mark lee's muse

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Summary

The best things in life are unexpected, Lee Donghyuck was no exception to that rule

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
memories

Chapter Notes

If any of you read my noren fic, you know how this goes. Donghyuck swears and makes inappropriate jokes a LOT in this AU, it's just how his character is and i don't think it's that bad but i had to inform beforehand just in case

Also the first chap is just a collection of flashbacks sorry if its boring??? it's just to give background info idk ;/ next chapters will be normal tho

(anyways, english isn't my first language please keep that in mind thank you!!)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Vote For the 2016 World’s Cutest Donghyuck” Mark reads on a bright red poster sell taped on his school’s door. He scoffs and makes his way inside towards the crowded school halls, if there was something he didn’t quite understand was why Donghyuck always wanted to be the student’s representative. On top of having to listen to the teacher’s complaints about the students, you also had to plan events, make surveys about what the students wanted to change in the school and also serve as a therapist because no one actually trusted the school’s psychologist.

And yet, the boy fought for that title for as long as Mark had come to Korea. He never understood why, only voted for him because Jeno basically begged for him to do so. If Mark could, he definitely wouldn’t vote for Donghyuck, not because he was bad at his job since he was surprisingly good for someone who looked like he gave zero shits about everything. It’s just that the very moment Donghyuck had shown up in Mark’s camp of vision, he knew he’d dislike the boy.

Donghyuck had slammed the door to their Maths class wide open and yelled ‘Good morning, fuckers!’ at the top of his lungs on Mark’s very first day of school in Korea. Everyone replied back cheerfully, everyone always did. Apparently Donghyuck had some sort of charm that Mark could not see but everyone around him could, no matter how hard he tried all Mark saw in Donghyuck was a vulgar boy who swore far more than he should and spoke of things that people their age probably should not. Plus, the messy way he dressed didn’t help his first impression but Mark preferred to pretend he didn’t judge people based on the way they dress.

Jeno, on the other hand, attracted Mark like a magnet from the very start. The boy looked cold, but as soon as he smiled it all vanished and the real Jeno shone through. He had introduced himself with one of his popular eyesmiles that stole everyone’s heart, Mark’s included, and from then on they had become as close as they possibly could.

However, being friends with Jeno also meant having to hang out with Donghyuck because the two seemed to get along as well as good brothers do. Mark didn’t want to admit to Jeno that he didn’t like Donghyuck, but he was sure his friend knew and chose to ignore. Mark was never good at hiding his emotions anyways.

Mark closes his locker only to find Jeno smiling brightly right behind him. “You’ll vote for Donghyuck, right?” He bats his eyelashes in an attempt to look cute.
“You already know I will.” Mark shrugs and starts walking in the direction of his classroom, he doesn’t need to look behind to know Jeno was following him. “Why does he do it? Seriously, it’s such a shitty job.”

“I don’t know man, he just says it’s fun.”

“Fun?! He’s crazy that’s what.” He shakes his head. Jeno doesn’t say anything, like always whenever Mark started talking about Donghyuck.

The classroom is already filled with students when the two boys get there, Donghyuck is sitting on the teacher’s chair mocking a serious expression. Mark rolls his eyes and moves to his allocated seat right next to Jihoon, the boy doesn’t even notice his presence too busy listening to whatever garbage Donghyuck was spewing out of his mouth.

“As y’all know, I’m running for student’s representative this year as well. If I find out any of you cocksuckers didn’t vote for me I will make Jeno beat your asses.” The boy smirks and slams the ruler he was holding on the palm of his hand. “And we all know how strong he is, so you better vote for me.” Everyone chuckles, except Mark of course, who was still recovering from being called a cocksucker.

The teacher finally comes and forces Donghyuck to go back to his seat next to Jeno, the two boys snicker for quite some time until Jeno begs for Donghyuck to shut up and let him pay attention. Mark watches them for a few minutes while the teacher prepares his material with a look that could be classified as disgust.

“You look ugly when you do that.” Jihoon mumbles and Mark furrows his eyebrows.

“Do what?”

“Judge Donghyuck.” The boy raises one his eyebrows, a smirk spreads across his face when Mark chokes on his own spit.

“I wasn’t-“

“Spare me, Mark Lee.” He rolls his eyes and turns his attention back to the teacher, Mark places his hand on his cheek to cool it down since the embarrassment had left his face burning.

He wished he could hide his emotions better.

7th of September 2013

Mark adjusts the frame of his glasses on the bridge of his nose and stares at Jeno’s face as the boy explains their surroundings, they had entered a big building with a high white ceiling and red walls that was, according to the boy, the school’s canteen. “It’s pretty, Donghyuck says it isn’t, though.”

“Who’s that?” He asks quietly, Jeno chuckles.

“Does good morning fuckers ring a bell?”

The boy cringes and nods weakly. “Yeah, that one.”
Jeno goes back to explaining in detail every corner of their school, by the end of the lengthily tour Mark already knows all the secret places and who they belong to so that he wouldn’t have to deal with an angry seventeen old for stealing his spot.

Mark was ready to be ditched during lunch time, after all Jeno’s responsibility was to show him school not make sure he had friends, but the boy grabs his arm when he announces that he would be leaving him making Mark gasp in surprise. Jeno lets go right away afraid he had scared the new boy and apologises. “You can join us, if you’d like.”

“I’d love to.”

20th of October 2013

To say his Korean was rusty was an understatement, Mark had never noticed just how hard speaking was for him. More often than not he’d mix languages together and pronounce things wrong giving them a completely different meaning, however none of that really bothered him until a certain boy started making witty remarks about it. He was already a man of few words, but afterwards, he’d barely open his mouth to speak and instead would listen to the world around him quietly.

Jeno was the first to notice, Mark was nodding and laughing along with the group when the boy slapped his shoulder. He hisses and turns to his new friend who had a big pout on his lips. “What was that for?”

“Why won’t you speak?! I almost forgot how your voice sounds like.” He whines.

“S-Sorry?” Mark blinks at him and rubs the back of his head. “My grammar-“

“If you don’t speak it won’t get better!”

Mark copies the pout on Jeno’s face, his friend was right but the thought of Donghyuck bullying him for it made him want to run away as fast as he could. “Sounds stupid.”

“If this is about Hyuck just ignore him, he’s just bored half of the time and you’re an easy target.”

Said boy perks up from a few seats away from them and shoots Jeno a confused look to which his friend replies with a glare. “Seriously.”

He smiles weakly. “I’ll try”

14th of November 2013

They were both laying on top of Jeno’s bed looking up at the ceiling, the plan was to study for Maths but that had been quickly dropped and they decided to play videogames instead. That had been hours ago, however, and they were too tired to even talk after all the mental strain they had put into their battling strategies.

Jeno sits up, Mark follows him with his eyes. “I have to go soon.”
“Where to?”

His friend sighs deeply and ruffles his black locks. “Swimming.” He turns around to face Mark with a thoughtful look. “Do you do sports?”

“I love badminton.”

“Ah, so does Jaemin.” Jeno whispers.

“Who’s that?” Mark moves to his side and holds his head up with the palm of his hand.

Jeno smiles brightly, moves closer to Mark so that their faces are just a few centimetres apart and bops his nose. “Join me in swimming and you’ll find out.”

“Me?! I can’t even swim!” He laughs out loud but stops once Jeno keeps a straight face. “I never swam properly in my life, Jeno.”

“That’s okay, Donghyuck can’t swim for shit and he’s still there.” Jeno chuckles and gets up from the bed. “C’mon it’ll be fun!” Mark mumbles something under his breath and feels the bed all over to find his glasses, Jeno beats him to it however. “Come with me and I’ll give your glasses back.”

“That’s not fair!” He cries out but doesn’t try to get the glasses back knowing full well he’d miss Jeno’s hand completely. “I don’t even have swimming equipment!”

Jeno moves around the room, Mark can’t see what he was up to due to his lack of vision so he waits on the bed impatiently. His friend comes back and throws something on his face that Mark later finds out to be some swimming trunks. “There, now you have some.” Mark rolls his eyes at him. “Please?”

“Do I get my glasses back?” Mark sighs.

His friend giggles loudly. “Yes.”

“Fine, I’ll join your stupid club.”

_9th of December 2013_

Jaemin engulfs him in a big hug as soon as he enters the changing room, Mark looks at him as if he had grown two heads and tries to push him away the best he can. “What?”

“Yeowon said she likes me back!” He squeals.

“We get it Jaemin, let the boy breathe.” Someone says from behind him, a boy who Mark noticed was always following Jaemin around and wouldn’t speak much even with his own teammates. “You don’t need to tell everyone, y’know?”

“Shut up Renjun! This is a big deal!”

The boy, Renjun, rolls his eyes and drags Jaemin away. “It’s just a girl.”

Jaemin waves Mark goodbye before he goes back to protesting against what his friend was saying, their voices become muffled as they leave the room. Mark chuckles quietly to himself before he starts
Suddenly someone sits next to him and he looks to his side only to find two big dark eyes staring back at him. “Hello Mark Lee.” Donghyuck greets. Mark furrows his eyebrows and looks around him checking if there were any hidden cameras somewhere in the room, but he finds nothing and goes back to staring into the boy’s eyes. “Cat got your tongue?”

“You- what want?” Mark hits himself in the head mentally, he had managed to get better at speaking with everyone but Donghyuck. Every time it came to him it was as if he was suddenly in kindergarten and the simplest phrases made his brain turn into mush.

Donghyuck laughs out loud and pats Mark’s shoulder, as if that made it any better. “Such a tiny baby.”

Mark glares at him and finishes putting his clothes inside his rucksack. “Go away.” He mutters through his teeth before shoving the bag inside the tiny locker and turning to face the other once again. “Stop bothering me.”

“He speaks!” Donghyuck smiles brightly for a few seconds before the typical smirk takes over once more.

Mark grabs his goggles and swimming cap with a bit more anger than he should have and walks out of the room, slamming the door as he does so.

14th February 2014

Mark watches as Donghyuck opens his locker only to be bombarded with roses and red heart shaped letters, his jaw drops to the floor in shock. Even if he knew the boy was popular, he didn’t know it was to that extent, it made him wonder even harder how someone could possibly like Donghyuck so much when he was such a mean person.

Jeno comes behind him and pats his back. “Open yours, you might have some as well.”

He does, three to be precise but it wasn’t like he really payed attention to it, not when Donghyuck was still gathering everything that fell on the floor just a few meters away. How come so many people like him? He could feel his blood boil which was something he never thought possible, Mark shakes his head. “Get yourself together, dude.” He mutters to himself in English before closing his locker and walking to class leaving Donghyuck on his own to fetch his stupid presents.

Midway through his class, Mark remembers the letters inside his locker and opens his backpack. Jeno watches as he places them on top of his desk with curious eyes and bends over closer to Mark so he could read them as well. Mark chuckles at the action and opens the first letter, the pretty handwriting was so pleasing to read that the boy almost forgot to pay attention to whatever he was reading.

“Your so handsome!! I cant believe how lucky I am to have you in my class mark lee <3 I wish youd notice me but its okay if you dont <3 ill watch you from afar!!”

Jeno lets out a laugh and covers it up with a cough right after it, Mark stares at the letter with a mix of horror and disbelief. “They should’ve just written it fully in Korean, it’s not your.” He mumbles and Jeno chokes on his own spit while forcing himself not to laugh again.
“That’s the only thing bothering you here?”

“Well, the biggest, yeah.” Mark cringes once he reread the letter and puts it aside. The second one is pastel pink and its writing more round, not so delicate.

“I wish I could get to know you more, but I’m shy and so are you : ( I got a feeling you’re going to be very beautiful in a few years, you’re already such a cutie. >.< ah, this is embarrassing. Fighting Mark!”

His friend raises one of his eyebrows and shrugs. “Well, they don’t sound like a total psycho like the previous one. Now I want to know who this is.”

Mark nods, his eyes were unfocused as he stared at the paper in his hands. “Same, I’m going to be more observant from now on.”

“No you won’t, your head is always in the clouds.” Jeno teases and Mark hits his shoulder, the teacher gives the boys a look of disappointment but doesn’t reprimand them. “Read the last one!”

“Future visual of our school, how come you’re a cutie even with braces and those ugly glasses of yours? How unfair, but can’t wait to swoon after you Mark Lee.”

Mark rereads the letters over and over again, Jeno stays quiet as well with a look of confusion on his face. “Well, that’s sure a weird way of praising someone.” His friend finally says and snorts.

“Right?!” He lets out a short laugh. “Well, this was interesting.”

Jeno goes back to paying attention to class and so does he. Well, kind of, his brain kept on replaying the words from his so called love letters like a broken disc and it was driving him crazy. He should be paying attention to Biology not on how he was called the future visual of the school, Mark curses Valentine’s Day inside his head.

23rd April 2014

Mark is the last one to arrive, his mother had gotten lost on their way to Jeno’s house and they were forced to call the boy’s parents for directions. By the time he gets there, the amount of food left was just enough for Mark to be content. “I promise I tried to make them stop eating!” Jeno pouts but his friend shakes his head.

“It’s really okay, and we still got the cake!” Mark grins and shoves the chicken drumstick inside his mouth. Donghyuck shows up in the living room yelling loudly about how Jaemin was trying to steal a red balloon from him, Jeno rolls his eyes. “Wait a second, yeah?”

He nods and watches as Jeno pushes Donghyuck to the floor, both boys start to playfight making Donghyuck forget completely about his balloon which gave Jaemin a chance to have it instead. Mark snorts and both he and Jaemin giggle knowingly.

The two boys fighting on the floor get separated by Jeno’s mom after some minutes of continuous shouting and kicking. The audience that had created around them boos but the woman seemed unbothered and announces that the cutting of the cake was going to happen soon, all the kids shut up right away.
Jeno sits at the very end of the big table with a cake in front of him, the lights are turned off and everyone starts singing Happy Birthday simultaneously. Jeno’s dad stays in the back with a camera in his hands filming everything. Donghyuck turns to face the camera and winks before going to back to facing Jeno who shoots him a scowl. “What?!” Donghyuck mouths.

“It’s my party idiot! Stop stealing the spotlight.” Jeno yells over the singing, Donghyuck laughs loudly at that.

He blows the candles and everybody cheers, before Jeno’s mother can even cut one slice, there were already about five boys fighting for it. She pushes them away and places it on Jeno’s place with a fond smile. “My baby gets it first.”

Jeno smiles brightly back at her and takes a small bite while making eye contact with the rest of the boys just to piss them off, Mark chuckles when Donghyuck lightly hits the table with his fist.

Mark doesn’t mind being the last to get a piece, when he finally gets his Jeno was already done eating and decided to start planning what games they should play next. He watches as everyone yells out their ideas, he can see Jeno’s mother shake her head in disapproval from the corner or his eyes. He looks at her with a smile full of sympathy and she ruffles his hair lovingly.

Thankfully, half of the boys left before the sleepover started. Most weren’t allowed to join, Mark almost made part of that group but he had somehow managed to convince his mom to let him sleep at Jeno’s with the excuse that he needed to get closer to everyone or else he’d become a loner. His mother, like any other mother, didn’t want that.

So there he was now, in his pyjamas, surrounded by Jeno and Donghyuck on his friend’s king sized bed. Jaemin was next to Jeno on the other side with his leg thrown over the boy’s waist. “This is nice.” Jaemin giggles.

It’s not. Mark thinks when he feels Donghyuck’s breath on the back of his neck. “It’s too warm.” He mumbles and tries to get away from the boy. “Couldn’t some of us sleep on the floor?”

“That’s the longest I’ve heard you speak today, and you’re complaining.” Jeno hits him on the shoulder. “Hush, hush and sleep.”

Mark tries but, at some point, Donghyuck throws his limbs on top of him and he has to push the sleeping boy’s arm away from him and untangle their legs. He groans when Donghyuck does it again and decides to ignore it, he stares at Jeno’s serene expression and as much as he wants to curse the boy he can’t.

He keeps staring at his friend’s face, thanking him inside his head for being so nice to him from the beginning and giving him a group of friends to be with. Mark has no clue when he had fallen asleep but the next thing he knows he’s being woken up with Donghyuck jumping on top of him yelling about how it was breakfast time. “Shut up!” He cries out and hits the boy in the forearm.

“No abuse in this household.” Jeno slaps Mark in the thigh in Donghyuck’s defense.

“Really, Jeno Lee?” Mark squints his eyes at him and rolls off the bed. “You can’t fight violence with more violence.”

Jeno places his hands on his hips like an angry mother. “I can and I will, now get your ass downstairs before I drag you there.”
If Donghyuck was praised during the rest of the year, during his anniversary it just became ten times worse. Mark was greeted with the sight of the boy’s locker decorated with red balloons and sticky notes with happy birthday wishes, he looks at his dull looking locker and scoffs. “So today is the day.” He whispers to himself in English and takes his books out.

He had never been told when Donghyuck’s birthday was, but he didn’t need to be a genius to understand that there had to be a special occasion for the boy to get even more attention than usual.

Mark closes his locker with a loud bang and walks to class, it was going to be a long day.

No matter how much he wished to complain, Mark couldn’t get himself to do it. After all, Donghyuck had let him shove as many pieces of cake down his throat as he wanted, so that definitely compensated the fact that he had to hear the boy get praised left and right. Like really what was so special about him anyways?

Mark looks at the boy while he chews on the delicious cake, he found him to be basic looking, personality wise he was more annoying than anything, there was nothing there that screamed *I deserve to be praised like a God.* Nobody seemed to agree with him, though.

He finishes the cake and goes back to his seat, Mark carefully watches every move Donghyuck makes with interest. He wanted to understand, but he just couldn’t, and he knew it made no sense to dislike someone that much simply because they were the total opposite to him. It wasn’t a good excuse, he knew it, but he also couldn’t get himself to like Donghyuck like the rest. It bothered him, he wasn’t the type to dislike anyone.

“Murk Lee come over here.” Jeno shouts waking him up from his trance. “What are you doing there all alone you fool.”

He blinks back at him a couple of times before his brain goes back to functioning properly and he gets up. “Sorry.” He whispers and sits on top of the table nearest to Jeno.

Jeno doesn’t answer, instead, pats his back and gives him a reassuring smile. His friend puts his arm around Mark’s shoulder and keeps it there while he speaks to their classmates, Mark simply watches with curious eyes as they speak and giggles time to time.

“So who’s coming to my party tonight?” Donghyuck looks around, everyone around Mark cheers but he stays mute and stares at his shoes as if they were the most interesting thing in the world. Jeno pokes him in the ribs lightly and gives him a confused look.

“Mom wouldn’t let me.” He lies through his teeth, Donghyuck doesn’t seem bothered about his absence anyways but Jeno shoots him a cute pout.

“That’s a shame.”

Mark forces a smile. “Yeah, it really is.”
1st August 2014

The summer air was suffocating him, he curses Korea for its extreme weather under his breath as he throws another shirt inside his suitcase. He was sweating from moving around inside his room, it was insane. “I can’t wait to go back to the cold.” The boy cries out and flops onto the floor.

His break doesn’t last long, someone knocks on the door a few minutes after forcing Mark to stand up to open the door. Jeno stares back at him with a sad look on his face. “I’ll miss you Mark Lee!” He shouts before wrapping his arms around the other boy’s neck.

Mark freezes on the spot with his arms hanging by his sides. “Uh. I-“

“You’re going for the whole summer?!” Jeno cuts him.

“Yeah.” Mark chuckles when Jeno whines like a baby. “C’mon you got other friends.”

“But I like you too!” His friend finally lets go, they look at each other in silence for a while before Mark sighs and turns around. “Buy me something while you’re there so I can brag about having a Canadian thing.”

Mark snorts. “What would you want?”

Jeno hums and rubs his chin. “Don’t know, if you find something cool then buy me it.”

“Well then.” Mark says dryly and goes back to packing up, Jeno sits cross legged on the floor next to him and tries his best to help his friend.

They stay that way in silence till Mark finally finishes, when he keeps on struggling to close the suitcase Jeno decides to sit on it almost giving Mark a heart attack in the process because “THAT’S EXPENSIVE YOU IDIOT!”

Jeno shrugs. “I’m helping you stop being ungrateful.” Mark can’t argue with that because the suitcase finally closes. “See?”

“Whatever.” Mark rolls his eyes and lays on the floor, Jeno follows suit.

They lay in silence, like many times before, it had become their thing or so Mark would like to think it had. Jeno was okay with him not wanting to speak much, he was also okay with him not wanting to be as touchy as the rest of their tiny group and Mark couldn’t thank him enough for being so understanding when he didn’t own him anything. In the end, Jeno could’ve dropped him right away, but he hadn’t.

Whichever teacher had assigned Jeno to show him around had a special spot in Mark’s heart, he promised to himself that he’d find out who it was and pay up for the big favour.

It was stupid, but the words wouldn’t leave his mouth. He had never told Jeno how grateful he was, nor how much he liked him, he just hoped the other boy understood from his actions alone. He wanted to say he’d also miss Jeno but the words died the moment he opened his mouth to speak, it was frustrating him to no end.

“I can see you gaping like a fish.” Jeno snickers and pokes Mark’s shoulder.

Mark looks at his friend and pokes his tongue out. “Glu glu.”
Jeno chuckles and they go silent once more, Mark tries once more to say it but nothing comes out. “I know you’ll miss me too stop cosplaying a fish now.” His friend breaks the silence and Mark chokes on his own spit.

“How did you-“ He furrows his eyebrows, Jeno winks at him in response.

Maybe Mark didn’t mind being so transparent all the time after all.

7th September 2014

The moment he steps inside the school gates Mark feels two arms around his neck and a pair of lips crash against his cheek. He lets out a loud squeak and starts giggling loudly when he notices it’s Jeno who has attacked him out of the blue. “I missed you so much!”

“We texted every day.” Mark rolls his eyes but smiles fondly at the other.

“Shut up I know you missed me too.” Jeno punches him lightly on the chest and puts his arm around Mark’s shoulder.

They walk inside the busy school side by side chatting happily while dodging the students in the busy halls, Mark finds himself staring at Jeno as he talks for far too long and shakes his head. “It’s nice seeing your face again.” He blurts out and cringes right after.

Jeno pokes Mark’s cheek. “How cute, I missed your stupid face too.”

23th December 2014

Here’s the thing, Mark had never been the type to have crushes, back in Canada his friend would gush about how pretty the girls were and he’d sit in the very far corner of their group and stare. However since the beginning of the new school year he had been catching himself staring at a girl in his class called Jiwoon, at first it was just admiration but as time went on Mark found himself wanting to be near her all the time. It was only when Jeno pointed it out that it clicked together, though.

It had been about a month or so since he admitted his feelings to himself and his friends were already tired of his rambling about her, not that they’d ever actually said it out loud the only one with the guts to do it was Donghyuck who would mumble “We get it you’re straight.” time to time and roll his eyes. Mark rolled his back at him and kept going, not because he wanted to be annoying, he just couldn’t seem to stop himself.

So, there he was, standing outside the canteen getting the courage to walk in and ask her to talk to him privately. It wasn’t that he wanted to do it but Jeno had finally burst and made a bet with him, if he didn’t do it, he’d have to dye his hair blonde. “But what if I get rejected?!” Mark had whined and Jeno replied that he’d spare his hair if he did get rejected.

All in all, the chances of him going blonde were high. If he didn’t do it, Jeno would bleach his hair, if he did do it but didn’t get rejected, he’d also get bleached. It was a paradox really, part of him
wished to get rejected so his hair wouldn’t suffer but then his pride would get hurt, and that wasn’t any better.

Mark hates Jeno sometimes.

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4th January 2015

“It burns!” Mark cries out and tries to scratch his head but Jeno slaps his hand away.

“Don’t touch it.” Jeno reprimands.

If Mark only knew that getting a girlfriend was going to cost him his scalp he wouldn’t have accepted the bet, but it wasn’t his fault for thinking the prettiest girl in their class would reject him. After all he was Mark Lee, he had just gotten rid of his stupid braces and his face still looked child-like. So, really, it made no sense to him that he hadn’t been flat out rejected.

But there he was, with bleach on his head and no longer single. He wasn’t quite sure how to feel and it scared him to no end, he had never dated anyone in his whole life and he was sure Jiwoon had many times before. Jeno had assured him it wasn’t rocket science and it’d come naturally to him but Mark couldn’t help the nervousness that grew inside his stomach. What if I’m not good enough?

“She’s going to break up with me, and we haven’t even started dating properly.” Mark pouts at his reflection in the mirror.

“You’ll look adorable, I’m sure she’s going to love it.” His friend assures him and gives him a little pat on the back. “You can always wear hoodies for a whole month and dye it black again later.”

“Can I not change the rule-“

“No, no changes.”

Mark glares at him and then turns back to looking at himself. He looked ridiculous, hair poking in all sorts of direction covered in a white substance making him look like some Dragon Ball Z character. Great.

Jeno takes the blindfold away from Mark’s eyes, it’s silent for a few seconds before the boy starts yelling in agony and touching his hair. “No! It’s gross what the-“ He sobs and gets closer to the mirror. “Jeno she’s going to break up with me!”

“Dramatic fool, you look so adorable. Like a little angel.”

“Fuck off.” He growls and goes back to pulling at his hair to make sure what his eyes were seeing was real. Sadly, it was. “Please Jeno I look like- like- I don’t even know I look so weird, like a damn albino.”

His friend laughs out loud and almost falls on the floor because of it, Mark watches him with a glare and a cute pout of his lips. Jeno gets himself together and ruffles the boy’s blonde locks. “You look pretty, I’m gay I know what I’m saying.”
That doesn’t make Mark feel much better but he nods nevertheless and forces himself to move away from the mirror for the time being. Even if he didn’t like it, he’d have to deal with it for a month anyways. “If I go back to being single because of this you’re a dead man Lee Jeno.”

16th January 2015

Mark grabs Jiwoo’s waist to pull her closer as they enter the bus, they sit together with Jeno and Donghyuck in the parallel row. Everyone was excited to break away from the monotony of school with a little Biology field trip, it wasn’t anything special, they’d only look at the animals in the water of a river nearby. Either way, it was still something and that was better than sitting down for hours in a row.

Jiwoo puts her head in Mark’s shoulder and closes her eyes, the boy bops her nose before turning to his friend and chatting away the whole ride as his girlfriend sleeps. Mark had a smile glued permanently on his face for days, Donghyuck had already made a remark about it but not even that ruined his mood.

He felt like he was living in paradise, his grades were doing great and was dating his crush, to him it couldn’t get better than that. Things were going so well between him and Jiwoo, he loved talking to her and spending time together. Dating felt amazing, he found himself stupid to have stressed so badly over it.

The bus comes to a stop, outside Mark would see a wide green field with a river flowing far ahead, nearby it was a caravan.

They leave and are told to enter the vehicle, Mark grabs Jiwoo’s hand as they walk towards it. Inside, the caravan was decorated with posters about the animals that lived in the area and some other posters that Mark couldn’t be bothered to read, it had a few tables ready for them and a few equipment like rain boots in the far back.

Donghyuck sits with Jeno opposite to them and they wait for the biologists to start talking. “Good morning kids! Today we will be looking at the living organisms living in the river, it is one way of knowing the quality of the water of the area.” Mark zooms out as he stares out of the window towards the clear water of the river.

He’s woken up by Jiwoo who hits him gently in the ribs with her elbow, he looks at her and smiles right after. “Gross.” Donghyuck mumbles from under his breath as he passes by them. Mark glares at him before going back to eyeing the girl with the biggest heart eyes he could manage.

“We have to go, get up.” She smiles back and pushes him up. “We are going into the water now!”

Mark wishes he was as enthusiastic to go inside the water as she was, first they had to put on a suit so that the water wouldn’t wet their clothes and then the ugly looking red rain boots as well. By the time he had finished changing, Mark felt like he weighted ten times more. “Is this really compulsory?” He mumbles mostly to himself.

“Yes, now get into the water.” His teacher pushes him lightly in the direction of the river and he pouts.

Jiwoo was already inside having the time of her life splashing another classmate of theirs, Mark liked
to think of himself a chill person who didn’t get jealous but he certainly did not enjoy how loudly the girl was giggling whenever the boy would throw some water in her direction. He tries his best to look unfazed and goes near Jeno who was entertained trying to find animals inside the water.

“What are you doing near me? You’re dating, shoo.”

Mark snorts and joins him anyways. “It’s fine we don’t need to be near each other all the time right?”

Jeno looks to his side in Jiwoo’s direction and then back to Mark, he stares at the boy with a mix of pity and worry. “You good?”

“Why wouldn’t I be?” Mark shrugs and they go silent, but even then Jeno would look at his friend time to time to make sure he was fine. “Stop it, Jeno it’s fine really.”

His friend sighs but nods nevertheless and they go back to silently looking for the species they were told to look for. Suddenly Mark feels his face get wet and shrieks loudly, he almost drops the bucket he was holding when he notices it had been Donghyuck who had splashed him with water. “If I could splash you back, you’d be drowning.” He growls.

“Sure, sure.” The boy smirks and runs his fingers through his hair. “Ah I’m so bored, how much longer till we can home?” Jeno shrugs, Donghyuck doesn’t seem to like the little amount of attention he was getting and splashes his friend as well even if with considerably less water than with Mark. “C’mon, both of you look dead. Don’t people say dating makes you glow? How come I’m the only one glowing here?”

Mark raises his head to look at Donghyuck, he had a point, the winter sun rays hit his skin and made him glow brightly. “Dating is shit.” Jeno mumbles and starts walking away.

Donghyuck gives Mark a confused look to which he replies with a shrug. “Jeno? You okay?”

“No, I should give up on dating.” The boy keeps on walking, he’s slowed down by the current though so Donghyuck easily catches up to him by swimming to his side.

“Babe? What did he do?” Donghyuck asks and grabs Jeno’s hand, Mark chokes on his own spit at the petname. “Is he hurting you again?”

Jeno shakes his head. “I don’t know.”

“What do you mean, you don’t know?” His friend huffs and forces Jeno to look at him in the eyes. “Mental pain hurts just as much, has he been doing things he shouldn’t?”

“I don’t want to talk about this.” Jeno whispers and pushes Donghyuck away slightly. “Later, Hyuck.”

Mark watches from the back as Donghyuck tries to comfort Jeno by massaging the boys shoulders as they step out of the river, he darts his eyes downwards towards the crystal clear water and stares at the little fish swimming around him. Something was terribly wrong with Jeno and it made his heart sink, what hurt the most was that he wasn’t nearly as good as Donghyuck when it came to comforting his friend. He felt useless.

A giggle cuts through his thoughts and he snaps his head up in the direction of the sound, he wished he hadn’t because the sight makes his heart crack a little. Jiwoo seemed to had slip and the guy from previously caught her before she landed inside the water, they were giggling while looking into each other’s eyes exactly like a couple in love would.
He swallows down the hurt and turns away, maybe just *maybe* dating wasn’t actually that great.

27th February 2015

“Jeno.” Donghyuck leans on his friend and places his head on the other’s shoulder. “I need sugar.”

Mark furrows his eyebrows, the boy’s normally glowing skin was getting paler by the second and his lips had turned into a darker shade of pink. Jeno grabs Donghyuck’s cheeks with both of his hands, after a few seconds of analysing him he looks over to Jaemin. “Let’s get some sugar, Hyuckie.”

“I know a gummy store nearby.“

“We are going to a cafe and asking for some sugar.” Jeno says and drags the boy so he’d stand up, Donghyuck mumbles something under his breath and tries his very best to keep his eyes open.

Mark watches the scene with confusion written all over his face, the rest of the group seemed oblivious to what was happening to Donghyuck but he couldn’t help but wonder what was wrong with him. “No, we are not. That’s so boring.”

“Hyuck you’re going to pass out I don’t care!”

Donghyuck mocks his tone and pushes the boy away. “Well, I’m going on my own then.”

He wobbles for a few meters and looks back, Jeno hadn’t moved from his spot and the motherly frown on his face had only deepened. “You don’t have money.”

“I know.” The boy smirks and keeps on walking towards the little store nearby their hangout spot.

Jaemin gives Jeno a worried look and runs after his friend leaving Jeno and Mark alone. The blonde looks at his friend waiting for him to react, he’d follow Jeno in whatever he chose to do even if was none of his business.

Jeno gets up with a loud sigh and starts sprinting towards the other two boys, Mark follows right behind with no hesitation. Once they reach the others, they’re already entering the store so Jeno doesn’t get to warn Donghyuck once more.

Speaking of which, the boy greets the old lady behind the counter and moves towards the most hidden part of the store. Jeno grabs Jaemin’s wrist and starts whispering something, Mark doesn’t want to interfere so he decides to move closer to Donghyuck who looked almost as pale as the white walls of the store. “What are you doing?”

“What do you think, Mark Lee?” He says weakly and shoves a handful of gummy beard inside a bag. “Stealing gummy bears.”

*Out of all things.* Mark wants to hit the boy for being so stubborn, they could’ve easily asked someone for a packet of sugar instead of stealing some stupid gummy bears if they had no money. Donghyuck didn’t care for efficiency, it seemed, only the thrill of things. “You’re stupid.”

“Yeah.” The boy shoves the plastic bag inside his rucksack and gives Mark a witty smile. “Guess so.”
Mark looks to his side, Jeno and Jaemin were having a tiny chat with the old lady. “Now or never.” He whispers and walks towards the entrance.

The lady seemed to be so into whatever story the other two boys were telling that doesn’t notice as Donghyuck and Mark leave the store. They start running but Donghyuck soon slows down and starts panting way too much for it to be normal, Mark comes closer to him and crouches in front of the boy so they could look into each other’s eyes. “Can’t run?”

“Can’t walk, can’t breathe—“ The boy takes a deep breath and closes his eyes tightly. “Here, feed me some.”

Mark looks at the plastic bag being shoved on his face and then back at the other, Donghyuck looked as if he was going to pass out at any second. “O-Okay.” He nods and takes out a few gummy bears.

Donghyuck doesn’t speak as Mark slowly feeds him every single gummy bear inside the bag, once it’s finished Mark forces the boy to walk towards a bench nearby that was thankfully under the shade of a tree. They sit in silence, Donghyuck stares into nothingness while Mark analyses his face with a hint of worry. “Cut it out.” The boy finally whispers but doesn’t look away from the road ahead.

“Sorry.” Mark whispers back and moves his eyes away from the boy. There were so many questions running inside his head but he didn’t dare open his mouth anymore till the other two boys show up.

Jeno smacks Donghyuck in the back of his head when he finally finds them. “I hate you so much! What was that for! I should’ve left you to die!”

Donghyuck snickers and pushes his friend away. “Dramatic.”

“Yeah?! You didn’t have to do all the work now did you? Next time I’ll smack you down so hard you won’t be able to walk at all.” Jeno spits out, anger danced inside his dark eyes and it should’ve scared Donghyuck but the boy kept the stupid smirk on his face the whole time.

“Love you too, Jeno Lee.” He says in a high pitched voice, Jaemin chuckles next to Jeno.

The boy squints his eyes at him and huffs. “Don’t.”

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23th March 2015

Mark never thought anyone could pull off bright red but Donghyuck sure loved to prove him wrong.

Everyone starts shouting as soon as the redhead steps inside their bus, even Renjun raises his head from his book to find out what the fuss was all about and gasps. Donghyuck moves closer with his signature smirk plastered on his face and ruffles his hair. “Y’all like it?” There is a wave of ‘yes’ and the boy smiles brightly. “I wasn’t sure about it, but thank you guys!”

Jeno is the first to stand up to touch it, and then the rest follow. Mark secretly wanted to go as well but stops himself and decides to simply stare at the boy with curiosity, it looked oddly well in contrast to the boy’s tan skin. The boring black that had once adorned his head didn’t do him justice, Mark thought the red was much better, but he would never admit that out loud. Donghyuck didn’t need his ego to be boosted even more.

Their coach makes the boys sit down and chats with them for a few minutes to make sure that
everyone felt good and that they knew the rules they had to follow. The bus starts moving and Mark already knows what’s coming, the game. If there was something he hated about swimming competitions was the stupid game they’d always play, Jeno indirectly forced him to join though. He couldn’t say no whenever Jeno would assume he was going to play, so he ended up playing everytime.

He looks at Renjun a few rows away and sympathizes with the look the boy had in his face, he knew Jaemin probably forced him to play as well. Renjun was known as the boy who’d lose first, whenever the dare was too much he’d simply beat his foot as without thinking twice. He didn’t mind the cons that came with being the first to leave the game, or so it seemed.

“Mark aren’t you number ten?” Jeno whispers in his hear and he snaps out of it.

“Ah? Yeah, yeah I am. Why?” He gulps.

“You have to kiss Donghyuck’s cheek!” His friend grins and pushes the boy to move out of his place. “Today if possible Mark, the game must go on.”

Mark grunts as he gets up, Donghyuck look at him expectantly and smiles softly when Mark comes closer to his face. “How’s my hair, Markie?”

He stops in his tracks and looks at the other boy with a horrified look on his face, Markie?

“It’s- It looks good.” He admits before reluctantly moving his lips closer to Donghyuck’s face.

“You look hot with your blonde hair.” Donghyuck whispers as Mark’s lips collide with the side of his face, the other boy makes a choked up noise in the back of his throat and pulls away. “What? It’s true.”

Mark blinks down at him. “Uh, thanks.” Is all he says before running back to his seat where Jeno greets him with a shit eating grin. “Cut it out, I hate you.”

Jeno simply shrugs.

His throat hurts but he refuses to stop chanting Jeno’s name, his friend was doing amazing and he wouldn’t miss the chance to hype him up. Mark had always found fascinating how well Jeno swam, the boy really had a talent for it that was obviously magnified by the amount of practice and passion he put into swimming.

Next to him he could hear Donghyuck’s high-pitched voice muffle the rest, he glares at the boy knowing full well that Donghyuck wasn’t paying any attention to him. Much to his surprise, Donghyuck looks back at him and quirks his eyebrow up before going back to focusing on Jeno. Mark can feels his cheeks heat up with embarrassment and moves away from the boy.

Jeno slams his hand against the wall and their team erupts into a mess of shouts, he had broken yet another personal record and come in first place. Mark waits for the boy join them before he can vomit all his praises on him, Jeno chuckles and hugs the boy tightly. For the first time in a very long time, Mark hugs back just as tight. “I’m proud of you!” He exclaims before they part, Jeno smiles brightly at that.

“Thank you, do your best as well, yeah?”

Mark snorts, he knew he wouldn’t do nearly as well as Jeno, not then or ever. He hadn’t joined because he was passionate for the sport nor because he was good at it, so his results could never
compare. It wasn’t like he cared about it because he knew he didn’t put nearly as much effort into it as he should, he quite preferred to be allocated with the leader title and take care of other things such as who was going to swim and who wasn’t for certain competitions. Mark had much more fun watching his teammates swim than doing it himself, so the leader role came naturally to him.

“You know I won’t.” He rolls his eyes.

Jeno shrugs. “Well, yeah. But I’m still going to praise you for trying your best.”

Someone bumps their shoulder against his, Mark hisses and frowns at that. “You guys are so sappy, how gross.” Donghyuck scrunches up his nose. Before Mark can retaliate, Jeno was already throwing himself on top of the other boy and punching his chest lightly.

“Stop ruining the mood, I’m going to kill you.” Jeno threatens with a fond smile on his face.

Donghyuck wiggles his eyebrows. “Mhm, kinky.”

11th April 2015

He lifts his badminton racket up in the air and swings it down harshly, his competitor watches as the shuttlecock hits the floor before he can even react. Mark does a little victory dance while the other boy gets ready to serve.

It was sports day at their school and Mark had obviously chosen to spend it playing badminton, they were only warming up but the adrenaline was already running inside his veins. He couldn’t way to beat everyone’s asses and show his sport’s teacher that he did, in fact, have a talent when it came to sports.

Mark keeps a smile the whole time as they play, the other male didn’t look nearly as happy, though. But that was comprehensible, no one liked to lose nine times in a row especially against the proclaimed sports hater of their class. Their sports teacher had too much fun picking on Mark over his lack of skills for anything that wasn’t basketball or badminton, and even then he found something extremely small to tease him for. So, the moment they started to play, Mark couldn’t help but cackle when the other boy stared at him in schock.

He was in his little world when he hears a whistle and misses the shuttlecock, it falls on the floor right by his feet. Mark turns around with anger in his eyes and is greeted with Donghyuck’s typical smirk. “Doing great, noodle boy.”

