bliss behind the burn
by pjungkook

Summary

You attract what you fear, they say. Bullshit, Jimin mentally contests. He has always attracted pretty boys and he has never once feared love.

That is, until Jeon Jungkook's existence finds its way into his life, making sure it gets him regretting having laughed at old knowledge's face so carelessly.

He should have seen it coming. After all, he has always been weak where gorgeous features and mysterious eyes were concerned. And if putting himself in the line of fire meant a chance of grabbing with both hands what his heart always ached for, well, then maybe he was willing to pull the trigger himself.

or,

Jimin falls in love with Jungkook just to find out that he's in love with someone else.
prologue

Chapter Notes

TW: there's mention of sexual abuse during this chapter when Jimin is having a conversation with his sister. It's there as a warning and it is nowhere near graphic, but if you're not comfortable, please skip this part. It starts at '[..] “God, this is not–” she sounded so frustrated [..]' Take care!!

hello! heh, i started another chaptered fic without finishing any of the others, im deeply sorry, but i just felt like i had to write this so here it is sdfjksj (im the worst i know)

all my love and gratitude to @meatykook and @yoonnseok for always supporting me and being the absolute best, i love you both to the moon and back <3

and for @trickstersweet, thank you so much for sending me that prompt! i know my extra ass transformed this in probably a lot more than you expected, but i hope you like it! thank you for all your understanding and patience <3

to everyone else reading this, i hope you love reading it as much as i loved writing!! thank you <3

twitter

See the end of the chapter for more notes

I wanted it to be tender waves. But why didn't I know you were the sea.

Intense. Perhaps that's the best word to describe Park Jimin in his early eighteens. He's bright, and lovely, and optimistic too – and, more often than not, carries a sweet smile on his lips that he's always well-disposed to offer to anyone who seems to need it.

He's shy too, but his mother once said that's part of his charm, so he clings onto her words like he once did to her placenta. That's a way he finds to keep on believing he's actually loved by the people around him, and not annoying and childish, as a detached voice inside his head insists to whisper every time he's left alone in a crowded place.

Jimmie is full of contradictions – he knows. As he can feel the urge to fall in love inside him growing bigger each day, but always backs off when things seem to be evolving a bit too seriously. It's not his fault, he reassures himself – nor the boys’ he has gone out with.
They just weren’t right. Sure he felt good when they were on their knees sucking him off or when he was biting bruises down their necks hearing them moan his name – however, there was no sentiment; no butterflies running up and down his stomach, just an intense clenching around it, warning he was being driven over the edge and very likely about to come.

Thus, despite his thirst to feel love swallowing him whole, he doesn’t mind carrying around relationships he is sure is not going to last.

Maybe those are traces of his parent's failed marriage marked on his personality. But he is not willing to lose time of his life trying to trim the edges of a misplaced puzzle piece to fit his own, just to find out in the end they both make part of a completely different picture, and were never meant to match. He is not making the same mistakes his mother and father once did, just because bitter safety of a planned life tastes better in the throat than metallic fear of diving into the unknown. He learned better than that.

Or, at least that's what he keeps on telling himself.

The place he finds himself tucked into is crowded and by any sort, comforting. Every imaginable inch Jimin tries to reach is filled with people he doesn't really know – or bother to – and he is already regretting the decision of wasting his night away even before it starts.

See, the thing is, Taehyung is out of town in a family trip somewhere fancy and nice, while all Jimin had been capable of doing in his absence was watch the clock tick away the last days of his break and catch up with a tv show he isn't really that into anymore. He can't even fully remember the plot.

It’s true that Taehyung has only been out for three days? Yes. Is he being overly dramatic about the lack of his best friend pestering him around and being his company to every possible place? Maybe. But, although Jimin can pretty much face a 3 hours long walk, underneath the scorching sun, to reach a waterfall he won't be able to enjoy since it’s unexpectedly crowded (“We must have gotten in life’s bad side today”, Taehyung had told him), and still keep a smile on his face; he can't, for the life of him, spend three days monotonously laying on a bed while feeling all of his energy sucked out of him by the insistent thought of precious lifetime being thrown in the trash – completely useless in his memory and history.

So, that’s how he caught himself texting a classmate in a lonely friday night. He’s known for holding contact of all the best parties going on the neighborhood and only god knew how much Jimin so desperately assumed he needed one.

He hopes he was right when making that decision, though, because as well as he’s already here, he may just fucking make this night worth it.

The bar is fully displayed in front of him before he can even register how he got there – probably by the sway of bodies glued to his, moving him back and forth against his will at the sound of the beat. Well, at least, it didn't get him to walk. He miraculously finds an empty chair in front of the counter and plops his ass on it as fast as possible, before someone else has the chance to do it. He absently taps the cold surface of the marble with his fingers while waiting for the barista to serve of those who arrived first. His eyes wander around and fall down onto his hands resting on the
counter. It’s made of black marble with some silvery veins running over it. It’s pretty, but it doesn't
match the place, Jimin thinks. It’s too dark, and the club has already enough murky decorations, in
his opinion.

When the tall man responsible for the drinks finally stops in front of him, he shoots a suspicious
gaze his way, and then politely asks to see his id. Jimin smiles sweetly and takes his fake id out of
his pocket. He has done this so many times already it doesn't even make him nervous anymore.
The man returns it to Jimin with a slight bow and questions what drink he wants. He includes “sir”
in the sentence, which amuses Jimin more than he lets apparent. Poor man, has not a clue he’s
talking to a teenager who just finished the second year of high school. Jimin feels somewhat
powerful doing this. Somewhat free. Going places he shouldn't go, doing things he shouldn't do.
It's unsettling, but he takes the thrilling feeling with a mix of excitement and pleasure – tastes
every single drop of it in his tongue. He was never really one to bend down to rules that easily,
anyway. He hates being told what to do, how to act and who to love. After all, he is the only one
facing the consequences of his acts in the end of the day, so he might as well leave all the decisions
for him and himself only to make.

The barista places a tall cup filled with an orange drink on the counter, right in front of him, and
Jimin flashes a bright smile his way. “Thank you.”

He takes a gulp, and the liquid burns his throat with a heat he’s already so familiar with.

Oh.

Tastes like a free open bar party.

Jimin really does love having rich friends.

A smile involuntarily begins to take shape on his lips as more alcohol goes down his throat and a
song he’s been addicted to for the past week starts to blast the speakers of the house. It is not
enough to attract him to the dance floor, but it does get his body moving in place as he mouths the
lyrics and analyzes the faces surrounding him. As much as he enjoys his own company, tonight he
is suddenly in the mood for having another body close to his.

It feels like he hasn't kissed someone in ages.

It’s only two weeks in reality, but still.

However, no one particularly holds his attention long enough to be interesting so he sighs
disappointed and reluctantly gets up, bidding farewell to his chair ‘cause he knows he is no longer
finding her empty when he comes back.

The dance floor practically yells for him – demands his presence – when the greatest mix he’s ever
heard of ‘titanium’ starts playing.

Jimin dances like he’s no longer attached to the world, or to any kind of strings, really. Whenever
he dances, it’s like he owns everything and everyone around him – it’s like time itself stops, so it
can save that moment in eternity.

Jimin himself probably doesn't know that. Isn't aware of the talent he holds in hands – completely
oblivious on how bright he could shine or how far he could reach if only he paid more attention to
the qualities his body hides. But he does know he loves dancing. He feels it in his bones. Feels it in
the way the singer’s strong voice vibrates right through him. It’s a foreign song, but it was a hit
two years ago and he absolutely loves the beat, so he closes his eyes and allows it to carry him
It’s only when his body crashes against a sturdy chest, that his magical bubble no one could break into, bursts. Suddenly the song sounds way too loud and the people around him make the air stuffy and hot – he feels a lonesome drop of sweat slide down his nape and it bothers him to his fingertips. After huffing irritated, Jimin looks up to the man who so rudely put himself in the way like a statue when he was clearly lost in the song, enjoying the moment.

It happens it’s Doyoung, and Jimin has to stop himself from allowing a surprised “oh” to escape his lips.

“My bad, princess.” the older man utters in a rough voice. It doesn't take long for Jimin to smell his breath and know he is drunk.

He rolls his eyes, mainly because it’s only 9 pm, the party has just started and the man is drunk already, but Doyoung takes the act as a response for his usage of the old pet name.

“What? Can’t I call you princess anymore? You used to love it.”

Jimin takes a deep breath and forces a smile to grow on his pink lips. “Sorry, but I’d rather you not. It’s in the past now. Just like you are.”

Taehyung says it’s a charm of him, to say harsh words in a lovable tone. It’s Jimin’s favorite trait of himself.

“Oh, you’re mean.” Doyoung dramatically puts a hand over his heart.

It’s funny how a month ago, Jimin would find this extremely endearing and how now he thinks it’s any less than pitiful. He takes another sip from his drink and empties the cup, all meanwhile staring at the taller man’s eyes. He wanted to make sure he knew Jimin didn't give a fuck.

“My bad.” he repeats Doyoung’s words with a smile. “Asshole.”

The walk back to the bar turns to be much more difficult than Jimin expects, and even though he wants to make a dramatic exit for effect – going to the bar is clearly not providing him that –, he oh so much needs another drink right now, ‘cause it has just been proven a fact that he can't make tonight sober.

It was the best advice he has ever received from his sister, to dump Doyoung. Maybe even the best advice he has ever received. From anyone.

When Jimin first started going out with him it was nice. It was calm. Doyoung was handsome, tall, and dork in a certain childish way that got Jimin smiling by himself at the memories of the other man’s jokes. He was older too, and the fact used to make Jimin feel goosebumps from his ears to his fingertips. It was a kind of excitement that masked the whole situation to paint Jimin powerful – so attractive that he got an older man to fall for his charms. He couldn't believe it in the time.

The thought alone of Doyoung’s hands on his body now makes him sick to the stomach.

Back then, he didn't know his sister yet – his parents were still in the middle of signing the papers for divorce.

He was exposed to the vulnerability of being in a relationship with an older man and no one apart from Taehyung to advise in what steps to take – how fast to go.
Jimin is not a fervent believer of destiny – never was. However, if there is one thing that makes him wobble in his beliefs is the perfect timing in which he met his sister for the first time.

A month later after the official divorce, his father told him and Jihyun he had some people to introduce them. Jimin knew what was happening right away, but Jihyun remained oblivious until the very last second. When they found themselves sitting in front of two women in his father’s new apartment, his younger brother shot him a puzzled gaze, to which Jimin just shrugged apologetically. By the expression on Jihyun’s face he knew things were about to go down badly. He silently watched the younger boy lose his temper and be harshly scolded by their father when the man announced those were his girlfriend and her daughter. In the end, it all resulted in two very embarrassed ladies – Nayoung and Eunbi, by the way –, his father stressed out at the limit and Jihyun stomping out of the apartment back to their house in the verge of tears. Jimin sighing and complaining he was hungry was what took everyone out of their personal trances – out of the awkward silence settled in the living room as well – to reunite at the dinner table so they could eat.

Jimin and Eunbi – Nayoung’s daughter – clicked almost instantly. Between subtle smiles agreeing with what the other said throughout the dinner and casual laughs at each other’s moderate jokes in front of their parents, Jimin knew he needed to be friends with her. Unlike Jihyun, he was not the least bitter about his father’s new relationship. Life didn't stop for any of them, and Jimin knew the marriage with his mother was meant to wreckage from the start. All he could wish for them was to find joy in any possible thing around them, and if Nayoung meant that for his father, then he was happy. Besides, she seemed very sweet and smart. She was gorgeous too – nowhere near the most beautiful woman in the world, destined to be his mother for as long as she lived, but she was pretty. Jimin remembers exchanging numbers with Eunbi that night, and from that day forward it was downhill – in the best of ways.

It all happened in less than three weeks, and Jimin is gathering the courage to admit Eunbi is his second best friend now – well, Taehyung’s place cannot be taken by anyone. They’ve done at least 7 sleepovers in the spur of 21 days, which isn't exactly hard since they’re siblings — each one better than the last. They have so much in common it took Jimin off guard at first.

Eunbi is older by three years, so it should mean she has a lot of wise advices to give Jimin – yes, except she doesn’t. Jimin doesn't know if he finds it hilarious or tragic. Once he told her he didn't want to talk to Taehyung anymore, ‘cause the boy was taking too long to answer his messages and even had the courage to come with the lame excuse he wasn't feeling his phone vibrate in his pocket. At that, Eunbi told him, with the most plain expression ever: “Stick that phone up his ass so you’ll make sure he feels it next time.” Jimin cracked up laughing so hard he fell off the bed.

However, during one of their latest sleepovers, Eunbi came out for him, leaving Jimin nothing less than shocked from his spot on the mattress. Maybe it wasn't the statement itself, but the natural way in which she spilled it, as if she had told many people about it. Jimin didn't know what to say for some seconds. He had only told Taehyung about his sexuality, and yet there was his sister, two weeks after meeting him for the first time, rambling about how she misses this girl she used to hook up with.

Jimin ends inhaling all of his courage in his body to ask, “Are you… lesbian?”

She looked at him with a soft smile, “I’m bisexual.” she clarified, “But I sure have a preference for girls.”

“Oh…” Jimin nodded, a sort of haze in his mind, as if he was mild sleep induced.

“What’s the problem?” his sister asked, and Jimin could swear he saw a glint of regret swimming in her eyes in that moment.
“I’m…” he frowned, unable to believe he was actually mouthing those words. “I’m gay.”

Eunbi raised her brows at him, a slight smile on her lips. “I knew it!” she shot. It was only needed a exchange of gazes for both of them to lay down on the mattress laughing, completely at ease. After assuring Jimin “he didn't act gay at all”, (even though saying there’s no such a thing as acting gay, to which Jimin vehemently disagreed) and that “he wasn't obvious”, she excitedly jumped around asking Jimin about his relationships and such. Jimin told her everything. Every boy he has ever gone out with, every mouth he has ever kissed. He spilled his life on a plate for her to fully savor it – completely exposed –, and he couldn't even bring himself to feel scared about consequences. Eunbi transmitted to him a sort of comfortable confidence he didn't think he was going to find in anyone apart his mother and Taehyung. She listened through it all with a big smile and occasional smirks followed by comments such as “naughty boy” and a wiggle of eyebrows.

Then, he told her about Doyoung. He told her about his traits, how fun he was and how he was even gathering confidence enough in him to have his first time. Ever. He thought he never saw her giggle and squeal so hard.

“Oh my, that’s so cute, I can't believe you’re this adorable! I want to meet him, when can I pick you boys at school?”

Jimin scratched the back of his neck. “Uh, he doesn't go to school, actually.”

“What?” she was startled, “He dropped it?”

“Ah, no, he… Already finished it.”

Jimin watched her smile falter and her countenance change immediately. A frown installed on her forehead, denouncing the confusion in her mind.

“Jimin, how old is Doyoung?” her tone was completely apprehensive, as if she was walking on a ground full of hidden glass shards.

“…twenty…seven.” Usually, he allowed this information to slip from his lips a lot more confidently, but something in Eunbi’s eyes made him wobble in his cheap made up fairy tale.

“Twenty seven?!” she nearly choked, “Jimin, oh my god…”

“Listen, I–” he started, defensive, but she didn't seem to be listening to him.

“Do you know this is illegal, right?” At that, he shut up, doing his best to avoid eye contact.

“Jimin, oh god, he’s older than me.”

“I know, but…” his voice failed him. “He is nice.”

“God, this is not–” she sounded so frustrated, bordering disappointed and Jimin ducked his head in embarrassment. “Fuck, Jimin, they’re always nice.” At that, Jimin raised his eyes at her, at the exact same time she caressed one of his cheeks, wanting him to look at her. “Listen to me, okay? Promise.” Jimin nodded, for the first time shy in front of his sister. She sighed deeply, as if preparing herself mentally to say whatever she was about to say. “Once, I dated a guy older than me. It wasn't even illegal, he was 18 and I was 15. And I’m not saying relationships with age gaps are bad, no, but pay attention to me, I was only 15... Do you have any idea how a 15 year old girl thinks?” Eunbi waited for Jimin’s response, but when he remained quiet, she continued. “She thinks as a child, ‘cause that’s what she still is. A child. Just like you. It doesn't matter how much you try to argue with me, you still are a child, at least in his eyes. And you know it. But anyway, the point is. Imagine yourself with 15, remember the things you used to do. You probably played...
video games with Taehyung and watched animes all day long, right? Now think of you now, think about all the things you’ve already done, all the experience you already have in your package, how many more things you have lived, you have seen. If your 15 year old ever dated your 18 year old, you know what would happen? The 18 year old you would end up influencing, directly or indirectly, the 15 year old you, and not in a good way. 15 year old you would feel so powerful, so pretty for catching the attention of an older person like you, that he would do anything to keep it that way and prove that he’s better than the other people his age. More mature. I know that, because I did. And I know you’re probably doing it too. 15 year old you, would force himself to drink, ‘cause 18 year old you does so. He would force himself to go to places he has never been, and maybe is slightly scared of, just because you also go. You see what’s happening? Even without the intention, this hypothetical relationship is changing the whole way of the younger living, making things happen in an unnatural pace for him. Now, imagine how worse things could be when the older has the intention to influence and manipulate. It’s so easy to do this, when the younger is already so deep into changing their personal self to shape into the older’s mold, y’know? I lost my virginity for that guy.” she paused to take a deep breath and Jimin wondered if he was worth to listen to this story. “He kept on insisting, even though I said no so many times, ‘cause the thought alone scared me. One day he asked me to go to a party with him, so I went. He got me drunk, putting more drinks than I could handle in my hands. He knew that, and so did I, but I gulped every single drop in my stupid need to please him and prove I could do it. He… Well, let’s just say there was no consent from me on what we— what he did that night.” Jimin’s breath turned uneven, his fist closing tight without he realizing. “I was almost knocked unconscious, but not enough to keep the memories away.” He watched her in utmost disbelief, breath locked in his throat while his sister threw all the information up on him without even pausing. She closed her eyes and allowed herself to breathe for a moment. When she opened them again to continue her story Jimin swore he saw tears glistening in it. It completely broke him inside. “Jimin-ah, please, don’t make the same mistake I did. It may not lead to something as violent as rape, but it has such a high chance to evolve into an abusive relationship where you have no voice… Seriously, believe in me, I know what I’m talking about.”

