympathy. Honestly, he didn't know if he would have done any better, so soon after Seung-Gil's utterly brain-shattering Short Program. Saying that it was a hard act to follow was severely understating things, and the pressure to do well was absolutely ridiculous for everyone, especially him, since he'd just unquestionably been bumped to 6th place after that skate. “It's—he can make up for it with the Free Skate.”

The older man smiled tightly. He looked troubled. “I suppose we'll see.”

Harry let out a little sigh, only wrenching his hands away last minute as he went to rub at his face. Fuck. He needed to get his shit together, because like hell was he going onto the ice looking as hot a mess as he felt.

The bench creaked as another skater flopped down next to him. He glanced up, meeting Beka's bleary gaze. Harry was absolutely unsurprised by how shook the older skater looked.

“Hey.”

“Hey yourself, Beka. You OK?”

Beka shot him a flat look. Harry smiled blandly. Dark eyes flickered towards the ice before quickly flicking back to meet his own. He couldn't hide his grimace. Oh god, now Harry really, really didn't want to see.

Still...

“You'll be fine.”

“...hn.”

“Don't give me that, you will.”

Another shrug. Harry sighed. “I know you. Even if you eat shit, you'll still make it look like you fucking did it on purpose.”

Beka snorted. “Thanks.”

“I'm just saying.”

“Your confidence is overwhelming.”

Harry let out a weak laugh. “I'm, like, seconds away from running away to Kyoto to be a monk, or throwing up til I pass out, so. This is what you get when I'm all out of fucks to give.”

Beka reached between his feet and plucked up his water bottle, pressing it into Harry's hands. “Drink.”

“Can't. I'll just throw it up.”

“Take small sips, then.”

He grimaced, but did as he was told. He gripped the bottle, knuckles white, as Beka gave out a shaky sigh as his name was called, and slowly made his way onto the ice.
It...it wasn't as bad as Chulanont's skate—well, he didn't know, because he hadn't seen, but...it can't have been. He didn't step out of any of his jumps, for one. And even when he touched down on his first quad, and under-rotated two of the jumps in his final quad combos, he still kept his shit together. Still made it look fucking boss.

And, mistakes aside, his footwork definitely hadn't suffered. His edges were clean and powerful, and had managed not to fall out of sync with the music, even after he touched down. The crowd was going wild as he finished his skate, a rain of roses and plush toys hitting the ice as he drifted towards the Kiss and Cry.

Despite the cheering, Beka's face was tight. Harry moved to rise, but his Coach's steady palm on his shoulder stopped him.

“Just...give him a minute, Hala. He looks like he needs it.”

“But—”

“Let him get his score and talk to his coach, first.”

Harry absolutely wasn't pouting as he slumped in his seat, frowning down at his skates. He took a moody gulp from Beka's water bottle...which was unceremoniously plucked from his fingers a few minutes later as a sweat-slicked Beka reclaimed his spot on the bench next to him.

He was staring at the rubber mat, expression flat. Harry swallowed awkwardly. “…I was right.”

“Hn?”

“You still looked cool, even when you touched down. So.”

Beka snorted. “Oh, yeah?”

“I said you did, didn't I? You think I was saying it just to hear myself talk? Honestly, Beka.”

A smile tugged on the edge of his mouth. “Brat.”

“Oh, that's nice—after I go out of my way to be nice, and everything.”

“Is that what you were doing?”

Harry huffed, snatching the water bottle back, and taking a sip. “Rude. That's what you are, rude.”

“You say that like you're not a rude little shit yourself.”

Ice blue eyes flitted over to them, pinning them in place, and a smile tugged at the corner of his Coach's mouth. “I don't know, Hala, I'd say ignoring Guang-Hong is pretty rude.”

He startled, eyes darting towards the ice. He'd started already? He hadn't even heard—! Flush heating his face, he kept his eyes fixed on the ice for the rest of the man's program.

“Hala..?”

“Hm.”