“Nood-“ Mark looks at him mortified and picks up the object that had fallen. “You made me lose, idiot.”

“You’re doing so well, I couldn’t help but appreciate it.” He hears the boy’s voice from behind him and rolls his eyes before serving.

He wished Donghyuck would leave, or at least wouldn’t have made it known that he was there in the first place, because he could feel himself become nervous at the attention he was receiving. Even then, Mark still manages to play fairly well and win the other boy.

They are told to gather up together near the little temporary stage, Mark can feel Donghyuck follow his steps and sighs but doesn’t bother turning around. He stands still as their school’s direction
explains the rules to the crowd of the students, Mark tries to spot Jeno but to no avail, the room was too full.

The three of them had chosen different sports which meant they were alone for the time being. Mark didn’t mind it though, as long as he could play badminton the whole day he didn’t really care if Jeno was there for him or not. He still wanted to wish the boy good luck, so he’d probably go to the football area later before the match started.

He feels someone poke his shoulder and turns around, Donghyuck flashes him a big toothy smile. “Good luck today.”

Mark hums. “Yeah, you too.”

Before Donghyuck can say anything else, Mark walks away towards the field and starts swinging his racket in the air. He loses himself in his thoughts, Donghyuck had chosen archery and he seriously doubted the boy was any good at it simply because Donghyuck couldn’t stand still for more than a few second. How was he supposed to have enough concentration to hit the target straight in the middle?

He scoffs and swings the racket down harshly. “What an idiot.”

Okay, so maybe, Mark was wrong. Donghyuck isn’t nearly as bad as he expected the boy to be.

Jeno had dragged him away before he could even greet him so that he would join him in the benches while the archery competition was going on. Mark squints as Donghyuck gets ready to shoot the arrow and raises his eyebrow cockily. “I bet he’s not an-“ He’s cut off by Jeno’s loud shout.

“He got a ten!” The boy starts jumping up and down, Donghyuck look up at them and shoots Jeno a heart made with his arms. “Woah, he’s amazing. Isn’t he?”

Mark can feel his lips go dry so he licks them. “Wow?” He breathes out. “A ten? First try?”

“Yes!” His friend exclaims and sits down again.

Both boys watch Donghyuck as he gets ready to shoot again, tension had risen in the air this time around. Mark wanted to know if the first try had been pure luck or if the boy was actually good, he squints his eyes again and curses himself for not bringing his glasses.

Mark is sure Jeno’s shout had caused some damage to his hearing but he wasn’t focused on that, Donghyuck had scored yet another ten and was jumping up and down like a rabbit in the middle of the hall. “Yes! Yes!” Jeno punches the air. “He’s so good at this.”

“He… He is.” Mark mumbles to himself and snorts. “Who knew?”

Everything about Donghyuck’s posture yelled confidence, his back was the straightest Mark had ever seen it be and the boy’s concentrated expression caused shivers to run down his body. Mark shakes his head, it was as if the person standing there wasn’t the Donghyuck but an upgraded version of the boy he knew.

He shoots, and Jeno yells once more because it lands on a nine which gives Donghyuck the highest sum so far out of all the competitors. “My best friend that’s my best friend!” Jeno yells as loudly as he can, Mark covers his ears comically and kicks Jeno’s legs with his feet. The boy didn’t seem to notice it at all and keeps doing his little victory dance in sync with Donghyuck.
Mark rolls his eyes. “Idiots.”

5th May 2015

Donghyuck was leaning against the wall peeling a tangerine with a tiny smirk on his face, he stares at Mark as he approaches without ever breaking the eye contact. “Want some?” The boy asks as soon as the other comes close enough.

“I don’t like it.” Mark scrunches his nose and shakes his head slightly.

The boy’s eyes go wide. “You- Yah! How come you don’t like it? Look at the pretty warm colour, and it’s so tasty and sweet inside. Tsk, tsk Mark Lee.” He chuckles, throws the peel onto the floor and eats the whole fruit in one go. Mark looks horrified as he stares at the ground where Donghyuck had thrown the peel. “Bio degradable, we learnt that shit ages ago. Don’t look so anxious.”

“Yeah, but-“ He makes a few noises of frustration and takes a deep breath. “Do you perhaps know where Jeno is?”

“Sadly I do not, my very good sir. He’s probably with his boyfriend somewhere.” Donghyuck shrugs. “Where you heading?”

Mark doesn’t really want to answer but doesn’t quite have it in him to rudely walk away. “Canteen, to eat.” Donghyucks hums and grabs yet another tangerine.

“Better get going before the line gets too long.” The boy finally breaks the eye contact to look at the small fruit in his hand, the smirk was still there however.

It’s silent for a few seconds, apart from the chatter of students all around them, while Mark tries to comprehend Donghyuck’s actions. Normally, people would offer to tag along, Donghyuck seemed more than happy to stay outside eating by himself, whether it was because Mark’s dislike was obvious or not it still was odd. But, most teenagers aren’t Donghyuck, Mark had come to that conclusion a very long time ago. “I will.” He finally answers and moves away, leaving behind the other boy by himself.

1st July 2015

Mark hates running with passion, no matter how hard he tried to keep his breath steady it never worked which ended up with him feeling like he was going to pass out after a few minutes. All in all, running pretty much sucked and Mark wasn’t having none of it.

Except he had no choice in the matter, the school had a yearly project in which the amount of laps they ran around school counted as a certain amount of money for a random chosen poor country and Mark dreaded it. It was sadly compulsory till they turned sixteen, the only positive aspect was that it wouldn’t be long till he turned sixteen and wouldn’t have to do it anymore.

He understood the whole point of the project, even felt bad about complaining about it, but why did it have to be running? Wasn’t there any other option for raising money? Mark sighs to himself as he puts on his sport shoes and jogs behind Jeno to the starting point.
His friend was chatting away with Donghyuck who seemed thrilled to run, saying it was good for building thigh muscle. Mark couldn’t care less for thigh muscle, not when his ribcage was collapsing inside his body.

“How many rounds do you think you can manage?” Jeno finally turns to him and he shrugs.

“I’ll try to follow you, unless you go full speed.”

The boy snorts and shakes his head. “I’m not crazy like this guy over here.” He points at Donghyuck who winks and flips his imaginary hair. “Where’s your girlfriend?”

Mark furrows his eyebrows and looks around, she was nowhere to be seen in the middle of the crowd. “I don’t know.” He shrugs once more, Jeno gives him a look he couldn’t quite decipher and goes back to speaking to Donghyuck.

They’re told to get ready, Mark groans but follows the two boys. When the whistle blows Mark begs to whatever being was above looking after him that Jeno wasn’t going to sprint, because sometimes Jeno said he’d do something and change his mind at the last minute. Thankfully, at least at first, Jeno does keep a calm steady rhythm that doesn’t tire Mark.

Donghyuck was far gone, the boy had disappear mere second after the run started. Mark couldn’t be more grateful that Jeno didn’t follow the boy’s decision that one time, because he didn’t exactly feel like running alone nor wasting the little energy he had in him trying to make it to first place.

And so they chat, about everything that they could possibly think of. Jeno cautiously asks Mark about his relationship, trying his best not to show that there was a hidden worry behind his question, but his friend notices. He doesn’t say anything however and changes topics. If there was one thing he knew about Jeno was that he didn’t share what he thought if he wasn’t sure about it, so he knew there was no point in asking what was wrong because Jeno wasn’t going to tell him.

It still bothered him, though, because why would Jeno be so invested in his relationship when he had one of his own to take care of. One that especially not going well at all, which was something else bothering Mark. Jeno would occasionally show up with purple blemishes on his wrists and give some obviously made up excuse that their friends easily accepted, but not Mark and he knew Donghyuck didn’t swallow it down easily either from the looks he’d give the boy. If there was something they had in common, it’d be their hate for Jeno’s boyfriend. Well, boyfriends, because the boy seemed to never hit jackpot.

Right at that moment he feels someone slap the back of his head and he yells only to find Donghyuck looking at him with a smirk on his face. “Do that again and I’ll beat you up.” Mark threatens and raises his fist up high, Donghyuck didn’t seem to mind the warning one bit and runs away again.

“I’m going to end things with him.” Jeno breaks the silence, when Mark looks at him with a confused expression he keeps going. “Jun, I’m done I’m going to do it.”

He had heard that before a few times but the determination inside the boy’s eyes made him want to believe it this time. “Okay, I trust you” Mark gives him a soft smile and pats his back, Jeno was about to say something more but someone interrupts them with a loud shout.

“Y’all are so slow!” Donghyuck’s voice erupts from behind them, before Mark can even react the boy was already messing up his hair and giggling.

“Stop it!” Mark whines and tries to fix the messy locks, Donghyuck shrugs before disappearing once
more.

Mark looks to his side only to find Jeno smiling fondly at Donghyuck’s frame, he had seen the way the boy looked at his boyfriend and the slight glint in Jeno’s eyes did not show up then. He didn’t want to assume things, but the wheels inside his brain were already turning.

*Did Jeno like Donghyuck?*

Chapter End Notes

The ending looks a bit abrupt sorry about that? Also updates might be slow since i wanna get this fic right, i dont want the hate to love to be cliche or anything so im taking my time in making it the best i can!! Oh and i'm not even sure this will be 4 chapters, its an estimation, it could go higher or lower but there'll be at least 3 big ones :)

Once again, sorry if this chapter was boring !!
a slow change

Chapter Summary

i see you standing there like a rabid dog
and you got those crying eyes
it makes me wanna surrender and wrap you in my arms

– coming of age,, foster the people

Chapter Notes

Not really satisfied with this but i’m taking too long to update and its bothering me sO
HERE IT IS woop, hope it isnt too bad

(this chapter starts in about november 2015, it fast fowards to about same time as the
first scene from chap1!! Timeline is kinda hard to follow sorry about that but it should
be fine from now on)

ALSO sorry for any typos/phrases that sound off/etc, i have proofread most of it but not
all so yeah.... be warned that’s all fkdjg

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The streets were almost empty, the quietness contrasted with the loud bass he had been hearing for
hours inside the rap club he had just left from. Mark walks with his head down, hiding his face under
a facemask and his hoodie, the night was cold so the more he covered the better.

Suddenly, his stomach grumbles so he makes a turn changing plans at the last minute, it was just past
midnight and Mark was in need for his usual midnight snack. He places his hand on top of his
stomach and gives it a tiny pat. “Wait a little longer.” He whispers in English and speeds up.

Ahead he spots the familiar store, it lit up the whole street making it look holy in the middle of the
pitch-black night. Mark smiles brightly from under his mask as the owner calls out for his name
when he opens the door, he bows down and disappears in one of the aisles.

He then grabs box of rameon and sits nearby the window. Mark stares from out of it towards
nothingness, everything was still outside so when he spots someone moving a few meters away he
almost jumps from his seat. A boy was sitting outside with a dog to his right as he eagerly bites on a
sandwich, Mark furrows his eyebrows and then opens his eyes wide once he figures out who it was.

“Donghyuck?” He mumbles to himself. “What’s he doing here?”

The other thankfully doesn’t notice him and keeps eating while petting the dog, he still had his
school bag on his back and the same outfit he had worn the day before. Mark finishes his food and
says goodbye to the owner but the moment his opens the door to leave him and Donghyuck make
eye contact and he stops in his tracks.
It’s silent, even the dog seemed to breathe quietly as his owner stared at Mark wide eyed. The brown haired turns his back to Donghyuck without a word, he’s about to make a turn into another street when the other boy’s voice echoes around him. “Good night, Mark Lee.”

He doesn’t turn around.

Mark wakes with a massive headache, his mother had warned him that going to a rap competition on a Tuesday night was a bad idea but Mark couldn’t care less, in the end rapping was still worth every school day headache in the world.

He rolls out of bed and falls on the floor with a loud thud, before he even gets to groan and complain his mother is already at the door nagging him about how he was going to be late. Mark grumbles back at her and does a thumbs up, she rolls her eyes and steps away from the door still mumbling something about how her kids never listened to her.

The boy crawls to his door and shuts it with a loud bang before he gets up and quickly puts on the first thing he can find inside his closet. He matches it with black pants and shrugs it off, everything fits with black pants and he couldn’t care less if he looked like a fashion offense.

The smell of eggs catches his attention and he runs downstairs bumping into Johnny in the meantime. “You look dead.”

“Well I came home at two.” Mark grumbles. “But don’t tell mom I said that.”

Johnny smirks but nods and they enter the kitchen where their mother was already sitting down eating her food looking outside the window with a disinterested look in her face. Sometimes she would zoom out, Mark assumed he had gotten that from her, and look like a mix of sad and bored. It broke Mark’s heart because he knew exactly what was going on inside her head, he didn’t know how it felt to be separated from a partner for so long but he could guess that it was awful. Even if there was nothing he could do to change the situation they were in, it still made him want to help her.

He evolved her with his arms in a backhug and kisses her cheek. “Wakey wakey.” Mark says and they both giggle.

“Go eat before we are late.” She smiles at him and points at the dish to her left.

They eat in silence, his mother goes back to looking out of the window with empty eyes and he sighs loudly waking Johnny up from his daze. They both stare at her and give each other looks of pity, they had spoken about ways they could help her before but ended up empty handed with no solutions. All they could do was wait till their father came back from Canada for things went back to how they used to be.

The car ride was just as quiet, Mark tried to catch up on the sleep he had missed while Johnny played games on his phone and their mother hummed to the song playing on the radio. Out of the blue Donghyuck’s face flashes in Mark’s mind and he flinches, Johnny looks at him like he was crazy and Mark laughs it off.

It still confused him, why would the boy be out so late? To walk his dog? But who even walks their dog at dawn? His brain already hurt and classes were yet to start, Mark decides to push his thought away and closes his eyes once again. No matter how much he tried, though, more questions kept popping inside his head.

“Get out losers.” Their mother breaks the silence and turns around to face them. “Have fun in
“Have fun at work.” Mark gives her a sarcastic smile, she copies him and waves in an overly exaggerated manner.

Johnny says goodbye to his brother and walks in the opposite direction towards his friends but not before ruffling his hair and making Mark hit his shoulder. The boy walks inside the school and is instantly hit with the loud noise of chatter all around him, he groans in pain and rubs the sides of his forehead as if it’d help his headache go away. News flash, it didn’t, obviously.

He opens the door to his classroom and swings his bag on top of his table, Jihoon wasn’t there just yet. In fact, barely anyone was except for three other people one of which Mark sworn to be Donghyuck wearing the same exact clothes of before.

Mark forces the questions swimming in his head to quiet down, he wasn’t going to ask the boy about it. There was no point anyways, it wasn’t like Donghyuck would actually tell him the truth. So he decides to sit down and do what he did best, stare.

He stares at the boy’s sleeping frame with so much attention that he doesn’t notice when Jeno enters the classroom and yells out his name. It’s only when Mark feels a hand on his shoulder that he snaps out of it and look up at Jeno wide eyed. “Oh, hi Jeno.”

The boy furrows his eyebrows and looks in the direction Mark had been looking at. “Why are you creeping on Hyuck?” His friend smirks.

“I wasn’t, my eyes were just unfocused.” Mark shrugs and takes out his material, Jeno doesn’t look like he had accepted his lie. “I’m serious!”

“Sure you are.” Jeno winks before walking next to Donghyuck and carefully sitting down so he wouldn’t wake up the other. Mark scoffs, if it were him Jeno would’ve smacked the back of his head to wake him up. Favouritism.

Donghyuck looks like shit and Mark swears that isn’t his biased opinion, the boy looked like a walking zombie. His already dark eyes seemed to have sunk inside the eye sockets, Mark could only see a dark shadow from under the hoodie the boy refused to take off. The thing that stood out the most, though, wasn’t quite that.

Everything was quiet that day, Mark had never seen the teachers be so happy. However he had to admit free time simply wasn’t the same without his loud self whining and making witty remarks left and right about the most stupid things, Mark should be relieved but it didn’t feel right.

He looks at the boy as he shoves a piece of meat inside his mouth and chews, Jeno was chatting with Woojin next to him so he felt safe enough to stare for as long as he wished. Donghyuck was played with the rice with his chopsticks before starting to eat like a wild animal that hadn’t eaten for days, Jeno’s conversation comes to a halt and Mark drops his head down. “Hyuck?” His friend questions but the other just shakes his head and stands up to get a refill. “What the fuck was that?”

All the boys whisper amongst themselves but Mark was too busy watching every move the boy made, seconds later he came back with another bowl filled with rice and a content smile on his face. It was a nice change, even if Mark didn’t quite like to admit it. The mood had been down all day, maybe now that the boy was feeling better it’d go back to its normal comforting routine.

Mark looks around him, everyone was staring at Donghyuck’s animalistic way of eating with
disapproval on their faces except Jeno who looked at his friend with pity in his eyes. Mark furrows his eyebrows at that, why pity?


The boy snaps his head up, his cheeks were puffed out filled with food. He nods and tries to chew faster, everyone waits in silence for the boy to finally finish eating. “Just the same old.” He mumbles and shrugs. “Don’t worry.”

The sound of Jeno’s chair being dragged across the floor makes Mark cringe, his friend gets up and drags Donghyuck away with a worried look. “Wait! My food!” Donghyuck pouts and slaps Jeno’s hand away.

“I’ll buy you more later, this is more important.” Jeno says with a serious face and keeps on walking with his hand around Donghyuck’s wrist.

Mark watches as the two boys disappear in the middle of the crowd just like the rest of their group with a confused look on his face. What?

Philosophy class was boring in Mark’s most honest opinion, most topics didn’t interest him the slightest and he was forced to spend forty five minutes inside a classroom doing, well, nothing. Most times it was the teacher speaking and maybe choosing a few people to share their opinions, but that was basically it.

In fact, the teacher had already warned him that, if he didn’t start participating, his grade would lower considerably but as much as that stressed Mark he couldn’t manage to make himself actually give a damn about the subject.

Today’s topic was beauty standards which, once again, didn’t make Mark want to refrain from his little routine of sleeping throughout the whole lesson. However, just as he was about to lay his head on top of his bag, something made his head shoot up once again. “So I will put you in groups for a little project.” The teacher announces and Mark grabs Jeno’s hand right away. “It’ll be random groups, though.” There’s a wave of protests to which Mark joins, he was sure he wasn’t going to end up in the same team as Jeno, he never did.

Reluctantly, everyone gets up one by one to write their name on a piece of paper the teacher had cut out. Then he mixed everything up inside his hat and started taking out the names, Mark turns to Jeno and pouts. “We won’t be together. Imagine I end up with…” He doesn’t need to finish, his friend knows who. It wasn’t a big deal, Mark was used to being forced to deal with Donghyuck, however all the witty remarks still annoyed him every time. He couldn’t quite understand how everyone found them funny.

“Jeno.” The teacher says loudly and grabs another paper. “Jiwoo.” Mark lets out a tiny chuckle, Jeno was going to be in the same team as his ex, how awkward. “Donghyuck.”

The two boys fist the air in victory and send each other finger hearts, Mark cringes slightly but smiles to himself right after. It meant he wouldn’t have to deal with Donghyuck after all.

“And Mark. That’s the third team please sit by that corner.” He finally announces.

Mark can hear his ears buzz and fingers go numb, his ex and the person he probably disliked the
most in the whole world together with him in the same group? Even if he had Jeno in his team, it really didn’t seem worth it at that point. Speaking of whom, his friend forces him to stand up and move towards their allocated place. “You dramatic fool.” He whispers near Mark’s ear and slaps his back lightly. “It’s fine.”

“That’s my goddamn ex!” He whispers yells just before they sit down parallel to the other two teens.

Jeno starts a quick chat with Donghyuck which pretty much left Mark and Jiwoo alone to interact, but neither wanted to. Mark had mumbles a ‘hello’ to which she had replied back almost right away but that had been about it, both of them busied themselves with listening to the boys’ conversation. It wasn’t even interesting, they were discussing a new feature of a video game Mark didn’t play, and knowing Jiwoo, she didn’t either.

“Alright, I’ll give each team a different task to each team.” The teacher announces and starts giving out sheets, Mark grabs it before anyone from his team could but Jeno snatches it away before he could even read it.

“Compliment each other and discuss the answers.” Jeno reads and all of them groan. “Really?”

“Unleash the gay on me, Jeno.” Donghyuck snorts and wiggles his eyebrows.

“I’m dating, idiot.”

The other scrunches his nose. “Sadly.”

Mark stares at both of them with a look of disbelief for a few seconds before he manages to get his act together and actually think of normal things he could say. He knew what to say about Jiwoo, he had spent many months dating the girl and still found her pretty and she was still a nice girl overall. Well, apart from having cheated on him by kissing some random guy but he could try to put that aside for a few minutes.

Jeno finally turns his attention towards Mark for a short while and pats his thigh from under the tablet in an attempt to calm the boy down, he knew just how much Mark would overthink things that were not actually important. “Okay.” His friend starts. “Lee Donghyuck my beloved friend, you already know I love your eyes the most. And your charisma.”

Charisma my ass. Mark rolls his eyes but keeps quiet.

“Jiwoo I think your new hair is very pretty.” The girl giggles slightly and Mark looks at her, the once dark brown locks were blonde and shone brighter than ever. “But uh-“

“It’s okay.” She nods, knowing full well why Jeno didn’t deem it right to compliment her personality.

“Ah Murk Lee, I love your laugh the most but if I had to choose a physical trait then your smile.” He pats Mark’s back and smiles softly. “Love your determination.” Mark smiles back at him, it always felt good to be complimented after all.

Jiwoo follows, with the excuse that she just wanted to get it over with. “I love your eyesmile, Jeno.” The sigh of adoration that leaves her lips makes Mark shudder with disgust. “And how peaceful you are.”

Jeno thanks her quietly and shoots one of his well-known eyesmiles. Mark can see Jiwoo melt at that, he couldn’t blame her but still.
“Donghyuck indeed has the prettiest eyes I’ve ever seen!” She exclaims and grins widely, Donghyuck chuckles. “And you’re really funny.”

“Why, thank you.” He smirks and looks at Mark who tries his best to keep a straight face even though all he wished was to cringe.

Jiwoo turns to face her ex and sighs deeply. “I love your lips the most.” She admits and Mark starts coughing loudly, some of their classmates stare at them with confusion as Jeno tries to get Mark to breathe normally again. “Are you okay?!”

“I’m fine. Just- yeah.” Mark massages his throat and gestures for the girl to keep going.

“And I love your patience.” She smiles softly, almost shyly, and Mark nods. They both knew that if it wasn’t for his patience, things between them wouldn’t be nearly as great and peaceful.

It was quiet for a few seconds after but Donghyuck breaks it with his loud voice. “Jeno Lee! I love your whole goddamn self you fine piece of meat.” The boy whistles right after and Mark can feel his blood being drained from his face. “And I love your sweetness the most, you give me diabetes.”

“It neutralises your bitter self.” Jeno pokes his tongue out and both boys laugh out loud.

“Jiwoo, your whole face is admittedly beautiful overall.” He raises his eyebrow up in a teasingly manner making the girl’s face turn bright red. “And you’re smart, I’d say.”

Donghyuck locks his eyes with Mark’s and an evil smirk slowly appears on his face, Mark had no clue what to expect from Donghyuck, he never did. The boy always managed to surprise him, whenever he thought he knew every trick to him, Donghyuck pulled something new out of his sleeve.

“Mark Lee.” His smirk grows wider. “Y’know what I absolutely love?”

“Youself?”

“That too, good job. You get a cookie.” Donghyuck pretend to throw him something and chuckles. “But no, I love your shark teeth.”

The other two teens burst out laughing while Mark blinks at him in shock, his what? Mark touches his teeth with his index finger and his brows furrow even further. “My teeth are just fine!”

Donghyuck shrugs. “Did I say they weren’t? It’s cute, adds to the whole Mark Lee charm. Tiny sharp shark teeth.” The boy cracks a smile once Mark’s eyebrows knit together in confusion. “Anyways, I love your naiveness.”

“I am not!” He protests, pouting without noticing.

The other looks down at his lips and stretches his arm so he could lightly touch Mark’s lower lip with the pad of his finger. “A tiny naïve baby, that’s what you are.”

Marks slaps his hand away and glares at him, hard, but Donghyuck just laughs louder. Once they all quiet down, Mark notices that it’s his turn and considers running out of the classroom but Jeno gives him the look, so he doesn’t.

“Jeno I love your uh-“ He stops and stares at his friend, he had never put much thought into it. “I’ll go with eyesmile as well.” Donghyuck snickers and Mark glares at him. “I love everything about your personality, can’t chose.” Jeno smiles brightly at that.
The moment he dreaded the most, even more than complimenting his own ex, had come. Mark turns to Donghyuck and breathes in deeply. Never in his life had he looked at Donghyuck to examine his face, it had been mostly to glare at the boy or give him some weird look. This time, though, he had to actually look. “I like…” He furrows his eyebrows and tilts his head slightly.

Donghyuck had a tiny smile on his face as Mark analysed his features, as if he expected Mark to say something weird like he had just for the heck of it. The older looks at the boy’s eyes first, round, big, dark, pretty? Mark had to admit to find them somewhat pretty, they were different from everyone else’s.

Then his eyes drifted lower towards Donghyuck’s tiny nose. Mark had never noticed how squish worthy it was and made a mental note of annoying the boy with it next time. The lips came last and Mark didn’t want to spend too long staring at them and give Donghyuck teasing content, but the more he stared the prettier they seemed to appear. Heart shaped? It was exquisite, just like the rest of him.

“I like your lips.” Mark blurts out and slaps his hand over his mouth right away. Everyone looks shocked, even Donghyuck whose eyes were even rounder than usual, the teasing smile vanishes completely. They look at each other for a few seconds before Donghyuck goes back to his normal self and snorts.

“Thanks, baby shark teeth.”

Mark rolls his eyes. “I don’t like your personality, so pass.”

“Shocking.” Donghyuck quirks his eyebrow up.

The other boy ignores him and turns to the girl who smiles at him. “I like your eyes the most.” He mumbles and her smile widens. “And I like how you’re always willing to help others.”

“Thank you.” She mutters, Mark shoots hers a tiny smile that disappears right away and takes a deep breath. Finally it was over.

Jeno slams the table with his fist to wake all of them up. “Now! We must discuss our answers!”

Oh god please, no.

His head was buzzing and adrenaline still ran through his veins as he left the loud club, the quietness outside calmed him down in no time though.

Mark wanders around the empty streets rapping to himself as he does so, the addictive rhythm wouldn’t seem to leave his mind. He spots the bright lights of the convenience store ahead and speed walks in its direction, his stomach was growling at him to move faster so his needs could be satisfied.

“Good evening!” He grins at the owner who gives him a sleepy smile before going back to closing his eyes and snoring.

Mark grabs some chips and a can of coke, he could hear his mother yell at him for it saying it wasn’t a healthy choice. Good thing she would never find out about his not so healthy late night snacks
routine, or else he’d be a dead man.

He pays for his things with a big smile on his face. Right before he opens the door though, Mark notices someone sitting on the stairs near the entrance and stops in his tracks. It had been about a month since his last competition, which mean it had been about a month since he had seen Donghyuck all by himself outside at ungodly hours.

There was no denying, it really was Donghyuck sitting outside the store once again. His clothes plus the dog next to him gave it away, Mark didn’t know what to do, not that he had many choices to pick from but still.

The bell rings as soon as he opens the door, Donghyuck turns around and their eyes meet. Mark stares at the boy, he had no clue what he was supposed to do in that kind of situation. So he stays silent hoping that the other would either break the silence or go back to looking at the floor.

Neither happens and, instead, a loud noise coming from Donghyuck’s stomach breaks the ice. Mark chuckles and Donghyuck hides his face with embarrassment taking Mark by surprise since the boy had a confidence of a supermodel. “Hungry?” He asks.

“What does it look like?” Donghyuck glares at him and massages his stomach. “Stop shoving your chips in my face.”

He looks down at his hands, Mark had almost forgot what he had come there for. “You wanna share?” Even he is surprised to hear himself say that, it was probably the nicest thing he had said to the boy. “Like-”

Donghyuck cuts him off before the rambling started, he already knew how Mark worked after all those years spent near him. “Yes, I’d like some chips.” He smiles softly and moves to the side to give Mark more space to sit.

The moment the bag is opened, Donghyuck’s hand was already stuffed inside it. Mark watches with amazement as the boy shoves large amount of chips inside his mouth and hums in contentment.

“Not going to eat?” Donghyuck mumbles, Mark cringes at the fact that he was speaking with food in his mouth and the boy rolls his eyes. “Just eat, fancy boy.” Mark doesn’t bother reacting, he was too hungry anyways and didn’t quite have the energy to deal with a witty Donghyuck.

They eat in silence, the only sound around them was of the dog panting right next to the other boy. “Can I pet it?” Mark asks and points at the dog.

Donghyuck blinks back at him and then finishes chewing. “Uh…” He looks over to the dog and then to Mark once again. “I guess so?”

Mark beams, he loved animals, the dog had caught his attention the moment he had first seen it. “Is it male? Or female?” He asks as he comes closer, the dog looks at him with his big sparkly eyes and moves its tail faster.

“Female, her name is Yucki.” Donghyuck answers and Mark smiles to himself because he could clearly hear the fondness in the boy’s tone.

“Yuckie, from Hyuckie.” Mark murmurs, Donghyuck nods and pats the dog’s head lovingly. “She’s really pretty.”

Donghyuck giggles. “I know, right?”
He extends his arm to touch the animal, careful to not scare it away, and lets it sniff his hand. Once she looks satisfied, the dog moves its head closer so to tell Mark he could pet her. Mark wastes no time, he moves his hands everywhere and whispers praises in an overly cute manner. Donghyuck snorts at the scene.

“You should go.” The other says after many minutes of Mark entertaining himself with the dog while Donghyuck finishes the food. “It’s really late, must be about three o’clock now.”

Mark looks up at him and nods, he was right, no matter how cute the dog was Mark still had to get at least a few hours of sleep or else he would collapse. “Okay, I’ll get going now.” He grabs the can of coke he had left on top of the stairs and pets the animal one last time. “Good night.”

Donghyuck gives him a little wave and smiles. “Night night.”

Jeno had looked everywhere for Donghyuck but the boy was nowhere to be found so he gives up and they finally head to the canteen to eat. They had already lost about fifteen minutes of their break time so when they get there no one speaks, instead they rush through the line to get food and sit down as quickly as possible.

There was no sound coming from their group as they eat until someone gasps loudly and makes them all raise their heads. Donghyuck looked like a deer caught in headlights when all their eyes land on him, he pulls the broomstick closer to his body and shoots them an awkward smile. “Hyuck what the heck?!” Jeno shrieks.

The boy lets out a deep sigh, looks around him to check if a teacher was looking at him and comes closer to the group. “Yeah okay I got detention and they said I could get away with it if I spent my break cleaning the canteen.”

Jeno blinks back at him. “What- What did you do this time, fool?”

Donghyuck looks around again and drags a nearby chair. “I was using my phone in class-“

“Yeah okay we all do that.” Jeno cuts the boy and Donghyuck raises his fist up in the air.

“Didn’t even let me finish! Damn.” He huffs. “I was on my phone and I got this message on twitter, it was a stranger or something. So like, I open it and then I hear a gasp behind me, so I knew I was fucked.” They all look at him with confusion plastered all over their faces. “So basically my Geography teacher caught me opening a message with a dick pic in it.”

It’s quiet for a few seconds before they all burst out laughing. Mark, for the first time in years, lets out his real laugh around Donghyuck and grabs his stomach. “You got a dick pic?!” Jeno cackles. “Only you, Lee Donghyuck.”

“Excuse me I got a few myself.” Woojin says between giggles. “Welcome to the club.”

“I wish it was my first.” Donghyuck sighs. “Why do old men think shoving that into my face would make me want to share my address? Now I got no phone till the end of the day and I’m going to starve.”
Jeno hold up his chopsticks with pasta and points at it. “C’mon before you go eat a bit of my food.”

Donghyuck smiles brightly and squeezes Jeno’s cheeks before eating the food being presented to him, before he could eat too much, though, a teacher yells for him to go back to work and he groans. “God is calling out for me, fellas.”

“He’s been calling out for you for years, glad you’re finally following the light.” Jeno pats his shoulder.

“Look at him pretending he isn’t nasty as well, hypocrite.” The boy scoffs and hits his friend in the head with the broom. Jeno doesn’t get to fight back because Donghyuck was already running towards the very far corner of the room, his giggles echoed over the loud chatter of the students all around them.

They go back to eating their food in silence, with Donghyuck’s little distraction they had even less time to finish up before the next class started. Jeno coughs and some look up at him, the boy rubs his chin and tilts his head to the side. “Do you guys know where I can buy a bible?”

The club decided to have a special Christmas themed competition, Mark never though he’d ever have to make a rap about such a topic but it was fun nevertheless and he had even won second place. He holds his award in his right hand, a pretty dark blue notebook for writing lyrics, and smiles. His old notebook was running out of pages so it had definitely come in handy.

He closes his jacket and covers his head with the hoodie, the cold December air was blowing painfully against his face. Mark loved winter but he hated windy winter days, no matter how much time he had spent in Canada, he never got used to the sensation. It felt as if his nose was about to fall off due to the cold and he couldn’t wipe it properly because his hands were finally starting to get warm inside his pockets and he didn’t want to take them out.

Even then, Mark keeps his little routine and walks towards the convenience store. It was about one in the morning which meant the cold would just get worse but he couldn’t skip out on his very much needed snack.

The streets that were once dark and almost pitch-black had been illuminated with pretty Christmas lights that sparkled time to time, Mark looks around with the corner of his lips curled up slightly. Walking so late at night suddenly didn’t sound nearly as bad as before, at least now he could see what was ahead of him.

The store stands out the most nevertheless, or maybe Mark was just too hungry. He smiles brightly and starts walking faster but the smile on his face turns upside down when he spots a familiar figure nearby the entrance. “Donghyuck?!”

The boy raises his head up, his eyes were dull. “Sup.”

“It’s freezing, what are you doing out?” Mark asks without thinking twice and immediately slaps himself in the head mentally. “Uh, let’s go in, yeah? I’ll buy you something.”

Donghyuck doesn’t bother fighting back, he ties the dog’s leash around a post nearby and pats it with his trembling hands for a few seconds before following Mark inside. The owner gives Mark a
tiny smile before going back to playing on their phone, Mark walks towards one of the isles and looks back to check if Donghyuck was still behind him.

The boy hadn’t spoken a word since Mark had come and that in itself was weird, Mark knew Donghyuck wasn’t feeling good at all and feels pity bubble inside of him. “What do you want?” He asks and points at the different kinds of chips, Donghyuck grabs a red package and looks at Mark with pleading eyes. “Okay, I like those too.”

Mark grabs his typical coke and they sit inside the store eating in silence, Donghyuck ate as fast as he could just like last time as Mark observed him. Once the boy slows down, Mark finally finds the courage to grab some chips for himself and lets out a soft chuckle. “I assume you don’t want to explain yourself.”

“You are correct.” Donghyuck says after he licks his fingers clean. “I have a question.”

The other furrows his eyebrows and shoves a handful of chips inside his mouth, he could sense that whatever Donghyuck was about to ask him was going to be, to some degree, bad. He nods nevertheless, curiosity won the best of him in the end.

“Why did you breakup with Jiwoo?” He look right into Mark’s eyes.

Mark gulps, they had broken it off pretty discreetly since neither really enjoyed attention nor school drama. He had thankfully never gotten that question, but it was bound to happen so he sits back on his chair and tries to think of a reply. “I thought Jeno told you.”

“He’s more loyal than he looks.” Donghyuck smirks. “I don’t know anything.”

He looks at the other and sighs loudly, really there was no reason for him to share what really had happened between them to Donghyuck. They weren’t even friends and only recently actually sat down together and talked properly. Mark looks out of the window into the streets filled with Christmas lights and stares at them change colours, part of him wanted to let out the secrets he decided to bury, though.

“She cheated on me.”

“Shocker.” Donghyuck blurts out and slams his hand on top of his mouth right after. “I’m sorry.”

Mark chuckles. “It’s fine, I saw it coming too that’s why it didn’t quite hurt like it should.” He shrugs and grabs one chip. “Saw her making out with some twelfth grader near the football field.”

Donghyuck hums and looks down, there wasn’t much to say and Mark knew that so he didn’t mind the reaction he got. Not like he was expecting Donghyuck to apologise and say some nice words with no value to them, that just wasn’t something Donghyuck would do. “At least it didn’t hurt.” He murmurs.

The other looks at Donghyuck and then diverts his eyes back to the window. “Yeah, at least it didn’t hurt.”

Valentine’s Day came around, their club had been decorated with cliché red and pink hearts and
white flickering lights. Mark knew the topic would be love and already knew he wasn’t going to win anything that night, all he knew about love was that it didn’t go quite well for him just yet and that wasn’t what couples wished to listen to during Valentine’s Day.

He didn’t bother forcing sweet words to leave his mouth as he rapped, thing had to flow in order for it to sound good, so it’s no surprise that he had gotten almost last place that night. Taeyong hadn’t done much better but he had at least tried sugar coating his lyrics, Mark couldn’t even do that much.

At least the nights had started getting warmer, Mark could finally walk with his hands outside his pockets and wipe his nose if needed. Winter was slowly disappearing and as much as he loved it, Mark felt happy about that.

The convenience store shows up in the distance and Mark automatically searches for Donghyuck, he isn’t surprised when he finds the boy sitting on the stairs playing his dog. “Hey.” He mumbles to catch the boy’s attention.

“Oh, hi.” Donghyuck gives him a quick soft smile before going back to paying attention to Yuckie. Mark crouches down next to it and pets it at the same time as Donghyuck, she had never looked so satisfied. “Wanna go in? To eat?” Donghyuck looks at him with hesitation in his eyes. “C’mon it’s still pretty chilly out.”

The boy nods and makes sure Yuckie was secure before going inside next to Mark, they chose some sort of snack before sitting down and starting to eat. Mark watches Donghyuck like usual, he wanted to ask the boy why he was always there at such weird times but he couldn’t find it in him to do so. So he doesn’t and feels like a coward for the rest of the night.

“Did you get many roses and letters this year?” Mark asks as he takes out a few chips.

Donghyuck wiggles his eyebrows. “About eight, but three of those were from the same person.” He snorts and grabs his bag. “Seriously, that person is kinda creepy. They’ve been sending me letters for years and haven’t had the balls to approach me, I wonder if they spend their days watching me from afar or something.”

Mark wants to make a remark about how Donghyuck shouldn’t think of himself so highly, but the boy was probably right. He had seen many, far too many to count, people staring at Donghyuck with massive heart eyes. “What do they even say in them?”

“Like, how handsome I am? And funny? And how they’d love to date me, y’know all that cheesy crap. I find it funny, really.” He takes out a few letters and puts them on top of the table. “You can read if you want to, but you might puke.”

He snorts and grabs one of them, Donghyuck watches Mark intensely as he reads waiting for some sort of reaction. “Well, it is cheesy.” Mark scrunches up his nose. “And all they do is lie.”

“Ah really? So I’m not handsome, uh?”

“No.” Mark says less than a second after Donghyuck finishes speaking.

Donghyuck snorts and sits back on his chair. “I see.”

Mark looks down at the table and stuffs his mouth with more food, the atmosphere felt weird and he didn’t like it one bit. Why did Donghyuck have to ask such things? He asks himself and mentally groans, it left him feeling trapped.
“Well, Mark Lee, I guess I’ve been rejected.” The boy breaks the silence after many minutes, Mark snaps his head up in shock. “I should stop finding you attractive now since it’s not reciprocated.”

He couldn’t tell if Donghyuck was joking so he hums in reply and forces his body to relax, *it was a joke.* “Poor you.”

“Indeed poor me, have some consideration and shave your head, yeah? I’m sure I wouldn’t find you attractive if you looked like a teenage version of Caillou.” Donghyuck’s smirk widens.

Mark chokes on his food and hits his chest multiple times until he finally calms down. “Isn’t that he kid with cancer?”

“Does he have cancer? I assumed he was just born bald.”

“That literally makes no sense.” The blonde snorts, he can’t help the smile that appears on his lips.

“It’s a freaking cartoon it’s not supposed to make sense, but damn that took a dark turn.” The boy chuckles. “Well I’m not saying you should get cancer, just be nice and shave your head.”

Mark flips him off. “You’re not worthy of me being nice.”