She did.

When Jimin reached out for Doyoung two days later, after spending them in his bedroom gathering the courage and the heart to break up with him, the man seemed like another person. He never raised a hand to physically hurt Jimin, no – but his face fell, the usual dumb smile he wore fading and being replaced by dark shadows of pure offense and cruelty on his face. He scoffed and spat on the ground close to Jimin’s feet, startling him. He watched in shock as Doyoung venomously spilled the harsh words at him like he had never done before in their short time together.

“The whiny little bitch thinks he can dump me after getting me hooked on him for so long, just so I can get nothing in the end.” he stepped closer into Jimin’s personal space and he remembers being frozen in the spot. “But don’t worry. Never wanted you, anyway. Already had a pussy to fuck behind your back. Bet your ugly fat ass can’t even take half of my cock, just like your shitty mouth couldn’t. You’re dirty.” his breath hit on Jimin’s face and he felt his legs trembling, threatening to fail at any given moment. “You stink.” the man pulled away with a blank expression. “Good luck finding someone who will want to lay a finger on this disgusting body of yours. Can’t understand how I did.” He disappeared just like that and Jimin cried himself to sleep, trembling on Eunbi’s arms that night. Her voice soothing the burn in his chest, repeatedly chanting how all Doyoung ever did was lie, how Jimin shouldn’t trust his words. And even though he knows she’s probably right, he can’t bring himself to push the memory away from his mind, the words the man slapped him with still crystal clear ringing in his ears from time to time, in his weakest moments.

Jimin hates it. He hates how it affects his mood, how it tastes bitter in his throat. How it leaves him feeling weak and vulnerable. He doesn't cherish that night, not even when his sister held him close
like she could protect him from the whole world. He appreciated it, but if he could he would just rewind his entire life until the moment he met Doyoung to make the right choices. How stupid.

“A lemonade vodka, please.”

The barista eyes him with suspicion once again, but remains quiet, starting to prepare his drink gracefully. Jimin huffs in annoyance, knowing this is probably the last drink he’ll get. There’s only so much a fake id can do for him when he’s still walking around with a 18 year old face with baby fat in his cheeks – the makeup may add a little bit more of maturity to his features, but it doesn’t work like magic.

“Aren’t you a little bit young to be ordering drinks this naturally?” a voice creeps up by his side, loud enough only for them to hear above the heavy thud of the song vibrating behind them.

Jimin scoffs, before turning his head to gaze at the stranger, irritation clear in his tone. “Excuse me? And you are?

The boy beside him smirks, as if this is all just a big joke for him, before turning his face to the other side whilst tapping his long fingers on the marble, without answering Jimin’s answer. He scoffs once again at the rudeness, not daring to be swept away by how the boy’s jawline draws his profile like some sort of meticulous sculpture. He is insanely handsome, Jimin has to admit, even though he feels pissed off. Even beneath the musky flashlights of the club, hiding most of his features in neon shadows, it’s like his presence itself exudes a kind of mysterious glow Jimin can’t put his finger on. He seems young though, maybe even younger than Jimin.

“Like you’re one to talk, brat.”

At that, the boy snaps his attention back at him, the amused smile tugging at the corner of his lips still having not left his demeanor. “Oh?” he tilts his head, “But you don’t see me holding any drink in my hands, do you?”

Jimin takes a second to think of an answer, when he realizes the rude ass is sitting on his chair. What is he even doing at the bar if he’s not going to drink anything? He lets a snort of air go past his lips, clearly irritated. “Whatever.”

He turns his head to the other side, not wanting to have some kid screw up his night by ruining even more his already ruined mood. He silently wishes Taehyung was there. It’d be so much easier to just have someone he trusts by his side to joke about the shitty people and laugh at the drunk ones. Jimin closes his eyes. He misses him.

“I saw you dancing.” the boy’s voice surges again, louder this time. Jimin pretends he doesn’t hear it. “You’re good.”

He represses the urge to scowl. He knows he’s good.

“I know.” he can’t stop the answer from falling past his lips. He doesn't know what it is about this boy that’s getting him so riled up over nothing – but the way he smiles so easily and talks like he owns the place pisses him the fuck off. Not to mention, he’s surely younger and still, doesn't seem to give a shit about using honorifics with him. “Call me hyung.”

“Why?” he raises his brows while his mouth goes into an ‘o’ shape, almost a pout, that Jimin refuses to find cute. “You don't even know how old I am!”

“How old are you?” he deadpans.
The boy seems to roll the answer on his tongue, and waits until the barista sets Jimin’s drink in front of him before he turns to speak. Jimin gladly takes the cup, bowing slightly at the older man as he mutters a low “thank you”.

“I’m seventeen.”

Jimin laughs, delighted at being right.

“See? It’s hyung for you from now on.”

He sips at his drink and when the bittersweet liquid touches his tongue and rolls down his throat, he hums appreciatively.

“What if I don’t want to?” comes the younger’s answer. Jimin doesn’t know if he’s joking or being straightforward rude, but he doesn't care and neither has the patience to deal with this right now.

“Then, I advise you to fuck the fuck off.”

He doesn’t bother turning back to look at the boy’s expression when he stomps out of there.

The pool shines under the moonlight. Jimin has his feet dipped in it as he stares at all the patterns the water creates by reflecting the lights around. It’s pretty. He sighs, too caught up in his own thoughts to pay attention at his surroundings. He feels embarrassed now, after the heat of all his annoyance disappeared into the chilly night, for treating that boy so bad. He doesn't even know his name. He just doesn't understand what got into him. He has never treated someone he just met that way. It’s just… Jimin can't explain. He was just so riled up at the time that he wasn't thinking straight and the guy just kept pushing it.

Jimin raises his eyes to look for him and regrets it straight away. There’s people all around him – smiling, talking in small groups and laughing out loud while he sits alone by the pool, the sound of the music muffled inside the house. He sighs. He really really wishes Taehyung was there with him. It’d make everything so much easier. Taehyung had always been better at making friends than him, always been better at chatting with strangers like they already knew each other for months. It was admirable – envyable even. Most of Jimin’s extroverted, yet still lacking traits came from Taehyung – from watching him, learning with his peaceful way of dealing with life. Jimin wishes he was more like Taehyung in many ways. He’d know how to sort Jimin’s sudden melancholy so well it’d be surprising.

He exhales a deep breath and diverts his eyes to the night sky. It’s mostly cloudless, the stars shining timidly, faded by the city lights and the urban pollution. Jimin wonders what Doyoung is doing at one of the parties his classmate holds contact of. Even though he always takes Jimin and Taehyung to all the best ones, he knows there’s only so much a high school student can reach, although being rich as fuck. The thought alone of Doyoung somehow being the slightest related to anyone he knows gets his body on edge. He pushes the thought away, though, ‘cause he knows it’s not likely.

Jimin is about to get up and go find something better to entertain his night with, when the boy from earlier surges in his field of vision, completely hovering over him and hiding the stars Jimin was appreciating. His cheeks instantly burn in embarrassment and he has the urge to duck his head and
hide, but the way the boy is looking at him holds him captive.

“Hello, hyung.” he says simply, but Jimin smiles anyway, because the way hyung echoes in his ears easily pleases him. He mentally scolds himself for having already given in.

“Hello, stranger.”

Something flicks in the boy’s eyes, as if he’s clearly amused; but this time around Jimin doesn’t feel offended – he almost feels good at the possibility of he being the one providing his momentary joy.

“It can be Jungkook for you.” Jungkook also smiles and Jimin has to bite his lips to stop his own from growing bigger. He’s cute. “Sorry about earlier.” he says plainly and Jimin is a little taken aback by the honesty. He expects the boy to continue, but he doesn’t, so Jimin opens his mouth to start talking, when Jungkook plops down by his side, unlacing his shoes so he can also drown his legs in the water.

Jimin is caught staring, so he drifts his focus to something else. “I’m sorry too. I’m not usually like that. Guess I was already in a bad mood before you talked to me...” he trails off. Jimin doesn’t look him in the eye while talking, but he sees Jungkook nodding by his peripheral.

After the silence menaces to stretch for too long, Jungkook smiles faintly at him, “What can I actually call you?”

Jimin looks back and mimics his expression, the smile slipping into his lips rather naturally. He puts both hands behind his back and supports the weight of his torso with it while still maintaining eye contact with Jungkook. He feels like the smile on his face has transformed into a challenging one.

“What do you want to call me?”

Jungkook releases a laugh that’s half breathy and half incredulous, as if he wasn't expecting that response. Jimin likes it. The feeling of surprising Jungkook. He bites the inner part of his bottom lip awaiting for the other’s move.

However, when Jungkook places one of his hands dangerously close to Jimin’s and leans into his personal space he sees himself holding his breath.

“What if I want to call you ‘moody shortie’?”

Jimin takes a second to absorb. When he does, he chokes in offense, ears burning.

“Wha–” he snaps, but Jungkook cuts him off.

“But I also really like ‘pink cheeks’...” he adds, getting Jimin to flush red like a flame.

“Yah!”

“What?” the boy tilts his head while carrying that stupid smile on his lips. Jimin frowns, suddenly in a loss for words. He ducks his head and feels himself pouting, so he looks away for Jungkook not to see it.

“D-don’t say that, it’s rude!”

Jimin hears Jungkook giggling beside him so his attention returns to the boy in a split of second.
He has two of his front teeth a little more outstanding than the others which kind of reminds Jimin of a bunny. He smiles to himself at the observation. Jungkook’s lips are well delineated around his smile – his bottom lip is a lot more plump than the upper one and Jimin catches himself wondering what would it be like to scratch his teeth over it. Would Jungkook like it?

“Why are you smiling?” the younger shoots.

“Why are you smiling?” Jimin retorts, shifting his gaze to look at Jungkook’s eyes and not at his red, pretty lips.

“Are you sure you’re a hyung to me?” Jungkook darts from his question once again.

“You’re never answering anything I ask you, are you?”

“Well, I could question you the same? I still don’t know your name, pink cheeks.”

Jimin feels the blush creeping his skin for a second – third? – time. “It’s Jimin, Ji-min, call me Jimin-hyung from now on, not anything else.”

“Ah…” Jungkook sighs in disappointment. “I like pink cheeks better.”

“I’m going to hit you.” Jimin warns in a serious tone.

“Wow, you sure are moody, ain’t ya, pink cheeks?”

“You–” Jimin raises his hand to hit his shoulder, and is startled when Jungkook catches his wrist mid-air in a firm hold, shortening the distance between them and invading his air area until their noses are touching.

Jimin’s heart loses it inside his chest.

“I like it.” Jungkook whispers and Jimin feels it on his lips as a ghostly graze, getting his stomach muscles to curl, before Jungkook’s warmth suddenly takes over him and clouds his senses. He squeaks under the kiss and before he can feel ashamed by it, Jungkook is holding his jawline and he’s melting. He closes his eyes, completely overwhelmed by the sudden sensation and sooner than he’s able to process Jungkook’s soft lips are moving over his, and Jimin’s opening his mouth for him, eager to taste the boy on his tongue, but an abrupt and loud yell for his name stops both of them in the middle of the kiss. Jungkook detaches himself from him to look at their source of disturbance, yet still remaining close, leaving Jimin breathless, with half lidded eyes and a pair of parted lips wanting for more behind him. He’s sure he’s got himself induced in some sort of trance, ‘cause his heart can’t stop knocking against his rib cages and his senses are not properly functioning, but the loud voice surges again, snapping him back to reality.

“Jimin-ah!”

Jimin looks up to find the classmate who brought him to the party standing by the glass doors that leads to the backyard and the pool, energetically waving at him with a big smile on his face. He seems clueless about the fact he had just interrupted probably the highlight point of Jimin’s night.

“Ah.” he says, still a little out of himself, grabbing his shoes and taking his legs out of the water. “Sorry, I–” he gets up, flustered. “I gotta go.” and just like that, he’s walking away from Jungkook, carrying a frenetic heart and a tingling mouth with him, still electrified by the younger’s touch. What the fuck just happened?
Jimin soon finds himself tucked in the middle of a bunch of people he doesn't want to be with. It seems like someone randomly suggested a dance competition to see who was the best dancer of the party and his classmate soon thought of him. And that’s how the boy ended being the biggest cockblock of the night. Jimin snorts out of irritation, because he doesn't seem to find a way to get out of the situation – it seemed like his classmate made a big fuss about him and now people just won’t let him go – they keep dancing around him, clapping at every step he takes as if he just made the most difficult move ever when truly he’s just rolling his hips. But still he understands everyone is a little out of their minds, drunkenness already thick enough in the air for Jimin to smell it. It’s a bit overwhelming – in an uncomfortable way –, but at least, the music is good. So Jimin closes his eyes and tries to take the most out of the moment, because at least he’s not at home watching his hours be useless wasted away doing nothing. He feels the beat reverberating on the ground and on his body, from how loud it is. At some point, he gets completely sick of it, and not even his love on dance is capable of making him bear another second there. His body is already humid with sweat and he feels disgusted. Ignoring the sounds of disappointment from everyone around him, he detaches himself from them with an apologetic smile and gets the fuck out of there. Damn him three times for listening to his classmate calling for him and actually going. As far as he knows, if he wasn’t a complete dumbass he could’ve been making out with Jungkook until now.

Jungkook.

The name stirs something weird inside of him. Honestly, he felt embarrassed at the way he reacted when the boy kissed him – as if he had never kissed anyone ever in his entire life. Pathetically squealing and doing weird noises. And he considered himself the older out of the two of them. How embarrassing, really. He sighs, walking out of the stuffy room, and into the pool area. He takes a deep breath to inhale the fresh air of the night and finds himself searching for Jungkook in the sparse number of people who are sitting there. He doesn't find him – not even in the backyard that is a few stairs below the level of the house. He tries to suppress the disappointed feeling making itself noticeable inside of him. It’s just a boy, anyway – like many of the ones he’s already been with. It’s nothing big. Right.

Right.

He sighs again and takes his phone out of his pants, sitting on one of the many sun loungers sprawled around. He opens his message apps just to find it empty.

you – 10:54 pm

where you at

what you’re doing

It doesn't take long for the phone to vibrate on his hands.
Somehow, Taehyung’s reply sets a smile on his lips. He imagines the boy’s voice saying what’s written, and if anything, it consoles him a bit.

you – 10:58 pm

party

wish you were here tho

kinda sucks too

dumbass – 10:58 pm

tch

all i have to do is stay away for three days and u already ditching me

i see how it is

you – 10:58 pm

pls

dumbass – 10:59 pm

lol kiddin’

i wish i was there too

but no can do right

go have fun

shake that ass

find a mouth to kiss

a dick to suck
Jimin taps on his screen with his nails, without actually hitting any key, in deep thought if he should tell Taehyung about Jungkook or not.

After some seconds, he throws his head back and locks the phone. But, sooner than he expects, Taehyung reaches out for him again.

i hate that i’m not spending my birthday w you
or new years
god i hate this family
it’s my fucking birthday
and i have to spend it with a bunch of petty strangers i dont give a shit about

i know
i hate it too
new years gonna be so awful without you here
its breaking our tradition

i know
sorry to be ruining your night im just kinda upset
you – 11:07 pm

dont be

neither sorry or upset

when you’re back i have a surprise so look forward to be back soon

instead of worrying about this

Jimin doesn’t know why the urge to comfort Taehyung always makes him say the most stupid things and come up with the craziest ideas, but he just shrugs it off, because, after all, that’s what friendship is all about. Comfort and trust, love and support.

dumbass – 11:08 pm

rly?????

woah you’re the best

i’m really looking forward to it

Jimin smiles to himself. He better be.

dumbass – 11:10 pm

ei

jimin-ah?

you – 11:10 pm

yes?

dumbass – 11:11 pm

i love you

This time Jimin laughs out loud, joy filling him with the most beautiful sensation of being genuinely appreciated. He covers his mouth with the back of his hand to stop the laughter and types back.
Neither of them say anything else. There’s no need.

When Jimin’s focus turn to his surroundings once again, he realizes the few people who were outside when he got there, are nowhere to be seen, probably in the house once again. Jimin gets up and decides to call it a night, even though it’s early. He’s about to take his phone once more so he can call Eunbi to pick him up when a swift movement on the waters of the pool beside him catches his eye. He looks just in time to see Jungkook emerging from it.

First thing Jimin lays his eyes on are his arms. They’re thick and veiny, one of his hands going up his face to wipe the excess of water with long fingers. He also pushes his hair back, getting it messy and sticking to three different directions, since it’s soaked and gluing to his skin. Then, he slowly walks till the edge of the pool and places those annoyingly sinful arms on the border, which gets Jimin to redirect his attention to the second thing in Jungkook’s body he grows fast to crave: his shoulders. God. If shoulders could kill. It’s even more unfair, because the younger’s white t-shirt is, well, wet, and pretty much see-through, not allowing much for Jimin’s imagination. He takes a deep breath.

The boy smirks with ease at him. “Hey, pink cheeks.”

Jimin rolls his eyes. “I already said is hyung for you.” And although his words aren’t soft, the smile on his face pretty much is.