“What's wrong?”
“Nothing's wrong...” He tilted his head, eyeing Guang-Hong's footwork. A thoughtful frown tugged at his lips.

“Why don't I believe you?”

“Good question.”

“You're making a face.”

“Am I.”

He probably was making a face, but he couldn't help it. He wasn't sure what to make of what he was seeing. Like, he didn't know Guang-Hong as well as the younger skaters, or as well as his Sensei did, but he still knew enough about him to be familiar with his skating. And what he was seeing? Well.

Unlike Chulanont or Beka, he never touched down or stepped out of a jump. Even so, there was something about his program that was just...

It was almost too safe, maybe? Like he was so paranoid about tripping up that he'd compensated by lowering the difficulty of just about everything. Yeah, it kept his jumps and spins clean, but killed everything that had made his program so dynamic. With the lowered difficulty and the over-cautious skating, everything felt kinda...textbook flat. Like he was putting on a demonstration for a skating class, not competing for a spot on the podium.

Harry sighed. “He's not going to make it to the podium like that.”

Beka let out a little hum.

“I mean, unless he pulls a Seung-Gil with his Free Skate, his technical score wasn't nearly good enough to make up for his PCS.”

“It happens.”

Harry frowned. “Yeah, but it didn't have to—he was steady on his feet, and it's not like we haven't seen him land those jumps before. He just...”

He fucking gave up without trying. Why. He's so much better than this shit.

Beka nodded.

Harry took another swig from Beka's water bottle, eyes fixed on Guang-Hong's face as he fidgeted in his seat in the Kiss and Cry. He looked...not upset, but resigned, as his score was announced.

“Hala.”

He twitched, darting a look at his Coach. “C'mon, you're up.”

His stomach dropped.

Ohholyshitthewasgoingtodiesomebodysavehim.

He didn't even remember standing up or walking towards the edge of the rink. Between one blink and the next, he was staring blankly out at the ice as his Coach tugged his jacket away, setting his skate guards on the railing as he slowly slipped them off his skates.
Harry swallowed against the rising panic, too busy dying inside to register the murmured encouragement.

“Hala!”

He startled, eyes going wide as he whipped around to look at Beka. The older skater gave him a long, intense look, before finally giving him a thumbs up. Harry gave a shaky little nod, his smile tight, as he pushed away from the edge of the rink...and immediately had to find his feet as he tripped over his toe pick.

Fuck.

Fuck.

OK.

So maybe this was the skating gods telling him to wake the fuck up and smell the Zamboni before he brained himself on the ice.

He could do this.

He could get his shit together.

He could skate the shit out his program, but also pray that that was the worst that happened, just in case.

...I should have prayed harder.

He must have been skating on autopilot, because he didn't remember much about the crowd, or the music, or really much of anything between stepping onto the ice, and stepping out again at the Kiss and Cry.

He'd only really felt present in his body when he'd wobbled on a landing, and then again when he'd stepped out of the last goddamn jump of his last fucking quad combo. Even so, he'd managed not to accidentally hurt himself, or eat shit, so that was good.

It wasn't his best skate, or even particularly good by his standards, but considering how close he'd come to getting sick all over the ice, it was fucking good enough.

Harry didn't look at the score board once he made it to the Kiss and Cry, too drained to do more than grunt and slump against his Sensei's shoulder when the man pulled him into a side hug. “You're in Second, Harii-kun. Congratulations.”

He let out a little grunt. “Not for long. Plisetsky's up.”

He felt him nod where his chin was pressed against his temple. “Yes, but even if he scores higher than you, that still leaves you in third. Not bad.”

Harry grunted again, eyelids drooping. “Mm. Sleep now, panic about Free Skate later.”

Sensei snorted. “You sure you don't want to stay to watch Yura skate?”

He pouted, lifting his heavy lids to stare up at the older man. “Fine, but then bed after?”