“Right, sure buddy, so why do you pay for my food?” Donghyuck quirks one of his eyebrows up and watches as Mark tries to come up with an excuse, and fails miserably as expected. “Exactly, so just do me this one favour.”

“Over my dead body.” Mark rolls his eyes at him and keeps on eating.

“That’s also an option, y’know. Like, I’m pretty sure I wouldn’t find your corpse attractive.”

The other boy chokes on his food once again, he takes a large sip of his coke and massages his throat. “You’re pretty sure?”

“Well, yeah. Life is full of surprises, maybe I am a necrophiliac.” Donghyuck says, voice filled with amusement as the colour of Mark’s face turns paler by the minute.

“This is exactly why we didn’t speak to each other for years I hope you know that.” Mark cringes.

Donghyuck shrugs and moves so his face is closer to Mark’s. “Once you start, there’s no turning back. Enjoy the Hyuck rollercoaster, my friend.”

Mark seriously wishes he was dead, *no wait.*

Jeno hadn’t been in school for days, at first Mark thought he might’ve been sick but when he had asked the teachers if he had any excuse they had said there was nothing. He let it slide for a few days but a week had gone by and Jeno hadn’t showed any signs of being alive, he wasn’t replying to messages nor calls which left him with just one option left.

He sat in his Mathematics class looking out of the window into the empty park outside, Mark couldn’t wait a whole weekend to know if Jeno was okay or not. His mind kept drifting to the boy and thinking of plausible scenarios that could explain his absences, he hadn’t listened to a word the
teachers said for the last two days or so. It was driving him nuts.

The bell finally rings and Mark sighs heavily, the day was over he could finally go to Jeno’s house and find out the truth. He is stopped mid packing when a hand slams on top of his desk, he looks up to find Donghyuck’s dark eyes staring back at him. “Where is Jeno?”

“I wish I knew.” He mumbles and puts his pencil case inside his bag.

Donghyuck stays silent as Mark finishes packing up and follows behind the boy when he starts walking towards the door. “Let’s go to his house.”

“I was going by myself, actually.” Mark shrugs.

“Well shit, I’m joining you.”

Mark doesn’t even bother saying no to him.

Obviously the walk there wasn’t quiet, Donghyuck wasn’t quite the kind to shut up but also didn’t seem to mind whenever Mark would give him the curtest and driest answers in the world. The other was too stressed to even try to have a proper conversation with Donghyuck.

They finally reach Jeno’s house, Donghyuck rings the gate’s bell and waits for someone to open it. Mark stays behind him biting his already short nails as he switches from one foot to another, he couldn’t help the nervousness that grew inside of him. He knew it was probably nothing bad but even so.

“Hyuck!” Jeno’s mom greet when she leaves the front door and walks towards the gate. “So nice to see you, what bring you here?”

“Hello Mrs Lee, is Jeno home?”

She frowns. “Uh no he didn’t come from school yet? Why? Didn’t you just have classes with him?”

Both boys blink back at her. “Uhm he disappeared in… uhm early morning. Has he been feeling good lately?”

“Yeah! I mean sometimes he comes home looking a bit tired but that’s normal, right?” She grins. “Wanna come inside?”

Mark and Donghyuck look at each other and then the woman before nodding, they’re asked if they’d want some sort of snack or anything to drink and Mark denies right away but Donghyuck takes the chance to ask for a cup of warm choco. “Really?” Mark rolls his eyes.

“What?! She offered it anyways.” He shrugs and jumps on top of the bed, Mark walks around the room observing every single detail inside of it. “Haven’t been here in a while?”

The boy looks at him and nods, it had been in fact months since he had step foot inside Jeno’s house. It wasn’t like it looked much different than before, same old grey walls, same stupid toys, same photos tapped onto the wall. He smiles as he stares at the polaroids of their group, Jeno was very fond of keeping small memories of every little special moment spent together with them Mark found it endearing.

The sound of the door being open snaps him out of it, both he and Donghyuck look blankly at Jeno
whose eyes were just as round as two buttons. “Oh.” He whispers and closes the door quietly.
“Hello.”

“Hello?” Donghyuck stands up immediately and glares at his friend. “Explain, now. Because you’re
not sick so there’s no reason to be skipping school all.”

Jeno lets out the most awkward smile Mark had ever heard and rubs the palms of his hands together.
“About that…” He sighs. “It’s complicated.”

“I got all day.” Donghyuck gives him a fake smile.

“You’re going to kill me.” Jeno plays with his feet, Mark doesn’t bother moving away from the spot
near the desk and looks at his friend with curiosity. Donghyuck cracks his knuckles making Jeno
flinch. “No hitting, if you want to make it hurt then scream at me.”

Donghyuck shrugs. “Depends on how much pity I feel for you.”

Jeno gulps, cleans the sweat forming on his palms by rubbing his hands on his pants and finally
gathers the courage to speak. “I was meeting with this guy-”

The next thing Mark knows, Donghyuck is on top of Jeno lightly hitting the boy’s chest. “Idiot!
You’ve skipped school all week for a booty call?!”

“Listen to me! He’s really soft okay!” Jeno pouts and tries to make his friend stop hitting him.
“Hyuck I know it’s not okay-“

“Yeah! Glad you do, fucking idiot!” The boy finally stops but doesn’t move places, he stares down
at Jeno with a disappointed look and then at Mark. “Help me beat him up, maybe it’ll knock some
sense into his stupid head.”

Mark chuckles and comes closer, he doesn’t dare do anything though because Jeno shoots him his
best puppy eyes that would make anyone but Donghyuck back off. “You really are a dumbass,
though.”

Jeno groans. “I know, I can’t help it. He kept asking to meet and each hangout was better than the
last-“

“Okay so, some guy out there is more important than graduating?” Donghyuck crosses his arms. “If
you don’t come to school next week I will beat you so bad you can’t even meet with him,
understood?”

The boy rolls his eyes. “Hyuck-“ He starts but his friend hits him square in the chest and knocks the
air out of his lungs. “Hyuck! What the hell!”

“I’m being serious about the beating, stop being so stupid.” Donghyuck sighs deeply and massages
the area he had just hit. “Jeno Lee if he hurts you just as much as the last one…”

Jeno opens his mouth to speak but closes it right away, they all knew very well he couldn’t promise
he wouldn’t. “I will help Donghyuck beat you up, by the way.” Mark speaks up.

“I swear you two will become best buddies over my stupid behaviour.” Jeno rolls his eyes and tries
pushing Donghyuck from his lap. “Traitor.”

Mark shrugs. “Desperate times call for desperate measures.”
A Mariah Carey level scream erupts right next to Mark’s right ear and he cringes, if he wasn’t too busy trying to keep himself collected he would’ve given Donghyuck the deathliest glare in the world right there and then.

The roller-coaster seemed never-ending, by the time the second loop ends Mark was already feeling his soul leave his body and ascent into heaven. He closes his eyes and tries to keep his breathing steady but Donghyuck’s cursing and yells distract him every time he finally manages to calm himself down. He stares ahead with teary eyes and watches as the ground goes closer and further away from his feed over and over again, *fuck Jeno and his stupid birthday party.*

By the time the ride ends, Donghyuck’s voice was croaky and sounded hilarious, Mark couldn’t help the giggle that left his lips when the boy tried to speak to him afterwards. “What are you laughing at? Get up before I force you to move.” Donghyuck pushes Mark and glares at him.

“You sound like a muppet.” He snorts and gets up before the other could hit him for the diss.

“A what?!” His voice cracks and Mark laughs louder. “You’re a dead man, Mark Lee.”

Mark grabs his bag and runs down the stairs. Jeno and Jaemin observe as Donghyuck goes after the other with curiosity, they look at each other and silently agree to not get in the middle of it. Instead, they pass by them and walk towards the next ride leaving the other two behind to sort out their own mess.

When they finally break it off, Jaemin and Jeno were nowhere to be seen. “Good job, idiot.” Donghyuck groans.

“Me?! You were the one fighting me!” Mark wants to hit the boy one last time but forces the urge down. “Just call them or something.”

“Knowing Jeno, he won’t pick up just to piss me off.” He sighs but searches for his friend’s number in the contacts anyways. The phone rings for quite some time until Donghyuck gives up and starts walking without any warning, Mark runs after him.

“Where do you think you’re going?”

“I’m going to find them, I bet their lazy asses just went to the next ride or something.” He doesn’t bother looking back at Mark as he fast walks to their next destination.

They enter through the dark hole with a sign in neon light that read “**ENTRANCE**” above, Mark doesn’t even get the chance to find out what kind of ride it was going to be or else Donghyuck would disappear from his sight and he wasn’t in the mood to be lost for the rest of the day.

Mark watches Donghyuck’s back as the boy walks through the tunnel illuminated by fake crystals, the start of the line was nowhere to be seen so they keep on walking and walking. “Where is everyone?” He finally dares ask, Donghyuck’s shoulders shake in response.

The sound of chatter brings Mark to life after a few more minutes of walking, the ride didn’t seem all that popular for half of the line to be empty but at least Mark knew they hadn’t entered somewhere they shouldn’t have.
Donghyuck tries to find their friends by jumping up and down and lets out deep sigh once he doesn’t. “I can’t see them, they’re probably too far. It’s too dark to see till the beginning of the line.”

Mark nods and presses his back against the wall, Donghyuck does the same but in the wall parallel to him and they stay that way looking at each other in silence. It was awkward, but not nearly as awkward as it could’ve been about a year back.

The line moves slowly, the next thing Mark knows he’s staring at the rollercoaster seats and panicking because he had absolutely no clue which ride he was about to go into. On top of that, their friends were still nowhere to be seen and no matter how many times Donghyuck would try to call them, they wouldn’t answer. “I can’t believe I’m about to ride this shit for nothing, and I can’t believe how fake these bitches are.” Mark can’t help but agree with him, Jeno was up for a good beating, Jaemin too.

They sit down and the worker puts down the lap bar, the moment it starts moving Mark’s eyes were already closed and his lips pressed tightly against each other. Donghyuck chuckles at the sight, wishing he could film the whole scene with his eyes.

“You look like you’re going to shit yourself.” He teases and Mark cracks up one eye open to look at him.

“Shut up muppet.”

Before the boy can hit him they enter through a dark tunnel and then feel the ride go down at a fast speed. Donghyuck’s screams are thankfully not as strong as before, they came out croaky and almost like wheezes which sounded more funny than annoying. Mark forgets how scared he feels and starts laughing loudly at the noises Donghyuck was letting out every time they suddenly descended, it always caught the boy off guard since they couldn’t see what was ahead in the pitch black room.

The tunnel comes to an end and so does the ride, Mark can hear Donghyuck calm down his breathing next to him and chuckles. “What do you want??” Donghyuck wheezes out and massages his throat. “I will beat you up again, don’t test me Mark Lee.”

Donghyuck jumps on top of Jeno’s bed and lets out a sigh of contentment. “Finally a bed.” He says as he rubs his face against the pillow.

Jeno and Jaemin share a look that Mark can’t quite decipher but when he locks eyes with Jeno and furrows his eyebrows, his friend simply shrugs him off. “Jeno.” He calls out for him, he wasn’t going to just pretend he hadn’t seen that look.

“Later.” His friend mumbles.

They’re told to come downstairs to eat by Jeno’s mother, Jaemin tries to push Donghyuck out of the bed since he kept refusing to leave it and Jeno has to threaten him by saying he’d sleep on the floor if he didn’t come downstairs for Donghyuck to finally stand up.

The food disappears within a few minutes, they were all starving after the adrenaline filled day, they sit back on their chairs with a look of satisfaction on their faces and look at each other in silence for a few minutes. "So," Donghyuck sits up straight, looks at the birthday boy and he smiles brightly. "Any special plans for tonight, Jeno?"
His friend shrugs. "Dunno? We could watch a movie? Or play games, whatever you want."

"How about." The other smirks. "We spice it up?"

Jaemin's face seemed to lit up at the proposal but Jeno didn't quite look pleased. "I'm not sure we even have alcohol, and what if my mom finds out-"

"Don't be a coward." Donghyuck rolls his eyes and stands up, Jaemin follows. "Let's see what we can find here."

Mark and Jeno lock eyes, his friend sighs deeply before following after Donghyuck and leaving Mark alone by himself to clean the mess on top of the table. He could hear them bicker in the room next to his, making fun of Jeno for the amount if healthy foods filling his kitchen's drawers. Mark snorts, goes closer to the door separating them and looks over to Jeno who had a big pout on his lips.

Once the living room’s table was totally clean, Mark walks next to Jeno and pats his friend’s back. “You best friended bullies.”

Before Jeno had the chance to open his mouth, Donghyuck’s voice erupts inside the room and snaps both boys attention away. “We found liquor! It’s cherry and everything, how fancy.”

“It’s probably my mom’s, what if she finds out-“

“We can buy a new one, let’s go.” Donghyuck quickly walks out of the room towards the stairs, Jaemin follows behind excitedly leaving Mark and Jeno alone inside the room.

“My mom’s going to kill me but Hyuck is too stubborn so I guess…” He sighs and finally starts moving as well. “Let’s go, I can’t wait to see those idiots get wasted.”

Mark snorts and they both move towards the boy’s room quietly, the two other were already sipping on the liquor when they get there and giggling like two crazy people. Jeno sits down next to them and grabs the bottle, he examines it with a frown before taking a little sip.

“This tastes like ass.” He gags but takes yet another sip, Mark sits next to him but doesn’t bother asking for the boy to pass him the bottle.

“How would you know how ass tastes like?” Jaemin chuckles. “Oh wait, Jeno Lee-!”

“I have not, it’s an expression you idiot.” Jeno takes one last sip and passes the bottle back to Donghyuck who starts chugging it down. “Hey! Hey, Hyuck no stop right there you fool.”

The boy whines when the bottle is taken away by his friend but doesn’t try getting it back, Jaemin takes a few small sips and finally passes it to Mark who looks at it as if he was holding an alien. Jeno pushes the bottle closer to the boy’s lips and lets out a small whine. “Is it good?” Mark pouts and looks at Jeno.

“Not really, but the effects are fun.” He admits and shrugs. “Would you wanna be the sober friend that takes care of the others?”

Mark tilts his head. “Why no-“

“Just drink it.” Donghyuck whines.

The boy looks at the reddish substance one more time before closing his eyes and taking a big sip, he tries to block out the taste for as long as he could but fails when his throat burns and makes him lose
focus. “This is shit!” He starts coughing violently making everyone laugh. “Are you sure being drunk is worth it?”

Jeno nods so he takes yet another big sip and quickly passes it to someone else, it doesn’t take many minutes for him to feel his head feel heavy. *Oh no.*

Mark wasn’t quite sure how he ended up sandwiched between Jaemin and Donghyuck but he wasn’t complaining like he would usually either. The four boys were watching some random movie, perhaps horror but Mark couldn’t focus on it enough to figure out, squished together in Jeno’s bed.

His eyelashes felt heavy as if he was sleepy but whenever he’d close his eyes, it didn’t feel right. Mark was stuck in a sleepy state, everything was blurry and the noises muffled. “Jeno you lied.” He blurts out, he could feel people move around him and keeps going. “Being drunk is no jam.”

“No one says that anymore.” He could hear Jeno’s voice but it seemed to be muffled by a pillow or something of the sort.

“Uh excuse me, yes we do. Mister no Jam.” Donghyuck’s giggle sounded way too loud to be normal, Mark shudders.

“Ugh shut up.” Mark can feel the bed jiggle slightly and then Donghyuck’s body being thrown on top of him, he cries out in pain and tries to push the boy away. “Sorry Mark! Are you okay?”

Donghyuck huffs. “I was the one being pushed but he’s the one being babied?”

“You deserved it, Mark didn’t.” Jeno fights back and focuses on Mark once more. “I’m getting you water, you look like you’re dead or something.”

Mark just hums back and cuddles Jaemin’s arm, the other boy starts massaging his scalp while he and Donghyuck go back to focusing on the movie. He sighs with contentment and rubs his face on his friend’s arm, Mark knew he’d never do such a thing if he was to be sober but couldn’t help the sudden need for physical contact bubbling inside him.

Jeno comes back with a water bottle and forces Mark to swallow it all down, Donghyuck offers a piece of chocolate as well since he had apparently heard it helps when you’re too drunk. Mark doesn’t fight back, they could probably feed him expired food and he’d accept it without thinking twice.

“Just lay there for a bit, you’ll feel better in a few hours.” Jeno pats the boy’s head lovingly before moving back to his spot next to Donghyuck.

Mark doesn’t remember falling asleep, the last thing he recalled were the two hands softly petting his hair.

He’s woken up by the sound of someone’s giggle, Mark groans and massages his forehead. He could feel the headache forming but, on the other hand, things didn’t sound as muffled as before so he was fine for the time being.

Mark raises his head to find the three boys on the floor playing some sort of game, he stares at them for a few minutes before gaining the strength to push himself out of the bed and crawl next to them. He automatically places his head on Jeno’s shoulder and closes his eyes, his head still felt sort of
heavy. “Better?” Jeno asks quietly and runs his hand through Mark’s hair.

“Yeah, my head still feels kind of weird but it’s fine.” He smiles softly.

“Jaemin ordered pizza, want some?” Mark nods and is forced to get his head out of Jeno’s shoulder so the boy could move to get a slice. “Here, open your eyes though.”

He cracks one eye open and then reluctantly opens the other before grabbing the slice. “Thanks.” Mark mumbles and chews on the food, he squints his eyes at the board game on the floor. “What’s that?”

Jeno stands up next to him to go search for something. “It’s Pictionary.” Jaemin replies. Suddenly he feels his glasses’ frames on his nose and look up at Jeno with a smile. “Hyuck is trying to draw something but- Like what even is this Mark?” Jaemin whines and points at the board where the other boy was still doodling on.

He furrows his eyebrows and observes the shape carefully. “What kinda Picasso shit is that?” Mark finally says and snorts, Donghyuck glares at him. “Seriously what is it?”

“Do you even know how this game works?! You have to figure it out! I can’t talk! Idiots.” The boy’s voice sounded weird, slurred and too high-pitched. “Jaemin you have less than a damn minute.”

Jaemin whines softly and grabs the board to examine it closer. “Is this a bear? No, like, a horse? What the fuck is this honestly.” He sighs deeply. “Look at it, does it look like anything to you guys?” Both Mark and Jeno shake their heads, Donghyuck rolls his eyes at them and snatches the board from Jaemin’s hand.

“It’s a dog but good job.” He says sarcastically while violently rubbing off the chalk.

“How- How is that a dog?!”

“I’m drunk, let me live.” The boy threatens to hit Jaemin with the board and the other presses his lips together tightly in response. “Good boy, now Jeno’s turn.”

They play and play, Mark loses track of time completely. It could be midnight or five in the morning that he couldn’t tell the difference, they were having too much fun to care for the amount of hours of sleep they were going to have that night.

At some point, though, Donghyuck flops down on the cold floor and begs for them to stop since his brain was hurting from all the thinking. Jeno snorts but agrees and puts the game away, they all lay next to him unbothered by the coldness against their skin and look up at the ceiling in silence.

It’s only when Jaemin’s stomach starts complaining and begging for more food that their little ‘meditation’ time comes to an end, Jaemin and Donghyuck are the first to stand up to go downstairs while the other two stay laying quietly on the floor.

Jeno pokes Mark side and gestures to the door. “Jeno.” Mark grabs his friend’s wrist before he could follow Jaemin and Donghyuck downstairs. “I’m going to die of curiosity please tell me what that Donghyuck thing was all about.”

The boy sighs and steps out of the room to check if the boys were anywhere to be seen before dragging Mark out of the room towards the little toilet nearby his room. “It’s really not my place to tell you this, but I know you’re too much of a coward to ask Donghyuck yourself.” Mark was about to protest but Jeno holds his hand in front of his friend’s face. “It’s true, I know you guys hung out
quite a few times at night and yet you have never asked the reason why.”

“Isn’t it your place?”

Jeno groans loudly. “It’s not your place now then, is it?” He quirks his eyebrow up and Mark opens his mouth to speak only to close it a few seconds after. “Exactly. But whatever, he would’ve explained if you’ve asked anyways.”

“He would?”

“He would.” Jeno nods. “Anyways, he has some continuous issues at home that’s why he keeps going out so late at night. His apartment is pretty cramped and he feels suffocated.” Mark blinks back at him. “Yeah, but sometimes things get so bad he stays out the whole night.”

“What?!” Mark shrieks before Jeno can cover his mouth with his hand.

“I know, he’s so stupid I told him multiple times I’d prefer for him to get beat than die because of the cold or something worse.”

“He could be killed, if he falls asleep he-” He face palms. “That’s such a Donghyuck thing to do.”

Jeno snorts and sits on top of the toilet seat. “Isn’t it? Anyways, I don’t know much he only mentioned sleeping in the streets once or twice. He knows we wanna kick his ass for doing that.”

Suddenly there’s a loud banging outside the door, both boys jump in surprise but relax when they hear Donghyuck’s slurry voice from outside. “Are y’all making out in there? It’s highly offensive that you didn’t invite me too.”

Both boys burst out laughing at that, Jeno has difficulty opening the door from how much he was laughing. They’re met with a dishevelled haired Donghyuck pouting back at them, Jaemin was standing behind him trying his best to contain his laughter. “Mark had his gay awakening?” He asks with puppy eyes.

“Sadly, no.” Jeno shrugs and goes out of the bathroom.

Mark chokes on his own spit and frantically moves his eyes from Jeno to Donghyuck with confusion plastered all over his face. “Sadly?!”

Mark catches himself walking faster than usual in the direction of the convenience store and slows down.

He had decided that the next time he had a rap event and met with Donghyuck once again like usual he’d find the balls to ask the boy about the issue. It still felt like it wasn’t his place but Jeno had undoubtedly left him worried and thinking of how many times Donghyuck had slept on the cold streets at night.

The light coming from the store wakes him back to life and he squints his eyes trying to spot Donghyuck somewhere, he smiles when he finds the familiar frame sitting outside. “Hyuck.” He says without noticing, the boy snaps his head up and looks at Mark with confusion written all over
his face. "What?"

"Uh- Nothing." The other blinks a few times and pats the free space next to him. "Sit."

"I was going to buy food first." Mark grabs his wallet. "Plus I know its spring already but it’s still pretty cold, no? Let's go in."

Donghyuck looks at Yuckie with a little pout but ends up nodding and enters the store a few minutes after Mark. He already knows which aisle to look to find the other, Donghyuck isn't even sure he had ever looked at any other that wasn't the snack one.

"Red or yellow?" Mark holds up the two packages in front of Donghyuck's face.

"Yellow." The other grabs the bag and holds it like a baby. "My precious." Mark snorts and shakes his head before moving further away to grab the typical can of coke.

They sit down and, like usual, start off by eating in silence. Mark tries to gather the courage to open his mouth to speak as he stares at the boy shove handfuls inside his mouth. "Where will you sleep tonight?"

Donghyuck chokes on his food and starts having a coughing fit, Mark pats his back and offers him his coke right away. Once he finally calms down, Donghyuck massages his neck and coughs to clear his throat. "That's... so sudden."

"Jeno told me." Mark admits.

"What a snake." Donghyuck snorts. "It's fine Mark, I'm fine."

Mark shakes his head and pouts. "No, look you can sleep at mines if you ever need-"

"Mark." The other rolls his eyes. "I'm not about to do that."

"And why not?! I'm being serious, you could come to my house instead of sleeping on the streets. You could die, please." He gives the other his best puppy eyes and carefully reaches out to him and places his hand on top of Donghyuck's "I'm offering it, c'mon."

Donghyuck frowns. "If I didn't accept Jeno's offer what makes you think I'll accept yours?"

Mark freezes, he hadn't quite thought about the possibility of Jeno offering the same thing. "I, uh- I got an endless supply of beer and snacks at home. All Jeno has is protein bars."

The other boy lets out a loud laugh, so loud that wakes up the owner of the store up from his daydream. "Fair point. I'll take it into consideration."

Mark beams. "Gimme your phone!"

Donghyuck presses his phone close to his chest and quirks one his eyebrows up. "What for?"

"So you can call me every time you want me to open the door so you can come in, duh." Mark explains as if it were the most obvious thing in the world.

Donghyuck reluctantly places his phone on top of the table and slides it in Mark’s direction, he watches as the other types his number with a small smile on his face. “So I can just call you whenever?” He asks and Mark hums before giving the phone back. “At four in the morning?!"

“Why not, I'll just open the door and go back to sleep or something.” Mark shrugs and finishes the
rest of the chips. “You didn’t answer my question, though. Where will you sleep tonight?”

The other licks his lips and lets out a nervous chuckle. “What do you think?”

Mark furrows his eyebrows. “My offers still stands.” He mumbles and chugs down the coke. Truth be told, Mark knew he wouldn’t be able to sleep well at night knowing Donghyuck was out there in the streets prone to bad things. It wasn’t like he’d quite admit that to himself, but he deep down knew that was the reason he was so pushy about it.

Donghyuck looks to the side and stares at the floor with empty eyes, at least it seemed like he was considering and that was good enough for Mark. It meant he had hopes of sleeping peacefully. “Alright, sure. But you can’t complain about it later on since you are being so stubborn about this.”

“Sounds fair.” Mark smiles and stands up. “Let’s go.”

“So you’re sure Yuckie won’t make a noise?” The boy asks nervously, if his parents knew he had let a random dog into their backyard and a stranger inside their house he’d be thrown out (which really wasn’t something he would look forward to).

“She likes you, somehow, so she can probably smell you everywhere. She’ll stay calm.” Donghyuck assures him and looks around the room. “I thought it’d be messier, not gonna lie.”

Mark snorts loudly and tries to find something to create an improvised bed with, by the time he managed to build something comfortable enough for the boy to sleep on, Donghyuck had also finished his little tour around the room. “This is your bed until I find something better.”

“I didn’t say I’d come back now did I?” Donghyuck quirks his eyebrow up and Mark rolls his eyes at him.

The next task ahead was finding a pyjama for Donghyuck, it was thankfully not very hard since their bodies were built in a pretty similar matter. Mark leaves the room to go change in the toilet right next to his room and, once he comes back, Donghyuck was already under the sheets with his eyes closed.

Mark tiptoes his way to his bed and tries his very best to make the least noise possible while going under the sheets. “Goodnight.” He mumbles, mostly to himself since Donghyuck seemed to be asleep already.

He nearly jumps out of the bed when he hears Donghyuck’s soft voice reply back. “Night night.”

Mark is woken up by his ringtone in the middle of the night, he grumbles as he reaches for it but shuts up the moment he sees who was calling him. “Need me to open the door?” He asks.

“Yeah.” Donghyuck’s raspy voice comes from the other side, Mark hums before hanging up and stepping out of his bed. He stares at his feet for a few seconds trying his very best to stay awake, even in his sleepy state he stops by the mirror to somewhat fix his hair and walks towards the main door as quietly as possible.
The door opens with a little bit of a creak and Donghyuck’s figure shows up behind it, the boy doesn’t bother saying a word to Mark before making his way inside and moving upstairs. Mark looks as the boy disappears in the shadows and then closes the door before following him.

Once he enters his room, Donghyuck was already sitting on the bed looking from out of the window with a serene expression. Mark walks closer and it is only then that he notices the puffy eyes and smudgy eye makeup, he frowns and crouches in front of the boy waiting for him to finally look in his direction. “Hyuck.”

The boy locks eyes with him and his lip trembles slightly. “I need something to drink.”

“I’m not giving you alcohol, we got school tomorrow-“

“Mark.” The other growls, that’s all it takes for Mark to surrender and walk out of the room again.

He opens the fridge and hisses at the sudden light coming from it, there were a few bottles of beer in the far corner so he grabs two and closes the door as quickly as possible. He then walks upstairs again and closes the door behind him.

Donghyuck snaps his head up and extends his arm to grab one of the cans Mark had brought, he opens it and starts gulping in a blink of an eye. Mark sits next to the boy with the other can on his lap and stares at the other as he finishes the drink as quickly as possible. “Hyu-“

“Gimme the other.” The boy places the empty can on the floor and tries to grab the other right away.

Mark wants to say something but opts with simply giving in to Donghyuck’s wishes, he moves to get the empty can and waits for the other to finally finish drinking before throwing both of them on the bin nearby his desk. “Wanna talk about it?”

“Why do you think I asked for something to drink?” Donghyuck says bitterly.

“Right.” Mark sits on the bed with his legs crossed and looks at Donghyuck waiting for the boy to finally start speaking again.

“I’m going to ramble.” He warns and his shoulders sag down.

“That’s fine.” Mark assures him.

Donghyuck gives the other one last look before going back to facing the wall with unfocused eyes. “I think, I think if marriage ruins things for everyone, I won’t want it. What’s the point? All I see around me are broken marriages, broken promises of happy endings that aren’t realistic. What does it matter if people don’t marry? Dating makes it easy to just let go, no? Yes it’d still hurt but- It’s easier, isn’t it?” Mark stays quiet hoping that those were rhetorical questions. “Tell me now, why do adults always shrug it off when they have big fights left and right? Is it really normal that you fight so much with the person that is supposed to be your one and only? What’s the point then?”

The boy stops for quite some time, Mark stays still staring at Donghyuck’s profile with pity written all over his face. He understood the boy, but he wasn’t going to make it about himself so he stays quiet and waits for him to continue.

“My dad comes and goes, he’s more often gone than present. Those are the good times, my mom is too busy missing him to bitch on me, though sometimes she does take her frustrations on me either way. I don’t get it, she cries around about how much she misses dad but once he’s there they don’t do anything but fight. Fight, fight, fight, over the dumbest shit.” Donghyuck sighs deeply and shakes his head. “What’s the point? Are they blind? It isn’t love, now is it Mark? That’s not love.”
“I don’t know.” Mark whispers and looks at his hands, *how could he possibly know?* “Adults are a whole new world, maybe one day we will understand.”

“I don’t want to! I don’t want fights to become usual, I don’t want to fight with my partner left and right over dumb shit, that’s not love to me.” The boy finally looks at Mark. “Teasing is fine but actual fights? Where’s the love? I heard it fades with time but… Then why marry?”

Mark wants to answer with an ‘I don’t know’ once again but decides to keep his mouth shut and instead lets out a deep sigh. The room is silent for many minutes, the only sound was the ticking of the clock reminding them that they were not lost in time.

“Whatsoever I might as well spill it all, right?” Donghyuck crawls right in front of Mark and stares right into the boy’s eyes. “I know you think I’m some sort of conceited small-minded person, or whatever. I guess it can be seen that way, but just like you have defence mechanisms, I do too.”

“Hyuck…” Mark breathes and tries to reach out for the other but Donghyuck flinches away.

“Look, I know if I wasn’t funny I would be a no one.” He breathes in sharply. “And my dirty mind didn’t just pop out like that, you don’t know the shit I’m forced to see just because my parents seem to forget I exist. You just don’t know.”

Mark gapes like a fish, he wants to reach out to the other and apologise for being so judgmental but he knew he’d just get rejected once again so he keeps his hands on his lap and waits for Donghyuck to finish talking.

“You see me as stupid, I might give off that vibe but I know I’m not. I just joke around a lot, because if I were to let the bad things get to me, then my life would be a blur of black and white like it is right now.” He licks his lips and closes his eyes. “It always bothered me the way you looked at me, even if I keep the mind-set that I can’t please everyone, it still hurt and you’re a piece of shit for it.”

“I know.” Mark whispers.

“Good, I’m glad you know. And I hope you know that the confidence I show didn’t pop out of nowhere, that I had to gain it step by step. You judged me the second I stepped inside the room, I couldn’t help but dislike you too. I knew you hated my teasing, and I loved doing it for that same reason.” Donghyuck snorts. “Really, I thought you were the devil in disguise.”

The other snorts as well and shakes his head. “Maybe I am.”

“No, just slightly too judgmental. But you’re a good person overall, Mark Lee.” Donghyuck flops down on the bed and looks up at the ceiling. “I don’t want to go back home, my dad is staying for one more week.”

“He’s been here for a few months now, I assume.”

“You assume right.” The boy nods. “And I can’t stand the atmosphere at home.”

“You’re so stupid you’d rather die of hypothermia.” Mark slaps the boy’s shoulder lightly.

Donghyuck moves a bit so he can look into Mark’s eyes. “I got a better option now, I won’t die just yet.”

Mark hums and smiles softly. “I guess so.”
Chapter End Notes

(yes Jeno breaks up with his boyfriend and finds another boy to crush over almost right away bc he a *cough* thot)
calm before the storm

Chapter Summary

i'm in the desperate need of your affection
i know you see me the way
i see you in my head every single night

– affection,, ivory city

Chapter Notes

tysm for the people who send me lovely messages/comments that give me the motivation to keep going ♡ u r the true mvps i wub u

also, almost 100 kudos?!!!! and its not even the finished fic??!!!! im amazed woA thankuuu

sorry for any typos like always!!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Donghyuck straightens his back and positions the bow according to his preference, the tension could be cut with a knife as Jeno and Mark wait for him to hit the target. Jeno had both of his hands on the sides of his nervous looking face, his foot wouldn’t stop hitting the floor rhythmically until Mark stops it by putting his own on top. “C’mon Hyuck.” Jeno whispers.

Mark drifts his gaze back to the boy and chews his bottom lip nervously, Donghyuck was good he didn’t really understand why they were so nervous about it all. “He’ll be fine.” He says to Jeno but to also deep down reassure himself.

The boy shoots, Mark stops breathing for a few second before jumping from his seat at the same time as Jeno and yelling his lungs out. The two friends hug each other while jumping and, when they part, start chanting Donghyuck’s name so loud that the whole hall could hear them. Donghyuck giggles and waves at them happily. “A ten! A ten!” Jeno beams.

It’s silent once again, the boy gets into position and pulls the string. Mark focuses solemnly on him, eyes unmoving waiting for the score to be shown. “Yes!” He shouts when Donghyuck hits ten once more. Jeno jumps on top of him almost making both of them fall onto the floor.

“Lee Donghyuck you’re the best!” Jeno shouts the loudest he can and Donghyuck bows down jokingly in response. “Okay, okay last one.”

Donghyuck rolls his shoulder and cracks his neck before getting into position, Mark and Jeno stop breathing with anticipation. The arrow flies through the air and then the whole room erupts into chaos as it hits ten for the third time. “Holy shit!” Mark shouts in English and prepares for Jeno to jump on top of him, which he does not even a second later. His friend squeezes him tightly and
shrieks loudly almost making him go deaf. Mark rubs his ear but still lets out a small giggle.

They part once more and notice Donghyuck was beneath the bleachers looking up at them with shiny eyes. “Y’all better pay me a whole meal for this one.” He smiles brightly.

“T’lly buy you a whole car-“ Jeno stops himself. “Nevermind you’re going to take me serious and I’m broke.”

Both Donghyuck and Mark snort. “T’ll get changed so we can go watch Mark look like an idiot later, okay?” He says to Jeno ignoring Mark’s presence completely.

“Excuse me.” Mark clears his throat.

“Oh! Hi Mark.” He shoots him a fake smile, Mark simply flips him off.

The sudden nervousness running through his veins felt foreign to Mark, he knew he was good at badminton so it made no sense that he was so nervous out of the blue. “Get yourself together.” He whispers in English and observes his shaky hands on his lap. “It’s not even that serious.”

A loud whistle sound snaps him out of it, he forces himself to stand up and get into position parallel to his opponent. The other boy smiles at him, but there wasn’t any kindness in it, it beat Donghyuck’s fake smiling whenever the teacher would call him out for playing around in class. Which was saying something.

Just before the game starts and the shuttle is thrown up in the air, Mark hears someone shout his name and smiles to himself. He holds his racket in place ready to swing it as hard as he could and squats down slightly. “NICE ASS!” The same person shouts behind him and he tries his best not to burst out laughing in the middle of the field.

The shuttle appears in his vision and he grabs the racket so hard that his knuckle become white, he raises it up in the air and swings in back down in what seemed to be the speed of light. The object falls right in front of the other boy’s feet giving him no chance to hit it, Mark smirks to himself but tries to not show how proud he felt too much since he hated to piss off his opponents.

He grabs the shuttle and starts the game once again, this time it was as if the other boy had finally woken up and realised that Mark wasn’t as easy to beat as he looked. It took several minutes till the other finally lost once again, Mark was panting but still manages to smile when he hears a few people chant his name – he assumed it Jeno and Donghyuck because who else could it be?

The game ends with Mark winning by three points. They shake hands, his opponent makes sure to leave a mark on his hand and shoot him a threatening look while he’s at it. Mark chuckles when they part ways, he felt too cocky to be affected by the childishness of the other anyways. “So, an idiot you say?” He quirks his eyebrows up at Donghyuck who clicks his tongue.

“Well then, guess I gotta take that back now, uh?” He smirks. “Maybe Jeno over here will give me some bullying material during his match, you’re coming right?”

Donghyuck ignores Jeno’s glare and focuses on Mark who rubs his chin as if he was considering not going. “I guess so.”
“You guess?!” Jeno shrieks. “You said you were definitely going!”

“You’re an idiot, I hope you know that.” Donghyuck sighs and flicks his friend’s forehead.

Donghyuck pats the seat next to him and looks up at Mark with a toothy smile. “Ready to make fun of all of these dudes?” He asks as the other sits down, Mark snorts and licks his lips.

“It’ll be more you making fun of them and me snorting at whatever you say.”

“True.” The other giggles.

The game starts, Donghyuck tries to find something to tease them about but sadly they weren’t actually all that bad. It was pretty boring for both of them to watch football, Mark tries his best for Jeno since he knew his friend needed some sort of validation to feel good about himself but he swore he hadn’t been that bored in ages. Not even his History class bore him like that. “I’m bored.” He mumbles.

Donghyuck perks up at that, turns his body in Mark’s direction and places his hand on his shoulder. “Me too! I thought I was the only one thank you lord.” He groans making Mark chuckle. “Let’s do something, I don’t know. Or talk, talking is fine too.”

“We talk so much already.” Mark mumbles. “You sleep at my house more than not.”

“I literally speak of the most random things when I’m there, let’s… talk talk.” Donghyuck flutters his eyelashes jokingly and Mark sighs. “Let’s start it small, favourite colour?”

“Blue.”

“You’re boring. That’s so basic.” The boy snickers, Mark rolls his eyes once again. “Mine’s red!”

“That’s also basic, who are you to talk?”

Donghyuck stares at him with a judging look. “Blue for boy is the most boring crap I’ve ever heard you’re a walking hetero tragedy, I hope you know.”

“You make sure to remind me every three seconds, so yes.”

“Doing God’s work, really.” The boy smirks and hums. “Next, favourite season?”

Mark thinks for a few seconds before snapping his fingers and smiling brightly “Fall! Or Winter…”

“A disgrace.” He shakes his head. “Winter? You’re a summer baby, you’re a disgrace to us.”

“And you’re overdramatic, next.” Mark brushes him off and focuses his eyes back on the field, Jeno was trying to steal the ball from a taller guy who looked like he could break Jeno in half, he knew his friend was most likely hiding the fact that he wanted to piss himself in fear.

Donghyuck hums again. “Favourite number? Some people have it, you’re boring though…” He smirks and flinches when Mark threatens to hit him.
“Two, it’s my lucky number I guess.” He shrugs.

“Oh? Mark Lee isn’t boring? Interesting.” The boy scoffs and ruffles the other’s hair jokingly. “Mine’s eight. Random, no idea why.”

The conversation keeps on going until the whistle signalizing the first part of the game had come to an end interrupts them. Jeno sits next to Mark and swallows down a whole waterbottle before speaking. “How did I go?”

Mark was about to lie and say he did well, because Jeno always does well anyways, but Donghyuck interferes. “Gotta keep it real with you chief, we weren’t watching you.” He shrugs.

Jeno opens his mouth in disbelief and looks over to Mark for confirmation, the boy chuckles awkwardly and rubs his nape. “I need new friends.” He grabs another bottle. “What did you even do anyways? Don’t you like, hate each other?”

“You’re stuck in…” Donghyuck trails off and cringes. “Like a month ago.”

Jeno laughs out loud and turns to Mark. “You don’t hate him anymore? What kinda miracle is this?”

“Well considering he practically sleeps at my place everyday, I can’t hate him. I have a limit, I’m weak.” He groans. “He’s still the most annoying person I know, though. I feel like I created affection for a five year old.”

“Thanks buddy.” Donghyuck shoots him finger guns.

“Buddy zoned!” Jeno yells before running back to the field just as the second half was about to start.