“Ah, but hyung doesn't fit you…” Jungkook trails while looking around, and then stops his eyes at Jimin’s again. “I mean, aren't older people supposed to be taller and more muscular than me?” he teases.

Jimin scowls, actually offended. “You disrespectful brat. Has no one ever taught you a thing called manners?”

Jungkook shrugs, unaffected by Jimin’s tone. “Actually yes, but I like to have the freedom to choose when to use it.”

Jimin laughs with incredulity. Had he really just let himself be kissed by that same mouth some time ago? Unbelievable.

“So? Were you looking for me?” Jungkook asks when Jimin doesn't add anything.

He doesn't meet Jungkook’s eyes when he responds, arms crossed over his chest. “Hah. You wish. Actually, I was just leaving, have a good night.” he stubbornly says after having a short mental argument with himself. It is probably better for him to leave anyway. He turns on his heels and starts walking towards the house again, when he hears the sound of water being ruffled along with Jungkook’s heated voice:

“What? No, wait a second, please!”

Jimin sighs and turns around after a moment. He considers that a big ass defeat.
“Why are you leaving so soon?” he asks and it sounds almost like a whine. “Was I too much? Did you get mad for real?” he keeps on questioning and when Jimin doesn't answer any of them, he throws his head back. “Ah, I’m sorry. It’s just that… you’re like, fun to tease?”

“Okay, so” Jungkook continues, a hint of exasperation on his voice. It makes Jimin want to smile, but he remains impassive, curious to know how far the boy will go. “Tell me what can I do to make you smile at me again?” he asks, almost pleading, and Jimin finally returns his gaze, something flicking inside him at the sight.

F***, he’s hot.

Before he can lose courage, he roughly grabs Jungkook’s neck and crashes their lips together, the shock of cold and hot from their mouths’ temperature making both of them whimper. Jungkook spends no time in pulling Jimin closer by the waist, chests not an inch apart, Jimin’s shirt slowly, but surely soaking at the contact of the other’s wet body, running goosebumps all over skin. He takes his free hand up the boy’s jawline and presses his thumb beneath the bone, motioning him to open up for him, to which Jungkook easily complies. Jimin licks inside his mouth as if the taste inside it’s water after a long period of drought. And he is thirsty.

He kisses Jungkook with fervor, leading the way and marveling at the way their tongues slide against one another. He has to repress a groan that grows in his throat, so he sinks his fingers in Jungkook’s hair, in need of something to hold onto. The younger is kissing back just as desperately, his hands roaming up and down Jimin’s sides as if he can’t decide where to touch. Jimin tilts his head so Jungkook can deepen the kiss and doesn't regret a tiny bit when the boy does so. He is overwhelmed, his senses clouded and his mind running a mile per hour.

How the fuck is Jungkook doing this to him?

Jimin can’t understand, but he finds himself unable to give a shit when Jungkook pulls back just enough to take Jimin’s bottom lip with him between his teeth, sucking on it afterwards and making him moan for real this time. Jungkook sighs at the sound, sliding his hands down the older’s body and grabbing his thighs to pull him up in a clean, swift motion. Damn, he’s strong. Jimin straddles his waist with no difficulty, detaching his lips from the other to catch his breath at the same time the boy hoists him up further and grabs his ass for support. Jimin pants, head thrown back and heart thundering in his chest. He hisses when Jungkook’s soft lips meet his collarbones with open-mouthed kisses.

“Jungkook, fuck–” Jimin chokes up and tightens his grip on the younger’s hair, his other hand sinking nails on his nape mercilessly.

Jungkook growls against his shoulder and bites down on it, having Jimin feel the pressure on his muscles. He’s losing it. He knows he is.

“Shit.” he mutters, settling his head straight and searching for Jungkook’s mouth, already missing the touch. “Kiss me. Kiss m–”
Jungkook swallows his words pleasingly, doing exactly what he was told. He takes some steps back and before Jimin can realize what’s happening Jungkook parts their lips.

“What–” he breaths, confused.

“Where’s your phone?” Jungkook asks and his voice is so rough Jimin is glad his legs are not the thing supporting his weight in that moment. Gravity would be such a winner.

“Pocket.” he pants, voice barely there.

He feels Jungkook taking his phone out of it and hears the soft thump when he lets it fall over the jacket by the border of the pool. Jimin can’t even bring himself to care or reason anything, because even before he can think straight Jungkook is taking one last step backwards and losing his balance to the pool, taking Jimin down with him.

The water is cold and Jimin almost commits the error to search for oxygen, before he can stop himself. He lets his body sink for a second, eyes closed shut, absorbing the impact and the surprise of being suddenly thrown underwater. His body hairs bristle at the coldness and he feels weightless. But as soon as his feet meet the ground he boosts himself up, breathlessly emerging in the chilly night. Jungkook surges just a few moments later than him, also breathing loudly and repeating what he did earlier and taking the excess of water from his eyes. When he spots Jimin behind him he walks closer, cornering him against the wall of the pool.

“What the fuck?” Jimin demands, shoving his shoulder and feeling his throat constrict as the boy gets nearer.

Jungkook smiles a smile that tugs at the corner of his mouth and allows his beautiful teeth to make an appearance in Jimin’s field of vision. Fuck, he already feels his heart picking up the pace again.

“Sorry.” he ruffles some of the water off his hair, getting it a messy look that melts Jimin’s annoyance right away. When Jungkook is close enough he places his hands by both sides of Jimin’s head, caging him in his personal space and grazing his lips over his nose. “I’ve always wanted to kiss someone underwater.” he murmurs.

Jimin takes a second to allow the words to sink in him. When it does, he laughs in disbelief, looking up at the sky for a moment before he meets Jungkook’s eyes again. “You’re unbelievable.”

“So are you.” Jungkook whispers with a smile, nuzzling his way up Jimin’s jawline while tracing his skin with his lips almost feathery like. Jimin feels the path of sparkles he leaves behind with every brush. His stomach swirls.

“Am I?” he pushes, a lazy smirk claiming his lips. “How so?”

Jungkook chuckles breathlessly, sticking his tongue out and licking the side of Jimin’s neck up until beneath his ear. Jimin hisses, grabbing the front of the younger’s shirt in tight fists. “Fuck, you’re so sensitive. I could hear you all night. Every sound you make because of me. You sound so hot.”

“Yeah? Would you like that?” Jimin heaves, chest rising up and down.

“I would.” Jungkook places a slow kiss on his neck. “I would love to hear you moan my name.”

Jimin smiles, pulling Jungkook’s head back by the hair so he can face him. “Then make me.”

The boy doesn’t need to be told twice. He catches Jimin’s bottom lip in his mouth rather roughly,
sucking on it and invading Jimin’s own mouth with his tongue in a way that knocks all breath out of him. Jungkook presses him harder against the pool wall, a thigh between his legs that has Jimin pushing down in search of friction. When the younger doesn't allow him to, holding tight on his waist, Jimin whines into his mouth. It intoxicates him, how the tables have turned, how Jungkook is more than glad to take the lead, having him to melt between his fingers.

They kiss eagerly, as if they could slip away from each other’s hands at any given moment. Jungkook’s lips are so soft Jimin feels like crying. God, he could–

“I could kiss you for days.” Jungkook parts their mouths to say, seeming to hear Jimin’s thoughts. He nods, in a drunk haze. He is not drunk, but he feels like he is.

“Me too.” he responds out of oxygen to run his lungs. Maybe that’s why he feels so lightheaded.

His eyes travel down to Jungkook’s lips and he cries out a moan. They are bitten red, shining with saliva and water altogether. He trails his eyes back to Jungkook’s, just to feel like bursting out of his own body from how fucked up the boy looks. He’s also staring down Jimin’s lips, nothing to fill the silence of the night other than their rushed breaths. His eyes are dark and when Jimin least expects it, Jungkook takes his thumb till his bottom lip, lightly brushing the finger over it. Jimin’s insides curls, but he remains silent, watching how Jungkook intently focuses on it. The boy presses his finger a little harder and Jimin takes the chance to envelope his lips around it without a single warning. Jungkook gasps and his breath fails when Jimin gives it a hard suck, lids half closed with lust staring back at him. Jungkook moans with a frown as he watches the boy work his way in and out his finger with spit. The inner part of Jimin’s lips are even softer than the extern one, the slickness of it making Jungkook’s chest rise up and down frantically.

“Fuck, you’re so dirty.”

At that, Jimin releases his finger with a soft pop and lazily smirks. “You have no idea.”

Jungkook laughs, shaking his head and them dips his hand underwater, looking at Jimin with all the attention in the world. Jimin holds his breath, anticipation creeping his skin and when Jungkook’s nails scrape against the skin of his lower belly he releases all the caged oxygen in one rushed blow. Jungkook’s smile slowly grows at the reaction, satisfaction clear in every feature of his face, their eye contact not being broken for a single second. Jimin doesn't know how much more he can last before he loses it. However, Jungkook shows no rush, lightly taking the touch up as he drinks every single sound that leaves Jimin’s lips. Every sigh, every keen, everything.

Jimin’s mouth drops open when Jungkook reaches his nipple, the feeling still so fucking good even under the water. The younger circles the nib with the tip of his finger, getting Jimin to bite his bottom lip with force trying to stop the sounds to escape, but having the whimper crawl out of his throat anyway. He closes his eyes and moves his head forward, lips parted in need of Jungkook’s warmth in his tongue. But the boy uses his free hand to grab Jimin’s neck to push him back, head softly hitting the tiles behind him. The action may seem rough, but the touch is light, Jimin’s stomach squirming inside him in response.

“No.” Jungkook groans, when Jimin looks back at him. “I wanna watch you.”

Jimin doesn't know if he should laugh or cry. This is torture. What the fuck is he so sensitive for?

As if reading his mind, Jungkook grabs his thighs once again and hoists him up so Jimin can be the taller one, his legs almost instinctively circling around his waist.

“Take it off.” Jungkook demands, tugging at the bar of his tshirt. “Now.”
“Fuck.” is all Jimin can say before he is flying the cloth out of his torso. “Fuck.” he repeats, seeing Jungkook’s lips approach his collarbone teasingly. The worst part of it all is that he doesn't break the eye contact for a moment, staring at Jimin intently like he said he wanted to, making the whole experience even more painful. His tongue darts out, wet and shiny, leaving its trace of saliva on the beginning of his chest. Jimin can’t look away. He’s aware of his already full hard on tightening his pants, and the sight in front of him is so fucking hot, he feels he could come just by staring at it for long enough. Jungkook takes his time, leaving one or two hickeys over Jimin’s chest before he sinks further and closes his mouth around a nipple, the contrast of his hot tongue with Jimin’s cold skin blurring his vision for a second.

“Oh my god, Jungkook—” he moans almost pleading, and Jungkook smiles satisfied.

“Say that again.” he raises his head up, shortening the distance between their faces. “Say my name again.”

Jimin grabs his both jawlines with his palms and pulls him closer. “Jungkook.” he pants inside the younger’s mouth. “Jungkook, Jungkook—” Jimin repeats until the boy shuts him up. And he does, gluing both their mouths together and feeling Jimin’s lips with no rush or whatsoever. He pulls back.

“I love how it sounds when you say it.” Jungkook murmurs and it’s just so fucking unfair. Jimin can’t bring himself to utter a single word. He kisses him instead, giving in to the desire that’s burning him whole and ignoring how his heart is beating his chest up.

Their pace turns lazy, Jimin savoring every second, every tingle he feels when their lips move against one another. He doesn't want to sound dramatic, but it’s like they were made to kiss each other. He has kissed many—many—people in his life, but never once had he witnessed all these reactions his body is gifting him with. It’s almost like a dream, and if he has the risk of waking up at any moment he will as well just kiss Jungkook for as long as possible.

The loud thunder that vibrates and lights up the sky startles both of them, snapping their heads up to the sky.

“Shit.” they whisper in unison.

Jungkook looks back at him, and if Jimin is being honest, he looks rather disappointed. “We should get back in.”

Jimin nods, detaching his thighs from the younger’s waist after a long beat of silence. Jungkook helps him out of the pool and Jimin tries not to stare at how his arms flex when he uses them as a support on the border to boost himself up as well. How a seventeen year old holds a body like that Jimin has no idea. He looks around searching for his tshirt as a source of distraction when another thunder clicks in the sky, bringing the rain down with it.

“Fuck.” he hurriedly grabs Jungkook’s jacket in a way that envelopes his phone inside it, so it doesn’t get wet, and runs towards the house, hearing Jungkook’s footsteps right behind him.

When they reach the party is like nothing changed, everyone is still dancing, drinking while the loud beat of the song keeps the thunders away. Jimin is shivering now that the water is not
protecting his warmth anymore and that he has one less piece of cloth to shelter him. No one pays attention to them, or ask why they’re soaked from head to toe, but it’s not like Jimin pays attention to anything else either when Jungkook grabs his hand and starts guiding him through the house. He feels Jungkook’s jacket vibrating where he carries it on his arm and presumes someone is calling him, but it’s not like he can pick up now anyway, so he ignores it.

Jungkook takes him to a bathroom on the second floor and that’s when he has the chance to finally see who just won’t stop calling him. The younger closes the door and starts searching for towels on the drawers and cabinets, as he quietly tells Jimin. He simply nods and unfolds Jungkook’s jacket from the ball he curled it into and finds two phones there. The one with the screen lit up and vibrating is his so he places the other on the sink’s counter. Jungkook must have put his over his jacket too when he got into the pool.

“Hello?” he picks up the call. “Noona?”

“Yo.” Eunbi responds. “Listen, I’m passing by that street of that party you are in and I may be there in, I don’t know, five minutes? So, yeah, do you want me to pick you up? ‘Cause it’s already raining and it’s going to get worse, so I won’t leave again when I get home and you might have to ask for an uber if you want to go later.” Jimin considers staying for a second before he shakes his head.

“No, it’s okay, wait for me down there.”

“’kay, don’t take too long.” she says simply and hangs up.

Jimin places his phone by the side of Jungkook’s one and turns his head to look at the boy. He has already found the towels and it’s now busying himself in drying his body.

“Here.” Jungkook hands him a dry towel.

Jimin takes it with a shy smile and feels strangely exposed as he dries his bare chest. His boner has disappeared – thank god, but it’s like Jungkook’s touches are carved into his skin. They stay in silence with the tasks in hand for some moments until Jungkook breaks it.

“So, you’re leaving?” he asks.

“Yeah, my sister is passing by, so…”

“I see.” Jungkook stares at him with a gaze that Jimin is unable to reciprocate. “Here, let me help you.” he offers, when Jimin struggles in drying his hair, taking the towel from his hands without waiting for an answer.

At this close proximity again, Jimin has to hold his breath to not do anything stupid. Jungkook is tender, ruffling Jimin’s hair softly with the towel, drying it as much as possible.

“There…” he says when he’s done, analyzing his work. Jimin takes the chance to look at him, since Jungkook’s focusing in something else. The boy suddenly grins and Jimin finds himself smiling back in response. “You look like a puppy.”

He rolls his eyes amused, not having the heart to be annoyed by the comment.

“A cute one, I hope.” he jokes and Jungkook shrugs.

“Who knows…” he teases and Jimin shoves his shoulder lightly.
They let their smiles fade in the silence and before it gets uncomfortable Jimin says:

“I have to go…”

“Yeah.” Jungkook agrees, taking a hand up his nape to scratch it as he looks around the bathroom. He stretches his arms and grabs his jacket, handing it to Jimin. “Here, take it.”

“What? No–” Jimin hurries to deny, but the boy cuts him off.

“No, please, take it.” he plays with the hair of his nape, “It’s kinda my fault that you’re shirtless, and y’know…” Jimin doesn't miss how Jungkook blushes at that. He ducks his head, feeling his own cheeks heating up. “It’s raining, so you might get a cold walking around like that…”

Jimin transfers his weight from a feet to another as he considers the words.

“Okay.” he decides, at last, smiling and getting Jungkook to do the same.

He wears the denim jacket and doesn't know what to do with himself after. For some reason, Jungkook gets him on edge about every step he takes. “So…” he trails, fidgeting with his own fingers, not meeting Jungkook’s eyes. “I guess I should, um, get going…”

Jimin considers just leaving, given Jungkook’s silence, but his body betrays him and he searches for the boy’s face. Jungkook seems to be anticipating something, so Jimin takes a step forward and hesitantly places a kiss on his cheek. The skin beneath his lips is soft and Jimin doesn't feel like leaving, but he knows he has to, so he slowly pulls away and looks Jungkook in the eyes. He’s about to say goodbye, when Jungkook cups both his jawlines and kisses him on the mouth. Jimin’s eyes flutter closed and he grabs the boy’s waist in response, pulling him closer. There’s no tongue this time around, just their lips moving over one another for some moments until they part again. Jimin opens his eyes and he finds hard to breath for all the different reasons.

“See you around, pink cheeks.” Jungkook lets go of him and smiles.

Jimin bites down on his lip, also smiling.

“See you around, Jungkook.”

They share one last gaze, before Jimin turns his back at him and walks out of the bathroom.

He can’t seem to tear down the smile away from his lips, not even when he goes through the mass of people dancing on the ground floor or when he runs beneath the unforgiving rain to reach Eunbi’s car.

“What’s with all that happy energy around you, huh?” Eunbi comments as soon as he seats on the passenger seat. “Wild night?” she smirks.

Jimin looks back at her with a pair of knowing eyes and an accomplice smile. “You have no idea.”

She shakes her head and starts the engineer of the car, letting Jimin to marvel on his memories as he watches the rain slide down the window.
The smell of the beach is as strong as ever as Jimin sinks down his feet on the sand, appreciating how it relaxes him in line with the sound of the waves hitting the shore. The seagulls are loud in the cloudless sky – he notices it when he has to do extra effort to hear Taehyung out.