The man pet at his hair, pushing a bit of sweaty fringe away from his forehead. “I promise.”
Harry didn't remember falling asleep, but the fucking barrage of Instagram notifications he woke to told him well enough that he had.

Harry's face was smushed into Sensei's shoulder, dead to the world and drooling. His forehead glistened with sweat, his eyeliner a messy smear under his eyes. Sensei's gaze was fond as he stared down at him.

v-nikiforov Uaaaaah~! Baby's First GPF. His Tou-san is so proud. @katusdon-nikiforov and @hjp-skates. #MyHeartIsFull #BestHusband #BestSkatingSon #PodiumFamily #ThirdAfterSP #SoBlessed #MakkachinIsMissingOutOnCuddles #FamilyPortrait

45, 301 Likes 300 Comments

Harry looked like an especially small, deflated balloon thrown over his Papa's broad shoulder in a fireman's carry. The man's back was to the camera, but his face was in profile as he turned to look down at him. Sirius was smirking, poking at Harry's cheek through his curtain of hair. Sensei was peeking at him from his Papa's other side, smiling softly.

v-nikiforov (/ ^u^)/ @hjp-skates @katsudon-nikiforov @hjp-skates BabysFirstGPF SkatingFam ExtendedFam SleepyBoy

26, 002 Likes 146 Comments

His Coach looked calm and happy, holding a sleeping Harry who was clinging like a baby Koala. He was talking to Harry's Papa, mumma, and Sirius. Sensei was peering around his husband's shoulder to peek at Harry's face, which was buried against said husband's neck.

phichit+chu EEEEEEEE @v-nikiforov @katusdon-nikiforov @hjp-skates SkatingFam SmolBois SmolSkaters PodiumFam SkatingFam GPF Pics SoTiny LikeABabyKoala GrumpySmolIsCuteSmol

15,005 Likes 90 Comments

He groaned, glaring at his phone in betrayal. Well. To be fair, it was his fucking Coach and Phishit who had betrayed him, but it was the principle of the thing. His phone buzzed in his hand, and he scrambled not to drop the thing on his face. Again.

"...'llo?"
“Tch. You still in bed?”

Harry blinked at the ceiling, flopping sideways to stare at the clock. 13:56. *Oh, fuck.*

He groaned, rubbing at his face and grimacing at the gritty feeling of sleep sweat and a half-assed clean up job via makeup wipes. “Yeah, uh...sorry. Who is this?”

“Who do you think?”

He pulled the phone away from his ear, eyeing it in confusion. He knew who it sounded like, but......why the fuck would he even call?

“Hello?! Are you ignoring me?”

He bit back a warble of pain as he clipped his cheekbone with his knuckles as he pulled the phone back towards his ear. “Fuck—sorry. Just didn't think you had my num—anyway. *Why* are you calling?”

Plisetsky snorted, and Harry could all but hear him rolling his eyes. “Fucking Viktor. He's caught up in some bullshit video conference with Yakov, but wanted me to make sure you got up in time to eat. You're fucking welcome, by the way.”

Harry's tongue felt heavy in his mouth as the blurted out a pitchy. “Thank...you???”

“Whatever. Just—get your skinny ass down here, or you'll be stuck with crappy room service, yeah?”

“Um...OK? Thanks...”

The other skater grunted, and hung up.

Harry stared at the ceiling, pulling the phone away again to stare at it for a long moment. He was pretty sure he looked half-mad, staring wildly at his phone. He didn't give a fuck. This was just...Plisetsky had done him a favor, and had been nice-ish about it.

That was...

Was this...was this what the dissolution of the universe felt like?

He let out a grunt as he rolled out of bed, recalling too late the existence of the questionable stain as he toppled out of bed and face-planted in the patch of carpet he'd been avoiding. Harry reared back, nearly clipping his head on the edge of the side-table, as he felt the patch of crusty carpet brush his forehead.