The two boys look at each other, Donghyuck swore he could see a big red interrogation mark on the other’s face. “Is that even a thing?” He says and lets out a breathy laugh. “Anyways, back to questions?” Mark nods slowly and blinks his way out of his daze. “Are you a virgin?”

Mark lets out a loud shriek and looks at Donghyuck disbelief. “What?!”

“Had to take the chance, I’m a curious person.” He shoots him an overly fake smile, Mark rolls his eyes for what seemed to be the hundredth time. “Why did you stay out late when you’d meet me, like those nights?”

“Uh, rap competitions.”

“Rap competitions?! Bring me to one!” He gives Mark his best puppy eyes and puckers his lips. “Pretty please?”

“So you can make fun of me?” Mark pushes him away.

Donghyuck nods enthusiastically. “Exactly!”

This time there was no theme, it was freestyle. Mark was sort of glad since he didn’t want to make a fool out of himself in front of Donghyuck, that was like begging to be roasted for the rest of his life.
Taeyong pats his back reassuringly before they step on the stage, it was going to be a freestyle battle between them and Mark should’ve felt relaxed since he knew he had chemistry with Taeyong but anxiousness still bubbled in his stomach non-stop.

“Ready?” The older asks and Mark nods, he wasn’t really ready but he would never be anyways so he might as well get it over with and if he had to deal with Donghyuck’s witty remark then so be it.

The beat starts, Mark swings to the rhythm trying to get himself connected to it so the words would flow easier. “Woop woop.” Taeyong starts and Mark smiles, the older always started his freestyle with some random noises, he had even gained the same habit from him.

“You make me so mad.” Mark growls onto the microphone, his eyes search for Donghyuck’s in the dark room. “You’re different, you’re making me go mad.” They lock eyes and he breathes in sharply. “Baby look at us, look at us, you make me so mad”

He massages his throat when it’s Taeyong’s turn, his whole body felt shaky and he couldn’t seem to calm it down. Mark was annoyed to the point of considering kicking his own limbs for them to stop shaking so much.

Mark touches his frizzy blonde locks and ruffles them in an attempt to let his nervousness out. “People tell me to calm down, right now you’re too agitated man!” He spits out focusing all the anger inside his body to make his rap sound more powerful. “Then I answer, yeah, I think so. I don’t think I can control myself either.” He could see Donghyuck giggle at that and smirks back at him.

Taeyong takes over once again, Mark lets out small noises whenever the boy would make a good rhyme and danced all the way till the beat stopped and the crowd started clapping loudly. Mark looks over to Donghyuck and notices the boy was standing up with a big smile on his face clapping like his life depended on it, he shoots Mark a thumbs up before going back to clapping.

Mark giggles and follows Taeyong backstage where they’re given towels to dry the sweat. Taeyong throws Mark a water bottle and they sit in silence gulping it all down. “Who’s that boy?” The older asks and wipes his mouth his his arm.

“A friend.” Mark responds after finishing drinking and regaining his breathing back.

“Never seen one of your friends come here.” Taeyong’s big eyes burn holes in his head.

“He insisted.” He chuckles awkwardly.

Taeyong sits back on his chair. “Is that why you were nervous?” Mark nods. “Well, he seemed to like it. Say hi to him for me.”

Mark furrows his eyebrows but doesn’t get to say anything else because the older had already disappeared somewhere in the club. He grabs his things and goes inside the small changing room to change his clothes back to normal ones, he tries to be quick knowing Donghyuck was probably bored as hell waiting for him outside.

What he should’ve known is that Donghyuck is the most social person he knows so obviously he had found someone to talk to, which ended up being the bartender called Yuta. “Let’s go Hyuck.” Mark grabs the boy’s shirt forcing him to come with him.

“Wait! I’m having an interesting conversation here!” He whines and tries slapping the other’s hand away.

“You should go, kid. It’s getting late, but I’ll see you around!” Yuta waves with a big smile on his
face, Donghyuck waves back and finally follows Mark out.

The walk is oddly silent, Mark was too tired to talk anyways so he was glad. Donghyuck seemed to pay more attention to Yucky than him, which he didn’t mind, but Mark had admittedly expected some sort of praising after his performance. Donghyuck seemed to have enjoyed it after all.

They finally reach Mark’s house, he opens the door for Donghyuck to come in and hides Yucky in the place they had agreed on. “Be a good girl like always.” He whispers and kisses the top of her little head.

He heads back in making sure to not wake anyone up in the meantime, Donghyuck was already getting his improvised bed ready once he gets there. “Thanks.” Mark mutters before grabbing his pyjama and walking to the toilet to change.

Donghyuck had decided to choose a pyjama without asking first, but Mark was too tired to fight him so he lets the boy be. The moment his head hits the pillow, Mark can already feel the sleep crawling inside of him but something interrupts him from falling asleep. “You did really well today.” Donghyuck whispers.

Mark snorts and smiles, he didn’t understand why the praise felt so good. “Thanks, I try. Goodnight.”

“Night night.”

“Do you think pigeons have feelings?” Donghyuck breaks the one o’clock silence, Mark groans loudly and throws one of his pillows in the direction of the improvised bed on the floor where Donghyuck lay.

“Shut your mouth!” He begs.

“It’s a valid questions! I was watching this video-“

“Why don’t you sleep instead of watching videos, don’t you come here for that? Y’know, sleep?” Mark sighs and cracks one of his eyes open, the light coming from Donghyuck’s phone almost blinds him. “Why are you on YouTube, what time is it?”

Donghyuck shrugs. “Barely one in the morning. I come here because it’s better than being killed, robbed, or frozen to death, by the way. And I’ve been sleeping! Just maybe too much, my body isn’t used to it. I feel hyper, like I drank three redbulls.”

“Isn’t that your constant mood?”

“I wish, even I feel dead sometimes Mark Lee.” He turns the phone off and sits up, Mark’s caramel locks looked pretty under the moonlight so he comes closer. “Your hair looks really pretty. You look like shit, but your hair-“

“BECAUSE IT’S ONE IN THE MORNING AND YOU HAVEN’T LET ME SLEEP THREE DAYS IN A ROW.” He whisper yells and turns to the other side. “How can I look good when I’m sleep deprived you asshole?”

“Call me Markie one more time and you’re sleeping with Yucky.” The other threatens. “Please sleep, or watch your videos quietly. I’m serious, Hyuck.”

The other sighs loudly but nods even if Mark couldn’t see it. “Night night.”

Mark stares at the wall ahead of him and sighs quietly. “Goodnight.”

Donghyuck sits next to Mark and smiles brightly at him when the boy turns around with a questioning look, usually Donghyuck would sit pretty far away from Mark during the bus rides so everyone stopped doing to what they were doing for a few seconds to stare. “Hey!” The other exclaims and waves at the three boys who were still looking at him with confusion plastered all over their faces.

Jaemin is the first to snap out of it and wave back with a big grin. “Sup Hyuck.”

“Ready to make us proud, Ace?” Donghyuck teases, Jaemin brushes him off with an embarrassed smile. “What’s up with that face, Jeno?”

The boy blinks back at him and gapes like a fish. “I- Nothing? Glad you two are finally getting along.”

“Not like I had much choice when it came to this.” Mark mumbles earning a smack in the back of his head from Donghyuck. “It’s true! You just sat here, I didn’t have a say in it.”

“I can move if you want.” The boy pouts and fake cries.

Mark rolls his eyes. “Whatever, stay.”

The coach makes sure to remember them of the rules and then they’re off to do as they please for the next hour, and the majority obviously decides to play the same old game that they had been playing for years. Mark notices how Renjun sighs as soon as they agree on it, even after all these years he still found it hilarious how they seemed to be the only ones who agreed that the game simply wasn’t for them. He had given up on getting closer to the boy, though, it seemed like the only person he wished to talk to was Jaemin and Jaemin only. So he didn’t try anymore.

Suddenly, there’s a leg on top of his thigh and he yelps hands reaching to push it away by reflex. Mark stops them before they could even touch Donghyuck’s leg and leaves them hanging mere centimetres away, he wanted to take it off but another part of him yelled for him not to. He ends up deciding to lay his hands on top of the other’s leg but soon snatches them away when he senses the way Donghyuck tenses at the touch.

Even then, Donghyuck keeps his leg comfortably on top of Mark’s just like he often did with Jeno. Mark soon forgot about it completely, it wasn’t nearly as bad as his brain made it out to be whenever he’d overreact.

“I won’t kiss a hetero.” Donghyuck whines and crosses his arms in front of his chest, a little pout
forms on his lips.

Jaemin chuckles. “Are you sure about that?” Hyuck glares at him. “Fine then, I won’t know if im gay or not.”

Donghyuck snorts loudly and shakes his head. “You’re not.”

“You can’t know that!” The other protests and places his hands on his hips. “Your gaydar can be broken, how would you know?!”

“Oh my god, shut up.” Jeno cries out, grabs Jaemin’s face without any sort of warning and slams their lips against each other. He lets go of Jaemin’s face seconds later and tilts his head. “Was it good?”

“No.” Jaemin blurts out right away and gives his friend an awkward smile, muttering a ‘Sorry’ when Jeno pouts in disappointment.

“Then there’s your answer.” Jeno mumbles and pretends to not look affected by grabbing the bar of chips and shoving a handful in his mouth.

Donghyuck smirks in victory. “Well maybe it wasn’t good because he has no lips-“ Jeno hands the bag to Jaemin and, in a blink of an eye, jumps on top of Donghyuck ready to beat his friend up.

“You’re such an asshole.” Jeno says between playful punches to the boy’s stomach.

The other pokes his tongue out teasingly. “Kiss my ass”

“Can’t kiss something nonexistent.” Jeno smirks down at him.

Donghyuck giggles loudly. “Bet you heard that one before haven’t you?” He protects his face with his arms as soon as he finishes talking, ready to get beat up for real that time around.

“Knock it off!” Jaemin pokes Jeno’s back softly. “You’re giving him what he wants idiot, get off him.” Jeno huffs and hits Donghyuck in the shoulder one more time before going back to his seat. “Continue the game, c’mon we’re almost there.”

Mark looks over to Donghyuck who was massaging the places Jeno had hit with a mischievous smile on his face, they lock eyes and the boy snorts.

“Mark! Mark wake up!” Jaemin shouts. “You have to kiss Donghyuck’s cheek.”

“How- What-“

“Maybe if you weren’t asleep and heard us talking-“

Mark clicks his tongue and brushes him off. “Yeah okay mother, I got it.” He turns to Donghyuck once again, the boy smiles back at him and sits up straight poking his cheek impatiently. “I’m getting Vietman War flashbacks…”

Donghyuck snorts loudly and lets out yet another soft giggle. “Makes both of us.” Mark clears his throat and moves closer to the other ready to get things over with. “You look hot with caramel hair.” Donghyuck whispers right next to Mark’s ear making the boy stop in his tracks for a few seconds before bursting out laughing.

Mark lays his head on the boy’s shoulder till the laughter subsides, he the gives Donghyuck a small peck on the cheek and goes back to sitting like he was previously. “What’s the pout for?” He points
out and furrows his eyebrows.

“That was so quick!”

“Want me to makeout with your cheek or what?” Mark rolls his eyes.

Donghyuck wiggles his eyebrows. “Well…”

“Hyuck.” Mark huffs and pushes the boy’s shoulder playfully. “Just no.”

He’s the leader, and as the leader, he should be able to find his teammates whenever they’re needed. It was a simple task that he fulfilled with ease, except this time Donghyuck had gone missing for no reason whatsoever, not even Jeno knew where he was and Mark needed the boy to come back in less than five minutes so he’d be in time for his competition.

“I’m going mad.” He cries out. “He’s still not picking up?” Jeno shakes his head and pats his friend’s shoulder. “I’m going to beat him so bad he-“

“Wow, kinky.” Mark hears behind him and turns around to find Donghyuck smiling back at him.

“Where the fuck where you?!” He hisses and grabs Donghyuck by his forearm.

The other chuckles lightly. “Missed me?”

“Quit playing, you got a competition in less than two minutes and you’re still fucking around. It’s not funny!” Mark was fuming, it was only then that Donghyuck understood his place. The boy nods and quickly grabs his things heading to the waiting room without saying a word. “Was I too harsh?”

Mark asks nervously, Jeno shakes his head.

“Sometimes you gotta be that way for him to stop teasing, it’s fine he isn’t hurt.” Jeno shoots him a soft smile. “You did well, you’re the leader after all it’s your duty to keep order and he wasn’t taking that into consideration.”

Mark nods but can’t help but feel bad for even raising his voice, it didn’t feel like him at all but the stress was driving him crazy. He sighs deeply and watches as Donghyuck leaves the room and walks to the other side of the pool, the other boy turns to his side and instantly locks eyes with Mark.

“Sorry captain!” He shouts, frantically waving before wiggling his way to the spot allocated to him.

“Told you.” Jeno whispers and places his hand on Mark shoulder giving it a small pat as he does so. “He’s Donghyuck, he’s different.”

*I figured that much out.* Mark snorts to himself and stands up ready to show the other boy some support. Jeno follows suit and they both stay in the front next to Jaemin who was already holding a big sign with the boy’s name in glittery letters, they watch as Donghyuck positions himself and waits for the whistle to blow.

It was a known fact that Donghyuck wasn’t a big star, he was good but average kind of good, and that was fine. Mark felt pride bubble inside of him seeing how much better he had become over the years, he might’ve disliked the boy before but he still fulfilled his leader duties neutrally including analyzing the way Donghyuck swam. Seeing how his strokes had become more precise and harsher brought a smile to his face, rather than being sixth like usual, Donghyuck had become good enough
to end in fourth. It was a big deal, their teammates went wild with euphoria.

“That’s my man!” Jeno shouts when Donghyuck comes back, wet damp hair and shaking due to the cold water. “You’re going to be an ace someday!”

“Don’t get ahead of yourself.” The boy mumbles, catching everyone off guard. Cocky Donghyuck had become part of the boy, being humble didn’t quite suit him.

“Shut up and let me pamper you.” His friend says and wraps a towel around him. “You’ll go up steadily, I know you will.”

Donghyuck smiles softly and looks over to Mark. “How’d it go captain?”

Mark shoots him a thumbs up, coming closer so he could congratulate him as well. “Jeno’s right, you’ve been getting better steadily. You’ll get to the podium soon.” Donghyuck grins at that and lets out a tiny giggle. “Just don’t disappear again. Where were you?!”

“Buying something to eat…” He admits and looks down at his feet. “The crackers weren’t good enough I needed something more.”

“Just warn someone next time.” Mark breathes in sharply. “Yeah?”

Donghyuck looks up and nods, a small smile of relief forms on his face. “A’ight captain!”

The boy was already awake when his ringtone cuts through the late night silence. He rolls on the bed and grabs his phone from the nightstand not checking who it was before accepting the call. “The door?” Mark asks even if he knew the answer.

“Yes.” Donghyuck’s voice sounded tinier and croakier than usual, Mark furrows his eyebrows before turning off his phone and practically running downstairs.

He opens the door to find Donghyuck looking even messier than the last time he had come to Mark’s house devastated, before Mark could even blink, Donghyuck already had his arms wrapped around his neck and head buried on his neck. “Mark.” He breathes out and shakes his head. “I need a drink.”

Mark nods and manages to close the door with Donghyuck wrapped around him, he then notices how awkward he looked with his hands hanging by the sides of his body and decides to wrap them around the boy’s torso. “Let’s go upstairs, yeah?” Donghyuck nods and lets go. “I’ll get you something to drink, wait for me.” Dongyuck nods once again.

The boy watches as Donghyuck disappears in the shadows before heading to the kitchen, he presses his forehead against the cold surface of his fridge and sighs deeply. He was scared of what was to come, but glad Donghyuck was there and safe for the time being.

He grabs three cans this time – the third would probably be for himself – and heads upstairs. Donghyuck was under the covers staring at the ceiling with empty eyes when he opens the door, Mark calls out for him and places the cans on the nightstand. “Wanna talk?” He whispers.
“Mark, whenever I ask for a drink, what do you think I mean?” Donghyuck looks at the other with empty eyes, there was no malice in his words, the boy seemed too tired to try to be funny. He sits up, back pressed against the wall behind Mark’s bed, and grabs one of the cans.

Mark watches as the boys gulps it down in one go and then extends his arm asking for the next one to be handed to him. Donghyuck takes longer to swallow the other down so Mark decides to join him and takes a small sip before the boy would start ranting. It is then, as he bores his eyes on Donghyuck’s arm, that he notices a bruise. “Hyuck, I’m going to get the first aid kit.” He informs before leaving the bed and the room.

Donghyuck stays still waiting for the other boy to come back, truth be told he couldn’t even feel the bruises anymore. “It’s fine Mark.” He mumbles when the other finally comes back.

“You’re bleeding, it look painful.” Donghyuck would’ve found the wrinkles in Mark’s forehead funny if he didn’t feel so empty inside. “Let me take care of that, I might suck at it but…” He trails off and takes out what he thought was needed. “You can talk, I’ll listen.”

The boy stares at Mark, as if trying to find out where to start, before opening his mouth. “It was bad this time, they weren’t just yelling. My father almost broke my mother apart, I swear.” He whispers, pain evident in his voice. “So I stepped in, I know I shouldn’t have but she’s still my mother. Y’know.” Mark nods to give reassurance. “He beat me to a pulp, quite literally. Used the knife here and there I think? I can’t remember, really.”

“Hyuck…” Mark breathes out and look up at the boy. “They could go to prison for this, you can make them go to prison.”

“No, I cannot. Dad told me I’d fail, I think he’s right. And then what if I win Mark? They’ll take me away to some stupid foster care. No one wants a sixteen year old! A witty one on top of that.” Donghyuck sobs out. “There’s no point, I must endure it for a little while longer.”

Mark feels as if someone was pressing down on his chest. “Two more years, that’s two more years of torture Hyuck.”

“It’s better than being taken away from here! I’d lose everyone.” Donghyuck forces Mark to look at him in the eye when the boy looks down with sadness. “I’d lose you.”

“Stop.” Mark shakes his head. “Don’t say those things.”

“It’s the truth, I spent so long building up a good life. I spent too long building up a mind-set that keep me alive in this shitty family. I won’t throw that down the drain like that, I prefer to endure it for a while longer.” Donghyuck throws his head back and closes his eyes. “My mind is stronger than their attempts at erasing me. I’m not a mistake.”

Mark looks at him. “A mistake?”

“That’s what I am, apparently. Was never meant to be born, dad says I grew up fucked in the head due to the amount of times he tried to force abortion on my mother. Don’t want to find out what he did to her…” The boy lets the tears run down his cheeks, his breath was shaky but he couldn’t stop talking. “I’m not fucked in the head, I’m not a mistake. Took me far too long to realize that, I won’t let him ruin it like that.”

“You’re right.” Mark places his hand on the boy’s knee. “You’re right, Hyuck.”

Donghyuck chuckles. “Thanks, confirmation feels nice.” He bites his shaky lip and sucks on it to calm himself down. “I’ll survive, yeah? I can do it, right Mark?”
“You can, you’re Lee Donghyuck. What can’t Lee Donghyuck do?” Mark smiles softly even if Donghyuck couldn’t see it. “You’ll thrive.”

“I’ll thrive.” The boy mumbles.

Mark finishes up and closes the kit, he felt too exhausted to create Donghyuck a bed, plus the boy seemed to have fallen asleep already so he shrugs it off and goes under the blankets as well. "Hyuck, move down.” He whispers and pushes the sleepy boy so he’d be fully covered by the sheets.

He turns to the side and curls himself in a ball, Donghyuck calming breath lulls him to sleep. Something wakes him up again, though. Donghyuck had thrown his leg over his torso and snuggled his back, purring like a cat with contentment when he finds the perfect position. Mark freezes at the contact but doesn’t do anything, instead lets the boy cuddle him as much as he needed.

It felt foreign, but not bad.

It was just another day of Mark trying to focus on his unfinished homework with the background noise of his group chatting in the background, the food had already gone cold by his side and he only notices it’s there when his stomach grumbles with discontentment. “Damnit.” He sighs.

“What’s up?” Jeno turns his head in his direction and quirks one of his eyebrows up. “Need help?”

“I’m almost finished, but my food has gone cold. And I’m hungry as hell.” He pouts and goes back to his homework, he could see from the corner of his eyes that Jeno had taken the tray away with him when he stood up but didn’t have the energy to see it as important.

He finishes just as Jeno sits back down with his tray once more, Mark looks at the food and then at Jeno with a confused expression. “I asked for them to heat it up.” Jeno explains.

“Really?!” Mark smiles brightly and wraps his arms around Jeno without thinking twice. “Oh shit.” He gasps when he notices and laughs awkwardly.

“Not to sound like Donghyuck,” Jeno starts. “But you’re such a hetero cliché that it physically hurts me.”

Mark can feel his face heat up. “Shut up.” He mumbles and focuses on the tray. “Thanks for the food, though.”

Jeno chuckles besides him and goes back to doing whatever he was doing before, Mark drifts his eyes from the food to the group and instantly searches for Donghyuck. The boy looked sullen, Mark couldn’t believe he hadn’t noticed it before.

“What’s up with Hyuck?” He asks right next to Jeno’s ear to make sure Donghyuck couldn’t hear him.

His friend focuses his attention on said boy and furrows his eyebrows. “Hyuck.” He calls out and the other looks up. “You good?” Donghyuck shakes his head slightly. “Nurse?” Jeno points at the door and the other nods getting up right away.
Mark watches them with curiosity bubbling inside his chest. It wasn’t like it hadn’t happened before, the two boys often would leave without a word but it had never been much of his interest to figure out what exactly was going on. Now it was, now it worried him.

The next time Mark sees Donghyuck it’s in the detention room, out of all places. Donghyuck’s eyes go wide when he opens the door, and so do Mark’s. “How did you go from nurse to detention?” He chuckles and sits next to the boy.

The teacher clears her throat for them to break apart so Mark is forced to seat a few rows away. “Might’ve called the nurse something I shouldn’t when she pissed me off.”

Mark hums. “Sounds like you.”

Donghyuck mutters a ‘fuck you’, not loud enough for the teacher to hear but loud enough so that Mark could. “And you? How did Mark goody two shoes end up here?” He smirks and taps his fingers on the table.

“I got caught on my phone multiple times.” Donghyuck snorts. “Listen, by multiple I mean about fifteen times. She flipped so bad I saw my life flash across my eyes.”

They try to contain their laughter and stare at each other while doing so. Mark is the first to calm down and stays with a smile on his face staring in Donghyuck’s direction. “You look like an idiot smiling like that.”

“My bad for being happy.” He rolls his eyes and looks away, the smile never faded from his face though. “How long do we need to stay here?”

“Thirty more minutes.” The teacher answers before Donghyuck could utter a single word. “And if you keep on talking I’ll make it longer.” She threatens.

Mark stares at the work he should be doing during detention and then to Donghyuck who had his head laying on the desk, he lays down as well and they stare at each other in total silence. The only sound was the one coming from the teacher typing on her keyboard, the two boys kept their mouth shut throughout the whole thirty minutes. Mark doesn’t quite know how, since it was Donghyuck they were talking about, the boy didn’t seem to keep his mouth shut for one second.

He thinks, because that’s all he can do during those boring minutes, thinks about how things have changed almost overnight but not quite. Mark remembers how the excitement of getting a call from Donghyuck late night grew as time went on, and how comfortable he had become to everything the other did. It was a miracle, really, it still bugged his head sometimes. He and Donghyuck? Friends? It was almost laughable.

“Time to go home kiddos.” The woman informs and starts packing her things.

The two boy’s wake up from their daze and do the same, Donghyuck pokes Mark shoulder once he’s done making the other shriek in surprise. “You scared me.” He complains and places his hand over his heart.

“My bad, mister.” He snickers. “Let’s go, I’m tired of being here.”

“Not like you’ll be doing anything at home either.” Mark snorts and finally finishes shoving his
things inside his bag.

“True, but at least I’m in the privacy of my own home.” Donghyuck winks and keeps the door open for him. “What will Mister Mark Lee do when he reaches home?”

Mark smiles to himself. “Homework.”

“Ah yes, the usual boring Mark I know is back.” He teases, flinching when Mark raises his fist up high. “Have fun, nerd.”

“How many nicknames do you have for me at this point?!”

Donghyuck rubs his chin deep in thought. “I lost track as well… Guess you just gave me something to do this evening!” He shoots Mark finger hearts and the other cringes. “Hetero cliché will definitely be first on the list…”

“Fuck you.” Mark spits out, he can’t contain a smile from showing, though.

Donghyuck had tried everything he could to sleep, but his brain simply wouldn’t let him sleep. He had gotten bored of watching videos as well and couldn’t wake up Mark, the boy would yell at him and get really angry if he did so. He sighs, why is my brain such a dick?

He rolls over to the side and stares at the mess on the floor, books, clothes, pens, toys, there were just so many things on the floor it was ridiculous. Donghyuck gets up. “I might as well clean up.” He sighs and starts picking up the objects.

Something catches his attention, he wasn’t quite sure why but it did. A simple black notebook laying in a corner, he looks at Mark and then back at the notebook before opening it. “Stuff.” It read in big letters in the first page. Donghyuck skips it and notices that it was a where Mark kept all his lyrics, it was a mess of scribbles and poems. It looked oddly artistic and pleasing to look at, Donghyuck had to admit.

Donghyuck knew he shouldn’t read such a private thing but the boredom and curiosity were too strong, so he sits on the floor and skips through the pages. The old ones were mainly about grades, how school was stressful or how he felt useless, Donghyuck nodded along to most things.

It just got messier as it went, though, thoughts seemed to blend together and the boy sounded increasingly frustrated. Mark's calligraphy became bolder, less like handwriting more like scribbles everywhere. Donghyuck could barely read what some said.

I don't care now what it's worth
But if you lift this burden off my back
I'll follow you to the bloody end And I may go
I've lived my life the way I want To places I have never been to
Just to find the deepest desires in my mind

I will calm you in the storm

And breathe you in when you are worn

You are so strong

I shall never, find someone as strong

As you, boy

Donghyuck’s breath hitches and he gulps, his mind was going on overdrive and he couldn’t think properly. He grabs the nearest pen, opens the book in the middle, clicks the pen and doesn’t hesitate before scribbling down something right in the middle of the page.

He stares at his creation, considering ripping the page apart or not as he reread it over and over again.

*i do not wish to be called strong for i am not. there is no pain, no suffering inside my heart, just the emptiness and cowardness of accepting what has become of my life.*

He doesn’t get to decide on anything because Mark starts moving too much in his bed and fear takes over him. Donghyuck puts the notebook down where he found it and throws the pen somewhere in the room before going back underneath the covers.

Sleep doesn’t come that night, his brain kept repeating every poem, every scribble, every note. Donghyuck stares at Mark’s face until the first ray of light makes its way inside the room and then gets up ready to leave, but not before stealing yet another glance at the sleeping boy.

*What do you mean, Mark Lee?*

It was just another Biology lesson, Mark had lost track of what the topic was even about a few lessons back and dedicated the lesson time to copying notes without actually listening to anything the teacher was saying. He just hoped he’d understand what it all meant when he revised for it later.

He stops writing when he notices the teacher had asked them all a question, the classroom goes totally silent and all the students look at each other silently hoping someone would answer the question to get it over with. No one does, though.

“So no one knows?!” The teacher looks around offended and huffs. “Have you guys even paid attention to what I’ve been saying?” *No,* Mark thinks and presses his lips together tightly. “What’s so hard to grasp? You guys did this last year!”

More silence and then a fearless hero decides to speak up. “I looked at the notes from last year.” He clears his throat, the teacher raises their eyebrow. “But it’s like… it’s a different Nervous System.”
“What?” The teacher furrows their eyebrows and blinks back at them.

“It’s just different! Like, it has nothing to do what we are doing right now!” He tries to explain, everyone around him chuckles. “I swear, I don’t get what we’ve been learning for like three weeks now.”

Mark giggles – a bit more loudly than expected – and covers his mouth with his hand, he can see Donghyuck turns around from the corner of his eyes and drifts his gaze in the boy’s direction.

Donghyuck tsks and shakes his head in disapproval with a soft smile on his face, Mark glares at him teasingly and waves him off. “Alright so instead of telling me you kept on pretending to understand?!” The teacher says with disbelief. “You guys are really something else.” She looks around some more and spots Donghyuck trying to communicate with Mark who was trying his very best to ignore the boy. “Lee Donghyuck care to answer the question?”

The boy visibly gulps and laughs nervously. “I don’t know the answer.”

“Well it sure isn’t in Mark’s face, now is it? Pay attention to what really matters, maybe you’ll know the answer then.” They rolls their eyes and go back to scribbling on the board, Donghyuck looks down and tries to hide how red his face had gotten.

“What’s the History homework?” Donghyuck asks Jeno as he shoves a spoonful of soup in his mouth, his friend sighs loudly.

“I don’t know, Mark’s face might answer the question though.”

Donghyuck chokes, a few droplets squirt from his mouth onto the table and a few of the boys groan. “Fuck off, that was so embarrassing.”

“Well maybe if you weren’t looking at Mark while she was pissed off you wouldn’t have to experience that.” Jeno shrugs.

The boy flips him off and goes back to slurping on his soup, it isn’t until Mark pokes his shoulder that he adverts his eyes from the food. “What is?” He says after Mark scowls at him, the boy huffs and points at the droplets of soup still laying on the white surface of the table. “Clean it yourself if it bothers you so much.”

“I ain’t your maid.” Mark rolls his eyes and crosses his arms on top of his chest. “Clean it, you nasty bastard.”

“Getting brave, are we now?” Donghyuck quirks his eyebrows up. “Watch your mouth.”

“Or else?” He rolls his eyes once more and holds up a napkin.

Donghyuck grabs it harshly and slams his hand on the table. “Or else.” He grumbles while scrubbing the table a bit stronger than necessary. “I’ll erase those stupid seagull eyebrows off your face.”

Mark scoffs. “How would you do that without me noticing?”

“You shouldn’t let Lee Donghyuck sleep in the same room as you.” He gives him a sour smile and throws the dirty napkin onto the boy’s face. “Really, I thought you were smart.”
“Do it and you’ll go back to dying of hypothermia on the streets.” The boy growls, Donghyuck growls back at him and flips his finger on Mark’s forehead. “What the f-” He drags his chair across the floor and gets ready to jump on top of Donghyuck but Jeno miraculously appears in the middle of them and stops him.

“Alright so I’m not going to asks what the fuck any of this is about but you two need to shut up and eat your food because lesson starts in less than ten minutes.” Jeno pushes Mark down till the boy’s butt touches the chair. “Spare his idiotic eyebrows, the boy was nice enough to let you sleep in his house.”

“So were you.” Donghyuck snorts.

Jeno groans loudly and hits the top of his friend’s head. “I’m glad you didn’t accept my offer, at least I get to keep my precious eyebrows.”

“Ah yes, otherwise you couldn’t find a boy to cry about.” Donghyuck whispers and Jeno opens his mouth in shock. “What? It’s the truth.”

“Shut up and worry about your own love life problems.” Jeno scoffs and sits down again, he doesn’t look up from his bowl of rice even when Donghyuck speaks again.

“What are you even talking about?”

Jeno rolls his eyes and stabs the rice with his chopsticks. “You know exactly what I’m talking about.”

They were all used to seeing Jeno come to school looking sad, but this on another level. The boy’s face was swollen as if he had cried his eyes out the whole night – which was probably what had happened – and refused to utter a single word to anyone, not even the teachers managed to make him speak. Everyone had given up, Mark and Donghyuck included.

The group tried their best to act as if they couldn’t notice Jeno for everyone’s sake, they were all eating like they normally would while Donghyuck consoled the boy. The two boys were wrapped around each other exactly like a couple would, the view wasn’t foreign to Mark who had seen it happen far more times than he could count.

Donghyuck moves his fingers through Jeno’s black locks and hums a calming melody while rocking both their bodies in his chair. Mark eats his food in silence, neither participating in the other’s conversation nor helping Jeno, he felt useless. Only Donghyuck knew how to make Jeno calm down, it was almost as if he had a special gift that was unattainable. “Jeno, you have to eat.” He says with the softest voice Mark had ever heard.

“No.” The boy croaks out and hides his face on Donghyuck’s chest. “I’m going to puke it out.”

Mark catches a glimpse of a purple bruise due to the brusque movement the boy had done and his eyes go wide, Donghyuck notices and looks in the direction Mark was looking. He gasps quietly and pats Jeno’s back. “Babe, your neck…”

Jeno tries to cover it with his hands as if it would do anything and starts sobbing once again. “Oh my
god.” Mark feels tears prickle in his eyes. “Jeno.” He calls out in a soothing voice. “Please talk to us.”

“Not now.” Jeno shakes his head and curls into an even smaller ball. “Not now, not now, not now.”

“Shhh, it’s fine.” Donghyuck rubs his hips and kisses the top of his head. “Not now, that’s okay.”

Mark and Donghyuck lock gazes. “What is this dude doing to him?!” Mark mouths and Donghyuck shakes his head with a sad look on his face, he didn’t know either.

“Alright I got news for you.” Donghyuck wasted no time, the second Mark opens the door to his house the boy was already walking up the stairs.

“Jeno news?” Mark asks as he closes the door and follows the boy, Donghyuck nods. “How is he? Is he okay?”

“No, he’s awful that prick should die.” Mark cringes and wishes he could reprimand Donghyuck for saying such a thing but he too had wished that at some point that day. “He’s just like my father and I can’t believe Jeno is dumb enough to let him do this to him, is love that blind? What even is there to love about that motherfucker?”

Mark places his hands on Donghyuck’s shoulder in an attempt to calm the other down. “From the start.”

Donghyuck nods and sits on the bed. “He said he doesn’t know when things turned out like this, shocker. This is typical toxic behaviour, and I warned him so many times…” He pulls at his hair strands in frustration. “He says he was different than Jun, but he’s even worse! This one uses even more physical violence! Thinks he owns Jeno just because he’s older and stronger, it sickens me Mark. And yet Jeno seems to crawl back to him like he’s worth nothing. Does it make any sense?”

“Lack of self love.” Mark whispers.

“Exactly! He really doesn’t see how good he is, it pisses me off but I can’t even be angry at him. He’s so sensitive right now, he needs to be babied to the max, but I want to help him. I can’t just console him anymore, we have to do something.”

“Beat him up.” He blurts out.

“Well, no. Even if I wish we could that wouldn’t do anything would it? We have to destroy what’s most valuable to him, what keeps him so arrogant.” Donghyuck grabs Mark’s hands. “His reputation.”

Mark had only seen these kinds of things in movies, he never thought he’d experience it first-hand but there he was, hiding behind a bush spying on his friend’s boyfriend. Donghyuck had his camera in his hand and was finding the best time to use it, Mark simply made sure no one was watching while the other got his job done.
“It’s done, I took many it should be good enough.” Donghyuck taps Mark’s hands signalizing he could move.

He looks around and slowly walks from their hiding spot when no one was looking, Donghyuck does the same seconds later and they walk in the other direction the more casual looking they could manage. “This will get us in trouble.”

“Stop being a coward. Your friend is being beat up by that asshole, we deserve some revenge.” Donghyuck growls to make sure Mark finally gets the message across. “Why’d the police waste time on this? He’s not even rich he won’t bribe them to do it, we’ll be fine.”

Mark bites his lip and nods. “Okay, good point…” He sighs. “And now we meet with your friend, right?”

“Right.”

“Can you do it?” Donghyuck asks the other boy who hums in response. “Please say you can, you’re my only salvation Hwi.”

The boy chuckles. “I’ll try my best to make it look realistic, but really? Child porn? Isn’t that a bit… radical?”

“Right!?” Mark butts in and Donghyuck slams his hand on top of the boy’s mouth.

“Yes, but Hwi this dude is fucking crazy he deserves it. People will be so shocked and grossed out that they won’t stop to think about why he’d even look for that in public.” Donghyuck explains. “It’s fucked up, but so is what he’s doing to my friend.”

Hwi sighs but nods. “I get it, I’ll try my best okay? I’ll talk to you when I’m done, and you better pay me back somehow.”

“I’m broke.” Donghyuck whines.

“I said somehow.” The boy shrugs. “I guess you owe me a favour, maybe you’ll become my cleaning lady from now on.”

The boy snorts. “Your house won’t be any cleaner than before, trust me on that.” Hwi clicks his tongue and pushes Donghyuck away towards the door, Mark follows after him and bows down as they leave the house. “He’s younger than you, why are you bowing idiot?”

“He’s doing us a huge favour!” Mark protests. “And he better do it right so the plan works.”

“He’s the photoshop master, I swear he’s so good it’s crazy. We’ll be fine, okay? And that prick will be thrown in the mud.” Donghyuck giggles with excitement. “Revenge is so sweet, hopefully Jeno will get rid of him soon so I don’t have to hear from him ever again.”

Mark nods, he deemed Jeno strong enough to get rid of yet another toxic relationship. They just needed to wait and be patient.
“Stop slurping like that.” Mark whines and glares at Donghyuck who raises his arms up in surrender.

Jeno, as if he had been woken up from his sleep, perks up and snaps his head in Mark’s direction. “Oh! Right! There’s this party on Saturday-”

“Nope.” He cuts his friend off.

“Don’t be like that, it’ll be so fun.” Jeno pouts and bats his eyelashes at him trying to seduce Mark into accepting the proposal, his friend blinks back at him. “Dude, c’mon.”

Mark sighs deeply. “Why? Why do I have to go, don’t you have Donghyuck already?” He looks over to Donghyuck who shrugs back at him.

“You’re my best friend too, dickhead.” Jeno huffs. “Stop being such a bummer, if I cry will you go?”

“If you cry I’ll make fun of you, that’s what.” Mark shoots him an evil smile and goes back to sipping on his milkshake.

“You’re spending too much time with Donghyuck, I see.” His friend smiles smugly and cups Mark’s face with his hands. “You’re too cute to be a savage, now quit playing cool and accept my offer. Pretty please?”

The boy grabs Jeno’s wrists and pushes his hands away. “Fine. Just because you’re begging this badly.” He gives up.

“It’ll be so much fun!” Jeno fists the air in victory, Donghyuck snickers next to Mark at the boy’s reaction.

“I hope you’re right.” Mark mumbles.

Chapter End Notes

the notebook part might come out looking weird depending on your device im sorry i tried hghgh

(oh and mark had blonde hair but dyed it caramel i didnt add that as a scene bc its not important but,, yea?)
Chapter Summary

so much talking
swear that's all you ever do
show me something
before I show something to you
– take me,, aly & aj

Chapter Notes

yall know how this goes... sorry for any typos!!!

Jeno doesn’t even knock before entering the room, Mark shrieks and covers his exposed chest with his hands before relaxing when he figures out who exactly had just come in. “Really? Knocking is a foreign concept to you, Jeno.” He mumbles and grabs the shirt he planned on wearing to the party.

“That? You’re wearing that?” The boy tsks and looks around Mark’s wardrobe. “C’mon put this hoodie on, you’ll look hot.”

“Don’t I look hot with this on?”

“Heck, you always look hot but this one… Extra spicy.” His friend wiggles his eyebrows and throws the hoodie on Mark’s face. “You need to get laid.”

Mark coughs loudly and threatens to throw his shoe at Jeno’s face. “I do not, I’m good.”

Jeno rolls his eyes and sits on the bed. “Whatever, it’d make you less moody but okay buddy.” Mark hits him on the shoulder to shut him up, Jeno’s smirk just widens. “Anyways, I’m joking don’t get pissy with me.”

“I know, idiot.” He puts the hoodie on and stares at the mirror next to his bed. “Alright, fine, it does look slightly better.”

His friend shoots him one of his famous eyesmiles and pulls Mark so he’d sit on the bed right next to him. “What time must you be back by?” Mark shrugs, he didn’t know, his parents trusted him when it came to those things. “Don’t tell me I’m the only one with a curfew! I feel like a loser.”

Mark snorts and pats his friend’s back. “When must you be back by?”

“Like before midnight…” He groans. “I know I’m sixteen but everyone else will go home much later!”

“I doubt it’ll be fun enough for me to stay past that time.” Mark clicks his tongue. “It’s fine, Jeno.
When you’re older you can stay longer anyways.”

Jeno mumbles something under his breath and flops on his side on the bed. “Whatever, get dressed I wanna make the most of those four stupid hours.”

“Drama queen.” Mark teases earning a kick in the leg from Jeno. “Bitch.”