“Oh, stop being so pessimistic.” he speaks into the phone. “At least they’re rich and didn’t forget that fact when giving you presents. This year my aunt gave me literal socks.” Jimin remembers bitterly.

Taehyung’s offended voice peaks on the other line. “Bitch, shut up, socks are literally the best present?”

“Yeah, you go and tell that to your new xbox, you privileged fuck.” Jimin teases and knows Taehyung is rolling his eyes at him by the time he finishes speaking.

“The point is,” he blatantly ignores Jimin’s comment and continues on his never ending complaints about his family. “They’re a bunch of fake ass hoes. One of my cousins even went as far as calling me Taeyong one of these days. Taeyong. Can you believe that?!” Jimin laughs out loud. “They don’t even know my fucking name!”

“Well, to be really fair, do you know theirs?” Jimin states and his best friend goes silent. He laughs harder. “Oh my god, you’re so dramatic. Just let them be and enjoy the perks of being rich! I bet there will be so much food on the new years’ table that you won’t even know how to name them all.”

Taehyung scoffs. “I’d rather be eating your mom’s food on new years.”

Jimin sighs. “Me too. But, listen, I’ll tell her to save some of the desserts for you, okay? Just take the most out of it while you're there, it can’t be that hard, seriously!”

“Okay…” the younger finally relents. “Anyway, speaking of which, what are you guys doing tomorrow?”

“We’re having dinner at home and then heading to the beach so we can watch the fireworks.” Jimin answers, crouching down to play with some shells on the sand. “It will be pretty much crowded, though, so…” he shrugs, even though Taehyung won’t see him.

“If I was there we could go that place on the beach no one else goes.” his friend excitedly beams.

Jimin smiles. Their discovery was recent – it didn't even complete a year –, but it was still their special place. “We can go there next year.” he ensures. It’s a silent promise, but Jimin knows Taehyung hears it anyway. He always does.

“Pinky promise?” the boy still asks, though, as expected. It’s one of their many things. Jimin softly melts in a smile, holding his pinky on the air, because he knows Taehyung is doing the same.

“Pinky promise.” he answers and does just as if he was curling Taehyung’s finger on his.

Soon, they burst in a fit of giggles. “We’re so dumb.” he states the obvious, getting up from his position on the ground and dusting the sand off his hands while holding the phone between a cheek and a shoulder. Jimin hears some muffled background noise on the end of the line that seems a lot like the voice of Taehyung’s mother interrupting the boy’s laugh, so he waits until he hears his best
friend again.

“Listen,” Taehyung’s voice surges after a few seconds and the drastic change on his mood is already apparent by his tone. “I think they want to cut the cake or take photos, some shit like that, so I gotta go, but I call you later, okay?”

“Sure, don’t worry.” Jimin reassures while walking to the closest shadow, because the scorching sun started to take its toll upon him.

“Miss you.” the younger says, and Jimin knows he’s about to hung up, so he stops him.

“Taehyung-ah?”

“Yeah?”

“Happy birthday.” Jimin feels his cheeks plumping up. “Love you.”

Taehyung’s voice is much softer after he says into Jimin’s ear. “I love you too, dumbass.”

They hung up without another word and Jimin takes the opportunity to sit beneath a tall tree that’s grown in the limit of where the sand ends and the grass line begins. He rests there until he can feel the droplets of sweat dry on his skin. While doing so, he watches the sea and thinks about Jungkook.

The two of them kinda match, Jimin reflects. Jungkook and the sea. They both look calm, soothing, stunning blue, and when you least expects it, they swallow you whole.

Truth is, Jimin became kinda obsessed after the fateful party – he has to admit. He searched Jungkook’s name in every media possible just to confirm the obvious – if finding Jungkook with a last name would already be hard, close to impossible, there was no way in hell he’d find him by only a first name. But still, he tried, and scrolled past hundreds of Jungkooks on the facebook’s search page until his eyes got tired and he gave up. But next day, he woke up suddenly motivated to find the boy again and so he went to every imaginable party in town. Every single night, he’d find himself in between different groups of people in different environments, looking for a cute nose and a very characteristic smile, just to leave empty handed in the end. It was like Jungkook had disappeared into thin air for never to be seen again. So Jimin reluctantly let it go.

It wasn’t likely for them to meet again anyway, based on his previous experiences of hooking up with random strangers in random parties, but still, he can’t seem to take Jungkook’s soft ‘see you around’ from out of his damn mind.

Maybe the boy was a curse. Or a joke.

It seemed like a joke.

A bad one, if you ask his opinion.

Jimin has never felt this way before, not even with the cases he called brief and fast relationships – but still, the boy got to make him fall weightless and dip his head in the clouds only with a pair of heated lips and intense eyes. Was Jimin too easy? He knows he probably was, but it didn't seem like such a bad idea at the time.

He sighs, embarrassed. It’s not like Jungkook is somewhere else in Busan also losing his mind while thinking about him, so Jimin might as well take his head out of his ass and gather his shit up.
He has to finish planning the birthday party he decided to make for when Taehyung arrives. He can't wait to see the boy’s face when he has his eyes brimming with unshed tears while stuttering out his birthday already passed and asking what is happening. That’s when Jimin will say he doesn't know what he’s talking about and will show his and pretty much everyone’s phone shining December 30th back at the boy. He has almost everything settled on his mind, so hopefully it will all go well. He just has to remind everyone to change the date on their phone when they get into the party. It will be full success, he’s sure.

Jimin proudly smiles to himself while watching the waves come and go, and doesn't notice a brown haired boy climbing the rocks on the edge of the beach by his far right – on the way to his and Taehyung’s special place.

Jimin has a thing he adores about himself. It’s a characteristic he shares dearly with Taehyung.

Most – if not all – of his friends say there’s is not a thing they miss more from their childhood than the untouchable magic the end of the year’s holidays used to hold. Jimin never understood their words, because the magic never really faded for him. Of course, he doesn't believe in things such as Santa Claus or elves that confected the kids’ presents, but Christmas still is an ethereal night for him in its own unique way.

And new years… New years embraces all the promises for what is to come into his life for the next twelve months. It is fascinating.

Jimin sighs, sinking further into the couch as his mother softly sings and finishes the last dishes in the kitchen. It completely sucks to not be spending any of those moments with the only person who shares the same genuine feelings as his about it all. The night feels rather empty – void –, without Taehyung by his side. It’s the first time in years he’s spending the eve of the most awaited night of the year by the two of them without his best friend’s presence to brighten him up. It feels like a missing piece.

“I miss Taehyung.” Jimin complains out loud.

“Oh, I miss him too!” his mother comments from the kitchen and laughs, “My other son. Do you know if he’s having fun on his trip?”

“I wouldn't call it ‘fun', but you know Taehyung’s tendencies to drama, so…”

She giggles and Jimin turns his face to see her. She’s with a big bowl in hand, mixing some ingredients in it while standing by the counter that divides the living room from the kitchen. “I hope he comes back soon.”

“He will be here in a week or less.” Jimin answers. “I told you about the birthday party I’m planning for him, right?”

“Oh, yes, it’s such a lovely idea, baby!” she praises and Jimin nods, satisfied. “I’ll make all of his favourite desserts!”
He can’t help but smile lovingly at her. She’s so sweet. “Thank you, mom, I bet he’ll love that.”

“Mmm, I bet too.” she agrees, “Also, how are you feeling without him here today?” she kindly asks, and Jimin knows the intention behind the question is pure concern.

It happens that, for as long as he knows Taehyung, the boy has always spent all those dates with Jimin’s family, his actual family not really attached to those traditional commemorations – except, of course, in front of the people they considered important. It was all about good appearances for them.

“Bad.” he responds honestly, “Feels like something is missing.”

“Yeah,” she nods, “I know. I wonder if this is how I’m going to feel when you two don’t spend it with me...” she trails off, thoughtful, and Jimin’s heart hurts. Jihyun doesn't even flinch on the couch, headphones on, oblivious to the conversation enrolling around him, too focused on his phone to care anyway.

“Ei!” Jimin calls for her energetically, snapping her head up, “Don’t say things like this, mom! What kind of son do you think I am? I’m never leaving you alone in such important dates! Okay? I promise, I’m not.” he feels a frown forming on his features, which apparently makes his mom laugh.

“Sure thing, sweetie.” she says as if she doesn't believe it, as if she knows it’s inevitable. Jimin scowls offended. “I mean it!”

“I know you do.” she blinks sweetly and it’s like her lashes holds all the love in the world. Jimin loves her so much.

“He means it, mom.” Jihyun’s voice finally makes its presence in the living room known, showing he was hearing them all along and just had decided to straight up ignore them. His tone drips acid sarcasm and Jimin already hates it. The younger doesn't raise his eyes from his phone to keep talking, “Of course you can trust his words when he spends half of his existing time with those fucking traitors instead of into his own home.”

Oh boy.

Jimin is so pissed.

“Did your dumb brain never learn how to shut the fuck up when talking shit?” he retorts in the same tone.

“Boys!” their mom harshly puts the bowl down with a loud thud and Jimin knows they’ve irritated her, but he can’t tear his eyes away from his brother. He’s just so fucking immature.

Jihyun returns the heated gaze.

“Can’t even say a word about those bitches that you already snaps like they’re your own family!” he gets up to face the older and Jimin does the same. “How was those days with your new sister? Did you have fun? Huh? Bet you did. Why don't you just move out already and go live with them to lick up their asses all the time like you so desperately wants to?!” Jimin finds himself in a loss for words, staring at Jihyun’s face standing a feet from distance from him, with mute incredulity in his features. “How does it feel keeping secrets from your family, Jimin-ah?” he drops the honorifics like he knows something Jimin doesn't and Jimin fucking loses it.
“What the fuck is wrong with you?!” He shoves the younger’s shoulders hard, getting him to fall some steps backwards, startled.

The sound of bare fists hitting the marble’s counter stings their ears followed by the loudest tone they have ever heard their mother use, “Enough is enough!” When Jimin looks back at her, she is burning red from cheeks to ears and he doesn't think he ever has ever seen her so mad before. However, more than all, her eyes are shining with pure disappointment. He feels embarrassed and instantly regrets his actions. ‘I want both of you out of here! Right. Fucking. Now!”

Jihyun stomps out of the room without sparing a single glance to anyone, the sound of his bedroom’s door closing resonating loudly through the entire house. Jimin can’t bring himself to move.

“Mom, I–” he tries, but she harshly cuts him off.

“No, Jimin. To your bedroom.” When Jimin remains motionless, she speaks again, louder. “I said now!”

He bows to her, as if to express all the apologies she doesn't want to hear, and does as she ordered afterwards, his heart sinking within every step.

“So, you two fought? What the fuck?” Eunbi seems taken aback on the other side of the line. “Why the hell?”

“He talked shit about us, and your mother!”

“Doesn't he always? What’s the big news?” she lets out, not surprised and apparently unbothered.

“He was pretty damn rude!” Jimin reasons.

“So you went and shoved his fucking shoulders?!”

“Listen, I know I’m in the wrong too, okay?!” he snorts, defensive and clearly irritated. He didn't call her for a scolding, he called her for support.

“Then, do something about it! It’s new year’s eve, this is not the kind of shit your mom needs right now!”

Jimin’s voice turns slightly high-pitched as he excuses himself. “She doesn't even want to talk to us!”

“Then, stay fucking quiet, you idiot! What is she even doing right now?” Jimin feels smaller and smaller with growing guilt as the conversation proceeds.

“Uh… Dinner…”

“By herself? ” Eunbi lashes out. “All alone?” Jimin shrinks. “God, do I have to teach you men everything? Go help her!” Jimin tries to speak, but is cut off. “I don't care if she doesn't wanna talk! Help her silently, but help her! God!”
Jimin bites on his bottom lip, thoughtful. He knows she’s right. Besides Eunbi’s rough and explosive nature, she’s always reasonable towards the things that matter. He sighs.

“I know. I’m going.”

“You better! Later, tell her I wish her a happy new year and that I hope you two grow the fuck up in this one. I’m hanging up now, so go get your shit together! Your mother deserves to enjoy a happy holiday and you know it.”

Jimin releases a second sigh. “Yeah, I know that.”

Eunbi hums. “’kay then, see ya. I’ll call you later.”

“Bye, noona.”

She hangs up and Jimin allows himself to take a deep breath before he heads to the kitchen. His mother is no longer sing songing like she was earlier and if this doesn't say much about her mood, then her plain expression does. She side eyes the boy when he approaches her, but remains silent, choosing to stare at the pan on the oven instead, and still doesn't say anything when Jimin starts washing the dishes, minding her own business as if he's not there. He swallows the knot in his throat and his urge to say something.

By the time he has all the plates and cups clean and apparently has nothing else to do, his mom has yet not spared him a single glance and Jimin crosses his arms annoyed in front of his chest. Okay, fine, he had stepped over the line with Jihyun, but wasn't her reaction a little too much? He heavily sighs, doing as much noise as possible, and the person who gave birth to him, who carried him in the belly for nine months stands five feet of distance away from him blatantly ignoring his attempts of catching attention as if he’s some part of the kitchen decoration.

Jimin rolls his eyes.

Okay, good.

Good.

He leans back on the counter and starts a staring contest with his mother's back. It doesn't last very long as the woman still insists in not acknowledging all of his hard effort to apologize to her, so Jimin does what any reasonable person would do when seeking attention.

He starts following her around.

He makes sure he doesn't blink once while doing so; so his stare can be as intense as to burn holes on her clothes. After some more minutes of their cat and rat play, with Jimin chasing and hovering over her frame in every possible movement, she finally releases a long lasting sigh while closing her eyes. Jimin almost fistbumps the air, because, if that ain’t a victory! He considers it inappropriate though, so instead he just relaxes his body, relieved.

A content sigh escapes him naturally – that is, until his mom’s following sentence surges and breaks inside him.

“Jimin… Do you think I’m a bad mother?” she questions, and it sounds so small.

It’s not about what she asks, it’s about how her voice intonates the words. Jimin is ready to vehemently deny it when he realizes if he does so she can easily go dramatic and – “then if I’m not a bad mother, then why are you doing this to me?!”
But still, Jimin can’t lie to her, not even if he knows he might leave at fault in the end.

Her eyes doesn't meet his, finding great interest on the floor tiles instead.

“Of course not, mom.” he breathes and prepares himself to be scolded.

But, it never comes.

“Then, why does it feel like I am?” she whispers, so, so quietly, that Jimin even wonders if she intended for him to hear or not.

“Hey,” Jimin touches her arms and the woman’s silhouette seems to melt, or break, maybe both. He envelopes his arms around her, and even though she’s not crying, she hiccups against his chest, “God, what are you talking about, mom? You’re like the best mom ever, I’m sorry me and Jihyun fought–”

“No,” she speaks above him, and although Jimin’s voice is louder – ‘cause hers is muffled by his tshirt – he lets her. “It’s my fault.” He shakes his head, but doesn't interrupt. “It is, it is. I– Jihyun’s constantly mad and irritated at everything, a-and, even though I don't agree with the things he said he’s right in one thing, you–” she pauses, and Jimin patiently waits, drawing soothing patterns on her back, “You almost don’t spend any time home anymore, and it’s not like I don’t want you to live your life or anything, but I just– I just wonder what am I doing w-wrong.” It seems she chokes at the last word and so Jimin hugs her tighter.

The words sting his chest with guilt and he doesn't say anything for a while, but then, he realizes his silence may come off as him agreeing with her thoughts, so he hurries to say:

“You’re doing nothing wrong, mom.” is his reassurance. “We don't deserve you.” he adds, honestly. “I’m sorry you’re feeling like that, I promise the problem is not you.” he grabs her shoulders and delicately deatches her body from his, so their eyes can meet. “I swear that if I had another mother, I’d kick her ass just so I could run away and find you.”

The woman’s face seems to brighten at Jimin’s words, suddenly amused – she can't help the giggle that leaves her mouth. “Don’t say that. You can't kick anyone’s ass.”

“Hey!” Jimin most definitely can . “I'm trying to make a point here, you see?!”

“I know,” her smile is soft, but her eyes are blue, “Thank you, love.”

“Mom…” Jimin insists, “Believe me, please. It's not on you. I just… A lot has been going on with me these days. I'm sorry, I haven't really been telling you much about my life, have I?”

She shakes her head. “It's okay. Everyone's allowed to have secrets. Even family. Tell me when you're ready. I'm sorry I made you feel guilty about that.”

Jimin can feel his chest swelling. He truly doesn't deserve a mother like her. “I love you.” he holds her tight against his chest again. “Any person in the world would be the luckiest to have you as their mom, but I'm happy you're mine and not theirs.” At this sentence, she laughs loudly.

“God, how I made you so sweet?” she asks fondly while her hands stroke his hair and then pulls back to stare at him, “Because this is not on your father's, I'm sure.”

Jimin inflates his chest with pride. “You gave life to a human angel, mom.”

She flicks his forehead lightly, “Aish,” her voice is rather playful this time around and Jimin counts
that as a tiny victory, “And a humble human too, I see.”

He chuckles and his eyes curve as his cheeks plumps, getting the woman to pinch it.

A cough sound comes from the kitchen's doorstep, snapping mom and son's attention to it. Jihyun awkwardly stands there, eyes on the ground and apparently not sure how to act. “Uh.” he scratches one of his cheek with his indicator, slightly ruffling the hair on his nape afterwards, “I'm sorry too, mom.” his eyes don't meet hers as he speaks, “I didn't mean to upset you. Jimin-hyung is right, none of this is your fault, it's… It's on us.”

Their mother breaks into a smile – apparently all the hurt and frustration gone from her eyes. Just like this. Jimin sighs. Ever so forgiving. He can't come up with someone he knows that it's as good as his mom. She walks towards her other son and wraps gentle arms around his figure. Jihyun seems small when he holds onto her and hugs tighter. Jimin can't help, but feel guilty over coming too harsh on him earlier.