**JIZZ FOREHEAD. JIZZ FOREHEAD. ALERT. ALERT.**

“Aaaaaaand, that's my cue to take a fucking shower. Immediately. *Ugh.*”

He scrambled for the bathroom, slipping on a stray sock and clipping his shoulder as it sent him staggering into the door jam. He didn't hear the quiet *click* of the lock over the redhot owfuck anger. “FUCKING SONUVASHITTY ARSE-WIPE DOOR. I HATE YOU AND YOUR STUPID FACE.”

He slammed the door with a flourish, feeling very justified in his abuse, because fuck you too.

“Hala..?”
“...the fuck?!”

Harry let out a mortified warble as Beka's familiar baritone was echoed by Plisetsky's dulcet tenor squawk. “Uh, sorry. I was just—yeah. No. I'm good. How are you?”

There was a long—painfully long—pause, and then a tentative tap on the door. “I brought you some coffee and toast, if you're hungry?”

“Thanks! Just...you can set it on the table.” He tried his best to become one with the wall, or melt into the fugly tile floor. Something. Anything.

“...you sure you're OK in there?”

“Yeah, no. I'm great. Just—shower. Give me a minute?”

“.......sure.”

He let out a sigh, slumping shamefully into the claustrophobic glass shower stall.

Short of drowning himself, he knew he'd have to eventually leave the bathroom. That didn't stop him from dragging out his shower as long as he could, til Plisetsky banged on the door and threatened to come in and drag him out himself.

“And unless you want me staring at your naked ass while I take a piss, you have two goddamn minutes, brat!”

Dripping wet and all but buried in an itchy towel, he'd stumbled out of the bathroom in two minutes flat. Plisetsky smirked, triumphant. Harry shot him a flat stare, utterly fucking unimpressed with his bullshit. “You could have just said, you know.”

“I thought that's what I did.”

“No. What you did was threaten me with the possibility of your dick.”

“Same difference. And it fucking worked, didn't it?” The blonde blinked, tilting his head. “You get into a fight, or what?”

Harry stared blankly. The other skater gave an impatient snort, prodding gingerly at the bridge of his nose.

Ah, that.

The lovely souvenir from his mobile phone ambush had darkened overnight, the mottled sickly green-purple spreading across the bridge of his nose, and curling around the edges of his eyes.

“No, um. I sort of...never mind. It's fine.”

The older skater's eyes lingered on the bruise, his expression strange. Harry blushed. “Really, it's fine. Just—didn't you have to piss, or something?”

Plisetsky shrugged, brushing past him as he stepped into the bathroom.

The door shut behind the blonde with a sharp click. Harry stared at the door, confused. Beka sighed.

“Just...put on some clothes and eat, Hala.”
“What...”

“Don't worry about it.”

“But—?”

“It'll be fine, Hala.”

Harry shot him a look, gesturing wildly. Beka rolled his eyes. “Eat. You can contemplate the mystery of Yura later.”

Later turned out to be as he ate, and when the swaggering shit had slumped down across from him to pluck a few pieces of toast off his plate, and again after their Coach had tracked Yura down and ushered both he and Beka out so they could all change for their Free Skate.

He'd only really stopped grumbling and frowning when Sensei had gently pinched his side. “I can't do your makeup properly if you're sulking. Stop it.”

Harry had let out a little sniff, but settled back into the chair. At least the gold cosmetic paint meant he could hide the bruising.

... ..

Harry could barely breath, his attention pulled back to the score board time and again as the rankings shifted again.

Yesterday had been an upset, most definitely, when Seung-Gil had held onto his First Place slot after the Short Program, bumping Plisetsky into a close Second, and Harry trailing at bit to grab Third.

So today, all bets were off.

With three skates down and three to go, Chulanont was in the lead, followed closely by Beka and Guang-Hong. If he was being honest, Harry couldn't see any of them taking the podium.

That said, Chulanont's Free Skate was worlds away from his Short Program—more confident, clean...a good skate. Even so, he just didn't have the PCS or base value to make up for his disastrous showing the day before. Not even with the extra quad he'd added to the second half of his program.