His friend smirks and kicks him again but lighter. “You know it.”

Finding Jaemin proved to be harder than they imagined, the three boys had texted him but he wouldn’t answer and was nowhere to be found inside the house. “Maybe he hasn’t come yet.” Donghyuck shrugs and grabs a cup filled with something Mark couldn’t recognize. “Or is making out with some chick somewhere, who knows?”

“Well damnit it’s been one hour!” Jeno huffs.

Mark observes the different bottles of drinks all around him with curiosity. “Which one is safer to start with?”

“Literally none.” Donghyuck snorts and tries searching for something. “No, wait, I see beer over there.” He puts his cup down and gets one of the bottle of beer placed in a dark corner. “But don’t just drink beer, that’s no fun.”

“I wasn’t planning on it, just don’t want to start with like… shots or whatever that is.” He cringes when he sees Donghyuck swallow the whole thing down.

Jeno lets out a loud groan and the next thing Mark knows, his friend is on the other side of the room yelling at a confused looking Jaemin. “Where have you been?!”

“I literally just got here, get off my face.” Jaemin pushes Jeno’s chest and rolls his eyes. “Why didn’t you answer my calls?!” Jeno pushes anyways, trailing behind the boy like a puppy.

“Are you my dad or something? Damn.” He looks back at Jeno with a look of annoyance, Donghyuck forces himself in the middle of them and giggles loudly.

“Alright, enough, Jeno over here just a drink to relax. Don’t mind him.” The boy pushes Jaemin in Mark’s direction and then looks at the drinks so Mark would understand what to do next. “Let’s talk, Jeno.”

Jeno mumbles something under his breath but lets himself be dragged out of the house, Mark watches with a poker face as the boys leave him alone with a now pissed off Jaemin. “Uh…” He blinks at his friend and then looks at the bottles. “Want… Some?”

Jaemin snickers. “Yeah Mark, what else do you think I’m doing here?” He grabs the first drink he sees and pours it inside the plastic cup. “Is that beer?”

“Maybe…” Mark coughs and hides the bottle in his back. “Listen, y’all are crazy to start it off with those kinds of drinks.”

“Once a coward, always a coward uh?” Jaemin smirks and gulps on his drink. “But that’s good, at least I know I can count on you to take me home!”

Mark punches his shoulder lightly. “I wouldn’t count on it.” He finishes his beer and grabs another
“I might not be as reliable as you think.”

“I know you long enough, you’re too nice to leave me to die on the streets drunk.” Jaemin grabs both Mark’s cheeks and squishes them, hard. “Cutie, cutie Mark Lee!”

“Do that again and I’ll knock you down myself.” The other holds up the bottle of beer in a threatening way, Jaemin chuckles looking as unbothered as ever.

Jeno and Donghyuck disappeared, not that Mark was even trying to find them but they were nowhere to be seen at least. Jaemin had left him early on as well with the excuse of trying to find someone to hook up with, so Mark was left by himself near the drinks zone with boredom creeping inside of him.

He flops onto the couch which was thankfully free and stares at the TV screen with empty eyes, he wasn’t quite sure what he was watching nor what was going on anymore. The alcohol had started kicking in and everything felt drowsy.

His eyes move from the screen and scan the room, Mark gasps loudly when he spots a familiar face. “Why is he here…?” He grumbles and shoots daggers at Jeno’s boyfriend with his eyes. “Where’s Jaemin…”

Mark gets up and wobbles his way to the drink table once again, he couldn’t understand what the labels said and didn’t care at that point. The adrenaline of wanting to be even drunker ran through his veins like wildfire, so he grabs whatever comes first and swallows it down in one go. His throat hurt, but he somehow liked it.

The boy smiles to himself, no reason behind it really, there was just a sudden burst of happiness spreading inside of him. The only thing Mark knew he hated about being drunk was how heavy his head felt, otherwise he quite enjoyed the adrenaline that came with it all even if he didn’t put much use to it.

There was the option of dancing, but Mark still had some sort of sense to not embarrass himself like that. There was also the option of hooking up with someone which wasn’t something he had even considered properly but also involved embarrassing himself, and Mark didn’t really feel like doing that.

He manages to make his way to the kitchen, with half lidded eyes and wobbly legs. The door was closed so he pushes it open applying all the energy left in his arms till it finally moves, he blinks for a few seconds when he finds someone inside and then goes stone cold.

Mark couldn’t breathe, it was if someone was applying pressure on his chest. He stands motionless by the door of the kitchen staring at the person filling their cup with more alcohol, every time they’d move slightly the curls sitting on top of their head would bounce up and down cutely making Mark’s heart ache in pain.

The person looks up and Mark lets out a tiny wheeze and places his hand on top of his chest, Donghyuck stares back at him worriedly and steps forwards, the curls bounce once again and Mark has to breathe in deeply so he wouldn’t pass out right in front of the other. “Mark?” He asks, Mark whimpers back at him. “What’s wrong?”

“Your voice is adorable.” He cries out and sighs deeply, everything felt overwhelming all of a
sudden.

Donghyuck’s eyes go wide open and Mark can’t help but stare at the boy’s face, he had golden glitter on his eyes and the typical dark eyeliner that made his eyes beautifully hypnotizing. Mark looks lower, the black choker and a loose baggy white shirt with black skinny jeans didn’t help his heart slow down inside his chest. He couldn’t believe he didn’t notice how the boy was dressed hours previously. “I’m going to puke.”

“What-“ Before the boy can finish, Mark steps away from him and vomits all over the white shiny floor. Once he finishes Mark lets out a sob looking at the mess he had caused. “Are you okay?”

Mark doesn’t reply and runs out of the room as fast as his drunken self possibly could towards the nearest vacant bathroom which ended up being the top floor one. He locks the door and looks at himself in the mirror, his hair had never looked super messy, not even his morning hair could compete. “Why did I bother styling it?” He grumbles and looks around for toothpaste.

He places a small amount on his tongue and puts a bit of water inside his mouth to rinse out the awful taste. Just as he finishes there’s a knock on the door and he groans. “Not free!”

“I know idiot, open up. Are you okay?” Donghyuck sounds worried and Mark wasn’t in his right mind anyways so he opens the door only to close it again when he is greeted with the pretty sight of before. “What the fuck was that?!?”

“I cant-“ Mark’s voice breaks, he presses his back against the door and closes his eyes. “Do this right now.”

“You’re being extra, open the damn door.” Donghyuck punches the door and Mark pouts to himself before opening it again. “See? Wasn’t hard now was it?”

Mark breathes in sharply. “I think I might puke again.”

Donghyuck furrows his eyebrows. “What is wrong with you today?”

He wants to answer but he doesn’t know either, doesn’t know why is body was acting so strange. The alcohol sure was a factor and Mark knew his emotions became more intense every time he drank, but never to this extent. Never to the point of wanting to kiss a boy.

Suddenly the need to puke rose once more and he makes a strangled noise from the back of his throat.

“Mark-“

“Stop, wait.” Mark closes his eyes and presses the back of his hand against his forehead, it was just as warm as the rest of his body so he decides to splash his face with water instead to cool off. Donghyuck watches in silence with a confused look on his face as Mark violently washes his face.

Donghyuck gasp comes out muffled because of the pressure of Mark’s lips on his own, he moves his arms on his sides for a few seconds before finally deciding to place them on Mark’s shoulders.

It had been so long since Mark had last kissed, or so it felt like it had been, because he had no clue what to do with his lips anymore. He tries to relax and open his mouth, Donghyuck thankfully catches up and takes the lead while Mark follows his movements. The purple haired flips them
around so that Mark was the one with his back pressed against the cold bathroom wall and pins the boy’s wrists on both sides of his face.

Mark squeaks in surprise but doesn’t open his eyes and keeps on kissing Donghyuck knowing fully well that he was going to regret it the next morning. It didn’t matter, not at that moment.

They break apart but remain with their eyes closed. “I needed to sleep at your house today, my parents had a big fight.”

“Don’t know if that’s a good idea.” Mark gulps.

Donghyuck chuckles, Mark could feel his hot breath against his skin. “I disagree, think it’d be a wonderful idea.”

Mark opens his eyes and stares at Donghyuck’s face, he knew he wasn’t thinking right and that he was going to regret everything but he wanted to say yes, deep down inside of him he did. So he nods and kisses Donghyuck on the lips one last time. “Okay, but you gotta let go of my wrists first.”

The other flashes him a bright smile and moves his hand away. “Let’s go then.”

Monday was nerve-wracking, the nervousness inside his stomach seemed to have decided to make its home there forever. Mark tries to not think of it but the truth was that he had kissed Donghyuck, he had made the first move, and now he was going to face the boy in school without any type of answer to why he did it.

He steps out of the car and breathes in sharply, Johnny says goodbye cheerfully leaving him alone in the halls. Mark walks towards his locker and opens it with his shaky hands, there was no specific reason he had just used his locker. In fact, there was no reason at all. He stares at the books inside of it and closes it without taking or putting anything, his mind was screaming things at him. Things he didn’t want to hear, things he didn’t understand.

His legs start to shake just as badly as his hands and he quivers. “Stop.” Mark pleads, but his body just got worse and worse.

The nearest bathroom was too far away and he didn’t have time to calm down before class started, which meant he was going to face Donghyuck in the anxious state he was in. Mark wants to cry, it was all too much for him. The questions, the confrontation, the feelings, all of it made his body cry out in pain.

He takes small steps towards his classroom, the bell rings and the halls start to clear. Mark stands alone staring at the door and whimpers before going inside.

They lock eyes right away and Mark can feel the bile rise, he swears he can feel it in the back of his tongue. Donghyuck stays emotionless and moves his eyes away when Mark doesn’t move, he wants to run away the furthest away from Donghyuck possible.

Jeno spots him, however, and drags him to him closer to Donghyuck who gives him a tiny smile this time. Mark swallows down the vomit that had risen and looks at his feet. Donghyuck looked pretty, out of all the things his brain could’ve thought of, it had thought of that. Mark punches himself
mentally, nothing made sense anymore.

“You okay?” Jeno asks, the Donghyuck from the party flashes in front of his eyes and Mark takes a step back accidently knocking a chair down in the process. Everyone stares at him and goes back to what they were doing previously except for the two boys in front of him. “Mark? You’re too pale, are you okay?”

“I don’t know.” His lips were dry, it hurt to talk.

Before he could say more, the teacher comes inside and commands that they sit down for the class to start. Donghyuck looks at Mark one more time before he turns around, Mark couldn’t tell if the emotion inside the other boy’s eyes was disappointment or hurt and it didn’t matter, whatever it was meant he had fucked up.

Mark doesn’t exactly know how to explain it, but he could sense that something terribly bad was going to happen so when he hears his phone ring by his side, he knew he was right.

"I'm outside." Donghyuck informs as soon as Mark picks up and hang up before the other has any chance to reply.

The boy stares at the screen of his phone, a selfie with Jeno, for a few seconds and runs downstairs once he snaps out of it. Even with the excitement and nervousness of it all Mark tries to make the least noise possible.

Everything was dark, both outside and inside, but Mark could still see Donghyuck's soft features in the almost pitch black night. As if he radiated a light of his own.

No one speaks, Donghyuck enters the house and moves upstairs towards Mark's room without bumping into anything. Even Mark, who has been living for years there hits his foot against some of the furniture, but Donghyuck seemed unbothered and moves just as swiftly as if the lights were turned on.

Mark closes the bedroom door and sits on his bed, Donghyuck doesn't move from his spot from near the door. His eyes bore into Mark's as if he was waiting for some sort of explanation, but there was none that Mark could give him. "So? What was wrong with you today?"

"What do you mean? Get over myself?!

Donghyuck chuckles, but it wasn't the type of chuckle Mark loved to hear. It was just as bitter as a lemon, it made Mark cringe in his seat. "Y'know I knew it'd be like this, the moment you kissed me I could feel the regret pouring out of you. But I guess I thought too highly of you because I actually thought you'd get over yourself."

"What are you talking about? Get over myself?!!"

"Mark you're not straight! No straight boy kisses another boy, especially not more than once!" Donghyuck whisper yells.
Mark gulps. "I'm not gay, Donghyuck. I was drunk and experimenting."

Donghyuck scoffs, the smile on his face was just as bitter has the chuckle he had let out previously. "So that's it, yeah? I'm an experiment to you." He bites his lip, clenches and unclenches his fists and moves towards the door. "Go fuck yourself, Mark Lee."

Mark can't tell if it had been a thunder outside or Donghyuck closing the door, and he should care about the boy waking up his family but he doesn't. He had done something terribly wrong, and now he had lost a friend over it. "Hormones are the worst." He groans and hits his face with his pillow repeatedly.

Jeno had noticed, but who wouldn’t when both boys couldn’t even look at each other. Donghyuck looked angry and tired all the time, Mark already missed the little squeaks the boy would let out whenever Jeno attempted at being funny. The silence was suffocating, everyone around them looked almost if not just as uncomfortable as them.

Mark wanted to end it all, but Jaemin was right. He was a coward, he couldn’t make himself confront Donghyuck after all that so he was stuck with the guilt of waking up every day knowing he had completely messed up. Every morning he’d wake up wishing it was all a dream, but it wasn’t, and Mark didn’t know how to exactly face it.

On top of that, Mark could sense that everyone resented him for what he had done. He assumed Donghyuck had told them because Jeno barely spoke to him anymore and Jaemin sounded disinterested whenever he did. Mark just wanted to cry his eyes out and beg for mercy, his inner dramatic self wouldn’t stop yelling at him to make a fit in front of everyone to get some sort of pity from his friends. He didn’t dare go that low, though.

Just as everyone was leaving the table Mark calls out for Jeno and tugs the sleeve of his pullover. “Please I need to talk.”

“Mark.” His voice was ice cold. “Do I want to hear it?”

“Please.” He could feel his bottom lip start to shake so he bites it.

No matter how pissed Jeno was at someone he still was a softie at heart, Mark knew that and was desperate enough to put on his best I’m-totally-miserable face to get what he wanted. “Okay, after school.” Mark nods. “Get ready to get beat.”

Jeno pulls his arm away and turns his back to his friend, Mark watches him go with big lost eyes and goes back to his state of self-pity. Getting beat was better than silence treatment, anyways.

Mark hides his hands with the sleeves of his hoodie, the nervousness was almost too much for him. He walks towards the school’s entrance and looks around trying to spot Jeno, it isn’t until the crowd dissipates that he spots him leaning against a wall scrolling through his phone with a frown.
“Hey.” He whispers when he gets close enough for Jeno to hear him.

Jeno looks up, the frown doesn’t go away. “Follow me.” Is all he says before walking away from Mark.

The boy follows behind with his head hanging low, it felt odd seeing Jeno be so cold towards him he didn’t feel like any of what was happening was real. The silence was suffocating.

They come to a stop in front of a bench of a park nearby the school, Jeno sits down and looks up at Mark with a poker face. The boy flickers his eyes between Mark and the bench with confusion plastered on his face. “Sit down, Mark. Damnit.”

“O-okay.” He gulps and sits down close to Jeno, but not close enough for it to be awkward.

It’s silent for a few seconds, Mark was waiting for the other to say something as he plays with the sleeves of his hoodie. “I don’t understand you Mark. I don’t get what’s going on inside of your head right now, I don’t get why it’s so difficult for you to accept being gay.”

“I don’t feel it, Jeno. Whenever I try to call myself gay it doesn’t… sound right.” He bites his lip.

“I really want to hit you right now.” Jeno growls and chuckles bitterly. “You make it sound like a bad thing and I hate you for it.”

“It’s not! Jeno it’s really not like that…” Mark shakes his hands in front of his face frantically. “Don’t misunderstand me like this! You know I’m not homophobic.”

Jeno snorts. “Are you not? You might not be with me, but you sound pretty damn homophobic when it comes to yourself. As if you accept others being gay because it’s none of your business but deep down, Mark, you think it’s not real. Not right, or whatever.”

Mark shakes his head and lets out a small whimper. “No! Jeno it’s not like that! Oh my god please.” He feels his throat close on itself.

“Then what is it, uh?” Mark stares at his friend, mouth hanging open as if the words he wanted to let out refused to leave. “See? See this shit Mark? And then you go out there and use your friend for experimenting or some bullshit? I get it, perhaps you don’t see Hyuck as a real friend since you did hate him for years. But he doesn’t deserve this, Mark. You’re so wrong for this all.”

“Jeno.” He croaks out, his body was shaking all over and he could feel hot tears streaming down his face. That was all wrong, it was wrong. “It’s not- It’s not like that! I’m figuring it all out, I’m not homophobic. I care for Hyuck, I really do. You’re not being rational-”

“You’re the one telling me I’m not being rational?!” He scoffs and glares at the other. “The audacity, seriously.”

Mark starts sobbing, he didn’t want to but he couldn’t help the awful feeling pressing down on his chest. “JENO LISTEN TO ME! Stop it, I can’t do this-“

“You can’t do shit, that’s your problem.” Jeno crosses his arms. “And I won’t baby you, Mark, if that’s what you want. I’m tired of this shit, people like you think it’s fun to toy around with us like we are some sort of lab rats. We are humans! Stop playing.”

He shakes his head and wipes the tears that had fallen. “I don’t want you to baby me, I want you to understand! How do you think I feel? I only liked girls, heck I never even thought about kissing a boy in my life. Why are you being like this?”
“Because-“ Jeno breathes in sharply. “Because maybe I’m tired of this. Why can’t you figure yourself out without hurting others?”

“I’m sorry.”

“Say that to Hyuck.” His friend presses his lips together tightly.

“I want to, I really do.” Mark hides his face with his hands. ‘But I can’t face him, Jeno.”

Jeno grabs Mark’s hands and pulls them away from the boy’s face. “Being a coward won’t get you far in life, you’ll stay miserable forever. Is that what you wish?” Mark shakes his head. “Then find the courage to face your mistakes, Mark.”

It had been ages since Mark had last seen the boy, well, actually it had been about one week. But Mark felt as if the days went by too slow now, it made him realize just how boring life was without Donghyuck.

He wondered about what if, because of his stupidity, Donghyuck was being forced to spend night at home getting possibly hurt by his parents. It wasn't like the boy hadn't dealt with that before, but Mark felt a pang in chest knowing it was a plausible scenario and he had only made things worse.

Of course Donghyuck could've gone to Jeno's house, even Jaemin's or some other friend of his. Mark had a feeling that he had not, however, and it was making him far too anxious to think about the possibilities but he couldn't seem to stop.

His mind yelled Donghyuck’s name like a mantra inside his head at all times, it just became louder when he was home alone with nothing to get his mind off the problem.

He opens his notebook and writes, writes until his eyelashes become too heavy, writes until he feels the tears threatening to fall. Mark throws the book somewhere on the floor with a loud sigh and cuddles his pillow.

All those nights that he had taken for granted replayed themselves inside his head, Mark had never noticed just how much better sleeping felt with someone next to him. It takes hours, lots of rolling around alone in bed, but Mark finally falls asleep feeling cold just as if it were winter time.

Mark puts on his sweatpants while eavesdropping the conversations around him, he needed to figure out when he could possibly make his next move. He puts on his shirt and tries to find Donghyuck with his eyes, he spots the boy laughing along with Jeno just a few meters away and tries his best to not lose sight of him.

When he noticed the two boys were going out of the changing room, Mark breathes in and gathers all the courage inside of him before running behind them and grabbing Donghyuck’s wrist. The boy
looks back at him with shock written all over his face, lips parted and eyebrows knitted together, the sight almost makes him forget what he was about to do. “Let’s talk.”

Donghyuck cringes. “N-“ Jeno pinches his arm and he shrieks. “Do I really want to?”

“Perhaps?!” Mark rubs his arms with the palms of his hands nervously. “Please?”

Jeno and Donghyuck look at each other, Jeno nods and pats his friend’s back before leaving the changing room. Mark looks around him frantically. “What are you doing?”

“Could you wait with me till everyone’s gone? There’s only a few left.” Mark gulps and drifts his gaze low so he wouldn’t have to look at Donghyuck in the eyes.

“Why not…” Donghyuck whispers and sits next to Mark’s bag with a neutral look on his face, Mark is at least happy the boy didn’t look pissed off.

Mark keeps packing his things, by the time he finishes the last person was almost ready to leave so he sighs in relief. “Goodbye!” The last boy says and they both awkwardly wave him off.

Donghyuck stares at Mark with his eyebrows raised. “So?”

“What the fuck do I even say…” Mark whispers to himself.

“Could’ve planned this better, idiot.” Donghyuck snickers.

Mark chuckles awkwardly and rubs his nape. “You know I’m not homophobic, right?”

“Debatable.”

“Hyuck! I really am not!” Mark whines. “I just need time? I don’t understand any of this- It’s really weird… I feel weird! And no one’s giving me a break!”

Donghyuck sighs. “You’re a complete baby.” Mark whines once again. “Shut up, you really are a baby just admit it.”

“Will that make you forgive me?”

“Yes.”

Mark groans, looks down at his hands and clicks his tongue. “I’m a baby.”

“I had already forgiven you, but thanks anyways.” Donghyuck smirks when Mark’s eyes go wide. “You’re so bad at fixing things, did you know that?!”

“I know, I have no clue what I’m doing right now but I’m glad you don’t hate me.” Mark admits, a small pout on his lips as he speaks.

Donghyuck chuckles. “I don’t hate people, my name isn’t Mark Lee after all.” The other’s eyes go wide once more. “You look like a puppy.” Mark whines, for what seemed to be the hundredth time. “A whiny puppy, cute.”

“Shut up.” Mark mumbles.

“Shut me up?” The boy smirks and crosses his arms in front of his chest.

Mark tenses up visibly. “Oh?”
“If you’re going to hurt me, at least make it worth it.” Donghyuck snorts. “Oh c’mon don’t look at me like that, just do it and stop stressing.”

“I never intended on hurting anyone, Hyuck-“

Donghyuck stands up, grabs the back of Mark’s neck and presses their foreheads against each other in a blink of an eye. “I wasn’t ready for it at first, okay? I don’t care, just kiss me well.” Mark shakes his head and frowns. “Mark. I promise you, it’s fine.”

The other flickers his eyes towards Donghyuck’s lips and then back up towards his eyes. “Tempting.” He whispers just before Donghyuck slams their lips together, Mark lets out a little whimper before kissing back.

It was starting to get dark out, the smell of swimming pool filled his senses as Donghyuck moves his lips skillfully against his. Mark couldn’t process anything, though, it felt as if he wasn’t really there anymore. It was the Donghyuck effect.

Sports lessons were fun, no matter how much Mark whined because of how sweaty he’d be afterwards the truth was that he enjoyed them more than most classes. He got to jump around as much he wanted and let free the stress accumulated during the day, plus he and his friends mostly messed around the whole time anyways.

The teacher was nowhere to be seen, he had left after telling everyone to prepare the mats for a gymnastics lesson. Mark couldn’t be happier, he didn’t feel like doing gymnastics at all, he was clumsy it never went very well for him.

He watches the others do the work with empty eyes, no thoughts in mind at all, he had spaced out like usual. The next thing he knows, his back hits the mat next to him and he lets out a grunt. “What the-” He opens his eyes and is met with a smug Donghyuck staring back at him. “What are you doing?!"

Donghyuck crawls on top of Mark until their faces are mere inches apart. “I’m bored.”

“You don’t need to break my spine to cure your boredom.” Mark grumbles and flickers his eyes lower without thinking.

“No, but kissing you might.” Donghyuck comes even closer, so close that their breaths become one. “You look pretty when you’re flustered.”

“Shut the fuck up.” Mark turns his head to the side. Bad move, Donghyuck kisses his neck. “DONGHYUCK!” He shrieks and looks at the boy once again. “We’re in front of everyone.”

Donghyuck shrugs and places a noisy kiss on Mark’s cheek. “Like I care.”

“Off me.” Mark commands, the other pretends to not listen and places yet another kiss on Mark’s face. No matter how much the boy tried fighting it, Donghyuck found a way to kiss his face anyways. “Oh my god Hyuck, if the teacher sees us like this-“

“You’re a stress ball, seriously.” Donghyuck sighs. They stay in silence looking at each other while
Donghyuck slowly comes closer to the other’s face, Mark was too focused on the boy’s eyes to notice, though. “What does it matter?”

His lips touch Mark’s as he speaks, Mark feels a shiver go down his spine and licks his lips, tongue accidently touching Donghyuck’s lips as he does so. “My grade-”

“Ah yes, Mark Lee, will drop a mark because he was practicing gay activities in physical education.” Donghyuck teases and moves his head higher so he can place a final kiss on the boy’s nose. “You need to relax.”

He finally gets off Mark and lays next to him, Mark stares at the boy by his side with a mix of fascination and annoyance. “You’re so annoying.”

“You love it.” Donghyuck snorts, a toothy smile on his lips as he stares at the ceiling.

Mark looks at the ceiling as well, unable to stare at the other one second longer. “Perhaps.”

His eyelashes were starting to feel heavy, Mark blinks a few times before giving up and closing his eyes. He could hear Donghyuck occasionally giggle while watching the YouTube video but doesn’t open his eyes again even if curiosity tickled inside of him. “Why aren’t you watching?” The boy finally says when the video ends.

“I was too tired, sorry.” Mark places his head on Donghyuck’s shoulder. “Hyuck.” The other hums back. “How is Jeno doing?”

“He’s your friend too, y’know?” Donghyuck snorts and ruffles Mark’s hair. “You could technically ask him how he’s doing.”

Mark shakes his head, a little pout forms on his lips. “I think he still resents me, I understand, so I don’t want to be pushy like that…” He plays with the boy’s fingers as he speaks.

Donghyuck sighs. “Right.” He moves his index finger down Mark’s face, from the forehead down the cane of the boy’s nose till he reaches his lips. “He’s hanging in there, it’s still complicated. I just wish he had some time being single to find himself, feels like he just jumps onto the next relationship thinking it’s going to fix whatever he has going on.” He pokes Mark’s bottom lip and lets out a soft giggle before going back to playing with the boy’s hair. “Really, I understand why he used that girl to break it off with his dumb ex but he should’ve denied when she asked him out.”

“I don’t understand it, why date someone you don’t actually like?” Mark moves his eyes from Donghyuck’s fingers towards the boy’s face. “Not condemning the way he chose to finally put an end to it all, but why date a person you used? Because that’s literally all she ever was to him, a way out.”

“I know.” Donghyuck lets out another sigh. “I think he’s dependent on someone now, but he’s thinking of ending it with her anyways.”

Mark snorts. “So what, Hyuck? He’s just going to jump onto the next prey.”

Donghyuck shrugs. “What can I do?! He’s too scared to be alone by himself for whatever reason,
and I don’t know who put into his head that if he’s single he’s not whole.” The boy moves his hands downwards so he could hold Mark’s hand. “You should try to fix things with him.”

“He doesn’t like… this.” Mark tightens his hold on Donghyuck’s hand.

“It’s understandable.”

“I know.”

They stay in the same position in silence, Mark closes his eyes once again and snuggles closer to the other boy who keeps on petting Mark’s hand with his thumb. “He needs you, you’re his best friend just like I am.”

Mark presses his face against Donghyuck’s chest harshly to the point where he could suffocate. He knew that, he knew Jeno missed him like he missed Jeno, but the fears yelled louder than reason.

“And.” Donghyuck continues. “Who is he to judge you? Has he looked at his own life choices?”

The other snorts loudly and looks up at Donghyuck, chin pressed against the boy’s chest. “You got a point.” He sighs loudly. “I’ll… see what I’ll do…”

Donghyuck grabs his cheeks and forces the boy to move upwards so that their faces are mere inches apart. “Good.” He says before pecking Mark on the lips.

Donghyuck grabs Mark’s waist and pins him against the humid changing room's wall, Mark makes a surprise noise in the back of his throat and breathes in sharply. “Y’know what?”

“What.” Mark whispers while blatantly staring at the other’s lips.

“I think you look the most handsome with wet hair.” Donghyuck takes his left hand from the boy’s waist and moves it towards his head messing up the locks even more. “Is that weird?”

Mark snorts. “You’re weird, so-“

“Oh look who’s talking.” Donghyuck flickers his forehead before going back to playing with the wet locks. Mark sighs with contentment and closes his eyes, enjoying how good it felt to have someone play with his hair.

He lets out a small shriek when he feels something soft press against his lips and opens his eyes only to find Donghyuck’s face almost glued to his. Mark closes his eyes again and snakes his arms around Donghyuck’s torso, pulling him so close that Donghyuck wheezes out slightly.

“Listen, I still want to breathe.” The boy chuckles and Mark hides his face in the crook of his neck with embarrassment. “You’re like a puppy, am I supposed to make out with a puppy?”

Mark hits the boy’s chest lightly and faces him again. “See? This is why you’re weird.” He scrunches up his nose and shakes his head slightly.

“I guess you always have the option to stop me from saying weird shit, do you not?” Donghyuck smirks and moves his head closer, so close that Mark can feels the sensation of the boy’s lips on his
“Maybe I like to hear your weird shit.” Mark sighs.

The boy places a quick kiss onto Mark’s lips and smiles. “Just… Maybe, yeah?”

“Yeah.” He croaks out, Mark goes back to holding onto the other’s torso and pulls him closer. “I like you close.”

“I can tell.” Donghyuck giggles and moves his arms so that they’re around the other’s neck, he rubs his face against Mark’s jaw and places a quick kiss there enjoying the way Mark sucks in a breath at the contact. “Pretty.”

Mark grabs Donghyuck’s cheeks with both his hands and guides the boy so that their lips clash against each other, Donghyuck doesn’t even dare complain and starts kissing Mark like his life depended on it. Mark seems to take that as a challenge and bites down on the other’s bottom lip a bit harsher than usual earning a loud whimper from Donghyuck. He goes stone cold and breaks apart, eyes wide.

“What is?” The boy furrows his eyebrows and then a smirk slowly forms on his lips. “Oh, Mark Lee has a weak spot?” Mark looks up at the ceiling and shakes his head. “Weak when I whimper?”

“You didn’t need to say that out loud…” Mark whispers and licks his lips nervously.

“I clearly did, you’re all bothered. It’s cute.” Donghyuck teases while forcing Mark to look at him by pressing on the boy’s chin. Mark looks back at him with his big eyes, cheeks slightly pink and lips red.

“I hate you.” The boy mutters and drifts his gaze somewhere else.

“Ah yeah? Is that why you keep on kissing me?” Donghyuck lets out a breathy laugh and searches for Mark’s gaze.

Mark huffs. "I only do it because it’s the only way to stop you from spewing shit out of your mouth” They finally lock eyes again, Mark was trying his best to keep his serious face on but it wasn’t working all that well.

Donghyuck doesn’t waste another second before kissing him again, Mark relaxes almost instantly and soon becomes confident enough to start nibbling on the other’s lips again. This time, when Donghyuck lets out strangled noises from the back of his throat, Mark just kisses harder and tightens his hold on the boy’s hip.

The sun had totally vanished, the changing room had become almost pitch-black save for the moon’s light. The only sound was the boy’s panting and the occasional chatter of the cleaning ladies still finishing up their work somewhere in the swimming pool. “We should go, before they lock us in here.” Mark whispers and grabs Donghyuck wrist.

“We can continue at your place, no?” Donghyuck wiggles his eyebrows as the boy opens the stall’s door.

“You’re still not tired?!” He looks at him in shock.

Donghyuck shrugs. “I love kissing, I’d do it till my lips bleed.”

Mark blinks back at him and gapes like a fish before dragging the other outside. “Your lips are too
pretty to be ruined like that.” He mumbles when they’re finally outside. Donghyuck giggles and trails Mark’s arm until he reaches the boy’s hand.

“It’d be worth it, but if you got better plans…?” He sneakily holds the other’s hand and tilts his head.

The boy looks back at Donghyuck. “Let’s get some food and then decide.” He lets out a breathy laugh.

“Sounds like a good plan to me!” Donghyuck chirps and pushes Mark closer so he can plant a kiss on the boy’s cheek. Mark isn’t fazed anymore.

Mental note to self: don’t go shopping with Donghyuck.

Mark decided to follow the shopping list, unlike someone, like his mother had taught him so that he wouldn’t miss out of anything important. By the time he finishes, Donghyuck seemed to have gone missing inside the big supermarket.

He probably looked like a total idiot running around the aisles searching for the boy with two plastic baskets filled with goodies. It had been about thirty minutes since he noticed Donghyuck was nowhere to be seen, and he was still missing. “Idiot.” He mumbles to himself and restarts his search.

The snack aisle looks tempting but Mark knows he’s almost broke after ticking everything on the list so he ignores how much he wished to snatch one of the bags and keeps on searching for the other. Just as he was about to give up and try to call Donghyuck once again, the loudspeakers squeak making everyone cringe.

“My son, Mark Lee, come to the reception.” Donghyuck’s voice sounds, loud and clear, throughout the whole store. Mark groans and heads to the reception, mumbling curses under his breath as he stomps his feet on the shiny white floor.

He spots Donghyuck right away, the boy was leaning against the counter with a smirk on his face, the typical look that made Mark’s blood boil a little bit too much. “I’m your kid now, uh?” Mark shouts across the store.

Donghyuck lets out a loud laugh and waits till the other finally comes close. “Yes, my little bubu.” He pinches Mark’s cheeks and puckers his lips, coming almost close enough to kiss the other but Mark manages to dodge it in the last second.

“Uhm, what the fuck…” The boy growls while pushing Donghyuck away.

“Ah! Hundred won in the swear jar mister!”

“If it worked like that you’d be a beggar on the streets.” Mark glares at him and Donghyuck clicks his tongue.

“Fair point.”

Mark picks up the baskets and heads to the cashier. “Where were you?! Why didn’t you pick up
your stupid phone?!” He says in an exasperated tone, Donghyuck catches onto him and grabs one of the baskets.

“No service.” Mark glares at him once again. “I promise! Do you think I’d put myself under the trouble of asking the manager to use the speakers!!”


Both boys place the things on the black mat, Mark grabs his wallet out and gets ready to pay. “Are you mad?”

“No.” The boy pays no attention to the other and greets the cashier, Donghyuck helps put the things inside the big plastic bags in silence next to Mark with a tiny frown. “What even did you tell them? How did they believe you have a kid!!”

Donghyuck lights up again. “I told them I lost my brother, their face when I said son was terribly hilarious but they didn’t say anything.” Mark shakes his head with fake disappointment. “I genius, I know man.”

“I’m a genius.” Mark corrects and Donghyuck hits the back of his head with his free hand. “What?! I’m helping your English get better and this is how you repay me?”

“Well maybe I don’t want help, baby shark teeth.”

Mark shrieks. “NO! Not that again, let it die.”

“Nah.” Donghyuck smiles smugly and straightens his posture, acting the cockiest he could manage just to annoy Mark even more.

“I’ll stop mocking your English.” The boy promises.

“Nah.”

“What do you want then?!!” Mark cries out.

Donghyuck rubs his chin. “Kisses!”

“We’re in public.”

“Oh really now Mark Lee? Your contact are working so well, I’m amazed.” He says sarcastically, snorting when Mark gives him one of his well-known glares. “Shocking, perhaps I want kisses in public.”

The boy frowns and breaks the eye contact. “Not now.”

“Okeydokey, shark teeth.” Donghyuck chirps.

Mark closes his eyes and breathes in sharply, don’t kill him just yet.

“Say, sup bitches.” Donghyuck whispers while crouching down in front of Yuckie, Mark furrows
his eyebrows and stays hidden where he stood. “I wish you could talk, I bet you’d swear like a truck
driver.”

“Like her owner.” Mark chuckles making Donghyuck squeak with surprise. “Is this why you’re
taking ages to come upstairs?!”

Donghyuck stands frozen with his mouth hanging open slightly. “… Perhaps.” He shoots Mark an
awkward smile and pats Yuckie one last time before coming closer. “Let’s go before you die from
missing me too much.”

“You wish.” Mark mumbles and opens the door, Donghyuck gets ready to speak but he cuts him off.
“If you say perhaps one more time, you’re sleeping with the dog.”

The boy puts his arms up in surrender and heads upstairs without a word, Mark follows suit not so
subtly admiring how pretty the boy looked even from the back. He was glad Donghyuck couldn’t
see him, not like the boy needed his ego inflated even more.

As soon as Mark clicks the door closed, Donghyuck was already all over the boy, Mark lets out a
shriek when he feels a pair of lips touch his neck. “What the heck! Donghyuck-” He is cut off when
Donghyuck sucks slightly on the skin above his Adam apple. “E-Enough.”

Donghyuck shakes his head and grabs Mark’s bicep, pulling him till his legs touch the bed. “No,
never enough.” He falls onto the bed and pushes Mark on top of him, the boy falls with a loud grunt
and apologises right after. “I didn’t plan that very well…”

“No, you didn’t.” Mark raises himself up with his elbows.

“My lungs-“ Donghyuck fake cries. “You gotta kiss it better.”

Mark lets out a breathy loud and shakes his head. “You’re really something else.” He presses a quick
kiss onto the boy’s lips, but Donghyuck doesn’t look satisfied. “What now?”

“My lungs are not on my lips.”

“You said kiss-“ Mark stops. “Wait, what?”

“Oh my god, you’re so dense.” The boy moves so Mark wasn’t on top of him anymore and throws
his shirt somewhere in the room. “Clearer?” Mark blinks back at him, face heating up by the second.
“You’re making me feel self-conscious, stop it.”

The boy frantically shakes his head. “N-No, no it’s- That was sudden, sorry.” He comes closer to
Donghyuck who lets himself flop onto the bed again so Mark can crawl on top of him again.
“You’re pretty.”

“Mark Lee? Complimenting me?” The boy chuckles and Mark hits his shoulder lightly. “Thanks.”

Mark’s throat dries up, he didn’t want to block once again but he didn’t exactly know what to do. It
probably showed because Donghyuck grabs his face and kisses the insecurities away, making both
of them relax and melt onto each other. Mark moves his hands up and down on the boy’s naked
torso creating goose bumps on his skin, Donghyuck sighs against his lips and Mark smiles.

“Kiss it better, you say?” Mark whispers almost inaudibly, Donghyuck nods and places one last kiss
to the boy’s forehead.

To be honest, Mark was more nervous about making a fool out of himself than anything. Knowing
Donghyuck he would probably tease him if he did anything unknowingly stupid, then again the boy looked like he was just as nervous as Mark was, so maybe he wouldn’t. Just that one time.

Mark peppers light kisses onto Donghyuck neck and moves lower, kissing his shoulders, then collarbones all the way down till his soft tummy. Donghyuck giggles in-between sighs and Mark looks up at him with big wide eyes. “Ticklish?” The boy nods, Mark smirks and starts tickling Donghyuck till the boy almost falls off the bed. “Was that… Okay?” He asks when they finally calm down.

Donghyuck nods and smiles softly. “You kiss everything better, always.”

Mark’s snoring didn’t quite help Donghyuck fall asleep, he already took long enough normally as it was. The boy huffs and sneakily leaves the bed, making sure he didn’t wake Mark up in the process, and wanders around the room.

It doesn’t take long till he spots the familiar notebook laying on top of the table, he looks back at Mark who was still sleeping peacefully before grabbing it and sitting on one of the dark corners of the room with his phone’s lantern already on. The guilt from last time feels the same, but the curiosity overthrows it so he opens the book and tries to find where he left off.

Donghyuck sucks in his breath and scans through the pages, the guilt slowly dissipating as he loses himself in the poems and thoughts, they make Mark prettier, his mind was pretty. At least Donghyuck thought so.

_ I can't save you_

_But I will try_

_For you and I_

_Because I've been running from the truth_

_Will never lose_

_Lies come from loose teeth_

_Tied to the noose_

_Climbing up my own tree hoping it can hold_

_All the things I've seen but I've chosen to ignore_

He reads them out loud, just so his brain can soak it all in faster, it still didn’t feel real. It brought a smile to his face, it was like looking inside Mark’s head and finding out what he really thought. Donghyuck knew just how hard it was for the boy to express how he felt properly, he was transparent but not to his most inner emotions, it was complicated to understand him at times. But there it was, everything, laid out for him to read.
Mark was giving directions to one of the parents when it begins. "Now! Lee Donghyuck with Heroine!" He snaps his head to the side to look at the stage where the lights slowly started to change. Mark finishes what he was doing as quickly as possible and focuses his attention on the stage where he could already see Donghyuck sitting on a beautifully decorated white chair.