He watches them with an aching heart and, for the first time, misses the image of his father on his family’s picture. The thought is shoved away by a forced gulp down his throat and a fake smile, though. He watches as his brother and mother share a smile, and then watches as Jihyun joins them to help on the preparation of dinner.

Jimin waits and waits, but an apology never comes his way, so he remains silent too.

○

The beach is crowded, as expected. Jimin doesn't particularly enjoy it, but it's almost new years and he’s going to see the fireworks from up close, so he counts the pros better than the cons. Besides, it is full of people, but also, it's not like he can't freely walk or breath and he actually doesn't feel suffocated, so that should be considered a victory as well. His mom brought a blue sheet from home, so they could sit over the sand without getting dirty; and also brought small portions of the desserts she made if they feel hungry. There are many kiosks around for them to buy food, but the ones closer to the beach normally charges a kidney for a water bottle, so Jimin understands he attitude.

Midnight into the last night of the year is closer than ever and Jimin can't seem to contain the excitement inside his own body. He's standing, while his mother and Jihyun sit over the sheet, and his feet keep tapping the ground, counting the clicks on the clock away.

“Mom, I'm going to the water a little bit, okay?” he blurts out without thinking, “Just going to get in with my feet, I promise!” he quickly adds at the sight of her reprimanding eyes, “I just want to walk around a little, I'm nervous.”

She chuckles, “When will you get past that new years’ anxiety?”

“Hopefully never. I love it.”

“Sure. Go ahead, sweetie. But don't take too long, midnight is close!”
“I know, I'll be right back.” Jimin says already making his way further into the beach. He left his shoes on the sheet with his mom, so the cold sand gets in between his toes and it tickles his skin in a funny way. Jimin likes it.

He walks around, watching the people and thinking about his whole year with a chest full of memories. He wonders if everyone else feels the same as him. A little girl plays with her father building a deformed sandcastle, friends laugh out loud while gulping their beers down, a young couple rest on each other's embrace with closed eyes, a boy his age watches the sea with earbuds plugged on his ears.

Everyone is living their lives independently while sharing the same sky, while being illuminated by the same stars and moon, while staring at the same sea.

The thought fascinates Jimin more than he can express. He takes a deep breath and finally heads over to the sea. When the sand transforms from dry to wet, he allows himself a moment to enjoy the change of sensations. And when his toes reach the water his whole body shivers at the coldness, but he keeps on taking little steps until his entire shin is underwater. After awhile, the feeling eases him. The waves lightly hits his skin back and forth in tune with its breaking sound on the shore, and it's like it soothes something inside him. Jimin involuntarily smiles, welcoming the new year even though it's still some minutes away. He wants this year to bring him everything the last one didn't. He wants to experience new things, and grow, and learn. He wants to live. He wants to fall in love.

He quietly whispers his wishes to the sea and hopes she hears him.

Jimin turns around to try and go back to find his family and that's when he sees him.

His heart drops to his feet and it's like the whole world stops for a moment.

He's standing just a few feet from distance, wearing an all black outfit, standing out from the background picture of mostly white dressed people behind him, and looking up to the sky, half closed eyes as if he's chanting wishes to the stars just as Jimin did seconds ago to the sea.

Jimin doesn't realize he's holding his breath until Jungkook sighs and opens his eyes, looking down slowly just to find Jimin complementing his view of the night sky bathing the sea with its pretty glowing stars.

They stare at each other for some seconds in silence, blinking the shock away as if trying to believe their eyes – the breeze softly blowing strands of their hairs over their cheeks.

Jimin walks out of the water when Jungkook breaks into the most breathtaking smile he has ever witnessed. His heart knocks hard against his chest, trying to beat it up, but he holds himself together, stopping medium distance away from the boy, scared he might be pulled into his orbit way too fast if he gets too close.

Jungkook looks especially beautiful under the moonlight, features all sharp and clean on the right places, doe eyes shining exactly the way Jimin remembers them to. He can't believe he searched the town upside down for him, just to come and find the boy here in the end.

“I kinda had the feeling we were going to meet again.” Jungkook tells him with a smile, and the sound of his voice after so long makes Jimin's knees go weak.

“Can't believe it's here from all places.” he manages to respond without embarrassing himself.

Jungkook tilts his head in that way Jimin is learning fast to adore, “Are you by yourself?” he
changes the path of the conversation as he always does.

“Not really, my family is over there in the sand.” he points with a finger, getting Jungkook to look back at the direction he's showing, but not even Jimin is able to find them in that amount of people, “…somewhere.”

Jungkook looks back at him with an amused grin. “Are you lost?”

“Of course not!” Jimin retorts, “I was just now going to look for them!”

“I see…” Jungkook trails, drawing random patterns on the sand with his big toe. He also has no shoes on.

“It's true!” Jimin feels the need to reaffirm. “But what about you? Are you alone?”

The boy sighs. “My family is at one of those houses by the beach.” Jimin exhales a low ‘oh’ of acknowledgment. He must be rich like Taehyung to own a house by the beach. “Kinda got sick of it, so I came down here.” Jimin nods.

They spend a beat of silence in each other's presence, until Jungkook breaks it with a teasing smile. “Haven't you grown shorter, pink cheeks?” he takes one step closer.

Jimin's lungs expel all oxygen out of it at the decrease of gap between their bodies, his heart swells at the petname and his cheeks flush at the way Jungkook look at him. He takes a second to realize he didn't give a shit about the joke, but that's the only thing he allows himself to comment on.

“Yah!” he reprimands – but his voice is soft, melting.

He looks down at Jimin for some instants, until he says it:

“Aren't you going to look out for your family? It's almost midnight.”

Jimin bites his bottom lip, thoughtful. He doesn't want to let go of the boy just yet.

“You too!” he shoots back, instead. “Shouldn't you head back home?”

“Should I?” Jungkook narrows his eyes playfully and takes another step forward.

“Y-yeah!” Jimin's voice shakes and his heart speeds up, “Do you know what they say about the people you spend the midnight of the new years with?”

“Not really.” Jimin feels like Jungkook's voice is drastically low now, but he hears it anyway. “What does they say?”

Some random person around them shouts from far away, “Ten seconds!”, but it's background noise for their ears.

Suddenly, everyone in the beach seems to join a perfectly rhythmmed countdown, but even with the loudness of their voices all together – they can't break the trance around the two boys enveloping them in an own particular world.

“Ten!”

“They say if you spend the first moment of the new year with them,” – “Nine!” “you might spend the rest of it as well.” Jimin breathes, and Jungkook steps nearer into his personal space.
His heart is beating frantically already, pulsing inside his ears.

“Eight!”

“Yeah?” Jungkook mutters, one step closer. Jimin can almost feel their feets touching by this point.

“Seven!”

Jimin nods.

“Six!”

“And what do they say,” – Jungkook's voice sounds dulcet to Jimin's senses. “Five!” – “about the person you kiss at the first midnight of the year?” Jimin blinks at him, unable to breath, unable to process the smile on Jungkook's lips and how he looks so gorgeous like this.

“Four!”

His eyes lands on the younger's lips and his stomach curls with the memory of its taste and softness.

“Three! Two!”

Jungkook's eyes also fall over his lips and they simultaneously close the lasting distance between their bodies by taking one last step.

They reach for each other at the same time.

“One!”

The fireworks explode above in unison, sparkles blooming like flowers on the night sky, and Jimin feels it in his chest, in the way his heart mimics them and seems to burst, over and over again. He tightens his hold around Jungkook's neck and pulls him impossibly closer, needing the feeling of his lips on him to intoxicate him whole. It feels just as magical as he remembers from the party. Jungkook does the same, tugging on his waist to press their bodies harder and deepen the kiss. Jimin opens up for him, the lightening of the fireworks illuminating all around, even through his closed eyelids. He takes his other hand to cup Jungkook's jawline and sort of clings on him, standing on his tip toes and allowing Jungkook to hold his whole weight into his arms. He just realizes how much he missed the boy's lips against his when their tongues touch. Jimin slightly sinks his fingers on Jungkook's skin at the sensation and feels like the reaction gets the boy to kiss him harder. He slides his hand from Jimin’s waist through his lower back and completely envelops his arms around his hips, moving his lips passionately and stealing Jimin's breath away. He pants inside the boy's mouth and licks his tongue, biting on his bottom lip afterwards. Jungkook inhales a deep breath at that and releases Jimin's hips to place both hands on his jawlines. The younger's lip slides from Jimin's bite and they take the moment to breath deeply and stare at each other.

Jimin sees the exploding fireworks reflected on Jungkook’s orbs. He thinks he can never forget the sight.

He's so beautiful it's like it actually hurts.

They hold each other's face on their hands and say nothing for some instants, eyes simply travelling over one another's features. Finally, Jungkook breaks the trance they're in and nuzzles his nose against Jimin's.
“Happy new year, pink cheeks.” he whispers and Jimin still hears above all the noise. He watches as Jungkook's soft smile grows on his lips and finds himself unable to say anything.

He wants Jungkook to be the only thing he'll remember and keep safe in his heart that night.

It comes as no surprise, but still deeply welcomed, when the younger catches Jimin's bottom lip on his one more time, kissing him like he was made to do it.

And considering given events, perhaps he could have been.

Jimin is not a fervent believer of destiny – never was –, but if the way his body burns when Jungkook touches his is any signal, then, he might gladly convert into one.

Chapter End Notes

uh yea this is a prologue with 17k words, i kno w and im so sorry sdfjkd but i think it is on me to warn yall that things are about to go down badly next chapter so stop reading here if you dont like suffering lmao

also this is actually a really long fic and i have pretty much the whole story in my mind, i just have to sit and write, but for the next chapters, expect a lot more than 17k words lmao

i think this is it, thank you for reading so far!! find me on twitter <3
The winter’s winds blow over his dry lips as he makes his way down the school gates. The temperature has dropped severely ever since the beginning of the year, so Jimin shelters himself in long sleeves shirts and oversized hoodies most of the days. He sees Taehyung waiting for him by the entrance and smiles — the boy is taller than him and that much is perceptible even from Jimin’s distance —, however, the way he pouts at his red nose denies that he is just two months younger than Jimin. He shakes his head as he approaches him and is startled when a rushed figure bumps into him and passes by quickly without even bothering to look back to apologize. He frowns as he stares at the boy’s back and the hairline on his nape, strangely familiar. A shiver runs down his spine and he reprimands himself for even considering it could be him. This sick obsession with Jungkook will drive him crazy if he doesn't draw a line on it.

It happens the last time Jimin saw the boy was on New Years, their last exchange having been the romantic scene they enrolled at the beach — except they were two strangers, not lovers as in a sappy 90s movie. After that they completely lost touch, each one going back to their respective lives not having exchanged numbers or any sort of contact once again, much for Jimin’s dismay.

He found himself one more time searching down the internet in hopes he’d somehow find the boy, but it was like he was a ghost, or a dream. Taehyung didn't know about any of that, so Jimin suffered the frustration all alone until he finally gave up.

Winter break eventually came to an end and suddenly they were back at the hallways of the school he so much despised now. He can’t wait to apply to an university, be accepted and get the hell out of there. He and Taehyung have been considering trying an exchange program for Japan in an university they really admire. They even have been taking japanese lessons for six months now. If they’re lucky they can pass together and find an apartment there so they can share and live together. It’d be so amazing, Jimin muses.

“Stop daydreaming, tiny.” Taehyung flicks his forehead and pinches his nose as Jimin halts in front of him. He scrunches the nose between the younger’s fingers so he can let go.

“I wasn't daydreaming.” he lies. “And enough with calling me tiny!” Jimin complains, done with
the nickname Taehyung have been using for a week or two, ever since he found out he grew a couple of inches taller than Jimin. Again.

“Aigo, don’t get too mad, I heard short people feel things more intensely, cause they don’t have enough space in their bodies for the emotion to dissipate.”

Jimin glares at him as the boy giggles.

“You absolutely, one hundred percent suck, you know that, right?” he states.

Taehyung doesn’t care and throws an arm around his best friend’s shoulder, walking them into the school. “As long as you keep loving me endlessly.”

Jimin pretends to gasp, shocked, but does not move away from the hold. “Poor you… Who told you such a terrible lie like that?”

The taller rolls his eyes. “I wonder who could have done that a thousand times when passed out drunk on my bed?”

Jimin’s cheeks burn at the memories.

“Why do you insist on bringing back my most humiliating moments in the most inappropriate times?” he asks looking around to see if someone was paying any kind of attention to them.

Taehyung chuckles. “What do you think I applied for the best friend role for? Moral support and 24/7 love?” Jimin pinches him on the belly. “Ouch, ouch.” Taehyung angles his torso to the side to escape the piercing claws. “Alright, that was totally for it, you’re my spoiled baby.” he says in an sugar dipped voice and pulls Jimin closer to wrap him completely with both arms in a bear hug, kissing the top of his head.

The older loudly tries to say something that sounds a lot like “kiss my ugly ass”, but the voice is muffled by Taehyung’s hoodie, who giggles as they walk down the hallway tangled up in each other; bickering, yet attached to the hip.

Jimin wouldn’t change them for anything.

○

The classes are monotonous as always, but thanks to some divine light above, Jimin manages to get through them all awake — or maybe half —, and mildly paying attention and trying to make sense out of the teacher’s words about the second world war. Taehyung was past knocked down, nearly snoring by his side. He’s lucky he was sitting behind a guy with wide shoulders who hid him well. When the bell rang, Jimin’s senses shook awake and Taehyung jumped out of surprise by his side, traces of dry drool on his chin. They stretched their backs, gathered their stuff and made their way to the dinning hall.

Now, standing on the entrance Jimin ponders if he is really that hungry to wait in that huge ass line of students who got there before them. He decides he is not, but Taehyung forces him to stay and eat, because he is annoying just like that.

“We really should start bringing our own food again. We’re dumb, why did we stop?” Jimin
complains as they take a single step forward when the line moves.

“I have no idea, but you're completely right, we should.”

Jimin huffs and takes his time looking around, analyzing the other students’ faces. As a senior, there are a lot which he doesn't acknowledge, since he mostly interacts with people from his own grade now. In fact, he barely recognizes anyone, so he just roams with his eyes uninterested, looking for nothing in specific. He stops at a random black haired boy who is eating alone, head lowered as he takes the food to his mouth. Jimin closes his eyes and throws his head back, bored and tired.

Taehyung starts to squeeze his arm’s muscle to distract himself, so he aligns his head straight again and opens his eyes out of pure impulse. He is preparing himself to tell Taehyung something when he feels a stare burning his skin. He returns his gaze to the previous boy he was looking and is met with a pair of dark irises staring straight into him.

He is so pretty Jimin takes a moment to realize; to understand.

His heart drops to his feet.

No way.

There's no fucking way.

He feels all air leave his lungs in one quick motion.

It’s him.

Jimin is not hallucinating, it’s really him, sitting three tables across from him.

Dear god. He looks so stunning. Maybe even more than Jimin remembers? Was he always that big?

Jimin is about to raise a hand and wave with trembling fingers when Jungkook breaks the contact, diverting his eyes somewhere else as he chews, and then to his food again.

Jimin frowns, confused, and waits for the boy to look at him again. Did he not see him? No, the eye contact pretty much happened, of that much Jimin is sure. Maybe he didn't recognize him?

But just the thought of that being it hurts Jimin more than he could predict.

He continues to analyze the boy’s expression and tries to toss the negativity away — however if he’s being honest, Jungkook’s expression turns rather cold after their short exchange. But maybe he is imagining it?

“Yah, Jimin!” Taehyung shoves his shoulder and startles him.

“Uh?” he says confused at the sudden outburst of violence and feels detached as he watches Taehyung point with his chin to something behind him.

He looks back and takes a while to realize what Taehyung is talking about. The line. Oh right. They're here to eat.

Jungkook is studying in the same school as him. He walks five steps until he reaches the person in front of him and stops. Jungkook is sitting right there, mere meters away from him.
“What's up with you?!” Taehyung slaps his back and Jimin turns around to look at him, but ends up looking at Jungkook’s table instead. Even the way he eats is gorgeous. Why doesn't he return the gaze?

“Huh?” Jimin dumbly repeats. “Ah, sorry. I’m just thinking.” he lies, but it seems to go downhill, because instead of settling Taehyung, it does quite the contrary and gives a concerned demeanour to his face. “Ah, it's nothing, really.” he hurries to excuse, and the boy doesn't seem to believe him, but he’s always the best person to respect Jimin’s wants and sensing he doesn't want to talk about it, he simply envelops the older’s waist with his arms and backhugs him, chin resting on his shoulder.

Feeling distressed, Jimin closes his eyes and leans against it, preferring to clean his mind rather than to drown and be consumed by his negative thoughts. He knows pretty well where goes down that road.

With Taehyung by him it's easier to not think about anything — the boy is bigger than him, so the warmth he transfers to Jimin’s body is pretty much everything he focuses on.

He pays attention to the way Taehyung’s fingers massages his waist and eases his muscles, he pays attention to the sound of the soft chaos around him, tons of voices mixing in a single place; and empties his mind.

When he least expects, it's their turn and after picking up their food they're searching for a place to sit — which would be cool, if all the tables weren't already taken. Jimin sighs drained. He kinda wants to leave.

His eyes betray him and do their own scanning of the place until they find Jungkook again. He is sitting alone, three empty chairs around him, and if he wasn't carrying such a confident expression, the sight would be sad. Jimin wants to look away, but he also half wants the boy to look back at him and smile. Jimin remembers his smile was so pretty. His front teeth stooded out a little more than the others, and when he smiled wide he looked like a bunny. It was cute.