Beka had skated beautifully, as expected, but an under-rotated jump and a snapped lace half-way through the program left him—and Harry—reeling. He never quite recovered the energy needed for the powerful piece. Though he'd secured a comfortable spot in Second, Harry was certain he wouldn't be able to hold on the spot with three of them left to got, not unless something went terribly, terribly wrong.

Guang-Hong, unlike the other two, had a much rougher go of it. He'd hesitate to call it an on-ice meltdown, per se, because he'd kept his shit together, but it was a near thing. He'd looked visibly stressed from the start, face going tighter and tighter as the program went on. After touching down on his third quad, the older skater seemed to quickly lose energy, actually stepping out of his spin sequence; it was difficult to watch, honestly.

Harry could see the resignation on Guang-Hong's face as a sympathetic Chulananont tugged him into a hug at the Kiss and Cry.

He turned away from the private moment as a sweaty Beka joined him at the side of the rink. He glomming onto the other skater in a tight side-hug, his nose wrinkling at the smell of sweaty armpits
and polyester.

“That was beautiful.”

Beka shrugged. “We'll see.”

Harry elbowed him. “No, fuck that. You're amazing.”

“That jump really fucked me over.”

Harry rolled his eyes. “So, you missed a jump. Like any one of us hasn't eaten shit half a million times, tripping over crappy ice, or toe picks, or fucking air. It goddamn happens.”

“Hn.”

“You think I care if you miss a jump? You think your fans do? If all we cared about were textbook flawless skates, we'd be gaga for fucking Idiot-Viktor, or goddamn Plisetsky. Mostly though, we'd be fucking disappointed, because there's no such thing as a perfect skate all the time.”

Beka shrugged again. Harry dug a finger into his ribs. “My point is, I like your skating, and Seung-Gil's, and-and Sensei's. Not because you don't make mistakes—you obviously do—but because you skate what you feel, and you don't fucking apologize for it. So. Don't you dare fucking apologize for not being textbook perfect. Not to me.”

Beka's mouth pulled up at the corner, and he tugged Harry closer. “You're a sap, you know?”

Harry snorted. “Tell anyone, and I'll fucking kill you in your sleep.”

“Noted.”

Harry rolled his eyes, digging his finger into Beka's rib til he twitched away.

The speakers crackled, drowning out the sound of the crowd and Beka's slow, steady breathing. “SKATING FOR JAPAN. HARRY POTTER.”

Harry blanched, swallowing hard...and yelped, as the older skater flicked the back of his head. “Hey. You got this. Just do what you do best. Skate what you feel, right?”

He let out a breath, shoulders loosening. So, OK. So not fair, using his words against him, but also...touche. And really, even if he made a clusterfuck of it all, he could at least say that he'd made it to the Grand Prix his first season of Seniors, right?

Right.

That was...well, it was something.

...fuck but he was boned.

“Harii-chaaaan~! GANBATTLE!” A chorus of voices in varying levels of moe pitchiness cut through the ambient chaos.

Harry whipped around, eyes going wide at the sight of a...was that fucking dyed silk?...banner with his name embroidered into it, surrounded by a beautifully elaborate border of English Ivy and Sakura blossoms.

On either end of the banner stood a Hitachiin, and they beamed down at him like the utter shits they
were when they met his gaze. Suou-san and Ohtori, gingerly holding up the middle of the long banner, sent him blinding and politely encouraging smiles, respectively. The other Hosts—Fujiokasan, and Morinozuka-san and Haninozuka-san—were scattered amongst their regular Club guests along the length of the sizable banner, on either side of Suou and Ohtori. Harry was pretty sure he saw Fujioka, sandwiched between two guests, flinch back as the ladies let out an ear-shattering Kyaaaaaaa~!

He blinked.

Jesusfuck. How had he forgotten they were here? Yeah, he was understandably fucking distracted with the whole International competition thing, but...how.