The boy had a hat on, seemingly a police one, and a red blouse that hung loose around his frame. With collarbones almost on full display, the boy moves his body along with the rhythm.

Mark had always thought Donghyuck had the power of being hypnotic but what he was witnessing was simply another level. He was hooked, eyes unmoving, everything else was blur but Donghyuck. His stage presence was really something Mark looked up to since he knew his was lacking still.

Someone was speaking to him but his body wasn't reacting, it was only when Yeojin punches him on the shoulder that he wakes up from his daze to looks at her. "What?!" He whines.

"The kids need to be directed to the stage."
"Can you do that then? For once?" Mark growls. "Just this one time."

She gives him a confused look and nods, she didn't look pleased but Mark seriously couldn't care less.

He looks back to the stage where Donghyuck was dancing with another boy, when he figures out who it was, Mark gasps loudly. "Jeno?!" He stares with his mouth slightly open in shock.

The next he knows, Donghyuck is firmly grasping his friend’s neck. Mark lets out a gasp and then mumbles a ‘Wow’ as the performance keeps going, now Donghyuck was hugging his friends from the back and they keep going with the choreography. Mark feels as if he had turned to stone completely.

Then the chorus plays, and suddenly Donghyuck locks eyes with him. His breath is knocked out of him, Donghyuck’s dark eyes were now a shade of green due to the eye contacts, the boy looked someone else entirely and his brain was collapsing on itself.

Mark watches the boy’s moves with admiration, he was so into it that he didn’t notice just how much his body temperature had risen. It is only when Donghyuck sits back on the chair and the lights turn off that Mark notices just how much he was boiling, he fans himself with his hand but that wasn’t enough so he decides to run out of the building to get some fresh air.

He leans against the wall the lets the lukewarm air cool him off slightly, it wasn’t much since it was almost summer, but it was better than staying inside the crowded hall. “Mark! How about you do your job?! I was looking for you everywhere!” Yeojin yells making him jump in surprise. “So useless.”

Mark grumbles, he didn’t feel good enough to go back inside, but Yeojin would beat him up if he
didn’t follow orders. He could barely pass through the door due to how crowded the whole place was, but he manages somehow.

“How did I do?” He hears from behind and stops in his tracks.

He doesn’t need to turn back to know who it was, the distinct voice spoils it for him. “You were amazing, seriously.” He faces Donghyuck with a soft smile. “I didn’t know you could be that good. I knew you were a great singer but—dance too?”

“Oh okay you need to stop now, this influx of compliments is too much for my sensitive heart Mark Lee.” Donghyuck touches his forehead with the back of his head and poses dramatically. “No but… Thank you! It means a lot.”

Mark was about to answer back when someone pulls his ear harshly. “GET. BACK. TO. WORK!” Yeojin yells way too close to his ear, Mark whimpers and tries to get away. “I will report this to the economics teacher so unless you want your grades to go down you better work.”

“I will I will! Damn.” He curses under his breath and waves Donghyuck off. “I’ll see you later…” “Meet me by the basketball court! I’ll bring food” The boy promises and shoots him finger hearts.

Mark feels tempted to do them back but decides against it and turns his back to the boy.

Donghyuck shoves a chicken wing in Mark’s mouth as soon as the boy sits down next to him. “No gag reflex?! Noted.”

“I just got here, have some mercy.” Mark whines and hits Donghyuck shoulder a bit harsher than usual making the boy whine as well. “You deserved that one.”

“Perhaps.” He smirks when Mark shoots him an irritated look. “Let’s play a fun game!”

“Oh wonderful…”

Donghyuck glares at him. “Every time I say perhaps, you must kiss me.” The boy wiggles his eyebrows at the other who chews on his chicken silently.

“You’d start saying it even more, no thank you.” Mark grabs another chicken wing from the bucket and nibbles on it, eyes totally focused on the other boy’s face as he speaks.

“Yes, because I love kisses and I want an excuse to get more of them.” He pouts and crosses his arms in front of his chest. “As my kiss provider I demand for more kisses.”

Mark puts down the chicken. “My lips are starting to hurt from the amount of times we kiss, you want me dead; that’s what.”

“Well then, guess I’ll need to find a second kiss provider. No?” The boy teases, loving how Mark chokes on his own spit and looks at him like he had grown two heads. “It is only fair.”

“And who will that be, then?”

Donghyuck shrugs. “I’ll find someone.”
Mark shoves the unfinished chicken piece in his mouth and, without noticing, starts furiously chewing on it. Donghyuck watches with amusement as he carefully eats his own chicken, it was fun to mess around with Mark seeing how transparent the boy was.

The chicken comes to an end after many minutes of them silently eating, Mark cleans his mouth and stares at the basketball court with empty eyes. Donghyuck was starting to get worried by the reaction, it was fun at first but Mark still hadn’t started to talk again. “Babe?”

“Don’t call me that.”

“Are you serious!?” Donghyuck moves in front of Mark but the boy drifts his eyes somewhere else. “Oh my, you are.” He whispers and grabs Mark’s face so he could force the boy to look at him, Mark stays silent. “Mark I was joking…”

“I know.”

“Then-“ Donghyuck doesn’t get to finish because Mark presses his lips against his and starts furiously kissing Donghyuck to the point where the boy couldn’t breathe properly. They break apart and he stares at Mark speechless while panting. “What was that?” He asks once he regains his breath back.

“Would you pick Jeno?” Mark mumbles, almost inaudible. Donghyuck furrows his eyebrows and tilts his head with confusion. “To kiss you.”

“I said it was a joke-“

“Would you, though?”

Donghyuck gapes, the wheels inside his head were turning terribly slow. “Mark what are you trying to accomplish here?”

Mark lets out a frustrated groan and massages the sides of his head with his index. “Would you want Jeno as your so called kiss provider?”

“I don’t know what to tell you.” Donghyuck shrugs and Mark whispers ‘The truth’ under his breath. “The truth? I don’t need Jeno. Perhaps if I didn’t have you, yes. But I don’t need Jeno.” Mark looks down at his feet. “What’s this all about?”

“You two… Always looks like you like each other.”

The boy grabs Mark’s shoulder. “Well, I don’t. He doesn’t.” Donghyuck pulls Mark closer till their limbs are tangled together and places a peck on the side of the boy’s head. “Are you okay?”

Mark nods. “I’m just being stupid, I’m sorry.”

“It’s okay.” The boy pets Mark’s locks softly. “But… I like your kisses better than Jeno’s just so you know.” Mark snorts and shakes his head slightly. “I’m serious!”

“Whatever.” He says trying to hide the smile forming on his lips, Donghyuck lightly bumps his forehead against Mark’s and rubs their noses together.

“Idiot.” Donghyuck whispers, lips brushing against Mark’s as he speaks. “A cute idiot.”

Mark smirks and pecks the boy. “Perhaps. But just perhaps.”
The sound of someone playing the guitar could be heard from outside the house. Donghyuck considers calling Mark to open the door but it was a Saturday evening anyways and it wouldn’t hurt no one to finally greet the boy’s parents so he clicks the doorbell.

A woman opens the door, she stares at him with a confused look. “Yes? Hello?”

Donghyuck bows slightly. “I’m Mark’s friend, could I come in?”

She beams and opens the door even wider so that the boy could pass through. “Of course! He didn’t say anything about a friend coming over sorry for my reception.”

“I came uninvited, it’s totally fine.” He smiles, looking around as if he hadn’t been there many times before. It looked prettier when it was totally lit up and he could see all the details, the morning sunshine didn’t do it any justice. “Thank you for letting me in!”

“He’s upstairs, would you like something to eat?” The woman smiles back at him.

“No, thank you, it’s fine.” He bows again and heads to the stairs, the woman shrugs and disappears somewhere in the house. Donghyuck lets out a sigh of relief before heading upstairs towards Mark’s room.

The guitar sounded even louder then, Donghyuck opens the door quietly and peaks inside. Mark was sitting on the bed with his eyes closed humming to the song he was playing, head bobbing slightly to the rhythm as he did so. Donghyuck smiles and closes the door behind him, Mark still hadn’t noticed his presence so he keeps on walking closer and closer.

He moves behind Mark and giggles to himself before grabbing the boy’s shoulders. Mark lets out a shriek and snaps his head to the side, eyes as wide as buttons. “What the heck, Hyuck!”

Donghyuck lets out a high-pitched laugh, backhugs the boy and puts his chin on the other’s shoulder. “You sound good, I didn’t know you played guitar.”

“Surprise, surprise.” Mark snorts and puts the guitar next to him. “What are you doing here so early?”

“I was so bored I thought I might die.” The boy huffs, hot breath hitting Mark’s shoulder. “Keep playing, though, pretend I’m not even here.”

“Kinda difficult when you’re all over me.” He chuckles and presses the side of his head against Donghyuck’s. “Ain’t it?”

Donghyuck lets go of Mark and flops down onto the bed near the other who picks his guitar once again and starts playing with the strings. A few minutes go by before Mark finally starts playing a different song, Donghyuck watches him with hawk eyes not missing any move.

He moves closer and flickers his eyes from Mark’s hands to his face time to time, even if he wasn’t actually doing anything he still found amusement in watching the other play. It was definitely better than being home dying of boredom.

The song comes to an end. “You play really well.” Donghyuck praises and smiles brightly.
Mark rubs his cheek with embarrassment. “You think so?”

“I know so.”

The other stays silent, cheeks red and lips curled up in a tiny smile as he stares at Donghyuck lying in bed. “Should I keep going?” He lets out a soft giggle when Donghyuck nods his head frantically and claps his hands. “Is it really that good?!”

“I enjoy watching you, and yes.” Donghyuck shrugs and grabs a pillow so he could lay down more comfortably. “I’ll stay here all evening watching you play.”

“My finger might fall off if I do that…” Mark whispers while playing with the strings.

Donghyuck smirks and licks his lips. “You can take short breaks, then.”

Mark blinks back at him and then lowers his gaze towards the boy’s shiny lips. “Oh.” He coughs and focuses on the way his fingers strung the guitar. “Sounds like a good plan.”

“You look so cute when you’re flustered.” Donghyuck teases and pokes Mark’s lower back.

“Shut up.” Mark pouts.

Donghyuck trails Mark’s spine with his fingers. “Shut me up, then.”

The boy finally turns to him with an unfazed look on his face. “You’re terribly lame.”

“Look who’s talking, you own the crown of the lamest human being in the entire world.” Donghyuck reaches Mark’s nape and presses his index and thumb harshly on the boy’s neck, Mark lets out a yelp and tries to get away from the boy’s hold. “Just play the guitar and shut up, pretty boy.”

“I will throw you out of the window.” Mark threatens.

“I’d like to see you try, noodle arms.”

Mark cries out and puts the guitar down on the floor before jumping on top of Donghyuck putting his weight on top of the boy so he couldn’t move. “Will you stop?!”

“Bullying you? No, not really.” Donghyuck giggles and tries to reach out for the boy’s face but Mark pins him down. “You’re still a noodle boy.”

“You’re weaker than me!” Donghyuck tries to escape from Mark’s hold and fails miserably. “Nice try.”

“Fine, if I stop will you keep playing guitar and shut up?”

Mark lets go of the other and moves so he can go get his guitar again. “You better keep your promise, Lee Donghyuck.”

Donghyuck snorts. “I always keep my promises.”
Mark was late to their hangout, his mother had asked for him to go grocery shopping just as he was about to leave so he was forced to waste one hour on that instead. One hour only, and yet when he gets there, Donghyuck already looked like he had smoked a whole chimney. “You gotta be kidding me.” He mutters when he sees Donghyuck smiling at the clear blue sky. “What d’ya all do to him?”

“Nothing, he did this to himself.” Jeno shrugs and pokes the boy. “Hyuck, for the love of god.”

“God isn’t real.” The boy frowns and looks at Jeno then lifts his eyes to look at Mark. “Oh my god, hi! My babe is here!”

“Hyuck did you smoke a whole garden or what?” Mark whines and sits next to the boy.

Donghyuck whines, lays his head on top of Mark’s lap and stares at the other boy. “You’re so pretty, pretty, pretty boyyy.” He sings as he reaches out for Mark’s face. “Mine.”

Mark chokes on his spit and grabs Donghyuck’s hand. “Jeno, help me. Is he supposed to just sleep it off?”

“Man I don’t know.”

“You’re so helpful.” Mark rolls his eyes and moves his attention back to the boy on his lap. “You’re a mess.”

“Your mess?” Donghyuck bats his eyelashes at him.

The boy opens and closes his mouth before turning his attention somewhere else, it wasn’t like Donghyuck was going to remember whatever he did with the state he was in. “Do you want anything to eat or drink?” He asks as he stares at the rest of the group.

Donghyuck cuddles his face closer to Mark’s stomach. “No, I want you.”

Mark breathes in sharply and tries to ignore the lump forming in his throat. “You already have that.”

“I do?” Donghyuck mumbles against his shirt. “I want water.”

“Okay.” Mark reaches out for his bag and takes out a water bottle. “Here.” Donghyuck grabs it and opens the cap, ready to pour it in his mouth while laying down. “Wait no you’re going to wet your face if you do that.”

“No I’m not!” The boy whines like a little kid and pouts.

“Hyuck c’mon.” He holds the boy’s neck up so he wasn’t completely straight. “You can drink now.”

Donghyuck chugs half of the bottle down in one go, stops to look at Mark for a few seconds and then finishes the rest of the bottle. “I’m still thirsty.”

“Anyone here has water?” Mark raises his voice so the rest pay attention to him, a few nod their heads and reach out for their bags. “Thank you guys.” He says while catching all the water bottles, Donghyuck claps every time he manages without letting the bottle fall onto the floor. “Here.”

The boy finishes about three small bottles before he’s finally satisfied, Mark watches with amazement as he chugs them all down. “Thank you babe.” Donghyuck whispers before snuggling on the boy’s lap once again. “You’re the best.”

Mark stares at him with a blank expression and doesn’t notice Donghyuck reach out for his hand so, when he feels the boy’s fingers grab his wrist, Mark gasps. “What are you doing?” He asks to no
avail because the boy stays mute.

Donghyuck guides Mark’s hand so it lays on top of his head. “Pet me.” He demands.

The other snorts before starting to massage Donghyuck’s head and playing with the faded purple strands with both of his hands.

“Night, Mark.” Donghyuck smiles with his eyes closed and rubs his face on the other’s stomach once again.

The corners of Mark’s lips curl into a soft smile. “Goodnight, Hyuck.”

“And like I want to hang with y’all but my mom already bought the ticket to Canada for this summer so I really have no option on this, like-“ Mark sighs deeply. “I wish I could stay… What am I supposed to even do there? I’ll be so bored, Hyuck.”

Donghyuck watches the boy like a cat while sitting on the floor a few meters away. He shrugs and crawls a bit closer.

“There’s always the option of me getting a job, I could do that, technically. Like I’d gain money I could use for my own shit and I wouldn’t be so bored, but then again-“ He stops talking when Donghyuck wordlessly sits on his lap. Mark blinks back at the boy speechless.

The other starts petting Mark’s nape with a smug smile on his face. “You’ll be fine, really.”

“No.” Donghyuck coughs. “Yes.”

“I’ll miss you.” Mark admits and rubs his rose on the crook of the boy’s neck.

The other giggles. “I’ll miss your kisses.”

“Is that all I’m worth?” He feigns sadness and pecks the most sensitive part of Donghyuck’s neck making him shiver.

“I’ll miss you, and your kisses too.” Donghyuck corrects himself.

It’s silent for many long minutes. Mark peppers kisses to the boy’s neck time to time while Donghyuck stares out of the window with a soft smile on his face. “Mark, we need to talk.”

The boy goes stone cold. “What about…”

Donghyuck forces Mark to look at him in the eyes. “Us.” Mark gulps loudly, his lips suddenly felt drier than normal. “Mark are you serious?” Mark blinks back at him, no confusion, he knew exactly what was going on. “There is no way you haven’t figured yourself out after all this time. What do you want?!?”
Mark opens his mouth to speak only to close it again, he didn’t know. “I didn’t think about it…”

The other looks disappointed, not even sad nor mad, just disappointed. “This whole time?! I gave you so much time, we practically act like we’re dating!” He’s almost yelling at that point, Mark wishes the ground would swallow him whole. “What else? Are you going to tell me you still think you’re straight after all this?”

He stays silent, stone cold face as he stares Donghyuck.

Donghyuck scoffs and gets off his lap. “Fuck you Mark Lee.” He spits out and grabs his things. “I’m seriously done playing games with you now.”

Mark doesn’t know if it was all a plan made by their friends so that they fix their problems but it definitely doesn’t go as planned, Donghyuck was all kinds of messed up shouting gibberish here and there and yelling curses in Mark’s direction. The boy stands in his spot, heart breaking by the second. But he knew he deserved it.

Jaemin tries to help Jeno calm the boy down, but to no avail, Donghyuck would kick anyone who’d get too close to him. Till he didn’t, and then everyone started panicking because the boy wasn’t moving anymore. Mark jumps out of his seat and runs to the other pushing people so he could take a closer look at Donghyuck.

The boy lay on the floor looking almost lifeless, lips purple and eyes semi closed. Jeno held him tight while he screamed in Jaemin’s direction. “Sugar! Sugar now, Nana!” Jaemin nods and starts sprinting in the direction of the town's centre where most coffee shops were located. Mark feels useless, he isn’t even sure what was going on.

“Jeno…” He manages to croak out. “What is happening?”

Donghyuck makes a frustrated noise form the back of his throat and hides his face on Jeno’s chest. “You guys never… Spoke about his illness?” Jeno quirks his eyebrows up, Donghyuck shakes his head weakly. Mark shakes his head as well, eyes wide at the mention of ‘illness’. “Your boy has got diabetes, dumbass.”

Light flashes inside Mark’s head, it all clicked together. “Oh god.” He kneels next to the two boys and searches for Donghyuck’s face but it was useless, the boy had hid himself. “He never told me.”

“He hasn’t slept well lately, and probably hasn’t eaten either knowing him.” Jeno sighs exasperatedly. “Great copying mechanisms, Hyuck.” Donghyuck doesn’t reply anymore, Mark wasn’t sure if he had passed out or if he was too weak to do anything anymore.

“Fuck.” Mark pulls some of his hair strands. “Sugar will do the trick?”

“Yeah, he should be fine.” Jeno pats the boy’s head and rocks his body in a lulling kind of way. “The plan failed miserably, I’m sorry. To you both.”

“It’s my fault.” Mark shakes his head. “It’s fine, the plan wasn’t meant to work, Jeno. There’s bigger things to fix before I fix… us?” Jeno nods and gives him a tiny smile. “I should go.” He looks back down at Donghyuck and places a kiss on the back of the boy’s head. “I’ll be leaving in two days, so
I guess I’ll see you in a month.” He says to Jeno who nods.

“Call me whenever you need anything.” Jeno waves him off. “Figure yourself out, yeah?”

Mark smiles weakly, suddenly the idea of being a month away from everything and everyone especially Donghyuck sounded perfect. It was probably all he needed. “I will. I must.”

Chapter End Notes

...... oops

Just to clarify:
- i explained how Jeno broke it off with his ex on the noren one, but for those who didn't read nor want to read that one: Jeno knew his bf was coming to the party and purposely madeout with a girl he found there in front of everyone so that his ex would see and then break it off. BASICALLYYYY Jeno was a scared cat to actually face him so he found a /shitty/ alternative hhhh (in my head Jeno was just scared the boy wouldnt really take his excuse to why he wanted to end it + was scared of getting beat up, so that was an easy way out)
Chapter Summary

if that's your choice
then take responsibility for your results
is it 'cause you're not confident
that you're hiding behind?

– go,, nct dream

Chapter Notes

Alright so i figured that posting a slightly shorter chapter would be better than making people wait for the /useless/ fluff that i will add to chapter 6, and i don't wanna keep you waiting tbh

I hope you're okay with me doing that? Grrr i'm so self conscious about these last two chapters i don't wanna disappoint, hope they don't bore you :((( anyways... sorry for any typos (as usual)

Peace and quiet, it suffocated Mark to no end. He knew it was the right thing to do, he knew asking his father to go to their cabin in the outskirts of the city was just what he needed to get himself together. However the limited and quite slow internet was driving him insane, he still managed to call Jeno with it but sometimes the call would shut down and take ages to work again. Even then, he didn’t dare ask to go back.

He swings his legs while sitting on a big rock by the lake nearby the cabin and watches as the little fish swim around, the sun hitting his back was enough to warm him up but not enough to burn like the Seoul rays. Mark liked it there, he couldn’t help but imagine the possibility of showing Donghyuck around, it saddens him for a few seconds before his mind forces itself to become blank again.

It hadn’t been all that long, perhaps a week, Mark had lost track but it couldn’t be much more than that. And yet, he hadn’t tried all that much to focus on the real issue and reason for his isolation. He knew he was being stupid, but he couldn’t quite help it.

Mark gets up and walks near the cabin again, he stays in his spot staring at the bicycle nearby the entrance for a few minutes before snapping out of it. All the frustration had accumulated inside of him, he knew forcing it all out with physical effort would solve it in the short term so he gets on the bicycle and disappears in the middle of the woods.

The path was hard to manoeuvre around but that was what made it more exciting, Mark’s leg’s muscles burnt underneath his skin but he kept on going like his life depended on it until his limbs started to fail him and he comes to an abrupt stop in the middle of nowhere. He sits on a big tree trunk laying around and looks up at the sky through the tall trees. “Pretty…” He mumbles, his voice
didn’t sound like his own anymore. How many hours had it been since he had heard himself talk? Maybe longer than a day, he wasn’t sure about that either anymore.

He wants to call Jeno just to talk to someone, but his phone was nowhere near him and he wouldn’t have internet anyways so he sighs deeply and closes his eyes. “If I talk to myself, does that make me crazy?” Mark asks himself. “I can pretend I’m talking with the animals maybe that would make me feel like I’m not losing my mind.”

Silence, apart from the ruffle of the leaves and the occasional sound of a bird chirping nearby. Mark had never felt so lonely, but he refused to give up on himself. He wanted to be okay with himself, alone, utterly alone. “How does one figure himself out, though?” The boy opens his eyes, the clouds had changed slightly. “I am gay.” He says loudly. “Am I?”

He gets up and cleans his pants, his legs still shook as he walked towards his bicycle but Mark didn’t feel like being in the same spot anymore. The bicycle was moving at snail speed especially due to the amount of broken branches annoyingly getting on the way, Mark huffs in frustration but doesn’t stop.

His mind drifts away, for what seemed to be the first time since he had gotten there, instead of becoming completely blank. He thinks of how empty things felt without Donghyuck in his life, and how he didn’t feel scared of the fact that he was boy the months they spent fooling around. Mark knew he didn’t care, what difference was there anyways? And yet, it didn’t feel right whenever he’d blurt out that he was gay. It simply didn’t. Nothing made sense in his head.

Mark waits for Jeno to pick up the call as he taps his fingers on top of his laptop, he had spent hours searching online ‘Am I Gay?’ and reading all the webpages that he stumbled upon. One of the websites had literally been a blank page with “If You’re Searching About it, Then You Definitely Are.”, Mark had quickly discarded it determined to find proper answers. He had even done a quiz at some point, but the questions were ridiculous so he had given up on it.

The beeping comes to a stop and then his friend happily greets him after what seemed like an eternity. “I’m gay” He states without any further ado, Jeno chuckles on the other end of the line. “Any news?”

“Because you put into your stupid head that you cannot possibly be gay.” Jeno clicks his tongue.

Mark shakes his head and pouts. “It’s not that. Like, I’m gay? Because Donghyuck exists.” Jeno awes in the other side of the line and Mark shushes him. “But… Girls…”

Jeno starts laughing loudly, so loudly that Mark needs to move his phone a bit away from his ear so he wouldn’t go deaf. He’s about to hang up when the boy speaks up again. “Fool.” He giggles a few more times before breathing in loudly to calm down. “Ever heard of bisexuality and pansexuality?”

“Yeah, course.” He furrows his eyebrows. “But what’s the difference?”
“You’re a disgrace.” Jeno teases.

“You’re not being helpful!”

His friend shushes him out and clears his throat. “Is Mark Lee ready to be informed?”

“Just get it done with it, asshole.”

His chocolates stock was running out, in fact his food stock was in general running out. Mark was therefore forced to face civilization for the first time in almost two weeks, which wasn’t something he was looking forward to since he had gotten used to being completely isolated. He guessed it was a good thing to get used to being around people again, but still.

Mark grabs his bicycle and puts on his headphones, he just hoped he didn’t get lost in the middle of the woods since it was already mid-afternoon and he wasn’t quite sure just how long it’d take him to head back. Lost in the woods at night? It sounded like the best way to die, and Mark had not spent all that time trying to figure himself out to die like that. That wasn’t an option.

He hums happily to the tune of the song blasting through his headphones, he was so into it that he almost doesn’t notice that he had already reached the beginning of the town. Mark looks around for some sort of supermarket nearby, he had never been to that part of town and felt like a complete foreigner to it all.

Knowing people could seem him was a weird concept now, he felt like he had gone completely crazy because he could feel everyone’s eyes on him. “Idiot.” He mumbles in Korean so no one could understand what he was saying.

Finally, after many minutes of going around, Mark finds somewhere decent looking. The nostalgia that hit him as soon as the automatic doors slid open almost knocks his breath away, it wasn’t as if Donghyuck had ever actually been there but the ambient in itself reminded him of all the times they had shopped together and fooled around in the aisles. Mark can feel the sadness pour out of him as he walks towards the food aisle, he missed the other. Terribly so.

Not like he was going to try to contact the boy though, Jeno would randomly update him on how the other was doing anyways. Mark didn’t think Donghyuck wanted to hear from him for the time being, in fact he was quite sure of that. Jeno always seemed extra cautious when it came to the topic which only meant it was all still very fresh. He understood Donghyuck’s anger, he didn’t expect to be forgiven that fast. If ever. Though he was going to try to beg for forgiveness anyways even if that meant putting his pride in the side.

Mark always knew that Donghyuck was one of the big sources of his happiness, he also knew he had taken the boy for granted most of the time. And he couldn’t simply not have him in his life anymore, pride didn’t matter when it came to Donghyuck. At least not anymore.

The rambling was never ending, Mark’s brain was either blank or on overdrive. Perhaps he was really going mad. “I should ask dad to go back.” He whispers to himself as he throws a can of sausages on the cart. “I think I got myself figured out.” A tiny voice in the back of his head told him no, but Mark ignores it. Whatever was left to figure out he could do it with the help of someone, the most important part was over and done with. Or so it seemed to be.

He pays for his things and goes out again, the fresh Canadian air blows on his face and he smiles. He
felt at peace for the first time in many months, his heart still ached for someone who was oceans away, but at least it finally seemed like he was on the right track.

All he wanted to do was call Donghyuck, right there and then, and then tell him that he wanted to make things right. But it could wait, Mark would make sure to make it all worth it when it were to happen.

Mark turns on the little light near his bed and opens his notebook. Only a month ago it would be not even a quarter full, now he had almost reached the middle. “Boredom at its peak.” He sighs to himself and flips through the pages. Poems, all poems. There were a few frustrated drawing here and there but that was about it, Mark wasn’t even sure he could ever rap the things he had been writing for the past weeks. They were simply to embarrassingly cheesy.

He writes, losing track of how long it had been since he had started. Pages just kept on filling as he poured his heart out with words he couldn’t say out loud ever, thoughts he didn’t quite dare think about, everything felt easier when it was written on ink.

One more page flipped, and then he stops. Mark furrows his eyebrows and touches the inked page, the handwriting wasn’t his, and he had no record of writing such a thing.

* i do not wish to be called strong for i am not. there is no pain, no suffering inside my heart, just the emptiness and cowardness of accepting what has become of my life*

Mark stares at it and rereads over and over to make sure he hadn’t written it at some point, he definitely hadn’t. The boy crawls over to pick his phone and clicks on Jeno’s contact name right away, no one picks up at first but Mark doesn’t give up and calls him again.

“What the fuck do you want?” His friend’s voice came out way deeper than usual, Mark almost forgot what he had to say for two seconds. That was nice. “It’s like three in the damn morning, Mark.”

“Listen, do you perhaps own anything with Donghyuck’s handwriting on it?” Mark asks and Jeno groans in response. “What does that even mean?”

“Means I hope you die in your sleep for making me get out of my bed at ungodly hours, seriously I hate you.” His friend sighs and mumbles something inaudible under his breath, Mark waits anxiously for his friend to find what he was looking for. “Want me to send a picture of it? Or what?”

Mark nods and then remembers Jeno couldn’t see him. “Yes, thank you so much.”

“Did it really have to be done now?”

“I wouldn’t have slept otherwise.” Mark puckers his lips, forgetting once again his friend couldn’t actually see him. “Thank you, love you!”

The line goes silent for what seemed to be the longest time, Mark was starting to get worried. “Sorry I was waiting for the famous ‘no homo’ but it never came, my bad.”

“Can’t really say no homo anymore when y’know… This whole trip was about finding the homo.”
Mark lets out a frustrated sigh. “All the homo, bro.”

“Love you too, with my whole gay heart. Now let me sleep, dickhead.” Jeno says before the line gets cut off and Mark is left alone once again.

He waits to receive a new message from Jeno with a picture of the handwriting while throwing a small plastic ball he had found in a hidden corner against the wall, he was sure he knew the handwriting from somewhere but he had to be sure.

His phone dings, Mark jumps on top of it and unlocks the device in the speed of light. He opens the picture and places the screen close to the notebook. “It matches.” He whispers with a small on his face, which soon fades away. It meant Donghyuck had been reading his notebook, it meant Donghyuck knew of his deepest thoughts. Mark should feel violated, but he could only feel relief, the boy knew him without him having to actually voice his mind. It was freeing, even if scary.

Mark puts the notebook and his phone down on the floor and cuddles the second pillow on the big king size bed, the idea of Donghyuck cuddling him lulling him into deep sleep.

“What’s that noise?” Jeno asks when the sound of something frizzling breaks the silence. “Oh! How has the cooking been going, masterchef?”

“Eggs, and it’s awful they look like a mess I haven’t eaten proper food in so long I think I’m going to die.” He sighs exasperatedly and pours olive oil on the pan. “What do you do when they stick to the bottom of the pan?”

Jeno takes his sweet time answering, Mark almost gives up. “Hum there’s not really any saving sorry buddy. What did you do?”

“Pour olive oil on it.” He admits and Jeno cackles loudly. “Bet you wouldn’t do much better anyways, shut up.”

“My bad.” The line goes silent again, Mark puts the phone down near the stove and tries to save his food. To no avail, the eggs looked like literal shit.

Something makes him perk up, a familiar beat sounds through the phone and he suddenly forgets all about his ruined eggs. “Is that Britney Spears?” Jeno seemed to be caught off guard, the boy chokes on his own spit and his voice comes out a little bit too high-pitched.

“Yeah. That’s…” He lets out a long ‘Uhhh’ before continuing. “Toxic.”

Mark furrows his eyebrows, he sounded off. “You like Indie Rock, what is your hipster self doing listening to Britney Spears?!”

“I, uh, put this random playlist on and it just came on.” Jeno explains but Mark still felt like something was off, Jeno didn’t like such pop songs. A special someone, however...

“Okay, whatever buddy.” Mark scoffs and tries to focus on the food again, he had lost his appetite from looking at the mess he had created. “God, this looks gross. Think I might just starve myself here.”
“You’re already skinny, don’t vanish into thin air.” Jeno teases.

Mark grabs the phone and places his mouth near the microphone. “Go listen to your Britney Spears and choke.” He says loudly before hanging up.

His lunch was ruined, and Mark’s gut feeling wasn’t letting him feel any appetite for the food he had left inside the fridge. He really felt like he was starting to lose his mind.

The boy had managed to have enough connection to call Jeno outside the house, it was a miracle but Mark was glad because it was either being alone by himself in the pleasant weather or stuck inside the stuffy house but with Jeno’s company.

He throws his shoes somewhere behind him and steps on the water, sitting on the rocks nearby the edges of the lake as he does so. “How is he?” Mark plays with the water with his feet to distract himself from the way his throat was closing on itself.

“He’s the same old.” Jeno replies. “Like, I don’t know… Stuff at home aren’t much better but he’s Donghyuck.”

“Yeah, he’s survived so far…” Mark sighs and splashes himself with water, it felt nice under the warm sunrays. “I just…Feels weird to not be able to do anything. He probably wouldn’t want my help anyways but, like, I felt better knowing he didn’t have to spend all that much time with them.”

Jeno chuckles. “He’s fine Mark, Donghyuck is social he always finds someone to be with so he doesn’t have to be inside his house. Worry about yourself first.”

“I do! I am, but this place leaves me way too much time to think.” Mark grabs a tiny rock and swings it as hard as he could. “And I miss him.”

“He-“ The boy stops and coughs. “Look, there’s a week left. I think you should maybe go back to the city now. You’ve been there for three weeks straight, can you even face another human being without crying now?”

“Probably not.” Mark laughs. “But I also don’t want to go back just yet? I mean I do, I miss talking to people face to face but like, it’s so freeing to not own anything to anyone.”

Jeno hums with understanding. “Then stay one more week, then come back. And if you miss him that much, you know what you gotta do.”

Marks nods and closes his eyes, tilting his head to the side so the sun hits his neck and shoulder. “I really do miss him, I never need affection but he spoiled me too much.” He lets out a breathy chuckle. “I hope the balls I grew here don’t shrink right back in.”

His friend laughs out loud at that. “I got hope that you finally stopped being so dumb.” Jeno sighs. “No matter how he reacts, Mark, you push. You push until he lets you in again, yes?”

“I will, I don’t have anything to lose. I’m already at rock bottom when it comes to him.” Mark shrugs and breathes in deeply. “He still…likes me?”
Jeno goes silent and moves in the bed, Mark waits nervously for what his friend had to say. “He
does, you don’t deserve it. But he likes you very much still. Don’t ruin that, even Donghyuck has his
limits.”

Mark nods enthusiastically, he always forgot Jeno couldn’t actually see him. “I can’t fuck up, I
won’t! You have the permission to kill me if I do.”

The boy snorts. “That sure sounds promising…”

He had thought about it many times, he had spent weeks thinking about how he was going to face
Donghyuck and fix things. But now, as he stood in front of the apartment building next to Jeno,
Mark just wished to go all the way back to Canada and live in solitude. “Here’s the place, have fun
my dude.” Jeno pats his friend in the back.

Mark grabs the other’s arm and shoots him a terrified look. “Jeno I might piss my pants.”

“Gross.” He scrunches up his nose and whimpers when Mark hits him on the shoulder. “Look,
remember what I said okay? You gotta be pushy.” Mark groans and presses his face against the
boy’s chest. “He lives in the eighth floor, right side apartment.”

The boy finally lets go of Jeno and nods. “Wish me luck…”

“All the best.” Jeno ruffles his hair and waves him off leaving Mark all alone to get things done.

Mark rings the bell and waits for the door to click open, he wonders if Donghyuck would even let
him in. He hadn’t quite thought of that previously, he could’ve used Jeno as a bait if he had. “Idiot.”
He whispers and prays to the gods above that the other would let him in.

A buzz sound comes from the door, Mark fists the air and enters right away. The building smelled
odd, like humid wood and smoke, he coughs and tries his best to get used to it. Mark fidgets with the
sleeves of his shirt as the elevator moves up, he thought he might puke with nervousness.

The elevator comes to a stop, the boy stares at the door for a few seconds and then finally gathers the
courage to open the door. He peaks out of it and stares at the red door to his right. Mark finally steps
out and knocks on the floor while facing the floor, he couldn’t look up no matter what, he was
terrified.

The door clicks open making his body go stone cold, Mark breathes in sharply. “How can I help
you?” It’s a female’s voice so he raises his head.

Mark blinks back at her, he didn’t need to be a genius to know it could only be Donghyuck’s
mother. She had the same big eyes and lip shape, Mark’s mind goes blank at that. “I- Could I speak
to Donghyuck? Is he home?”

She furrows her eyebrows. “Uh, yeah he’s home. Come in.” Mark bows before entering and
following the woman around, she stops in front of a floor and knocks harshly. “COME OUT!”
The boy flinches. “No, go away!” Donghyuck yells back.

“Open the damn door or else I will starve you for the next two weeks.” She threatens, clenched fist pressing against the door so tight that the knuckles had become white. Mark gulps.

“Why can’t you let me be for two seconds?” The boy’s voice sounds clearer and then the sound of the key being turn is heard, Mark could feel his legs shake. “Wha-“ Donghyuck moves his eyes from the woman to the boy. “Oh hell no.”

“Hyuck-“

“No.” He repeats and closes the door.

The women looks at the door and then at Mark who gapes like a fish. “Well, looks like your problem.” She shrugs and disappears again.

“Lee Donghyuck let me talk to you…” Mark begs, cheek pressed against the door to make sure the boy could hear him. “Please, please. Please open the door, please.”

Mark loses balance when the door suddenly opens again, Donghyuck huffs. “Stop saying please I’m going to lose my damn mind.” He growls. “What do you want? I don’t want to hear it.”

“Hyuck.” He pushes the door open, Donghyuck shrieks when he couldn’t manage to force the boy out and pouts. “Listen to me.” Mark tries to reach for the boy but he runs away.

“Don’t touch me!” Donghyuck shouts, voice breaking as he does so. Donghyuck wraps himself with his arms as if Mark was going to somehow hurt him, Mark furrows his eyebrows and his smile drops when he sees just how bad the other was trembling. “Why do you want to hurt me even more?”

Mark shakes his head violently. “I don’t want to hurt you!”

“But you will.”

“I won’t!” Mark says exasperatedly. “Donghyuck-“

The boy slides down against the wall behind him till he touches the floor and hides his face with his knees, Mark comes closer and softly places his hand on the other’s shoulder. “NO!” Donghyuck slaps it away. “No.”

“Hyuck I’m so sorry.” He whispers and backs away.

Donghyuck shakes his head, a sob rips through the silence and Mark feels the urge to reach out for him again but forces himself to stay put. “Your sorrys don’t do shit…” He mumbles. “They don’t do shit…” The boy repeats and snaps his head up, Mark’s urge to come closer increases when he’s faced with a puffy faced and bloodshot eyed Donghyuck. “They don’t mean anything when you don’t mean them.”

“I mean them. I mean them, I promise you.” Mark gulps and takes a step closer, Donghyuck clenches his fists and punches Mark’s chest lightly enough to not knock the other down but strong enough to make Mark grunt loudly. “Donghyuck-“

The boy starts hitting him non-stop while letting out frustrated noises and with tears rolling down his cheeks. Mark focuses on something else rather than how much his body was starting to hurt until the other finally stops and lets himself fall on top of Mark, forehead hitting right on the spot he had punched multiple times before.
Mark wraps his arms around him and pulls him closer, Donghyuck was still shaking and sobbing but he could feel the other’s body relax at the contact. “What’s all this about…?” He whispers against the boy’s locks. “What happened?”

Donghyuck shakes his head and firmly grasps Mark’s shirt. “My dad.” He sobs loudly. “He left few days ago but…” The boy locks eyes with Mark and pushes his shirt so that his collarbone could be in display, there was a large bruise there. Mark gasps loudly and reaches out for it carefully. “There’s many, too many.”

“Oh my god I’m so sorry.” Mark could feel his bottom lip start to tremble and tears swell with tears. “I’m so sorry.”

“You couldn’t do anything.” He shakes his head. “It’s not your fault.”

Mark pulls the boy closer carefully and swings their bodies together in a calming fashion. “I’m still guilty for so much, and I wished I could help but I only made it worse. Donghyuck I don’t ask for forgiveness, at least not yet, but please let me try to make it up to you.”

Donghyuck lets out a breathy laugh and grabs the boy’s hips. “I’m a fool.” He whispers.

“Why?” Mark kisses the top of his head.

“Because I’m about to let you in my life again, like the weak fool I am.” Donghyuck sighs. “Keep your promises, Mark Lee.”

Mark nods and places many more kisses on the top of Donghyuck’s head. “I will, I swear I will.” He thought his heart was about to jump out of his chest with the glee of knowing Donghyuck was going to be back in his life. “Please come to my house, I can’t let you stay here.”

The boy giggles. “Take me away from this hell of a place.”

“Pack your things.” Mark finally lets go of him. “You’re staying with me.”

“Mark…” Donghyuck sighs deeply.

“No, look, I’ll figure something out. Temporarily.” He places both his hands on Donghyuck’s cheeks. “It’s foolish, you’ll come back here at some point but- I don’t know.”