Jimin doesn't know what is it that gets to him. But without really sparing much thought, he starts walking in the table’s direction, feeling Taehyung follow right behind him.

“Hey, did you find a table?” the younger asks uncertain, but Jimin just ignores.

His feet halts, however, when he is close enough that Jungkook can hear him if he says something. And like sensing another presence, the boy raises his eyes, until they meet.

Jimin holds his breath slightly, a sort of pressure against his chest making it hard for him to breath. Taehyung notices nothing but the empty places on the table, for Jimin’s complete horror.

“Oh!” he realizes, “We can sit here, right? They’re empty.”

Jimin looks back at him to answer something close to “absolutely not”, assuming the boy is talking to him, and with the double as horror, understands that he is actually asking the question to Jungkook.

“Yah—” he is about to interfere, but is cut off by that voice, that one voice he so much denied to have missed.

“Sure.”

Jimin freezes for a moment. It really is him. His tone sounds somewhat colder than what he
remembers, but he can't really forget that voice.

Taehyung beams, and Jimin wants to melt with the ground. Remind him again why the fuck did he walk this direction?

“Thank you!” his best friend smiles, already taking a seat in front of the boy. “What's your name? I’m Taehyung!”

Damn him three times for being so friendly. Jimin really considers turning around, throwing his food in the trash and waiting until lunchtime is over somewhere away from there.

“I’m Jungkook.” he says and Jimin bites on his bottom lip, eyes down.

“Hello stranger.”

“It can be Jungkook for you.”

He almost feels like he can really hear their voices resounding in his ears.

“Nice to meet you.” Jungkook finishes and Jimin gathers enough courage to make eye contact, surprised to find out he is already looking at him.

They stare at each other in silence for some moments. Jimin doesn't know what to say. This is not the Jungkook he knew. He feels strange and distant. Not that they were any close when they met, but it's almost like he doesn't want Jimin’s presence around him. And given the fact he didn't show any sort of reaction when seeing him, and not even acknowledged him, to begin with, Jimin wouldn't be surprised if that was the case.

“Do you know each other?” Taehyung asks when the silence stretches long enough to become uncomfortable.

Jimin snaps out of his trance. “No!” he is faster to answer. He doesn't know why. Doesn't know if it's whether because he doesn't want Taehyung to know anything or because he didn't want to hear Jungkook’s own voice denying any kind of relation between them, erasing what they shared.

He blushes hard, but tries to hide it ducking his head down, and sits by Taehyung’s side without looking at anything else but his tray. “I’m Jimin.” he sounds awkward. “Nice to meet you.” he does a little bow to have an excuse to keep his head lowered, and closes his eyes when he thinks about How pathetic he must look.

“Cool.” is all Jungkook has to say to him, and Jimin has to take a deep breath to calm his nerves down, hearing his heartbeat on his ears.

His anxiety is buzzing his senses and numbing his fingers. Did he do something wrong to make Jungkook treat him that way or didn't he recognize him at all? Maybe he forgot? Jimin bites his bottom lip, trying to avoid how weirdly this hurts. If he forgot him it's because he had a lot of other people after Jimin to the point their experience was meaningless, forgettable.

It hurts because Jimin couldn't bring himself to be with anyone else after him. Too dizzy to see anyone above his infatuation.

But even if Jungkook had been with this many people after. Jimin knows that even if he had done the same, he wouldn't forget him that soon and that easily. Even more after the night at the beach.

So maybe the problem was him?
Was the people Jungkook fooled around with more beautiful? More interesting, more skinny? Maybe they didn't laugh so loud and acted more maturely. Maybe they had prettier hair and more smooth skin.

He starts to pick at a newly born pimple on his jawline.

His fingers are playing with the napkins over his tray.

They are so small and fat. It doesn't look like a guy's hand and neither does it look like a girl’s. He hides them away in his hoodie, suddenly embarrassed — humiliated by Taehyung’s and Jungkook’s long fingers, veiny hands.

“Hey.” he feels a nudge on his rib. “Ain't you gonna eat?”

Jimin looks up to his best friend. “Uh?” he has to concentrate to understand his words for a second. “Oh, right. I will.”

He starts to roll his food with the chopsticks just so Taehyung won't pay much attention to him. It works, cause the boy goes back to his conversation with Jungkook. Jimin begins to pay attention. He hadn't even realized they were talking.

It's awkward. Jungkook doesn't seem to be as repelled to Taehyung’s presence as he does with his. In fact, he… He seems to be enjoying the conservation? He still has a closed expression, but from time to time the corner of his lips curve slightly. It's no surprise, given how exciting and giddy Taehyung can be when talking. Jimin looks at him and confirms. He looks cute. If Jimin was the one talking with him he’d be smiling too.

Yet, he can't stop the urge to compare the two of them. He must look like a depressed idiot by his side. Taehyung reciprocates his gaze for a second and Jimin puts a little rice ball into his mouth so the boy won't be suspicious, diverting his eyes to somewhere else.

He starts to wander through random faces as he chews on the food torturously slow. He wants to spit it out, cause the taste bothers his stomach, but he forces himself to keep eating. He locks eyes with a girl he talks to occasionally on some classes and gives her a little smile, to which she waves friendly. The next one he does eye contact with is a past classmate, whom he used to hook up last year. The boy smiles at him and Jimin smiles back without much enthusiasm. However, some seconds later his phone rings in his pocket. Having nothing else to distract himself, Jimin takes it on his hands and reads the message. He knows it’s the boy, cause he also has his phone in hands.

_Jinyoung — 12:32 pm_

bored much?

Jimin looks up and smiles at the boy, who chuckles cutely.

_you — 12:32 pm_

nothing insanely amazing about eating here
He raises his head to see the other’s reaction and is happy to see him laughing at the message. At least he knows how to be funny sometimes.

Jinyoung — 12:33 pm

it always amazed me how you’re not crazy about food

you — 12:33 pm

ah

depends on the day

Jinyoung — 12:33 pm

when do you feel especially excited about eating?

we could go somewhere after school

Jimin knew it was coming. He tilts his head, considering the offer. He knows where he is going to end up if he accepts — and it's not on his doorstep being kissed after a romantic date on a nice restaurant. He looks up to the two boys in front of him. Jungkook seems to have completely forgotten about him being there and Taehyung is so excited talking about his action figure’s collection that he doesn't pay much attention to him either.

He travels with his eyes back to the boy, who is staring at him with a smile that used to make his body go hot. Jimin sighs. He could use some distraction.

you — 12:34 pm

friday seems nice

Jinyoung — 12:35 pm

friday it is then

They stop texting after that and Jimin watches as Jinyoung goes back to his conversation with his friends. He wonders if they know he is gay. And if they don't, how they would react. Jinyoung is pretty enough to turn girls’ and boys’ heads — well, at least it turned his.

Jimin returns to stare at his full bowl— as if he stares hard enough it will all disappear. Sadly, it
doesn't, so he is forced to eat a couple of meat cubes and some of the vegetables there. He stuffs the rest of the food on the corners of the bowl and rolls it with the chopsticks so it will look like he ate some of it.

When the bell rings, Taehyung takes a quick glance at his tray and doesn't say anything, so Jimin counts that as a victory. Jungkook, on the other hand, doesn't spare him a single second of attention and parts ways with them after waving Taehyung goodbye. Jimin looks down and buries the bad feeling deep inside his gut to be felt on some other moment.

Taehyung talks with him normally during the rest of the day so he assumes the atmosphere only felt uncomfortable for him. He concludes this feels worse than if it did for everyone.

They go on with their normal routine and later, on a toilet cabin, when everyone else is at class, Jimin locks himself up and throws up all the food from his stomach.

The clock finally rings on the ending of the last class and Jimin waits outside of the school for Taehyung that claimed to have a bathroom emergency when they were going down the stairs. The air is still chilly, so Jimin sinks further in his hoodie, cheeks half covered by the cloth.

“Yo.” he hears a familiar voice and turns to place a face on it. It’s Jinyoung.

“Hey.” he smiles friendly, apart from the cold burning his cheeks.

“You’re freezing.”

“Glad you noticed.” Jimin jokes and they chuckle.

“I think I have a spare coat inside my bag, wait.” the boy says and waits for no answer before he is already unzipping the backpack to find the sweatshirt.

“No, no, please, there’s no need.” Jimin refuses straight away, but before he sees it, the boy is handing the coat to him. Jimin doesn’t make a single move take it, so Jinyoung puts it over his shoulders.

“Please, take it, it’s cold.”

“Yeah, and you’re only using a sweater.” Jimin retorts.

The taller one rolls his eyes. “I resist well to the cold.”

It’s Jimin’s turn to roll his. “So much for getting in my pants.” he jokes, amusement swimming in his eyes, getting the other boy to laugh out loud with his head thrown back. It’s nice. Jinyoung makes him feel funny and wanted.

Jimin bites his lip to contain his own smile, because the boy really is pretty and holds the air inside his lungs when he quits the laughter and leans close enough that Jimin can feel his hot breath.

“Maybe it's not just your pants I wanna get in.”

Jimin’s eyes go wide and that's when Taehyung arrives.
With company.

He has no time to think about what Jinyoung meant, because his heart loses it the moment he sees Jungkook, and suddenly, that's all he can think about.

“Hey, hey you two.” his best friend greets.

Jungkook watches them with eyes Jimin can't read.

Jinyoung puts some distance between them with a smirk to Jimin’s apparent lack of reaction. Little did he know.

“What’s up.” he answers Taehyung and simply nods at Jungkook, already walking backwards to make his go. “See you around, Jimin. Text me later!”

“Bye…” Jimin waves at him a little lost, all action sucked out of him the moment Jungkook entered his sight, installing back the melancholy he felt all day at the knowledge he was being ignored, or almost that. “Um, hi.” he greets the boys in front of him when Jinyoung is gone, kind of embarrassed.

Taehyung is smiling and ready to spill some unnecessary bullshit when Jungkook’s strong voice cuts him and Jimin’s heart drops to his feet, cause he has his eyes directed to him.

“Is he your boyfriend?” his voice sounds harsher than when he talked with Taehyung earlier, so Jimin assumes he must really hate him now.

He is taken off guard, no armor to protect him. It’s the first time Jungkook is actually directing some real words to him and Jimin doesn't know what to do. He keeps his shocked silence for a second or two.

“U-uh, no, we… We…” he doesn't know how to describe them and this just gets even more on his nerves. “We’re friends.”

“They hook up from time to time. Why? Are you a homophobe, by any chance?”

Jimin stares horrified at his best friend, not believing what his ears just heard.

“Taehyung!” he reprimands him the very same second.

Jungkook acts as if he didn't hear Jimin’s indignation, and looks at Taehyung as if he is stupid. “Of course not, are you dumb?”

“Great, because Jiminie is gay, and if you were, you wouldn't hang out with us.”

Is he fucking invisible?

“Kim Taehyung!” Jimin speaks louder this time and they both look at him.

“What?” the boy acts as if he didn't just expose Jimin’s life to, technically, a stranger.

“I’d like to myself choose with whom I want to share my personal life and my sexuality, thank you very much.”

He doesn't seem to get it. “But Jungkook is our friend now.”

Jimin looks at Jungkook and scoffs. He doesn't know if it's the pissed state of mind Taehyung got
him in, but somehow he finds the courage to stand up for himself. He is not going to be treated like he doesn't exist and lower his head as if he is the one to blame. Who does Jungkook think he is? The golden dick of South Korea? Please. “Speak for yourself.”

This seems to get both boys in a loss for words and Jimin takes the chance to walk the way contrary of them. “I’m taking the bus today.”

He leaves them behind with a heavy chest, but not an inch of guilt in his body.

○

It’s not thirty minutes later after he arrives home that he is showered with a dozen messages from Taehyung apologizing. He ignores him for the entire afternoon and binge watches seven or eight episodes of One Piece in a roll. Before he notices, his mom is appearing by the front door and the sunlight is already dying, barely being noticed from where he enters the window, welcoming the night.

“Hello, sweetheart.” she announces her presence with a warm smile.

“Hi, mom. How was your day?”

She passes by to drop a kiss on his forehead and goes to leave her purse over the kitchen’s counter. “Just tiring, really. Yours?” She comes back with the mails in hands, checking each one, most probably bills.

“Nothing particularly exciting, either.” he lies.

He wants to share his day with her, really, he wants, but there’s not a single thing about it that doesn't expose the one thing he’s been keeping from her his entire life. He wishes he could hear her advices about Jungkook. He can always play him off as some nonexistent girl, but that would be he directly lying to her and that just feels way too wrong. He never completely lies to his mom, just tells half truths.

“So mondays are really always this boring for everyone, huh.” she concludes and tosses the papers over the coffee table, where Jimin’s feet rest. She taps it away. “Off, off, I don't want my table stained. Where’s your brother?”

Jimin shrugs. “Got no clue. He wasn't here when I arrived.” His mother sighs.

“He’ll drive me crazy these days.”

Jimin has nothing to say. Jihyun really has been acting difficult lately. In fact, the two of them are not really properly speaking since the New Year's incident. Not that he cares, he has no interest in maintaining assholes in his life talking shit to him for literally no reason other than wanting to act like a fucking child.

“Call him.” Jimin suggests.

“I will, baby. Oh, and your phone won't stop buzzing here.”

Jimin looks up. He put his phone to charge over the counter when he arrived so he wouldn't feel
the urge to check it every two seconds.

It must be Taehyung. He decides it’s already time to stop torturing and forgive him. “Can you give it to me, mom, please?”

She hands the phone to him and heads for her bedroom with her own glued to her ear, presumably calling Jihyun.

It’s actually Taehyung on the phone, and he has already sent, like, thirty messages. Jimin shakes his head, laughing. He had always been intense to this extent. All the messages were variations of “I’m so sorry, forgive me, I love you ;(“ mixed with some “fuck, why are you so stubborn???”

Jimin chuckles and starts typing.

you — 6:22 pm

youre an idiot

and thats why i love you

but never ever EVER do that again

The answer comes almost instantly.

most beautiful man in the world whom i love — 6:23 pm

i wont!!!!!!

im so sorry :( im so dumb

you — 6:23 pm

sure

its fine as long as u understood you messed up

most beautiful man in the world whom i love — 6:23 pm

i do

i rly do

but thank god you answered i rly wanted to talk 2 u

jungkook wont stop making questions about you
Jimin’s heart stops at that.

What?

You — 6:24 pm

What

Jimin waits for an answer, but gets his phone vibrating instead, Taehyung’s name and picture showing up on the screen as the ringtone echoes through the living room. He licks his lips nervously before picking up.

“What the hell are you talking about?” Jimin shoots as soon as the phone is on his ear.

“Dude, I don't know, but listen to me, I think he got a thing for you.”

Jimin thinks he has never scoffed this hard in his life before.

“Please.” Just hearing those words sound insane. It wouldn't a month ago, or if Jungkook was treating him as a fucking decent person, at least.

“I’m serious. We went home together, and I was feeling so guilty I started talking about you, and our friendship and how bad I fucked up, and he was quietly listening until he started asking about us, if we were a thing, if we had ever been, and I was so surprised, because he barely made any question when we were talking before, and he seemed so curious.”

Jimin sighs, sinking in the couch, his stomach twisting uncomfortably inside him. “Never considered he might be interested in you and not me?” he says at once, like ripping a bandage off, hoping it will hurt less.

It doesn't. The words are still burning on his tongue with the aftertaste.

Taehyung goes silent and Jimin already knows the answer.

“That's stupid.” the boy finally says, but he doesn't seem so convinced anymore. Jimin feels even sadder. He starts to play with the hem of his shirt, throat closing.

“No, it's not. Think about it. He spent the whole time talking to you during lunch, he barely acknowledged I was there,” within every word that leaves his mouth, his voice gets smaller and smaller, “It’s just normal that he might’ve gotten interested in you… After all you’re… you.”

Jimin can practically feel Taehyung’s frown over the phone. “What do you mean by that?”

Jimin sighs. “I mean that you’re amazing, Tae, and there's not a single person who wouldn't like you.”

Taehyung coos, for Jimin’s misery. If he couldn't feel any worse. He said the truth, but his intention wasn't to make Taehyung feel good; he was talking more to himself than to anyone, letting the words out to remind how different they are. “That's sweet, but I don't think that's it.”

“Whatever.” he doesn't want to hear about it anymore. It’s making him feel sick and it's so stupid, because he hooked up with Jungkook twice, they know literally nothing about each other and he’s
already this attached. It's pathetic. “I’ve got homework to do, so I’ll hang up, okay? Talk to you later.”

“Oh, yeah, sure.” Taehyung drifts, kinda awkward. “Bye…”

Jimin hangs up, feeling so frustrated he hides his face between his knees, raised up to his chest. He stays in that position for a while, feeling the warmth of his own body, hearing the soft voices of the anime characters playing on the television. Time could stop. He stays there until his breathing is calm and easy, flowing out of his system in quiet sighs, slowly.

“Honey?” his mom’s voice surges behind him, her hand coming to stroke his nape. “You good?”

Jimin raises his head. “Yeah.” he shifts on the couch to look at her. “Do you need anything?”

“Actually, yes.” her eyes are apologetic and Jimin already knows the favor she's about to ask will have him leaving the house. “I just got to talk to your brother, and he’s on the other side of the city, on a beach, doing God knows what. I told him to come home, but he says he has no money to take the bus and I don't want him to walk at this hour, cause it’s already dark, so can you, please, please, go pick him up for me?”

Jimin wants to say no, just because it’s Jihyun and he’s doing this purely out of childishness, but the way his mother is looking at him gets him melting the armour right away, sighing defeatedly. “Sure, where is he?”

She sends him his brother’s location on the message app, and guides him to which bus to take and where to drop off.

Jimin grabs a hoodie to shield him from the wind outside before getting out of the comfort of his home, annoyance almost dripping off his feet through heavy steps.