Well. There's that whole thing about blocking out traumatic memories, so.

“YOU CAN DO IT, HARII-KUN~! DADDY BELIEVES IN YOU~! DO YOUR BEST FOR DADDYYYYY.”

Harry let out a strangled laugh. Or maybe it was a scream.

Honestly, he could give a fuck if Suou wanted to expose himself for the Daddy Fetishist he obviously was, but, BUT. He was pretty fucking sure every single person within earshot had heard that...and knew it was directed at him. Jesus Christ.

Did he...did he not know that YouTube, and Instagram, and Twitter, and-and the media were things that existed? Or...or did he just not care that everyone was going to assume they were having kinky, daddy-fetish-y sex?

It took all his effort not to pinch the bridge of his nose.

“Hala!”

He blinked, turning away from the madness that was the Host Club, and headed toward the rink entrance. Well. If nothing else, he'd at least give those ridiculous bastards a damn good show. He owed them that much, considering he was giving serious thought to fucking KILLING their ridiculous Host King.

Even with the upset he knew he'd caused by switching out his 4A for a 4Lu-4L and a 3Lz TanO-3TRippon, Harry was satisfied with his Free Skate. Without the stress of landing the Axel without breaking his goddamn neck, everything had seemed to fall into place.

Honestly, maybe Yakov warning him away from the Axel had been a blessing in disguise, because he was pretty sure the aesthetics of the tano-rippon suited him better, as a skater. Powerful jumps were all well and good for skaters like Cripino and Popovich and Plisetsky, but...well. He wasn't them, and he wasn't sure he wanted to be.

Sweat clinging to his skin, he turned to wave at the crowd as he drifted towards the Kiss and Cry, stooping to pick up a plush Rainbow Nyan Cat off the ice. The lights were blinding, making it impossible to see more than a writhing mass of shadows, but he could hear the cheering, and his heart swelled.

Like the goddamn Grinch on Christmas Morning. Three sizes bigger, and all.

...and god, but he was never voicing that thought aloud near Sirius, because he'd turn it into a dick joke, he just knew it.
Embarrassingly phallic associations aside, he really did feel like his heart was swelling with love, and he absolutely was not going to go to pieces like a pageant contestant being handed the crown.

He. Was. Not.

Harry sniffled, swiping at his eyes, grimacing as his hand came away with a smear of gold and black. Well, fuck.

Both his Sensei and Coach were waiting for him at the Kiss and Cry, beaming and crying, snot (and also mascara, in the latter's case) streaking their faces. Harry, of course, burst out into messy tears the minute Sensei pulled him into a tight hug.

“...I though' you pr'mised not t'make me ugly cry on live television.”

The man let out a fond chuckle, pressing a kiss to a sweaty temple. “Sorry, Harii-kun.”

“No you're not.”

“No, I'm really not. I'm so, so proud of you.”

Harry wailed, tightening his grip on his Sensei. “Oh god, stop, you're making it worse~!”

The older man just gave an affectionate snort, gently passing him to his equally as teary-snotty-ugly crying husband. Coach pulled him in tightly to his chest, rocking him happily back and forth on his feet. “My little Hala~! You did so well~!”

He hiccuped, burying his face in his Coach's chest. “Oh god, I'm a mess. I want to see my score, but I'm pretty sure I look like the Rocky Horror Picture Show had an orgy on my face right now.”

His Coach let out a little chortle, shuffling him over to the bench and sitting him down. The amusement that flickered across the man's face was enough to let Harry know that he was right, and he pointedly stared at his feet while the man dug through his pockets for an unopened packet of his Chanel wipes and compact mirror.

Keeping his face hidden, he carefully cleaned himself up, grimacing at Jackson Pollock nightmare that was his face as he methodically cleaned up the best he could. He yelped, peeking up at his Coach through his lashes as the man snatched the wipes and compact from his hand.

“Look, Hala! Look!”