Donghyuck smiles softly. “A few days, that’s good enough.” The boy places his right hand on top of Mark’s. “Sounds good to you?”

He nods enthusiastically. “I’ll take it. Now pack so we can leave this place as soon as possible.”

Mark’s mother’s face when Donghyuck entered the house with a big bag was of pure confusion, Mark commands the boy to go upstairs and puts on his best angelic face before turning to his mother. “Can Hyuck stay here for a few days?”

“Why are you asking me when you clearly told him he can?” She puts her hands on her hips and quirks her eyebrow up. “What’s this?”
“There’s a good explanation, I promise.” Mark lets out an awkward laugh and proceeds to fill in his mother on Donghyuck’s family problems. The woman’s face when his son finishes is of pure sadness, she nods and heads upstairs right away.

“Okay so you both staying in separate rooms-“

“What?! Why?!” Mark whines.

She turns to face him and scoffs. “If you don’t think I know what’s going on between you two, you’re wrong. I’m not risking anything-“

“You’re acting like I might get pregnant or something.”

“Mark Lee! There’s a thing called sexually transmitted diseases and-“ Mark lets out a high-pitched yell to shut her up, the woman smirks. “So, no sleeping together.”

Mark stands in the middle of the hall making frustrated noises while his mother goes inside their host’s room and starts making the bed. “Mom!” He finally calls out. “You have to be kidding, seriously. Nothing’s going to happen.”

“You’re both seventeen and telling me you won’t do anything, sure.” She shrugs him off.

“Not all teens-“

“Mark Lee you can’t fool me. My house, my rules. Pipe it down.” His mother sighs with frustration and points at the door leading to his room. “Tell him to get himself comfortable with this room.”

The boy pouts but gives up, his mother wasn’t going to change his mind anyway. It didn’t matter, Mark was still going to sneak into the boy’s room no matter what. Even if that meant getting in trouble with his mother.

“Hyuck.” He whispers inside the pitch-black room.

A tiny squeak is heard somewhere. “What are you doing?!”

“What does it look like I’m doing?” Mark bumps against something but keeps going till he finds the bed.

“Your mom is going to kick me out of the house in my first night.” The boy sighs but makes space for Mark.

He chuckles and goes under the covers next to Donghyuck. “Nah, she’ll kill me but not you. Plus I’m the one going to your room not the other way around.” The other huffs and puts his leg over Mark’s. “Feel better?”

“Yeah.” Donghyuck whispers and comes closer so that he can put his head on Mark’s chest. “Dreading the day I have to go back there.”

Mark frowns and plays with the boy’s locks. “I don’t want you to go back, wish you could stay here forever.”

“As much as my mom hates me, I think she’d call the cops on me or something.” Donghyuck sighs.
“Plus, I can’t be such a bother to your mother.” As much as Mark wanted to disagree, the truth was that at some point his mother would start to get annoyed. They couldn’t afford to keep Donghyuck there for very long at all.

“For now you’re here. So I’ll enjoy the present.” Mark murmurs and closes his eyes, inhaling the boy’s calming scent. “Sleep well, Hyuck.”

Donghyuck rubs his face on Mark’s chest. “Night night.”

Mark looks to his side at Donghyuck who was intensely watching a movie on the television, the boy had made himself some popcorn and taken over the whole couch. Not that Mark really cared, he wasn’t in the mood to watch movies so he decided to lay on the floor scribbling all over his notebook.

He looks down at the drawings, they weren’t all that pretty but Mark had tried his best to portray Donghyuck beauty in it. The soft slump of his nose, plush lips, pretty eyelashes, the list just went on and on. Mark couldn’t keep his eyes off the other, not that he had tried anyways.

“Creep.” Donghyuck chuckles, eyes still glued to the screen.

“Can’t help it.”

The boy scrunches up his nose. “Smells like cheese up in here.” He giggles and throws one popcorn against Mark’s forehead. “Come here.”

Mark scrawls next to him leaving his closed notebook on the floor by itself, he instantly feels the need to go back and grab it but Donghyuck had already placed his hand on his head and started playing with the black locks.

“You look hot with black hair.”

“According to you, I look hot with any hair colour.” Mark chuckles and smiles brightly.

Donghyuck shrugs. “Well… Yes. But black is superior.” He tugs at the strands making Mark whimper. “My bad.”

“You clearly did that on purpose.” He pouts and turns to look at him, Donghyuck pokes his tongue out.

“Perhaps.” The boy moves his eyes back to the screen. “It’s for making me lose focus on the movie.”

Mark scoffs loudly and slaps the boy’s knee. “You asked me to come closer!” Donghyuck sighs and puts his hand on top of Mark’s mouth to shut him up, Mark tries to complain but all that was heard was a mess of muffled noises.

“Shut up.” Donghyuck pushes Mark’s face so the boy stares at the screen as well and then pulls him closer to the couch by grabbing his shoulders.

“What if I don’t want to?!” Mark complains now that there wasn’t a hand covering his mouth, Donghyuck groans in response. “What am I going to gain from it?”
“I’m going to kick you out.”

“This is my house.”

Donghyuck slaps the back of the boy’s head lightly. “You’re so annoying! What does Mark Lee want in return then?”

Mark stares at the screen with unfocused eyes, he wasn’t sure if he timing was good enough, but he decided to test his luck. “A date.” He looks back at Donghyuck whose eyes were even bigger than usual.

“We’ve been on many dates-“

“As my boyfriend.” Mark blurts out and feels his blood rise to his face right away. “I mean- if you’d want. Like-“

Donghyuck grabs the remote and turns off the television, Mark gulps loudly and stabs his nails against the palm of his hand nervously. He watches at the other slides down the couch and crawls in front of him so that they were face to face. “Are you for real?” He asks softly, Mark nods. “Boyfriend?” Mark nods again and looks at his lap with embarrassment.

“Yeah, I want you to be my boyfriend.” He admits while fidgeting with his fingers. Donghyuck forces Mark to look up so that they lock eyes and nods with a bright smile on his face.

“A date it is then.” He giggles and pulls Mark closer so they could hug, Donghyuck buries his face on the other’s neck to hide the blush forming on his face. “I can’t believe this.” He says, lips brushing against the sensitive skin making Mark shiver.

The boy closes his eyes and tightens his hold around Donghyuck’s waist. “I want it to be different this time.” He whispers.

Donghyuck giggles once again and places a quick kiss on Mark’s neck. “Okay.” He stops. “Boyfriend.”

Mark can’t help but giggle along with Donghyuck.

“BOYFRIEND?” Jeno shrieks and moves his eyes from Donghyuck to Mark. “Oh my- It finally happened.”

They were all waiting for their class teacher to arrive and dictate the same old rules before school actually started, it felt weird going back to school after the stressful summer break. Mark felt as if it had been years since he had last stepped inside that building.

“Yes.” Donghyuck smiles brightly and snakes his arm around Mark’s waist so he could pull him closer. “We’re dating!”

Mark’s cheeks were turning into a bright shade of pink by the second, Jeno pokes them and smiles just as brightly as Donghyuck. “Mr. Lee finally found the balls to ask you out or did you get fed up?”
“Good news, my balls didn’t quite shrink back when I came back.” Mark chuckles and rubs his nape.

Jeno bro-fists him. “My good dude, glad you going almost completely nuts was worth for something.” His eyesmile was almost blinding at that point. “Everything’s figured inside that little head of yours?”

“I think so? And if it’s not, I know I can figure it out if I really try.” The corners of Mark’s mouth turn upwards and he looks at Donghyuck who looks back with just as much fondness.

The next hours go by in a blink of an eye, the two boys had obviously chosen to sit together which meant no attention was paid to the teacher’s explanations and information. Donghyuck kept playing with the other’s hand, pulling at the fingers, squeezing them and tracing the veins in back of the boy’s hand. Mark had actually tried maintain some sort of focus but Donghyuck was keen on fooling around so he ended up chatting with the boy for the rest of the time instead.

“Lastly, if any of you ever need someone to speak to or help with something, you can come to me.” The teacher says and Donghyuck rolls his eyes.

“Sure I will.” He whispers and Mark giggles.

The bell rings and the students noisily drag their chairs back and start chatting with each other, Jeno grabs his things and comes closer to his friends. “You guys were so annoying the whole time, we could all hear you flirting from miles away.” He sighs.

“You asked, we deliver.” Donghyuck shoots him a smug look and gets up as well, never letting go of Mark’s hand as he gets his things ready. “You wanted us to date? Now you must suffer the consequences.”

Jeno scrunches up his nose. “I did not ask for this! You didn’t shut up for the whole two hours!” He crosses his arms in front of his chest. “Oh god no, I’m going to forever be a third wheel now.”

Both boys laugh out loud while Jeno dramatically hits his forehead against the table. “You can join us.” Donghyuck pats his back.

“Absolutely not.” Mark shrieks wide eyed, now Jeno was the one laughing while Mark frowned like a little kid. “Mine.”

Donghyuck scoffs and kisses the boy’s cheek. “Yours!” He chirps and Jeno gags. “I can be your side hoe.” Donghyuck whispers to Jeno jokingly, Mark hits his shoulder lightly with a big pout on his lips.

“Sounds good to me!” Jeno nods and smiles brightly.

“Fine.” Mark grumbles and walks out of the door faking to be throwing a tantrum to give Donghyuck a taste of his own medicine.

“Babe!” Donghyuck runs after him and grabs his forearm. “Mark, I wasn’t being serious.” He pouts and bounces up and down cutely trying to win over his boyfriend.

Mark chuckles. “I was joking too, idiot.”

“I hate you.” The other frowns and places his hands on his hip.

“Liarr.” Jeno sings as he passes by them and heads down the stairs, Mark chuckles loudly earning a
smack in the forehead from Donghyuck. “Enough with your couple-y antics, I got a bus to catch.”

Donghyuck grabs Mark’s hand and intertwines their fingers together. “I still hate you.”

Mark smirks smugly. “Mhm, I’m sure you do.”

“Is Jeno serious?” He pulls Donghyuck closer to him so that no one else could hear him. “How long has he been single for again?”

Donghyuck follows Mark’s eyes and chuckles. “I don’t know, maybe five months?”

“And he’s already hitting on someone new?!” Mark observes as Jeno tries to help Renjun put the swimming utensils in their destined place with the biggest smile on his face, Donghyuck tsks.

“See now,” He turns to face Mark. “You’re not seeing the full picture.”

Mark gives him a puzzled look. “What does that even mean?”

“Renjun is not like that for him, in fact I think he’s the reason Jeno even put himself out there so much to the point where he couldn’t keep himself out of the dating area, or whatever.” Donghyuck starts, Mark’s scowl just gets worse. “Like, Jeno never told me, but a few years back he had this… phase where he simply wouldn’t shut up about Renjun. Then one day Jaemin decided to open his mouth to complain that Renjun didn’t seem interested in anything other than school.”

“Okay…” The wrinkles in the boy’s forehead started slowly disappearing. “I see where this is going.”

Donghyuck chuckles. “Yeah, so, then he shut up about him completely and started being obsessed with finding someone to date. It was weird, I didn’t even think about it then I only put the puzzle pieces together quite recently.”

“So, what you’re trying to tell me is that Jeno has been trying to bury his feelings down by dating others?!” Donghyuck nods and sighs deeply. “That’s… sad.”

“I know, I think he gave up on Renjun for all these years. Maybe he’s trying to go at it once again.” They both look over to Jeno who was still attempting at small talk with the boy, Mark shakes his head and chuckles at the scene.

“With Renjun… I truly wish him luck.”

Donghyuck shrugs. “Well, if I managed to make hetero boy over here date me then Jeno Lee shall manage to make him crack and fall for him too.” Mark hits the other’s shoulder lightly, he could feel the heat rise up his face and decides to walk the opposite direction as fast as he could before Donghyuck noticed how flustered he had gotten. “I saw that! You can’t hide from me!”

“Watch me!” Mark squeaks and flips him off with his back still turned to him.
Dating Mark turned out to be better than expected, not that Donghyuck thought Mark would be a bad boyfriend or anything. Just, perhaps, not such a good one. “Here’s your present.” The boy extends his arms and shoves a big box in front of Donghyuck’s face. “I hope you like it, I wasn’t sure what to buy at first but like—“

“It’s okay Mark, I’ll be happy with whatever. Except if this is a piece of poop, then no.” He chuckles and grabs the box, Mark switches from one foot to another nervously as his boyfriend rips the Christmas-y paper. “Mark!” Donghyuck smiles brightly.

He puts the box on top of the desk nearby and starts taking out everything that was inside. “D-Do you like it? I saw your Michael Jackson posters on your wall when I came over, so I asked Jeno about it…”

Donghyuck pulls the other closer in a suffocating hug and giggles loudly. “You just gave me all Michael Jackson CDs out there and some merch, how could I not like it?!” Mark smiles softly and pecks the other’s cheek lovingly.

“I’m glad you like it that much.” He says brightly and watches as the other analyses the present thoroughly. “Mom asked me something, by the way.” Donghyuck hums as he opens the CD case of one of the albums. “Would you wanna spend Christmas with us?”

The boy snaps his head to the side to look at him and blinks rapidly. “What?” It takes him a few seconds to react properly to the proposal. “Oh my! Yes! Yes I’d totally love that.” He smiles even wider and then suddenly frowns. “But… I can’t buy a present for all of you…”

“That’s totally fine, Hyuck. You don’t need to buy a present for anyone.”

“Oh hell no, you got me all this I have to repay.”

Mark pokes Donghyuck’s lips and smirks. “There you have it.”

“Shut up.” He snorts and moves closer again so he could peck the other on the lips. “That’s not good enough for my conscience… My mom steals my money all the time so I might as well steal hears this one time.”

“Hyuck, what if she gets mad?” Mark pouts.

“Then she gets mad. Whatever really, I’m stronger than her so if she tries laying a finger on me she’ll be the one getting hurt and she knows that.” The boy sighs deeply and puts everything back on the box. “Thank you so much again, you’re the best.” He snakes his arms around the boy’s neck and rubs their noses together. “Love you.”

Mark’s eyes widen in shock. “Say what now?”

“I love you.” Donghyuck says slowly with a smirk on his face.

“I-“ The boy chokes on his own spit and clears his throat. “I love you too, Hyuck.”

“You’re so awkward.” Mark frowns at that so the boy shakes his head. “No, I don’t mean it in a bad way! It’s cute, adorable.”

Mark rolls his eyes. “Yeah great.”
“My adorable baby mochi mochi.” Donghyuck says in a baby-like voice.

“No.” The boy pushes him away and shoots him a look of disgust. “You’re gross, disgusting, get off me.”

Donghyuck giggles and clings to the boy like a koala, leg wrapped around his torso as he puckers his lips. “My mochi is annoyed, isn’t he adorable!”

“You’re lucky I love you.” The boy cringes and gives up on trying to get away from the boy’s hold.

The other stops trying to attack Mark and clicks his tongue. “I sure am.”
my life next to you

Chapter Notes

this is... basically an extra chapter of Markhyuck being boyfriends 😂😂 lmao enjoy all the fluff (hopefully)
sorry for any typos like usual!!
(for those who have read the noren fic, yes some scenes are taken from it. i just adapted them slightly to fit Markhyuck’s POV!!!)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Mark takes his phone out of his pocket and snaps a quick picture of Donghyuck sitting on the sand looking at the vast sea, he smiles at the screen before putting the phone back in its place and sitting right next to the other. “Pretty?”

Donghyuck nods, a lazy smile spreads across his face. “It’s so calming.” He puts his head on Mark’s shoulder. “I’m glad we decided to do this.”

Many months ago, as they lay on the bed cuddling late night, Mark had come up with the idea of going on a small vacation together. Nothing grand, just something small for them to spend some quality time away from everything together. Mark was surprised his mother had let him, but she seemed more than happy when he had told her about their plans.

“It’s getting late, are you hungry?” Mark whispers after many minutes of staring ahead in silence, Donghyuck perks up immediately. “I’m taking that as a yes.”

“Let’s just buy pizza and come back here to look at the sunset.” Donghyuck suggest with a big grin on his face. “Sounds good?” Mark nods, who was he to deny Donghyuck’s wishes anyways.

It still felt odd holding Donghyuck’s hand in public, especially in crowded places, sometimes it didn’t bother him while other it did. He could feel the eyes on them, and he absolutely hated it. Seoul was already conservative as it was, and they had chosen a pretty rural town to spend those days at, he knew people would talk stare but it still made him feel uneasy. It was scary.

Donghyuck seemed unbothered, though, and his aura almost made the stress go away until a man comes up to them and starts spitting things out of him mouth without a single care. No one stood up for them either, simply stared as some teenagers dealt with a full grown man spilled hatred from him mouth.

“What is this shit, are you some faggots?!” He points at their hands with a disgusted look, Mark goes stone cold and Donghyuck tightens his hold on his boyfriend’s hand to calm him down. “Please keep that inside your house, I don’t want to see it in public.”

“Excuse me?” Mark lets out involuntarily. “We’re not doing anything wrong.”
The man scoffs and rudely slaps their hands to break their hold apart, Mark could feel the anger bubble inside of him. “Excuse me sir we aren’t doing anything much, we just want a pizza could you please leave?” Donghyuck says softly, trying to be as polite as he could manage.

“Me? Leave? You sick fucks should be the one to walk right out of this door, no one wants you here.” He growls and Mark stabs the palm of his hand harshly, all he wanted to do was punch the stranger but he was way smaller and definitely not as strong.

Donghyuck grabs Mark’s forearm. “We won’t be leaving until we get our damn pizza, thank you.”

“We just want our pizza, sir.” Mark manages to speak calmly, even he is surprised by how gentle he sounds.

“I don’t care, get off my sights before I do something.” The man threatens, a shiver goes down Mark’s spine. He couldn’t tell if it was fear or anger, probably both, so he walks towards the entrance with Donghyuck trailing behind.

“We’re leaving.” He mumbles.

“No, we’re not.” Donghyuck pulls him back. “We can’t walk away from these things like that, Mark.”

No matter how much the other protests, they end up outside the store anyways. “Fight for what? He’s clearly not going to change his viewpoint, I don’t know if I wanna get beat over a pizza.”

Donghyuck goes in front of him and places his hands on both of Mark’s shoulders. “Look, you’re going to deal with those kind of imbeciles your whole life. You can’t just let them win like that, then they’ll think they have the right to do so. It isn’t true.”

“I know it isn’t true, but Hyuck I just my damn pizza why do I need to fight with imbeciles like that this so stupid.” He tugs his hair strands with frustration.

“This.” Donghyuck sighs. “This is how your life is going to be, probably forever. You either face it or you live with self-pity till the end of your days, Mark.”

The boy stares at Donghyuck with a blank expression, everything was still so new to him he just didn’t know how deal with things just yet. It was sad to think he’d just have to adapt like that. “I guess.” He finally says. “Let’s just… Go home.” He almost pleads with his head hanging low, the good mood from the past few days had suddenly vanished. He just wanted to go home and be comfortable with being around Donghyuck again.

It was the night before they had to go back to the Seoul life. The August air blew calmly against their faces as they observed the sea ahead and ate the typical dish of the area.

Donghyuck hums loudly to catch Mark’s attention. “Y’know.” He starts and puts his chopsticks down. “I feel like we’re one of those rich couples you see in movies going on a fancy dinner date at night.”

Mark chuckles. “Except this is a cheap dish in a cheap restaurant in a cheap trip.” He quirks his
“Yeah but the thought it what counts.” Donghyuck pokes his tongue out. “Plus, what difference would it make if the food I’m eating right now costed ten times more. It’s still great, everything is still great.”

The other stares at his boyfriend speechless, there wasn’t anything he could say anyways. He was just happy and felt at peace since they were so far away from everything that bothered them. Or so it felt like it, because Mark still had to deal with the anger that came from homophobic remarks wherever he went, but at least he wouldn’t have to look at those people’s faces every day of his life.

Mark had almost forgotten that Donghyuck would have to go back to his awful family in a day’s time. It makes the smile on his face fade away slightly. “What’s wrong?” Donghyuck asks with a frown.

“I wish it’d be always like this, y’know? Just us.”

“Like, living together?”


Donghyuck snorts. “Perhaps most of the time, but nothing is perfect.”

The other flips him off and rolls his eyes. “I’m aware, idiot. But I like the idea of coming home and knowing you’ll be there. Like-“

“A constant?” He interrupts, big eyes staring back at him with an emotion Mark couldn’t put his finger on.

“Yeah, if we need anything we got each other at all times. Kind of like that.” Mark shrugs and takes a tiny bite of his food. “It sounds comfortable.”

Donghyuck nods, gets up and walks behind Mark. “I’d love to, if what you’re doing right now is suggesting.” He wraps his arms around the boy’s frame and pecks his cheek. “I’m bringing Yuckie, by the way.”

Mark turns his face to the side so he can look at Donghyuck better and smiles brightly. “It wouldn’t be complete without her.”

Jaemin’s hangouts never variated much, they’d sit down together in the same spot and some would smoke, some drink, others sit there and listen while the rest enjoyed themselves. Mark was usually the latter, not that he minded, he liked being around his friend and especially Donghyuck even if he didn’t quite join their activities. No one cared anyways, they were all too busy getting shit-faced.

So, naturally, when Mark spots Renjun walking alongside Jaemin, his first instinct is to call out for his boyfriend who was too busy chatting with a random dude. “Hyuck.” His boyfriend turns to look at him with a puzzled look, Mark tilts his head in the direction of the newcomers and Donghyuck gasps.
“No way!” He giggles and waves the random boy off. “The Renjun? Jeno’s gonna lose his shit.”

Renjun sits down next to Jaemin, his nervousness was so obvious that it made Mark feel bad. He probably wasn’t used to that kind of environment and Jaemin had dragged him there because he could without thinking of his friend. Mark wished he could hit Jaemin in the back of his head for being such an idiot.

“Ima call Jeno.” Is the first thing he says after greeting everyone, they all nod. “Sup, wanna meet at the usual spot?” There is a curt pause. “Cool, bring the stuff everyone’s here.”

Donghyuck chuckles lowly and looks at Mark with a smirk on his face. “This is gonna be interesting.”

“Or not.” Mark looks over to Renjun. “I can feel his discomfort from here, he’ll probably not talk the whole time.”

It doesn’t take very long for Jeno to show up, as soon as the boy shows up in the distance Jaemin was already calling out for him. Mark frowns noticing how Renjun had been cut out by it and sighs deeply, Jaemin was so oblivious to everything it was actually painful to watch. “Jeno!” The boy stands up and hugs the blonde before making him sit next to him. “That was so fast, were you nearby?”

"Yeah, I had to run some errands for my mom.” The boy admits and rubs his nape.

Donghyuck snorts loudly. “Such a good boy.” His friend flips him off with a smile on his face before he notices the newbie.

“Hi!” He smiles widely at Renjun, Mark can’t help but chuckle at how obvious Jeno was being. “Good to see you here.”

His boyfriend joins him, but thankfully Renjun doesn’t seem to notice. “Ah, yes, good to see you too.” The boy replies back with a nervous smile.

For the rest of the hangout, Mark couldn’t take his eyes off Renjun and his behaviour. He felt sad and annoyed that Jaemin would have brought him there when he knew that the boy didn’t like it. Jeno seemed to have tried to make him feel better, though. Mark was glad for that. He didn’t want to be weird and chat with Renjun either, no matter how many years it had passed next to Donghyuck, he still lacked the social skills it took to make small talk with new people.

Donghyuck had started chatting with the same dude of previously, Mark blinks lazily before deciding to lay his head on his boyfriend’s lap. His only source of entertainment was watching Jeno attempt at flirting without scaring Renjun off.

His boyfriend starts playing with his hair and he purrs, Donghyuck drifts his eyes off the boy towards Mark and smiles when he sees his boyfriend with messy hair and pink cheeks. “You look so cute.” He grabs both of his cheeks and squeezes them together. “You look so sleepy, look at those pink cheeks.”

“I am.” Mark yawns and closes his eyes again. “Let’s go home?”

Donghyuck nods and says goodbye to the guy. “I’m guessing that’s an invitation for me to sneak into your house tonight.”

Mark smirks. “It sure is, just make sure my mom doesn’t know you’re staying over or she might separate us.”
The boy laughs and bends down so he could place a chaste kiss to Mark’s forehead. “Watch out, I might give you AIDS.”

Mark grumbles and pushes his face away. “As if!”

Since he had started dating Donghyuck, Mark had started enjoying partying way more than he used to. Not because the alcohol tasted any better now and definitely not because he enjoyed the musky smell inside the discos, it was simply because he spent the whole time having fun next to Donghyuck instead of forcing himself to enjoy a stranger’s company.

He watches as Donghyuck goes through his wardrobe with an amused look. “Why are you so into wearing my clothes?”

Donghyuck turns to him with his hands on his hip. “Listen, they smell good. I’ve told you this three hundred times!” He sighs deeply. “But I don’t know what to wear…”

Mark gets up and walks next to him. “It’ll be fairly cold out, but inside not so much. Just wear a hoodie with a T-shirt inside?” He shrugs.

“Yeah but then I’ll have to carry the damn hoodie around.” He picks up a grey hoodie with UTAH written on it and tilts his head. “I guess I could wrap it around my torso when we get there?” He looks over to Mark to make sure he would be okay with it, the boy nods and shoots him a thumbs up before flopping onto the bed again.

“Whatever you wear, you’ll look pretty anyways.” He mumbles and suddenly someone jumps on top of him knocking the air out of his lungs at the impact. “Christ sake!”

Donghyuck nuzzles his nose on his boyfriend’s neck and giggles loudly. “I’m still not used to your compliments.” He pecks a sensitive spot and watches as Mark’s eye widen.

“Don’t do that.” He tries pushing the other off him, but Donghyuck only clings tighter. “Weren’t you doing to do your makeup?”

The boy gets off him at light’s speed and stars rummaging through his bag excitedly. “I hope you like it! I think you will but-“

“Like I said, you look pretty no matter what.” He closes his eyes tightly waiting for his boyfriend to collapse on top of him, but instead the only thing he feels is two soft lips press against his forehead lovingly.

“You know I gotta be careful with my sugar levels, cut the lame remarks before I pay a little visit to our local hospital.” He jokes, Mark cracks one of his eyes open and chuckles when Donghyuck kisses the closed one. “C’mon, get ready. I won’t take long and I sure as hell won’t be waiting for you once I’m done.”

Marks sits up reluctantly and groans. “Can we just stay home and cuddle?” He grumbles, Donghyuck shoots him a death glares as he takes out one of his brushes from a small transparent bag. “Fine, whatever you want.”
Donghyuck shoots him a flying kiss and grins. “I’ll make up for it.”

“How so?” Mark raises his eyebrows and walks towards the mess Donghyuck had made, the pile of clothes sure was going to take ages to take care off but that was future Mark’s problem not his.

He picks whatever looked nice at first sight, he wasn’t too bothered if he would look ridiculous or not. After all, it’d be dark inside. “Kisses, drinks? I don’t know you pick.”

“You’ll be sleeping over here tonight?” The boy asks while watching as Donghyuck applies dark eyeshadow on his top lid.

“I was planning on it, yes.”

Mark smiles and sits next to his boyfriend, staring up as he were a puppy watching its owner. “Alright, sounds good enough of a reward.” He laughs loudly when Donghyuck turns to him with one of his eyes predominantly darker than the other.

“Yes, I look like a weird panda. Stop laughing.” He groans and flicks Mark’s forehead.

“A cute panda.” He corrects.

“What’s up with the sudden influx of sweetness? I’m getting slightly worried.” Donghyuck cringes and tries to kick Mark away from him. “Go get dressed and leave my diabetes alone, they’re bad as it is.”

Mark pouts and moves away to get ready, but not before stealing a quick kiss on Donghyuck still naked lips. The boy threatens to stab him but the smile on his face gave away his true emotions, Mark couldn’t resist the need to steal yet another kiss just a few minutes later.

“MARK LEE I WILL KILL YOU.” Donghyuck shouts and throws the flip-flop lying next to him straight at his boyfriend’s head, Mark cries out in pain. “Serves you well.”

“Fine, I won’t kiss you for a whole week then.” Mark pretend to be mad while putting his pants on a bit more violently than normal, Donghyuck puts his things down and runs towards him with the best puppy eyes he could muster.

He touches the place where he had hit Mark softly. “I’ll kiss it better!” Donghyuck tries to kiss the spot the most gently he could manage so it wouldn’t hurt and cups Mark’s face. “You’re not for real, right?”

Mark swears he had tries to keep a poker face, but Donghyuck looked so worried that he couldn’t help but let out a curt laugh. “I could never, why would I torture myself like that?” He looks down at Donghyuck’s lips and then back up at the boy’s smoky eyes.

Donghyuck smile is so big that Mark can’t help but smile as well. The boy bends down slightly to kiss Mark properly, they almost forget about the party until someone knocks on the door. “Yes?” Mark croaks out before cleaning his lips, Donghyuck rushes back to his place and keeps busying himself with his makeup.

Johnny comes in and looks at both of them as if checking they weren’t doing anything wrong. Mark fights the urge to roll his eyes at how obvious he was being. “Right, uhm, how long will you guys take? I can drive you there but I have to meet up with my friends in less than an hour so.”

Mark nods. “Soon, give us like ten minutes.”
His brother looks at Donghyuck and then nods as well. “Right, but not fooling around-“

“Dude.” Mark pushes him out of the room and slams the door closed.

“No fooling around!” Donghyuck repeats in a high-pitches voice making Mark laugh loudly. “Babe.” He calls out, his boyfriend hums and turns to him with a questioning look. “Kiss me again before I put on lipstick?”

Mark lets out a breathy chuckle before connecting their lips together again. So much for no fooling round.

“Sup Muurk.” Mark hears and snorts.

“Sup Jeno.” He greets and, when he sees Renjun behind the blonde, smiles widely. “Ah, you came!”

Renjun scratches the back of his neck. “Yes.” He sounded awfully nervous, Mark felt bad for the other since it was obvious he still didn’t enjoy partying like the rest of them did.

Donghyuck comes behind Mark, wraps his arms around the boy’s torso and places a quick kiss on his neck. “Hey y’all.”

“Hey.” Renjun croaks out and drifts his eyes away from Donghyuck, Mark looks between the two and frowns. It was true, Donghyuck looked pretty intimidating with the dark eye makeup, he could understand why Renjun was acting even more anxious than normal towards him.

“Jun came?” The little nickname seems to calm Renjun down slightly. “I’m glad, you never join us.” Mark could notice that Donghyuck had used his most gentle voice on the other and smiles.

“I thought, why not?” Renjun lets out an awkward laugh.

Mark turns around to face Donghyuck properly. “Let’s grab a drink?” He asks hoping that his boyfriend would understand what he truly meant with it. Thankfully he does, just as expected. Sometimes Mark thought their minds were somehow connected.

Donghyuck waves the other two off and they disappear in the crowd in search of the bar. “Do I look that scary?” His boyfriend asks after many minutes when they finally spot the bartender. “I mean, I wanted to look sexy. Not scary.”

The other pokes his boyfriend’s pouty lips. “You know how Renjun is, I think you scare the living crap out of him as it is.” Donghyuck’s pout just grows at that. “It’s not your fault, I know he likes you!”

“I hope so.” The boy mumbles, suddenly Mark remember just how hard Donghyuck always tried to make everyone like him and sighs.

“He seemed fine after you called him Jun, he’ll open up soon enough.” Mark pecks his cheek and snakes his arms around his boyfriend’s waist. “Don’t think about it too much, what do you want to order?”

Donghyuck sighs once again. “You’re right, I shouldn’t even aim to make everyone like me in the first place.” Mark shushes him and points at the drinks at the drinks behind the bar. “Right, should I
get shitfaced?”

Mark was about to say no, but he didn’t see why Donghyuck shouldn’t enjoy himself properly. Since they had started dating the boy had decided to stay pretty much sober to take care of Mark who got easily drunk. “Yeah, I won’t drink tonight.” Donghyuck frowns. “Don’t worry, I’ll have fun dealing with your drunken self.”

“No filming!” The boy demands. Marks nods, even if he knew full well he was still going to film the entire thing so he could make fun of Donghyuck later.

The boy’s giggle gets muffled by the music blasting inside the building. He catches Donghyuck when he trips and helps him up so they’d finally manage to leave the club. “I wanna take a nap.” The boy mumbles and forces himself down, Mark uses his whole strength to keep him from sitting on the dirty floor. “I’m going to take a nap right here.”

“No.”

“No jam! You’re always no jam!” Donghyuck whines. “Why do I always fall for the boring dudes?”

Mark feels his blood drain from his face and stops in his tracks, Jeno? He didn’t dare speak up, though, drunk Donghyuck was even more shameless than normal Donghyuck and he sure wasn’t ready to hear something he didn’t want to.

He pulls Donghyuck towards the entrance the best he could, the boy kept whining and forcing himself down the whole time but Mark somehow manages. “Can I take a nap now?” The boy pouts.

“No, wait till we’re home.” Mark says, perhaps a bit more coldly than he’d like, and takes his phone out. “Put my hoodie on, it’s cold out.”

Donghyuck unties the knot he had made with the sleeves while Mark waits for his brother to pick the phone up, there was no way in hell they’d walk home by themselves.

The other looked like a child as he tried putting on the piece of cloth, Mark has to resist the urge to force the damn thing down in one go instead of letting Donghyuck figure where his head and arms were supposed to go by himself.

Johnny finally picks up. Mark lets out a sigh of relief before speaking. “Hey, dude, are you free right now?”

“It’s like three in the morning, I was sleeping.”

“Already?!”

“What do you mean- Whatever.” Johnny seems to get off the bed by the sounds coming from the other end of the line. “Are you still in that disco place? I’ll come pick you up.”

Mark smiles brightly and thanks him before hanging up. Donghyuck had finally managed to put the hoodie on properly and was laying on the cold floor as if it was the most normal thing in the world. “Hyuck!” He shrieks and grabs the boy’s arm. “Get up for goodness sake.”

Donghyuck whines, shaking his head frantically as if that’d persuade Mark into letting him lay on the
street. “Babe! Babe let me sleep!” He says way too loudly for Mark’s taste.

He cringes and looks around to check if there was anyone around before crouching down next to his boyfriend. “Listen, Hyuck, you’ll get a cold if you keep laying on the floor like that. It’s so cold out, please.” The other boy huffs loudly. “I can warm you up, you can take a nap against my chest.”

Donghyuck perks up instantly at that. “Yeah?” Mark nods.

In a blink of an eye, Donghyuck is standing up in front of Mark looking down at him with pleading eyes. Mark chuckles and raises onto his full height as well, opening his arms so that Donghyuck could cling to him like a little baby.

They stay that way, with Donghyuck’s face buried on Mark’s chest, till Johnny finally arrives. “Get in losers.” He shouts.

Mark has a hard time forcing Donghyuck to walk, Johnny almost loses his patience and takes the boy bridal style inside the car. Donghyuck lays down with his head on Mark’s lap and cuddles the boy’s thigh as if it were a pillow as soon as they’re inside. Mark looks down on the other with a fond smile which makes Johnny fake gag.

“Oh shut up.” The younger flips him off. “Just get us home.”

“Demanding, are we?” Johnny quirks his eyebrow up. “I should’ve let you there to freeze.” He says but Mark knows he doesn’t mean it, Johnny had a soft heart no matter how cold he pretended to be. “Does mom know Donghyuck is sleeping over?”

Mark doesn’t reply, that’s all Johnny needs.

“No fooling around, you hear me?” The smug smirk on his face was irritating but Mark nods nevertheless, he couldn’t risk Johnny snitching on their mother. “If I hear weird noises-“

“Could you please just drive?” Mark pleads in a high-pitched voice.

Johnny does just that, but the smirk sadly doesn’t fade throughout the entire ride back home. Mark had no other choice than to try to ignore it the best he could.

Donghyuck slept like a peaceful baby, Mark observed the way his chest rose and descended in a calming and hypnotizing fashion. It’s only when the other flinches that he wakes up from him trance. He rubs his eyes and looks up only to find Donghyuck staring back at him already, Mark almost lets out a shriek but somehow manages to suppress it. “You’re awake?”

“Just woke up.” His boyfriend mumbles. “What time is it?”

Mark reaches for his phone on the nightstand and groans. “Six o’clock.”

Donghyuck rolls his body so that he lands on top of Mark and smiles. “You look adorable.” He coos and starts kissing the other’s face all over. “Mine!” The boy repeats every time he leaves a kiss on Mark’s face.

“Yes, yours.” He giggles and manages to move his head so that Donghyuck’s lips collide with his. Mark kisses Donghyuck lazily, the remaining of his energy wasn’t much after the tantrums he had to
put up with the whole night.

His boyfriend, still his sleepy state, kisses back just as groggily. It was more like a peck than a proper kiss, but it leaves both breathless nevertheless. “Forever?” Donghyuck asks after a few minutes of them sharing more sloppy kisses.

“Forever sounds like an awfully long time.” Mark blurts out while staring up at the ceiling.

“I know.” The other sighs. “But I can’t imagine a future without you anymore.”

And, as much as that makes Mark’s heart melt, it also sends off sirens inside his head. All around them were people who believed they’d always be together only to have those wishes crushed by the reality of adulthood. Mark wanted to believe they weren’t like that, but a voice inside his head told him otherwise. “I can’t either, but let’s focus on the present. Always focus on the present.”

Donghyuck nods and places one last kiss on the tip of Mark’s nose. “You give me hope.”

Mark couldn’t help but smile widely at that, his face muscles hurt from all the sweet nothings Donghyuck kept drunkenly whispering. “Hope?”

“I see a future! Y’know, I didn’t think I’d even want to graduate. But I do now.” Donghyuck shrugs. “It’s dumb, right? To give yourself like that to someone and depends on them with your whole life.”

He draws patters on the exposed skin of Mark’s shoulder. “But I trust you so much, even if you break my heart I think I’ll be forever thankful…”

The other feels a shiver run down his body and goose bumps form all over, suddenly all he wanted to do was cry. It felt weird, but nice, to be loved like that. Mark stares at the other for the longest time, trying to formulate words strong enough to show Donghyuck how much he cared. But nothing left his mouth.

Instead, he holds his boyfriend as tight as he could, pressing every inch of Donghyuck’s body against his so close that they became one. He wished he could promise to never let the feeling go, and to not break Donghyuck heart. But he couldn’t. And neither could Donghyuck. To not know how things were going to be the next morning was all awfully scary but he loved the other at that very moment, and he would hold onto that emotion for as long as he could.

Forever, if possible.

Donghyuck comes late to their hangout, his mother had made a fuss about the little money he had asked from her to buy a simple packet of Skittles. “Woman I’m just trying to eat!” He had yelled but she didn’t seem to even want to listen so Donghyuck decided to leave mid-conversation and slam the door right in front of her face. He was too tired to care, Donghyuck’s patience was running out.

He greets everyone with a lazy ‘Hello’ and pours a handful of Smarties on his hand before shoving them inside his mouth all at once. Mark chuckles at the sight and points at the cylinder shaped box. “To Donghyuck, from Haechan? Who’s Haechan?”

The boy places a kiss on Mark’s cheek and sits by his side. “Me, I’m Haechan.”
Renjun lets out a confused sound from the back of his throat. “Since when is your name Haechan, what-“ Renjun furrows his eyebrows and looks at Mark who mouths ‘Don’t question’ at him.

“It’s my artistic name.” The boy grins.

Jaemin groans loudly. “You don’t an artistic name.”

“Fuck off.” Donghyuck flips the boy off and goes back to savouring the Smarties, Mark doesn’t even bother asking for permission before eating some as well. “How was the party, y’all?”

“Oh, fucking amazing I loved it.” Samuel, one of Jaemin’s friends, answers.

“You're not even part of our swimming team, idiot.” Donghyuck rolls his eyes. “Everyone was so wasted, it was hilarious.”

“I wasn’t that bad.” Jaemin protests. “I only had a few shots and a beer.”

“And then smoked like a fucking chimney.” Donghyuck snorts and Jaemin raises his fist up in the air. “It’s true, you’re going to ruin your body if you keep on getting wasted like that all the time. You think that pretty face won’t melt away from the amount of shit you consume?”

Mark slaps his boyfriend’s shoulder to shut him up. “Don’t say stuff like that.”

“It’s true! See, Renjun over here will have that pretty face forever because he isn’t ruining himself over like us. Good job, buddy.”