He and Jihyun sit side by side in silence, not having greeted each other even when Jimin dropped off at the bus stop, where the younger was waiting, head down. They crossed the street to wait for the bus coming back, and Jimin haven't even spared him a single glance since, haven't asked what he was doing, why wasn't he home. He doesn't care. Not now, when he's so pissed off he can't think of anything else. It’s just so fucking immature of him, to worry their mother like this, without any damn reason. Go out carelessly to the other side of town without money to come back. Seriously, how old does he think he is he? It's ridiculous.

Jimin sighs, watching his breath come out in a weak smoke. He hugs his own body, trying to warm himself up, closing his eyes and focusing on the sound of the waves breaking down the shore rather than of the wheels burning the asphalt as the cars pass by them in high speed.

The last time Jimin been to the beach was at New Years, when… Well.

He bites the inner part of his cheeks, trying to contain the memories, but they’re just too
overwhelming, spreading through his system like a virus as soon as he remembers Jungkook’s mouth moving against his, biting his lips, giggling against him because of the fireworks.

Jimin opens his eyes. His heart hurts.

Seeing Jungkook again feels like shooting a bullet straight into his chest, breaking down his shield, shattering it to pieces, and awakening all the feelings he tried to bury and forget the past month. He hates, hates how he is so intense, willing to fall for someone after sharing one pretty moment.

So what they kissed on New Years? So what Jungkook looked at him as if he held all the galaxies in his eyes? So what, Jimin? You're not that special.

The bus arrives before he can dwell longer in his spiralling negative thoughts. He realizes with not much surprise, but still as frustrated as he could be, that the bus is full. Jimin signs for the driver, who stops right in front of them some seconds later. They're the only ones at the bus stop, so he lets Jihyun go up first since he’s paying.

All seats are taken, apparently, so Jimin follows Jihyun further into the bus until the boy luckily finds an empty seat next to an old lady. He’s about to stop and stand next to his brother when his sight catches a glance of one more empty seat in the back of the bus, next to a boy with a black cap covering his eyes.

Jimin almost opens his mouth to tell Jihyun he’ll sit there when he decides against it, walking towards the back of the bus without uttering a word.

As Jimin approaches the seat, the boy with the cap raises his head to lean against the window, his sharp jawline coming to vision and stealing all the breath away from him, who halts in his feet.

He almost wants to laugh at the tragic coincidence.

The abrupt movement seems to catch the boy’s attention, because he slowly withdraws his eyes from the light beams outside the street, turning his head to see who’s standing in the middle of the bus — locking eyes with Jimin.

They stay like that for some torturous seconds, Jimin’s heart pace increasing embarrassingly inside his chest as his hands sweat beside his body. He quickly scans all the seats one more time, trying to make sure there's not another one he accidentally missed — but, no, there's not. Of course there's not.

Jimin considers going back to Jihyun, but he thinks that backing off like a stupid little kid after making clear he was heading to that seat is making too much a fool of himself — and he's done looking like a poor desperate boy to Jungkook.

So, as much as both his heart and mind scream for him not to, he takes a deep breath, looking up and walks in his direction, trying not to lock eyes, but that being almost impossible when he reaches the seat and Jungkook remains to stare at him, almost as if he wants Jimin to reciprocate.

“Hey.” Jungkook’s rough voice catches his ears and Jimin’s breath hitches. He looks at him, utterly surprised, nearly shocked, but tries gulping all his anxiety down his throat, sitting beside him with eyes fixed on the front seat’s backrest.

“Hey.” he answers coldly, holding his emotions at bay, close to his heart, trying not to spill them all over.

Or doing his best, at least.
The bus engine working beneath the machine is responsible for filling the silence with its mechanical buzz. He feels the high speed the driver is in on the swing of his body, left and right, knees moving with its irregular movements.

Jimin sinks on the seat, hands deep inside his pocket, face half engulfed by the coat as he feels suddenly conscious about his appearance. The pimples surging on his jawline, the cracked lips, the mess of a hair on his head. Everything seems to come crashing down over him; his fingers tingling to try and fix the strands somehow — but he buries his nails in his palms instead, the burning skin serving to fill his mind with something else.

“Uh,” Jungkook hums all of a sudden and Jimin thinks he might be hallucinating, hearing things, but not even a second later the younger is speaking again and Jimin feels his heart try and rip his chest open. Why won't he shut up and leave him be? “Do you live here?”

Hearing his voice hurts; being by his side hurts, especially after today. Jimin gulps, not daring to try and look at Jungkook’s direction, even though he can see the boy staring at him by his peripheral.

If it was any other person, Jimin would happily engage in a conversation, would tell about how he came all the way to the other side of the city to pick up his brother and how he is being a brat lately — he is not bad at socializing, he’s just shy and insecure. However, the person beside him is Jungkook, and Jimin just can't seem to utter any word without having his throat closing. He doesn't understand why he's trying to talk to him when he’s clearly interested in Taehyung, when he’s fucking pretending they never met before.

Perhaps he doesn't mind talking to him as long as Taehyung is not present, maybe he’s acting like they don't know each other because he doesn't want Taehyung to know.

“Not really.” Jimin manages to answer, a sour taste in his mouth, his voice muffled by the hoodie.

“Cool.” Jungkook says, averting his gaze elsewhere, “Me neither, I live on the other side, actually.”

Jimin laughs. Fucking great.

Jungkook turns to look at him with a confused frown, but seems to opt for not making any other questions, to which Jimin is thankful. Maybe he sensed his sour mood or whatever. As long as he keeps quiet and doesn't make this any more excruciating than it already is for Jimin.

He realizes his nails are still painfully kneading the flesh of his palms, so he stops. It’s marked — he feels it with his fingertips, a sigh escaping his lips at the realization. Jimin keeps his eyes up, blankly staring at the back of Jihyun’s head as a form of distraction while the bus proceeds to follow it's route. At some time along the way, his brother either feels the stare burning his nape or gets curious to know where Jimin is and looks back, being met with him already staring at him. The younger frowns, averting his eyes from his older brother to Jungkook, then looking back to the front.

Jimin maintains his gaze, unfazed by the quick exchange. Honestly, he’s just tired. He just wants to get home and sleep all this away. He kind of wishes he hadn't forgotten to bring his phone, because at least now he’d have some real, material source of distraction to grasp onto.

But things are how they are, and the reality he’s forced to deal with is that Jungkook’s thighs are touching his and as much as he tries to pull back, the swing of the bus always overcomes his forces, making that warmth spread all over his body, making him want to punch both him and Jungkook. Maybe twice.
Jimin is about to shut his eyes and lean his head back, when the driver, out of nowhere, takes a too
closed curve, stealing all the balance away from him since his hands are into his pocket, and with
as much horror as possible, Jimin sees himself falling against Jungkook, just like that, in a
flashlight. His heart drops to his feet, tries escaping his mouth, all the same. He attempts to get his
hands free to try and grab something, but Jungkook is quicker, holding him by the shoulders
before he can fall face down on his thighs.

Jimin feels his cheeks heating absurdly, and when he looks up, to his utmost terror, Jungkook’s
face is within an inch from his, getting him to positively forget how to breath. He is so close their
noses touch, and Jungkook is intently looking at him, Jimin feels it. He doesn't want to reciprocate,
but his eyes drift from the bridge of the boy’s nose towards his eyes without Jimin’s consent, and
soon they're looking straight into each other's eyes, their breaths mixing, memories washing his
mind all over.

He jumps out of the boy’s grasp as soon as the bus settles back, as if the touch burnt.

He can't think straight, can't see past his hazy memories replaying in the back of his mind.

“S-sorry.” he manages to utter, but suddenly it is too much. It's all too much. He needs to get out of
here.

He motions to get up from the seat, ready to run away, anywhere, but a hand comes to wrap itself
around his wrist and Jimin just can’t.

“What?!” he explodes, maybe too energetic, but he can't bring himself to care.

Jungkook seems taken aback; yet shows no signs of letting him go.

“I…” he fails, seeming to consider whether he should go on or not, “I just wanted to apologize for
earlier.”

Jimin stares at him for a moment, words missing out, trying to understand if he's apologizing for
literally pretending he didn't exist — when it clicks in his mind.

Oh. Sure. He's apologizing for what Taehyung did.

Before Jimin can think of any other thing, he yanks his hand away harshly. His face turns pale,
contrasting to the thundering sound of his heart beating on his ears. He feels sick. “Nothing that
you didn't know already.” No clue from where he took the courage to utter.

Jungkook is left speechless for a second or two, eyes widening as if he really is shocked that Jimin
mentioned them, even if indirectly. He opens his mouth and no words leave it. Jimin almost enjoys
it, as if he’s the one with the upper hand for once now — but he feels equally frustrated and
distressed, so he just snorts and mentions to leave.

“No, wait! I… I know, but, even so…”

Jimin looks back at him, blood boiling, words spilling from his mouth before he can swallow them.

“Don't worry. Maybe your ego is unable to tell, but my problem was with Taehyung and not you. If
you’re so desperate to apologize in his place you should just go straight up and lick his ass, I’m
sure that would be of much more use.”

Jungkook deeply frowns at him, as if he’s more confused to what Jimin is saying than surprised at
the way he is saying it.
Yet, as soon as the troubled expression comes, it leaves his face in a gust of wind and he stares at Jimin with emotionless eyes, blank.

“Maybe I will.”

Jimin scoffs to hide the hurt in his chest. He knew it.

He fucking knew it.

“Make sure he likes it.” Are the last words his voice manages before it fails on the last syllable.

His feet guide him away so Jungkook can’t see the way his cheeks burn red, eyes glistening with unshed tears.

Jimin doesn’t know, can’t understand why this is taking such a tool on him, it’s not even like he’s in love with Jungkook, but for some reason, a rejection coming from him seems to hurt infinitely times more than any other he has ever gotten.

“Hyung?” Jihyun’s voice snaps him out of his downwards thoughts. He looks up, sort of startled.

His brother is standing from his seat and Jimin tilts his head, confused, when the bus starts to slow down and the view outside shows him they’re on their stop. He breathes out, relieved.

“Let’s go.” His voice is rougher than usual.

Jihyun follows him down the steps of the bus and they’re welcomed on the street by the freezing wind kissing their skin.

Jimin doesn’t wait for him, he just starts walking the way to their home in complete silence, sinking deeper in his own self.

Jihyun catches up to him. “Who’s that?”

“No one.” He is quick to answer, not even an inch of will to have that conversation, or any conversation, really.

“You two seemed pretty worked up for him to be no one.” The boy insists and less than concerned he sounds rather… Suspicious.

Jimin bats his eyes at him for a moment shorter than a second, but makes no real effort to dig into what he wants.

“He’s a classmate. Is that good to you? Now if you don’t mind, leave me alone, please.”

He has not a single drop of patience in him to deal with anyone right now. Especially not Jihyun.

When they get home, Jimin goes straight up to the bathroom strip himself of his clothes and take a cold shower.

He shivers, and shivers, the drops running down his back like ice in that sort of cold weather — but he persists, jaws tightened, mind finally blank.
It’s a wicked little thing being head over heels for a stranger. It’s awkward how it takes a toll on his mood.

Question is, is Jimin willing to go through this; to allow it?

With his apparent suicidal tendencies, probably. He can pretend to hate Jungkook on the outside while he mourns the hurt of an unrequited, unstoppable need inside. He can do that.

The only problem — the only fear he has — is diving in too deep. Only god knows how many days he spent, searching in every form of social media for his name, for his picture, for something. How many days he smiled to himself, daydreaming, making up scenarios where they would meet again, Jungkook with that bright smile, captivating personality, approaching him and offering every beat of his heart in return.

Jimin hates being this intense, so willing to give himself away for someone he barely knows. But he can't help it; he waited so long for this kind of feeling to take, to overwhelm him. He just didn't expect to be slowly crushed in the process.

A sigh escapes past his lips.

The morning is surprisingly hot, sunlight bathing his skin, warm atmosphere adding a natural glow and blush to his cheeks. It feels almost good, if he wasn't with the urge to vomit.

It’s stupid, really. But it’s been a couple of days since his and Jungkook’s scene on the bus, and the younger doesn't even try to hide he is ignoring him anymore. Taehyung is completely oblivious, thinking it’s just Jungkook’s closed personality colliding with Jimin’s shy behaviors.

They don't talk, even though they’re sitting on the same table and Jimin just can't stand how Taehyung has already welcomed him so easily, allowing him to spend lunchtime with them and catching up to him on the halls at literally every chance he gets. He appreciates the boy’s efforts to get the two of them interacting in the same conversation, but they fall short. It’s simply unrealistic, and Jimin thinks that even Taehyung is starting to come to realize that too.

And to top it all off, Taehyung is monitoring him eat. It’s subtle, but Jimin notices. He feels so annoyed, forcing all that food down his throat, that his stomach turns, bile rising.

“But how come you’re younger and is in the same class as us?”

Jimin looks at Taehyung, suddenly interested at the new information. “What?”

The boy looks at him, nodding. “Jungkook takes biology classes with me. And I think he is in the same as you for chem and history! Isn't that amazing?!”

Jimin tries taking a moment to absorb, but he forces a smile on his face just for the sake of Taehyung’s excited sounds. It’s okay, cause he knows he doesn't share any class with him. “Sure.”

He doesn't look back at Jungkook, his skin prickling more than usual at the knowledge he’s in the same grade as them.

“I traveled a lot.” Jungkook starts to answer Taehyung, apparently already used to the older’s never-ending personal questions. “My parents jobs always required them to go from a place to another, and as a kid with no friends I had quite a lot of free time, so I used it to study and stuff. I mean, it was boring, but at least I got to use this time for something.” He’s quite detailed, Jimin
notices, stretching himself more than necessary to answer a simple curiosity. Maybe he truly is already comfortable with Taehyung’s antics, after all.

Jimin can't help but feel a bit of bitterness bothering him. He knows the outcome would have been a lot different, if he was the one asking the question.

“I’m so sorry to hear that.” Taehyung says, sounding really apologetic.

“Nah, it’s fine.” Jungkook waves it off, “They’ve settled here now, so I’m good.”

“But it must have been hard, growing up with no friends at all.”

Jimin feigns disinterest as he observes other people walk past their table, but he’s attentively listening to every word.

“A bit, but I kind of went off spending my time working out, partying and being with other people, y’know, just for fun.”

Jimin halts the chopsticks in the way to his mouth, throat suddenly choked up as his heart seems to quit beating for a moment.

“A naughty one, we have here, I see.” Taehyung jokes, but his voice sounds so muffled and distant.

Jimin replays the words he just heard in his mind. Once, twice, until it sinks in.

After he spent a solid month or more, pinning over the memories, the idealization of Jungkook, he was never seen as anything more than a simply hook up for him. Just for fun.

It hits him really hard, stealing all the breath from his chest. To think they shared something special. How much more stupid can he get?

Jungkook doesn't spare him a glance to watch his reaction, doesn't tremble a syllable as he remains talking to Taehyung, unbothered. Jimin watches their mouths moving, but he can't hear a thing, only the sound of his heart pounding.

He might really throw up, after all.

“Jimin-ah!” a voice pulls him back to reality and Jimin looks up, lost, trying to make sense of the sight of Jinyoung’s body making its way through the other students to reach their table.

Taehyung and Jungkook visibly stop talking, which gets Jimin extra nervous, to know they’ll be paying attention to their exchange, and he just wants a reason to get out of there, so he decides he might use Jinyoung as an emergency escape.

“Ah!” he stands up, suddenly, while the boy haven't made it to where they are yet, “I just remembered,” he focus solemnly on Taehyung as he fakes this excuse, “Me and Jinyoungie have something to discuss, so I’ll catch up to you after class, alright Tae?” he makes sure his eyes curve with his smile at the end, so it doesn't raise any suspicion.

“Don't tell me he’s already asking to be your boyfriend? Have you not told him that you’re—”

Jimin hurries in picking up his tray and shutting Taehyung up, fingers trembling, “Okay, I’m going now, see you later!”

He turns around just in time to catch Jinyoung coming to a stop right in front of him. “Hey.” he
frowns to see the boy is leaving, “Where are you going?”

Jimin starts walking away from the table, happy to watch the other follow him. “Come on, let’s go to the rooftop.”

“Oh.” is all he says before they start making their way out of the refectory.

Jimin makes sure his tray with half full plates goes down in the trash when they pass by the glass doors.

There are leaves scattered all over the paved floor, falling from the tree that stretches above the school’s building limits. They’re rising from the ground, rolling with the soft wind and Jimin finds melancholy in that. He wishes they were pink coloured, so he could pretend he was one of those main characters of sappy animes, hiding in the rooftop to have someone confess to them — only they don’t write animes about gay characters and neither is Jimin here to be told he is loved. The leaves are an ordinary green.

The rooftop is empty, void of any soul that might have wanted some fresh air to breathe in that suffocating prison of open doors. It didn't use to be like this in middle school — Jimin feels high on the memories, nostalgia tickling his fingertips as he rolls over in his mind all the times he and Taehyung spent here; all the secrets they shared, the loud laughs, the tears. Now, in high school, everyone prefers to spend their free time flirting on the patios, talking on the yards — exchanging the chance of a runaway escape for social interaction.

Jimin wonders where all the weirdos — loners — went.

Would he be one if he wasn't Taehyung’s friend, shadowing under the boy’s bright smile to befriend the people he charmed?

It’s a saddening thought.

“Hey,” Jinyoung rings behind him, but it’s distant. “Did something happen? I mean, I was just going to ask you about friday.” Jimin doesn't want to hear. “Do you need something? You seem…” His eyes fall closed. A sigh. “Do you want to talk?”

He doesn't.