With only Seung-Gil and Plisetsky left to go, he was First place by a wide margin. So...so even if they did what they did best, and made the ice their willing bitch, that still meant he was going home with a medal.

A fresh wave of tears flooded his eyes, and he buried his face in his hands, not even caring that the dirty makeup wipe was leaving streaks of makeup across his forehead. He just sobbed like the sensitive fucking flower he goddamn was, and let his happy Coach steer him from the Kiss and Cry to the locker rooms, so he could clean his face up for real.

In the end, Seung-Gil delivered a skate that left no question that he'd earned that fucking Gold, thankyouverygoddamnmuch, leaving Harry—HARRY, him—to take Silver, with Plisetsky only a fraction of a point behind to take Bronze.
His knees trembled as he stood on the podium, staring dumbly out into the crowd.

He was pretty sure everyone and their mother was going to be talking about the huge fucking bruise he was showing off later, but he couldn't be fucked.

He'd made it and medaled and...what.

Plisetsky poked him in the side, ruining the moment. As was his thing, apparently. “You want everyone to think you're as stupid as you look? Fuck.”

“Huh?”

“That thing you're doing with your face.”

“What thing with my face?”

“The stupid fucking gaping thing. You keep that shit up, everyone's gonna think you're dumb as paint. Or, well, fucking Viktor.”

“Noted.”

Plisetsky nodded and fell silent, his gaze oddly distant. He sighed. “…that wasn't bad, for a brat.”

Harry turned to blink at him. “Thanks, I think..?”

Blue eyes flickered away from the crowd to met his green, fierce and bright with challenge, a shark-like grin splitting his face. “Don't think I'm gonna let you beat me again, though.”

Harry felt a smile tug at his lips. “Oh no?”

“No.”

Harry smirked, turning away to face the roaring crowd. “Challenge fucking accepted.”

THE END

Chapter End Notes

A Few Brief Notes and then Thank Yous.

Baba di Camelo. I've never had it, but it is apparently a local dessert and sounds goddamn amazing. Enough said.

So, in terms of how I ended the GPF, I totally did not start out planning to make Harry into the glamm Wonderkind of skating. I literally cut up scraps of paper, and wrote names on them. In order to prevent self-sabotage, I decided before I opened the first scrap to rank them 1-6 in reverse order for the SP. So, the first name I drew was 6th place, and so on. AND THEN I DID IT A SECOND TIME, to decide the final ranking after the FS. And thus, you get a GPF that is a bit of a clusterfuck, because I had to do
some real juggling to make the initial order match up with the final ranking.

The Gala and Loose Ends. Before anyone @s me, I realize I left a few dangling plot threads...like the gala, and the Kyoya Issue, and Ryota. I did that deliberately, to give myself a few things to play with other than skating in Part Two.

Now, to the thank yous.

I don't have all the screen names of all the amazing reviewers memorized, but I do want to sincerely thank everyone who has read and reviewed this story, and sent so much beautiful love and support. I may not have started writing this or even posting for you, but you kept me from procrastinating and shelving it for even longer than necessary.

SILENCEIA. Formerly known as Silencia. If ya'll want to know who the wizard behind the curtain is, you should look at her. She was there for my initial brainstorming, and when this was a thing that only existed on my writer's page on FB. She was the one who told me "No, but you need to put this on AO3." She happily squeed and flailed and brainstormed latter chapters with me, despite our massive time difference and her being busy with real life things. I L U, LADY.

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End Notes

Some helpful definitions:

lyubov moya = (Russ) My Love
Piz’da = (Russ) Cunt
Govnyuk = (Russ) Shithead
Mal'chik = (Russ) Boy
Sladin’kaya = (Russ dimin) My Sweet

Granted, Duolingo for Russian doesn't work on my phone, as it requires I download the Cyrillic alphabet, so this MAAAY be (probably is???) a bit off. Any corrections you want to give me on my Russian (or any other language outside of my native English) is welcome and appreciated.

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