Renjun choked on his own spit when he hears his name. “Thanks?” He croaks out.

“Fuck off, Donhyuck, you’ll be just as ugly as me anyways.” Jaemin spits out, but Donghyuck just shrugs.

“That’s okay, Mark is just like Jun so he can be the pretty one of the marriage.”

Mark lets out a shriek, his eyes were the size of two buttons as he stared at his boyfriend with pure shock. “Marriage-“ He blinks back at the boy who seemed unfazed by what he had just said. Suddenly the memories of Donghyuck’s first breakdown with him flash across his eyes but he decides to shake them off. “You won’t ever be ugly.”

Everyone gags at the comment but Donghyuck seemed more than please and throws himself on top of Mark so he could kiss the life out of him.

Donghyuck was glad Renjun had come up with the idea of going laser tagging to make up for the prank they pulled on Jeno on his birthday, not only because Jeno would no longer be pissed off at them for pretending to have forgotten about his birthday but also because he got to have the time of his life shooting random strangers.

Mark couldn’t stop laughing while watching as his boyfriend shouted profanities at the enemy every two seconds, either because he got shot or because he finally managed to hit someone. He, on the contrary, preferred to stay quiet and catch the opponent by surprise only to shoot them before they could even react.
Both boys press their backs against one of the hiding places and try to calm down, Donghyuck was panting form running around everywhere trying to shoot a many people as he could before he got shot down himself. “You good?” Mark asks and turns to look at Donghyuck, he almost forgot to pay attention when his boyfriend replied too focused on the other’s soft features illuminated by the neon lights.

“Yeah, I’m having the time of my life.” He lets out a breathy chuckle and closes his eyes. “Just wait a second.”

“For what?” Mark asks in vain because his boyfriend doesn’t reply.

He shrugs and closes his eyes as well, planning a quick tactic that would get him more kills. Suddenly, though, he feels two plush lips press against his and shrieks. Mark opens his eyes only to close them again when he figures out who was kissing him.

Donghyuck’s lips were shaky still, the boy’s body trembled with exhaustion against Mark so the other decides to take the lead for the time being and pushes Donghyuck down so the boy’s body was lying flat on the floor. His boyfriend didn’t seem to care much if it was dirty or not, they were grossly sweaty either way.

Mark places his legs on both sides of Donghyuck’s body and bends down so he can kiss the boy once again. Donghyuck pulls at the strands on the back of Mark’s head and smirks when the other lets out a strangled whimper, it was fun knowing what made Mark lose his self-control. What wasn’t so fun was that Mark knew his own as well, and always decided to use them against him whenever Donghyuck did it first.

The boy scrapes his nails against the skin of Donghyuck arm knowing full well the other adored it before moving his lips towards the boy’s neck and sucking on a sweet spot, Donghyuck makes a noise in the back of his throat and slaps Mark’s shoulder lightly. “Bitch.” He breathes out with a grin on his face.

“Let’s go, before time runs out.” Mark goes off Donghyuck and stands up.

Not even five minutes after they went back to playing, Donghyuck and Mark find themselves in the middle of a physical fight with about fifteen boys. Donghyuck wasn’t even sure who was the person he was currently grabbing the hair off but it didn’t matter anymore, someone had kicked him in the back painfully hard and he had to take his anger on someone.

“Hyuck stop!” Mark begs. “Isn’t this supposed to be a nonviolent game?!” He cries out when he spots Jeno with a pained expression in the middle of the crowd.

The next thing he knows, though, Jeno is swinging his fist at a stranger furiously. Donghyuck finally stops fighting and walks closer to check what was going on. Mark is the first one to rush towards Jeno and try to stop him from punching the stranger one more time but Jeno is stronger though and pushes Mark away.

“Jeno, Jeno it’s okay stop it.” Renjun begs. “Jeno listen to me, I’m okay, he didn’t hurt me. He already gave in please stop.”

Jeno lets his arms hang on the sides of his body and finally stands up. He stares down at the mess he had made and cringes but doesn’t say anything and walks towards the exit. Donghyuck stares at his friend with parted lips with shock and then looks over to Mark who looked back at him with worry plastered all over his face. “What was that all about?”
Mark just shakes his head.

“Good job idiot, now we are all banned from entering that place.” Donghyuck mutters as they walk back towards the town’s centre.

“Sorry.” Jeno whispers, his shoulder sag down even more.

Renjun had quickly explained what had happened and why Jeno had suddenly flipped on a stranger like that, and as much as Donghyuck understood Jeno he still felt bitter knowing he wouldn’t be able to go back there anymore. Then again, if someone tried touching Mark’s body in an improper way he knew he’d lose it just like Jeno had, so he tries to not be too harsh on his friend.

They wave each other goodbye, Donghyuck glances back one last time to find Renjun and Jeno talking to each other. Renjun didn’t look happy at all, he just hoped he wasn’t too mad about what had happened. Donghyuck knew just how much Jeno cared for the other (perhaps too much), he wondered if Renjun knew it too.

“Mark.” He blurts, his boyfriend snaps his head to the side and shoots him a puzzled look. “What would you do if someone had touched my butt?”

His boyfriend blinks back at him and gapes like a fish, Donghyuck almost lets out a laugh at the other’s reaction. “I don’t know, might punch him once to teach him a lesson but—” He rubs his nape and lets out a small hiss. “Not like that.”

“Really?!” Donghyuck laughs awkwardly. “I think I’d react the same way.”

“Hyuck, he basically left the boy unconscious.” Mark cringes remembering the state of the stranger.

“Okay well, Jeno is stronger. I could never manage to leave a person looking like that.” He snorts. “But, just the thought of someone harassing you makes my blood boil.” Donghyuck admits and reaches out for Mark’s hand.

Mark gives him a reassuring squeeze. “I mean, I’m not going to say that’s correct. But I gotta admit that it feels good to hear you say that.” The boy licks his lips nervously and ducks his head down to hide how flustered he really was. “It’s stupid, okay. Don’t laugh.”

Donghyuck grins and forces Mark to stop walking before walking In front of the other and crouching down so that they lock eyes. “I know you’re stronger, but that doesn’t mean you can’t lean on me when you need.” Mark nods weakly and tries to drift his gaze somewhere else. “Mark I know you like to carry shit on your back and pretend you’re the man, but it’s not like that with me. Yeah? I know this is sort of random, I just think you tend to forget that.”

“I guess so.” He whispers and whimpers when Donghyuck forces them to lock eyes again.

“Let’s lean on each other equally.” Donghyuck smiles softly and places a kiss on the other’s forehead. “And if someone is bothering you, then you have to tell me! I’m good with knifes, did you know?”

“Donghyuck!” Mark shrieks loudly before starting to giggle loudly.

“What? If they hurt you, I’ll hurt them back!”
The boy pushes him away playfully. “Ah yes my knight in a shining armour.” Donghyuck straightens his back and puts on a cocky expression. “No killing, I don’t want you to be in prison for life. I can’t kiss you if you’re behind bars.”

Donghyuck rubs his chin and clicks his tongue. “Damn, that’s a very good point. What a pity.”

“Girl, you look beautiful.” Donghyuck says in a high-pitched voice. “Work it!”

“Shut up Hyuck.” Jaemin sighs in frustration and turns to Renjun once again. “Jeno’s going to die once he sees you.”

Renjun had let Donghyuck take care of his makeup for prom, it had shocked them all at first but Donghyuck was more than happy with it. He adored playing around with the colours and finding which fit best for the person, plus he knew exactly what Jeno liked and he was determined to make his friend pass out at the sight of his boyfriend all dolled up. “Show me.” Renjun whines and tries to grab the little mirror Jaemin had in his hands.

“The hair isn’t done!” He protests and pushes the other down. “Go big or go home.”

The boy glares at his friend but lets him have his way and goes back to watching TV, Donghyuck was so busy doing his own makeup that he doesn’t notice the way Renjun was staring at him until the boy speaks up. “You did not make me look like I got punched in the eye, right?”

He snaps his head to look at the other and scoffs. “First of all I’m offended, I look bomb.” Donghyuck sighs dramatically. “And no, you look just slightly less innocent.”

“Slightly.” Renjun repeats in a mocking tone.

Donghyuck shrugs him off and goes back to focusing on his face, he wanted to go all in. It wasn’t that he cared for prom per say, but It was a reason to be as extra as he wanted without many people looking at him weirdly. Plus, he couldn’t wait to see how his boyfriend would react to a perfectly groomed Donghyuck. The thought alone made him giggle, he had even gone for a simply transparent lip-gloss knowing that it’d be a total waste to use anything else.

“Done!” Jaemin exclaims, Donghyuck wakes up from his daze and looks up at the two boys. “I’d turn gay for you.”

“That’s incest.” Renjun wrinkles his nose and Donghyuck laughs out loud. “Just give me the mirror already.”

The boy watches impatiently as Renjun picks the mirror up and stares at the reflection with an expression he couldn’t quite decode. He finally puts the mirror down and starts clapping, the other two boys look at him as if he was crazy. “You okay there?” Donghyuck asks nervously.

“More than. I look- Wow.” Renjun looks at the mirror once more. “Thank you guys, my butt hurts but my face looks good so who cares.”

Donghyuck lets out a sigh of relief and smiles brightly. “Beauty is pain!”
He was right, Jeno stared at Renjun’s face with absolute awe. Donghyuck mentally pats himself in the back for having done such a good job at highlighting Renjun’s best features. “Hello beautiful.” Is the first thing that comes out of Jeno’s mouth, Donghyuck turns his back to both boys so he could do a gagging face to Jaemin who laughs out loud.

“My diabetes just keep getting worse.” Renjun smiles and places a kiss on Jeno’s cheek. Tell me about it, Donghyuck thinks and rolls his eyes “You look so handsome.”

Jeno scans his boyfriend’s face and then looks at his outfit. “Well, you look unreal.” He licks his lips, pulls the other closer and kisses him on the lips furiously.

Donghyuck cringes. “Okay not in my household.” Jeno doesn’t seem to be paying any attention to him. “Oh my god.”

Renjun ends the kiss and looks at the other with fondness pouring out of his eyes. “I’m so lucky.”

As much as Donghyuck found both boy’s rosy cheeks adorable he could feel his sugar levels rising too high and starts whining once again. “Okay! Enough!” Donghyuck cries out. “I thought Mark was lame, but Lee Jeno you take the prize home.” Everyone laughs, even Jeno. “Now, where’s the food again?”

“Mark is in the toilet.” Jeno tries to keep a serious expression but ends up losing it when Renjun gasps loudly.

“What is my succulent three dish meal doing in the toilet at a time like this? I’m starving.” Donghyuck grumbles and cracks a smile when everyone laughs loudly. “Heck I’ll go check up on him or something, enjoy your night ladies.”

“You too, Hyuck.” Jeno gives him a soft smile before going back to focusing his attention of the boy in front of him. Jaemin wastes no time and disappears in the crowd, probably to find someone to flirt with.

The bathroom was quiet, and there was no one by the sinks. “Mark?” He calls out and waits for some sort of response. “Babe?”

“You’re going to make fun of me.” Mark’s tiny voice comes from one of the stalls.

“Did you shave your head or what? We can look past this, just start using a beanie.”

“My head looks massive.”

Donghyuck tries to contain his laughter but fails miserably, the boy sounded so distressed it was too funny. “Shut up, are you in your self-conscious hours or what?”

Perhaps.” Mark cries out, there is a loud slamming noise against the door of stall, Donghyuck assumes his boyfriend had just hit his head against the wooden door and laughs again. “Stop laughing! You haven’t even seen it and you’re already laughing.”

“Babe I’m sorry, it’s just that you’re being ridiculous right now I can’t help it.” Donghyuck comes closer to the stall. “Look, just come out, you’re always attractive in my eyes.”
“Lies.”

“Truths!” He fights back and presses his face against the door. “Markieee.” The boy sings cutely hoping that Mark would finally decide to get out, it thankfully works and Donghyuck takes a step back when he hears the lock turning.

A smile spreads across his face when Mark nervously peaks out with a cute frown on his face. “You’re already laughing.”

“I am not.” Donghyuck opens the door wider and looks the boy up and down a few times. “You look so handsome.”

“Really?” Mark rubs his cheeks nervously and clears his throat. “T-Thanks.”

Donghyuck sighs and wraps his arms around the boy’s neck. “Why were you so scared? Your head looks just fine, what drugs did you take?” Mark chuckles and finally lets himself smile. “You look really good with your hair up like that.”

Mark hides his face on Donghyuck shoulder and tries to muffle a giggle, Donghyuck’s smile becomes even wider and he plays with the hairs on his boyfriend’s nape lovingly. “I almost forgot.” Mark looks at the other once again. “You look stunning, your face, wow.”

“Isn’t my face always wow, though?”

“Yes, but today its extra wow.” Donghyuck flushes and pecks him on the lips as a thank you. “You did it yourself?” The other nods. “You’re so talented.”

“Okay enough with the praises before my sugar levels go off the roof and I have to go to the hospital or something.” He jokes but Mark doesn’t laugh and instead frowns. “What?”

He shakes his head. “Don’t joke about that!”

“Bohoo boring.” He pokes his tongue out making Mark finally looks at the boy’s lips.

“No lipstick?”

“Well, barely. I figured it’d be useless today.” Donghyuck smirks. “You better kiss me so many times I become sick of it.”

Mark raises one of his eyebrows teasingly and licks his lips. “As you please, boss.”

Donghyuck gets bored of the party only a few hours in, Mark didn’t seem to be having a blast either so he suggests they’d just head home earlier instead. He lock Mark’s pinkie finger with his and swings their arms around as if they were little kids, he had drank very little but it was still enough to act goofier than usual. “You’re so cute.” Mark gushes and pecks his cheek.

“My diabetes, they’re calling out for help!” Donghyuck jokes and pretends to become dizzy, Mark worriedly holds him up and puts his face way too close to the other’s to inspect it. “Idiot don’t look at me like that, I was joking.”

“Fuck you.” Mark groans and lets go of him.
“Is that a suggestion?”

The boy chokes on his spit and looks over to Donghyuck wide eyed. “No!”

“Damn.” He feigns disappointment and chuckles when Mark childishly scoffs and turns his head to the other side so he wouldn’t have to see Donghyuck. “Babe-“

“Don’t call me that.”

“Okay.” Donghyuck comes closer to Mark’s ear. “Baby shark teeth.”

Mark whines and pushes him away. “It’s been years! Years! I hate you!” He is almost shouting, Donghyuck can’t help but laugh at how childish the boy was being. It always happened whenever he got drunk, it was endearing just as much as it was annoying.

“Okay, baby shark teeth, let’s get you home faster I think you need some sleep.”

“I didn’t kiss you properly yet, though.” Mark pouts.

“Oh so now you don’t hate me, uh?”

The boy crosses his arms in front of his chest. “Just because I want to kiss you doesn’t mean I like you.”

“Sure, Jan.” Donghyuck rolls his eyes and grabs the other’s wrist pulling him so they’d walk faster. He just wanted to be home. “You’re so annoying, I can’t believe I love you this much.”

Mark giggles like a kid behind him, Donghyuck hates how it makes his heart beat faster.

It was one of those moments where Donghyuck took a step back to appreciate how good things were going for him, well his parents were still the same old but he had amazing friends and, now, a great boyfriend as well. Surely Mark wasn’t perfect, he threw tantrums all the time and was awfully jealous of Jeno even if he had a boyfriend now. But it wasn’t as if he was perfect either and that okay, he felt like he could show every side of himself to Mark. It was relieving.

He looks up at the other who had his eyes closed, he couldn’t tell if Mark was awake or not but he sure didn’t feel sleepy. “Mark.” Donghyuck calls out softly and chastity kisses the boy’s collarbone, the corner of the boy’s lips turn upwards and he opens his eyes lazily.

“Yes?” His voice came out croakier than usual, Donghyuck fights the urge to blurt out he found it attractive and instead move upwards so he can kiss the boy. “Are you bored?” Mark asks when Donghyuck pulls away.

“Perhaps.” He chuckles. “Or maybe I just wanted kisses.”

“Maybe both.” Mark quirks his eyebrows up and plays with a hair strand hanging in front of Donghyuck’s face. “I’m so happy.”

Donghyuck smiles. “You are?” Mark nods. “Any reason in specific?”

The boy snorts and cups Donghyuck’s face. “Idiot, you say you hate when I’m lame but you’re sucking the cheesiness out of me right now.”
“Perhaps.”

“Shush.” Mark giggles and pets Donghyuck’s face with his thumbs. “I love you. So much.”

The boy places his hands over Mark’s. “This is a secret.” He whispers with a smirk on his face. “But I might just love you too.”

The last competition came along, and even if Mark was never truly a fan of swimming, he still felt sad that that part of his life was coming to an end. After all, he had made so many good memories alongside his teammates, it was a pity it had to come to an end after high school ended.

The thick warm air inside the bus made it incredibly hard to breathe properly, Mark had tried to open the window but it seemed to be stuck so he had given up a few minutes later and accepted the fact that he was going to sweat his ass off the whole ride.

Mark rolls the sleeves of his T-shirt up attempting at making it so it felt as if he was wearing a tank top, it didn’t help much but it was better than nothing. “Ohh sexy.” Donghyuck whistles, Mark hopes that the rosiness of his cheeks passes as him being warm and not flustered.

“Stop acting as if you haven’t seen me shirtless.” Mark grumbles and forces down the smile that threatens to show on his face.

“Well it’s sexy nevertheless.” The boy rubs his face on Mark’s bicep as if he was a cat and giggles, Mark pushes him away. “You can’t reject me like this, I’m your boyfriend.”

“I’m sweaty! It’s gross.”

Donghyuck scoffs. “As if I care.”

“You should!” Mark whines and tries to clean off the sweat that had formed on his arm with his shirt, Donghyuck pokes the boy’s exposed skin and giggles. “You know what this is harassment.”

“I’m your boyfriend!”

“Doesn’t mean you are allowed to touch my sweaty self as you please! I’m gross right now stop it.” Mark growls and Donghyuck pouts. “Stop it.” He pretends he couldn’t see the puppy eyes the other was shooting him and keeps on trying to clean the sweat, Donghyuck doesn’t give up however. “Okay fine, be gross all you want.”

Donghyuck doesn’t waste time, not even half a second later he’s already hugging Mark sideways and rubbing his face on the other’s bicep again. “You’re stinky but you’re my stinky.”

“That’s possibly the worst thing I’ve heard you say since I’ve met you.”

“Tops the necrophilia thing?”

“The what-” Mark blinks back at him and light is made inside his head. “Oh god please I totally forgot about that why would you-“

“Hey y’all.” Jeno interrupts them, the boy looks over at Donghyuck and cringes. “Okay gross, we’re
all sweaty why are you up on him like that?”

Donghyuck flips his friend off. “I tried telling him that! But he won’t give up!” Mark cries out and huffs, Jeno chuckles at the scene and sits on the seat in front of them.

Only a few minutes later, an already tired looking Renjun enters the bus and Jeno visibly perks up, Donghyuck chuckles at his friend’s reaction and looks up at Mark who looks back at him with a knowingly smile. “Jaemin agreed of switching places.” Jeno explains when his boyfriend sits down next to him.

Renjun eyes him up and down and seems to freeze up. “Since when do they make tank tops with our team’s logo?!” He squeaks, Donghyuck has to hide his laughter by placing his hand on top of his mouth, Renjun seemed to lack the self-control to keep his eyes off the other’s arm. It was hilariously adorable.

“Since like forever.” Jeno quirks his eyebrow up in amusement and flexes his arm just to tease the other further. “You seem to like it.” Mark hits Donghyuck when the boy’s muffled laughter becomes louder and presses his lips tightly together to contain his own laughter.

Renjun finally looks up and sends him a death glare. “Shut up.”

“Shut me up.” He smirks and Renjun flicks his forehead, Donghyuck gags quietly at that. “I won’t shut up if you won’t do it.”

Renjun turns his whole body towards him and sits cross-legged on top of the seat, he glares at Jeno once more but gives up and moves forward to place a kiss on the other’s lips. Before he can back away, though, Jeno grabs his waist and pulls him even closer continuing the kiss.

“Knock it off already I’m right here.” Donghyuck whines and slaps the top of Jeno’s head.

“How come you’re always the one interrupting?” Jeno growls and twists his friend’s hand making the other whimper in pain. “Can I not kiss my boyfriend in peace you asshole.”

Mark stands up and grabs Jeno’s wrist so he’d stop hurting Donghyuck and tsk.s. “You both are going to drive me nuts.”

“Your boyfriend is gonna drive me nuts too, can you like kiss him so he shuts up.” Jeno huffs.

“His breath smells like shit I don’t wanna.” Donghyuck snorts when Mark shoots him a look of disbelief. “I’m joking, baby. You know I am-“

“You can kiss my ass from now on, I'm sure it wouldn't make a difference then. Bye.” Mark waves him off and grabs his bag.

“Gladly.” The boy smirks and throws himself on top of his boyfriend to prevent him from changing places.

Jeno scrunches up his nose. “Okay gross.”
himself, he had told the coach that it was totally fine and that he could manage but his arms were already shaking uncontrollably and he wasn’t sure how much longer it’d be till he’d let it drop onto the floor.

Mark’s groans. “Need help there?” Renjun chuckles and stands up.

“It’d be appreciated, definitely.” Mark smiles brightly at him, he couldn’t care less about his pride at the moment. His arms felt like they were going to fall off.

“I’ll help too!” Chenle chirps and the three carry the heavy box towards its destined place.

They let drop onto the floor, it makes a loud thud and then they sigh with relief. “What even is inside this? A baby?” Renjun cries out.

Mark rubs his nape. “Snacks, lots of them. Half for Donghyuck probably.” He explain and opens the box revealing all the different snacks inside. “Better than some crackers, no?”

“Definitely!” Chenle exclaims, snakes his arms around Mark’s neck and presses their cheeks together so harshly that their faces become deformed. Mark didn’t have the heart to push the cute boy away, so he doesn’t. “You’re the best hyung!”

Renjun ruffles Mark’s hair while Chenle was still clinging onto him like a koala. “Thank you for the snacks, hyung!” He says in an overly cute voice

“Renjun come back!” Jeno’s harsh voice sounds nearby, the sirens inside Mark’s head go off loudly at his friend’s tone.

“In a second.” The boy replies and turns to Mark once again. “The coach let you buy these because it’s our last competition or what?”

Mark nods. “Yeah, exactly. He knows we’re tired of eating the same old crackers and decided that we deserve this little reward.”

A few meters away, an unbothered Donghyuck played with his phone paying zero attention to whatever his boyfriend was doing. “Do you see this shit?” Jisung asks Donghyuck who lifts his head to look at Mark.

“I do, my man still gets it going even when he’s dating. A legend.” The boy shrugs and goes back to paying attention to his phone. “Not my fault your boyfriends are sluts, now is it?”

“RENJUN NOW.” Jeno demands, Renjun huffs loudly and stomps on his feet as he walks over to the other.

“What do you want?” Renjun crosses his arms in front of his chest with look of annoyance on his face. “Can I not speak with Mark without your possessive ass getting pissed off?”

Jeno opens his mouth to speak but Jisung steals the spotlight with his loud shout. “Chenle I did not come out of the closet for you to cheat on me like this!” The youngest was fuming, he had his hands on his hips and kept stomping his foot on the floor like an angry housewife.

“Karma’s a bitch, Jisung Park.” Chenle glares at him and hides behind Mark when his boyfriend comes running towards him with his hand raised up high in the air. “Don’t you dare.”

“Okay guys-“ Mark tries but Jisung cuts him off.
“Don’t.” He growls and tries to grab Chenle’s shirt to no avail because Mark pushes him away before he can touch the boy. “Chenle I hate you so much.”

The boy pokes his tongue out and grins right after just to piss the younger further. “Denying your feelings again?”

Jisung lets out a frustrated groan and goes back to trying to snatch Chenle back from Mark’s protection, the rest were so busy watching the scene that totally forget what they were previously doing. Donghyuck had miraculously put his phone down just to grab it again to film them, Mark looks over to his boyfriend with an exasperated look but the other simply shrugs and shoots him finger hearts.

Jaemin passes by to steal one of the croissants inside of the big box and stops to watch the scene in front of him for just a few seconds before starts giggling. “Problems in gay paradise, fellas?” He chuckles and takes a bite of the croissant.

The three boys stop yelling and slowly turn their heads in the intruder’s direction, Jaemin stares back at them wide eyed and gulps. “You better start running before you’re dead meat, Na Jaemin.” Jeno shouts from where he was sitting.

Jaemin wastes no time and runs away in sonic speed before any of them could catch up to him.

Pride bubbles inside his chest as he watches his boyfriend swim, Donghyuck had become so much better to the point where he was breaking records with the rest of the aces of their team now. He couldn’t wait to hug Donghyuck tight to show just how proud he was.

The whole team runs towards the opposite side of the pool as soon as Jaemin touches the wall, Mark follows along and tries not to slip while running the fastest he could so he’d be first to congratulate his boyfriend. Donghyuck spots him and decides to run as well, they crash against each other and almost fall onto the wet slippery floor but somehow manage to avoid it. “I’m so proud!” Mark grins and pulls the boy closer.

Donghyuck giggles and ruffles his wet hair. “I can’t believe we broke the national record! That’s crazy.” He hugs Mark and swings their bodies around before looking at his face once again. “I’m so, so happy right now.”

“You deserve it, all of this. You deserve it.”

“Stinks like cheese out of the blue, doesn’t it?” The boy teases and flinches when Mark threatens to slap his shoulder.

“Don’t ruin the moment.” Mark clicks his tongue and pecks the boy on the lips.

Donghyuck smiles brightly as he stares at Mark’s face, he couldn’t put it into words just how grateful he was for everything the other had done for him. He just hoped Mark knew, he hoped Mark knew that even if he couldn’t quite put it into words that he meant the world to him. “Thank you, for everything.” He manages and pokes Mark’s nose.

Mark copies the gesture. “I could say the exact same to you.”

“KNOCK IT OFF YOU TWO!” The coach yells from afar and they’re forced to let go of each
other. “I swear to god.” He mumbles when he passes by them making both boys giggle

University life was way calmer than Mark had expected it to be, his parents had always warned him about how stressful it was and to beware for drugs and whatnot, but Mark thought he was doing just fine. It was stressful at times, but he had learn to deal with it quickly enough. Things were pretty much perfect, so perfect that he couldn’t quite believe they were real sometimes.

He raises his head from his computer screen to look at Donghyuck taking an order and smiles fondly, the boy had moved out of his house as soon as Mark found an apartment for them to live at. Well, technically, the apartment was just for him not Donghyuck and it took weeks till the boy finally agreed to move in once things were settled but Mark was glad he did. Donghyuck was annoying time to time but he kept the apartment lively, and Mark was grateful.

Plus, he couldn’t leave Donghyuck behind to live with the people who had been hurting him for years. It was just that Donghyuck was terribly stubborn and he knew that he wouldn’t be able to pay the rent properly if he worked to try and put money together to go to university at the same time. Mark knew it still bothered him, he knew it always would.

Right now though, what mattered was that Donghyuck could go to university sometime soon like he wanted to. The boy had passed the year with amazing grades, Mark knew he could get into university with ease once he had enough money for it, Donghyuck was smart enough.

“My shift is ending soon.” Donghyuck warns, as if Mark didn’t know already. He nods anyways and hands the empty cup of coffee he had ordered hours previously to the other.

Mark had created a little routine of coming by often to the little coffee shop where his boyfriend worked to study, it had a calm atmosphere and he got to see Donghyuck whenever he’d lift his head. It didn’t get more perfect than that.

He starts packing up slowly while rereading the notes he had made once more, by the time he was finished Donghyuck was already walking in his direction with his regular clothes and a bright smile on his lips. “Let’s go, I’m starving.”

“You work in a coffee shop couldn’t you steal a cookie or something?” Mark snorts and adjusts his bag on his shoulder.

“Do I look like I steal thing for a living?”

“Well, yeah?! Or have you forgotten the thousands of times you’ve stolen?!”

Donghyuck slams his hand on top of Mark’s mouth. “That was old me, I was a teen-“

“You’re nineteen.” Marks mumbles against the palm of the boy’s hand.

“Stop being a brat, that’s my job.” He presses his hand against Mark’s mouth even harder to the other couldn’t utter a single word. “Anyways, is there even food at home?” Mark blinks back at him, he thought about it for a few seconds and reached the conclusion that, no. They probably had
nothing at home. “Damnit, guess we gotta go shopping.”

Mark forces Donghyuck hand off his mouth and takes a deep breath. “You know I was about to die? I couldn’t breathe.”

“Oh good, I should’ve kept it for longer.” He teases.

“Who’s going to cuddle you when you’re needy if I’m dead?” Mark teases right back with a smug look on his face.

Donghyuck shrugs. “Might go back to Jeno, I think Renjun would be chill with it.”

Mark’s face drops, the smile fades and transforms into a frown right away. “Don’t.”

“Is Mawk Lwee still jwealous?” The boy pouts his lips mockingly and pinches Mark’s cheeks as if he were a baby. “We’ve been together for years when will you get over it?” He scoffs but Mark’s frown doesn’t go away.

“I don’t know, you’ve known Jeno for super long-“

“Shut your trap I don’t see Jeno like that anymore.”

“ANYMORE?!“ Mark shrieks and stops in the middle of the sidewalk, Donghyuck sighs exasperatedly.

“I thought we went over this.”

Mark shrieks once again. “The hell we did!”

“Look it’s over, been over for like four years now.” Donghyuck forces Mark to start walking again since people were giving them annoyed looks for blocking the way. “You really want me to say it?”

“Say what?”

Donghyuck sighs dramatically and moves behind Mark so he can back hug him and whisper right next to his hear without anyone else hearing. “That I’m still absolutely whipped for you.” He says with a soft smile that only widens when Mark chokes on his own spit and comes to yet another abrupt stop. “I thought it was a known fact, I think it’s pretty damn obvious isn’t it?”

Mark slaps his arm lightly and giggles, he couldn’t help but let it out. “Whatever.”

“Don’t whatever me I know you love it when I’m lame.” Donghyuck moves next to the other and pokes his tongue out.

“Perhaps…” He mumbles.

“I didn’t hear that, what did you say?” Donghyuck moves closer with a sneaky smirk, Mark lets out a loud sigh and rolls his eyes.

“I SAID I HATE YOU GOODBYE DONGHYUCK.” Mark says louder before walking faster to try and get away from his boyfriend, Donghyuck giggles loudly before running after him and jumping on his back.

“You can run but you can’t hide.” He places a chaste kiss on Mark’s nape. “Now, buy me food and shut up.”
Donghyuck rubs his eyes and groggily makes his way towards the kitchen to make himself something to eat before work started only to find Mark already up busying himself with his own… breakfast? “Is that a fucking watermelon?”

Mark snaps his head up, eyes wide from shock. “Oh.” He looks back down at the already half eaten watermelon that they had bought not even two days ago. “Yeah, that’s watermelon.”

“For breakfast?!”

“Why not?!” He fights back and finishes cutting yet another slice. “It’s good, and it’s refreshing. It’s getting warm out you know I can’t survive summer without my daily dosage of watermelon.”

Donghyuck shakes his head with fake disapproval. “You’re really something else.”

“Look who’s talking.” Mark mumbles while munching on the watermelon, Donghyuck watches the other for a few seconds before shaking his head again and going back to preparing his own breakfast.

He sits parallel to Mark on their little table with his simple milk with cereal and shoots the boy a look of disgust. “You’re cleaning this mess up.” Mark shrugs him off not paying attention to what he was saying at all. “Excuse me mister don’t ignore me like this I hope you know I won’t be cleaning your shit this time around. My job is more important than your classes.”

Mark looks up at him with an offended look. “Excuse me since when?!”

“You can, technically, skip your classes. I can’t be late for work.” He shuts him off immediately. “If you don’t clean it then don’t complain when there’s ants all over it when you come back.”

“Yeah, yeah. Aren’t you going to be late if you keep nagging?” Mark points at the little watch hanging in one of the walls and quirks his eyebrow up, Donghyuck curses under his breath and starts eating the rest of the cereal as quickly as possible before chugging down the rest of the milk.

He leaves Mark alone once again for just a few minutes and shows up again already dressed and ready to go, even after all those months of living together Mark was still amazed at how fast Donghyuck was at getting ready. Donghyuck plays with Yuckie for a few seconds before moving closer to Mark. “Oh, by the way.” He says and eyes the clock quickly, he still had some time to spare. “Did you check our group chat?”

Mark shakes his head, he hadn’t had the time after staying up till about three in the morning to finish a project. “No, what’s up?”

Yuckie pokes her tiny face against Donghyuck’s calf begging for attention so he picks her up and tries his best to pet her without shedding fur onto his clothes. “We decided to meet up next weekend, I hope you’re okay with that? Are you free?”

“Yeah, should be fine.” Mark nods and Donghyuck smiles.

“Okay, good.” He bends down to peck Mark but stops midway and cringes. “Clean your mouth it’s full of watermelon juice, you little kiddo.” Mark flips him off before wiping the corners of his mouth
and raising himself slightly so he could kiss Donghyuck goodbye. “I’ll see you later, have a nice
day!” Donghyuck chirps and puts the dog on the floor, it runs behind him as soon as its tiny legs
touch the floor. The boy runs back inside the kitchen with Yuckie and puts her on Mark’s lap.
“Don’t forget to feed her before you go.” He warns while grabbing his keys.

Mark waves at the other. “Sure. Also, should I bring you food later?”

Donghyuck pokes his head inside the kitchen again and shoots him a thumbs up. “Definitely.”

The bar was already pretty crowded when Donghyuck finally gets there, he had to do an extra shift
for one of his co-workers the exact same day the group had planned to hangout which meant he was
about three hours late into it. Work had been torture knowing his friends were all gathered having
fun without him while he had to serve rude clients, but he had thankfully lived through it.

“Donghyuck!” Someone calls, he snaps his head in the direction of the sound and spots Jeno waving
at him and jogs in his direction. “You got even prettier since I’ve last seen you.” He says, a bit too
loudly.

“Yeah? Look even prettier when he’s messy underneath me-“Mark bites but gets cut off by
Donghyuck who squeaks loudly.

“Mark what the fuck?!” He hits the back of the boy’s head. “What did y’all do to him? Why is he
already drunk?”

Jeno grabs his cup. “First of all, he did this to himself.” He cocks his eyebrow up. “Secondly, what
did you do to Mark? He used to be a saint.”

“That was a façade and I fell for it too until he dropped it not even two months into our relationship.”
Donghyuck mumbles and sits down, grabbing a drink of his own so that he wouldn’t have to deal
with the drunken mess while being sober.

“Jeno.” Mark blurts out. “I have a question.”

Donghyuck growls and squeezes his boyfriend’s thigh painfully hard. “Mark shut it.”

“Shoot.” Jeno chuckles playfully and ignores the way Donghyuck shoots daggers at him with his
eyes.

“How does a horny bastard like you even survive our sweet asexual baby over there?” He leans back
on his chair smugly as if he had roasted the other really badly, but Jeno just laughs and Renjun
snorts, meanwhile Donghyuck groans and closes his eyes with embarrassment.

“You see, this is my best bud.” He points at his hand and Renjun wastes no time in smacking his
shoulder. “What?!”

Renjun rolls his eyes but doesn’t utter a single word. “Jun, are we the only one’s not drunk in this
damned place?” Donghyuck whines.

The other sighs loudly and glares at his boyfriend. “Probably.”
Suddenly something knocks against the table making some of drinks spill, Donghyuck looks up only to find Jaemin smiling down at him with a cup on his hand and rosy cheeks. “Oh! Hi Hyuck.” He greets enthusiastically.

“Sup lover boy,” Donghyuck smiles. “How’s it going for you?”

“How life is the best life, so I’m good.” He takes a sip of his drink and sits next to Donghyuck. “And my grades this year have been super good, I’m actually shocked with myself to be quite frank.”

Donghyuck pats his back and clicks his tongue. “I’m more shocked you actually give a damn about your grades, I thought you’d just wild around in university till you had to find a job and quiet down.”

Jaemin snorts. “Listen, even when I get a job, do you really think I’m going to ‘quiet down’? That’s boring, no.” He finishes his drink and starts pouring some more. “And you, how’s the domestic life? If it’s as boring as Renjun’s then you can keep it, though.”

Renjun kicks his friend from under the table and scoffs. “He says that because he doesn’t want to settle down, Jeno and I aren’t boring.”

“No y’all just boring.” Jaemin insists. “I mean have you seen Jeno? Boring.”

“Excuse me!!” Jeno perks up.

“I said what I said.” He turns to face Donghyuck once again ignoring the couple completely. “I swear I gave up on trying to ask them what they do, they sound like an old married couple.”

Donghyuck chuckles. “You’re going to be disappointed with us too, then.” He glances in Mark’s direction and shoots the boy a quick fond smile. “We’re pretty lame too.”

Jaemin sighs. “Gross, we’re so young but everyone’s already living like they’re forty in this damn group. This is so sad.”

“Well then, let’s forget everything tonight then.” Donghyuck grabs his drink and holds it in Jaemin’s direction. “Let’s be sixteen all over again.”

Things don’t exactly go as planned, Mark started puking not even one hour in after Donghyuck arrived so they’re forced to stop and leave the bar. The mood simply wasn’t there anymore when they finally clean up the mess on Mark’s clothes, plus the boy reeked which wasn’t exactly ideal, so they decide to crash at someone’s house. Which ends up being Renjun’s and Jeno’s since it was the closest.

It wasn’t a big apartment, just slightly bigger than Mark’s, but the aura of it all was very different. The shoes were neatly placed at the entrance and not scattered across the entire apartment like in theirs, and the decorations were subtle and elegant, Mark didn’t bother much with decorating the apartment. And Donghyuck didn’t have it in him to ask Mark to lend him more money to do it.

Jeno heads to the toilet right away, no one’s shocked when they hear vomiting noises coming from inside. “I’m surrounded by weaklings!” Jaemin sighs dramatically. “What are we going to do now?”

“Well Mark gotta shower.” Donghyuck scrunches up his nose with disgust.
“After that, then.”

Renjun shrugs and turns the television on. “Disney movies?” He suggests. “I watch them often with Chenle when we’re drunk, makes them oddly hilarious.”

Jaemin opens his mouth to complain at first but ends up closing it and silently agreeing to the plan, it wasn’t as if he had a better idea anyways. Donghyuck waits with Mark for Jeno to finally come out of the toilet before helping his boyfriend around. “You’ll always be a big baby, won’t you?”

Mark whines unable to speak properly, tired and drunken Mark was the absolute worse.

When they finally come out, with Mark wearing one of Jeno’s pyjamas, the rest were all gathered around the TV. Jeno was already asleep, with his head on Renjun’s lap while the boy attentively watches the movie next to Jaemin.

Donghyuck helps Mark lay on the couch and places a kiss on the boy’s cheek before sitting next to Jaemin. “What are we watching?”

“Rapunzel?” Jaemin looks at Renjun questionably.

Renjun clicks his tongue. “It’s Tangled you uncultured swine.”

Donghyuck lets out a quiet laugh so he wouldn’t wake Jeno up, Mark was clearly not going to wake up for the next twelve hours though. He crawls closer to his boyfriend again and starts playing with the boy’s black locks while giggling along with the other two boys about random things that weren’t even all that funny happening in the movie.

He sighs with contentment, Donghyuck never thought he could achieve such a good life. He always thought he was destined to have a harsh one, where he had always to go against the current to try to be happy. But things weren’t like that anymore, and he knew this new lifestyle was just starting. That he and Mark would have many couple fights, and that friendships weren’t always stable either. But Donghyuck trusted them with his life, he trusted that they would forever make him the happiest person on earth.

Looking at his future didn’t hurt him like it used to when he was younger. In fact, Donghyuck looked forward to it, he looked forward to creating many more memories.

He looks back at Mark’s peaceful face and caresses it. “Thank you.” The boy says knowing full well Mark wasn’t going to hear it.

“What did you say?” Jaemin turns back to him with a puzzled look.

“I said I hate all of you.”

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Chapter End Notes

So, i finally finished it?! Thank you for reading i hope you liked it!! And i’m super thankful for all the comments and people who showed their love towards this fic, it really motivates me to keep on writing and trying to improve <3

(Btw, i posted the nohyuck fic and will be starting the chensung after my exams are out of the way!!)
End Notes

curious cat  twitter

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