Faster than his mind can process it, Jimin is turning around, slamming Jinyoung against the wall, mouths clashing and hands tugging him closer by the collar of the shirt. The other sucks in a breath and Jimin presses harder, kisses harder, not wanting him to back off and question it. He just wants to forget.

Fortunately, the boy doesn't waste any time second guessing. He reciprocates quickly and Jimin hums appreciatively, inciting him on. He starts moving his mouth, lips parted, and Jinyoung takes him in.
“Do you know what they say about the people you spend the midnight of the new years with?”

Jimin sucks in a breath, struck by the memory so vivid in his mind, not enough oxygen in his lungs to breath. Shit.

“Not really. What does they say?”

Stop, stop, stop, stop, stop.

Jinyoung bites his lips so hard Jimin tastes blood, and he sinks his nails on his flesh, more pain than pleasure in his instant reaction. He doesn't care, though. He wants to feel it, wants the pain to punish him for being so fucking weak, for not even being able to be with someone else for a few seconds without being completely consumed by the memories, the path of Jungkook’s fingers on his skin as if imprinted; he can still feel it. It’s sickening.

“They say if you spend the first moment of the new year with them, you might spend the rest of it as well.”

He kneads the boy’s muscles, licks his lips, his tongue, bites the flesh, pulls his hair. Anything. He pours himself in the moment, trying to be overwhelmed by it and only it, but as he can already feel Jinyoung growing hard against his thigh, his dick remains flat and unbothered in his pants.

Jimin feels like crying, because it doesn't matter all his efforts, suddenly it’s Jungkook’s mouth he is tasting, it’s Jungkook’s cheeks he is feeling with his fingertips.

“Yeah? And what do they say, about the person you kiss at the first midnight of the year?”

Jimin chokes, throat closing so fast he has to pull back for air, all of it having been expelled from his lungs in a quick punch. Fuck. Fuck.

Jinyoung closes his eyes, and throws his head back, panting. “Shit, Jimin.”

He doesn't want to hear his voice, doesn't want to face the reality he put himself in. But he also doesn't want to kiss him again to shut him up, eyes burning with the need to let it all out. It’s not him, it’s not Jungkook and Jimin just can't accept this fact hurts so much.

“Fuck, you’re intense today.” Jinyoung continues, “What happened?”

Jimin stares at him for a second, no words to say, until he comes to his senses, using all his strength to mold the best smile on his lips. “You got me excited for friday.” he lies through his teeth.

His stomach sinks at the way the boy laughs, brightly, eyes curving. “If you tell me things like this my heart might be stolen.”

Jimin’s eyes widen, throat dry.

Shit, no.

He opens his mouth to try and say something, but no sound forms. Seeming to sense his obvious discomfort, Jinyoung laughs it off. “Jesus, relax, I’m just joking.”

“Oh…”

The wind passes by them. He doesn't really know what else to answer.
“Okay, so Friday?” the other quickly cuts the short silence.

Jimin tries smiling. “Friday it is. I’ll wait for you on the gates.”

“Deal.” he holds Jimin’s chin and reaches for another quick kiss. He reciprocates, with a hollow chest. “I’ll be going, then. You coming?”

Jimin looks around. He doesn’t really want to face Taehyung and Jungkook — or anyone, really. “Ah, no, I’ll… I will stay here a little more, you can go ahead.”

Jinyoung smiles his pretty smile and leaves.

Jimin just realizes he was holding a breath when the door closes and he releases it. His head is pounding, an insistent pressure on his temples makes him wonder when he became such a fucked up person. He feels like trash, using Jinyoung to cover his own turmoil like this. It’s such a dick move and he hates himself for it.

What if he wasn't joking, what if he was developing feelings for him?

Fair enough that it sounds pushing too hard, a bit too far-fetched that someone would actually fall in love with him, but…

Jimin groans out loud in the open, head thrown back and eyes shut tight. Fuck, his head feels like exploding.

“Breath, Jimin.” he mutters to himself, a way to keep himself grounded, “You’re good. Breath.” focusing on inhaling deeply, then exhaling slowly; once, twice, thrice — until the pressure in his chest starts dissipating, his throat allowing the air to enter naturally.

When his body finally feels less heavy, his mind more clear; he falls down, sitting on the harsh ground, back against the wall, and permits himself to feel.

Everything. Every single thing he’s been holding back, comes crashing down at once. He tries not to think, not to wander in useless scenarios in his mind — just dip in that sadness, that anger, that anguish.

It’s hard, blocking every single thought in his mind and simultaneously allowing all that’s been bottled up to overflow — but Jimin knows that if he lets his mind take control, he will fall down into a full blown anxiety attack, and he just can't let that happen. Not now.

He doesn't know when the tears start kissing his cheeks, doesn't know when his sobs are way too loud for him to keep them in or when his shoulders begin to tremble so hard he has to lean down his head on his knees, trying to stop it.

The wind flows, carrying his cry away, and Jimin just gives himself the permission to live that pain, soak in it; even if for just some moments, he allows him — and as crushing as it feels, as broken as it leaves him, it’s liberating, refreshing almost, to have something done for him, and him only.
Joey’s voice is echoing in the dark room as the character plays off his goofy antics with Chandler on the television. Eunbi chuckles by his side on the bed, but Jimin just feels dull. His eyes are focusing on the show rolling off, but he doesn’t really see it, can’t even remember what episode it is.

Is this still the first they’re watching or the third? He doesn’t know.

He moves up on the mattress, uncomfortable, and Eunbi side eyes him. “Hey.” Jimin turns his attention to her, “What’s the matter?”

He’s quick to shake his head, failed attempt of dismissing any worry. “Nothing, just distracted.”

The dark room makes the projection of the television’s light on her face look a lot more dramatic than it actually is.

“You sure? You’ve been kinda blue all day long. What’s wrong?”

Jimin averts his gaze, Eunbi’s eyes searching and inquiring; piercing, as if scanning deep inside of him. His fingers are absently playing with the sheets on his lap, he notices. “Nothing, just…” he can’t contain a tired sigh, “I’m done with never feeling enough.” it leaves him in a hush; hollow in his chest, heavy on his shoulders. It doesn’t feel any better saying it out loud.

Jimin closes his eyes, head leaning on the headboard with a melancholic thud. The girl frowns, twisting her body, so she can fully face him.

“Hey, what do you mean?”

He shrinks his shoulders, doesn't open his eyes. Stays silent for so long it gets Eunbi wondering if he’ll simply not answer her.

“I don’t know, just…” his lashes flutter open, but remain fixed to the ceiling above them, voice weak like paper glass. He goes quiet once more.

“Jimin?” Eunbi talks barely above a murmur, worry washing her whole body. She never quite saw the boy like that. “Honey, talk to me.” She shuffles closer to him, pleading in her tone, taking his hand in hers.

“Sorry.” Jimin paints a sad smile on his lips and finally rolls his head a bit to face her. “Don't worry about it. I’m used to this.”

She frowns, unable to understand. “This what?”

“This feeling. It's been here for a while. Don't worry, hopefully it will pass soon. Really.”

There was finality in his tone, and as much as Eunbi hates this powerless instance, hates not being capable of grasping what’s happening inside her brother, much less being able to take some real action to help him — she knows better than to not push where she’s not allowed in people's lives. She knows that if she insists, it will only become an unnecessary burden on Jimin’s shoulders and that’s the last thing she wants. Even more when he looks so… depressed.

Her heart tightens in a closed fist at the possibility.

*Please, don't let it be this.*

“What can I do to help you, love?” she softly asks, running her thumb on the boy’s palm, and
Jimin looks at her as if he could burst to tears any moment now.

“Just…” he sounds so choked up it tightens her own throat. “Can you hold me, please?” his voice breaks.

The request comes as a surprise, but Eunbi doesn't spare herself much time to dwell in it, scared Jimin might take it as rejection. On the contrary, she promptly wraps her arms around the boy’s small figure, cupping his head on her shoulder. “Of course.” she starts massaging his scalp with her fingertips, attempting to dissipate some of the boy’s stress off him. “What kind of question.” her voice fails her as Jimin brings her closer — as if a hug was everything he had been needing in a long time — hands clutching her shirt and hiding his face on her neck.

Eunbi thinks he’s going to cry, so she tries mentally preparing herself for the impact — the image alone of Jimin crying in her arms breaking her heart into tiny little pieces. But he doesn't — just breathes deeply, inhaling all the air he can manage, in and out, in and out. She continues to caress his hair, bringing his fringe backwards, curling the strands, softly using her nails to soothe him; pouring all her focus in passing as much comfort through her hold as she possibly can.

Eventually, Jimin’s breaths evens out, his grip on her shirt slowly loosens until his hand is falling on her lap. She kisses the top of his head, relieved he’s drifting to numbness, and waits some more minutes, running her thumb up and down the bridge of his nose, just like her mom used to do with her when she was little, lulling her to sleep in her constant restless state of mind. She never had any nightmares when she fell asleep like this, so she strongly believes it was the power of her mom’s protection etched onto her by that sweet act of love.

She hopes it does the same for her brother.

Jimin wakes up disoriented, pitch black before his eyes even though he’s sure he's got them opened. He blinks a few times, lids heavy with drowsiness, rubbing his entire face with his palms, trying to come to his senses as his body sinks deeper on the soft mattress. He realizes he is tucked in his fluffiest blanket when he runs his hands over it, the soothing texture awakening a tiny smile on his lips. Eunbi.

He swallows around his dry throat and grimaces at the taste in his mouth. It’s like he ate a dead rat.

Before getting up, he checks his phone, displeased to realize he is in time to get dressed and go to school. Well. It’s not like he could skip all the classes until the end of the year, but still. Disappointing.

Jimin pretends not to see all the unanswered texts from Taehyung, some missed calls. He can simply allege he fell asleep as soon as he got home and it will be okay. Taehyung doesn't know he called in sick and skipped the rest of his classes for the afternoon yesterday, because they doesn't share those — Taehyung goes home at 3 while Jimin has to suffer other 2 hours every thursday before he can go home.

He doesn't know and Jimin plans on keeping that way, not amused by the idea of having to lie straight to Taehyung’s face about the reason why.

The truth is he is pissed. Pissed at his weak self, at Jungkook, at Taehyung, even. Why does he
have to be so friendly, so social, so well-liked? Stealing the boy he’s falling for right out of his fingers and doesn't even realize it.

Jimin ponders when he got this so out of grasp. Who would tell.

He laughs, no color in it, rolling the apple over the kitchen’s table from a hand to another. He doesn't remember how he got there.

“Morning, sweetheart.” his mother appears, filling the place with a sweet scent from her perfume. Jimin doesn't have to look up to know she’s completely dressed, pretty make up ready to go to work. He stares down at his beaten up jeans he used yesterday. Doesn't remember how he got into those neither. Did he shower? He smells his armpit to know. He did.

“Morning, mom.”

“I’m just gonna prepare something for us to eat really quick, do you wanna a ride after?”

The apple rolls in front of his eyes. Left and right. Right and left.

“Jimin-ah?”

He catches the fruit before it can reach his hand, abruptly disrupting its path and gets up, biting down on it. “I’m good,” he says, mouth full, “I’ll walk today, thank you, mom.” he tries smiling, and knows he failed by her reaction.

He grabs his bag and keys before she can question, though.

“Love you.” Jimin remembers to tell her before he closes the door shut with a thud.

Outside, the sky is mixing in different hues of gray painting the clouds; a soft, humid wind caressing his cheeks, blowing the messy strands away from his forehead.

He marvels in the sensation, watching with interest the mostly empty streets as his feet guide him by muscle memory.

There’s some kind of magic in the first hours after the sun has rose, Jimin thinks. The untouchable hours, he calls them. Like a glimpse of eternity stuck in the present every morning.

He breathes in deep. He’s good.

○

Taehyung doesn't see him when Jimin wraps his arms around his waist and places a kiss between his shoulders’ blades. “Morning, baby.” he greets against the school’s tshirt, breath warming the cloth.

“Yah!” the boy interjects surprised, yet still takes a hand to caress Jimin’s arm, despite his scolding tone. He snaps his head around, but doesn't make a move to detach his body from his best friend’s arms. “Where were you?! Why did you ignore literally all of my messages?!”

Jimin holds him tighter, nuzzling on his back. “Sorry, sorry.” he murmurs, “I fell asleep as soon as I got home.” he repeats the lie he trained a few times in his mind.
Taehyung scoffs, as if he’s resisting to believe him, and finally spins his torso so they’re face to face. The classroom is slowly but surely getting more crowded as the other students arrive.

“And why did you leave yesterday without telling anyone?” he crosses his arms in front of his chest and Jimin drops his own by his side, sliding from the taller’s waist.

“Uh— What?”

How did he know that?

“Jungkook told me.”

Jimin frowns deep — confused an understatement for how he currently feels. The fuck Jungkook has to do with that?

“He has those classes with you.” Taehyung explains, but the interrogations points over Jimin’s face only doubles.

“He doesn't?”

“Well, he's paired up with you for the next history work, so I’m pretty sure that yeah, he does.”

Jimin stops himself before he can choke on air.

“What?!”

He looks around and gulps, self aware he made some heads turn to them, curious at his loud voice. He tones it down.

“What do you mean?”

“Exactly what I just said? The teacher paired everyone up by alphabetical order, so…”

Jimin takes a deep breath, closing his eyes in complete denial. His luck is a fucking joke.

“And how do you know that?” he remembers to ask, snapping back to that sarcastic reality.

“Duh? He told me.” Taehyung says as if it's the most natural thing in the world, as if they already talk everyday and Jimin is dumb for not knowing. Well, maybe they do. “Also, he asked me your number, hope you don't mind I gave him.” Jimin does mind, but that's the least of his problems. “And you’re darting from the actual question here! What happened yesterday?” he asks, demanding in a best-friend-way like, and then, suddenly his features soften, “Was it Jinyoung? Did something happen?”

Jimin sighs, carding his fingers through his hair, restless. “No, nothing happened, I just… I got a bellyache, that's all.” it sounds like a horrible lie even for him, who tends to believe everything.

Taehyung says nothing, simply remains staring at him, eyes inquiring. Jimin knows that look. It’s the ‘you can’t lie to me’ look.

“What?!” he pretends to not acknowledge it.

“Jimin.” it's all he says.

He snorts out loud, “I—” but his throat fails him for a moment, “I felt bad, okay? I wanted to leave, so I left. Is that a bad thing?”
Taehyung releases a breath, eyes softening. “No, you know that it's not. Just… Why didn't you tell me?” his arms fall beside his waist, as if a shield shattering and his voice sounds so hurt that before Jimin can think he’s stepping forward and hugging him, his face buried on his neck.

“I wanted to be alone.” he explains, “I’m sorry I worried you.”

Taehyung wraps his arms around his shoulders. “You did.”

“I know, I’m sorry. I’ll let you know if it happens again.” he promises, pulling back just the slightest so he can look in his eyes.

“You don't have to explain yourself, just… Don't leave me in the dark, asshole.”

Jimin manages a light chuckle. “I won't.”

Taehyung nods and they share a smile that it's only theirs.

“Aish,” the younger groans, ruffling Jimin’s hair and pushing him away from him, “That's enough, you koala.”

He giggles, using his own fingers to straighten the strands Taehyung messed. “Idiot.”

They make their way to their respective desks, side by side, as the teacher arrives.

“Good morning, class.” she announces with a smile.

“Oh, by the way,” Taehyung looks back at him, bag slipping from his shoulder to the ground, “Did Jungkook not message you? He said he would.”

Jimin’s heart skips a beat. Right. He almost forgot. After hunting down the internet, that's how he finds him. Through Taehyung.

“Oh, I don't… Think so? I haven't really checked my messages.”

“Oh, you tell me.” he drips in a sarcastic tone, to which Jimin simply shoots an apologetic smile.

They sit in silence, since the teacher settled on her desk in the front and started to talk about where they left on last class.

Jimin takes the opportunity he’s covered by the other students in the back, and steals his phone from his bag, furtively opening the messages, trying to hide the gadget the best he can from the teacher.

His heart almost comes to a stop in his chest when he sees that he has, indeed, a new message from an unknown number.

Hey, it’s Jungkook, remember me? Anyway, you’re paired up with me for our next history work, thought I should let you know since you skipped today. See ya

Jimin bites his lip, still not quite believing he went to the same classes as Jungkook last thursday and simply not saw him. They were sharing the same environment for much longer than he thought and he wasn't even aware. How many times could have he passed by him on the corridors,
missing his face in the middle of so many others? Shit, that’s a hard to believe concept. Jimin always thought, ever since the last time he saw him, that he was so deep in infatuation that he’d catch Jungkook’s face even in the crowdest crowd. Maybe he was really delusional, adding intensity for a thing that it’s not actually that deep. Perhaps he’s still doing that, even now.

If he stops thinking about Jungkook the way he is thinking, will his heart follow the lead?

He hopes so.

sup, taehyung told me, but thx talk to you later

Jimin types and blankly stares at the screen for a minute or so before pressing send.

Fuck it.

Friday is the only day they leave early from school — god bless. Jimin hates staying in that place all day; hates the crowded dining hall during lunchtime, feels suffocated every single time. He hates some teachers’ superior behavior, hates the hierarchy. He hates having to stay imprisoned for the most part of his days, trying to store some useless informations in his brain like a goddamn robot — informations he’s sure he’ll forget as soon as this period of his life ends. And all just to prove he’s the best when the race to get into a renowned university starts.

It’s a funny thought, to try and believe he can be the best at something for once. And something that big. He does not dwell in it long enough to shake his poorly made up confidence, but it does leave him in a sour mood.

“Yo, Jimin.” he snaps out of his reveries with a frown and turns around to see who’s calling for him that informally.

It’s Jungkook. He almost forgot they also shared their chemistry classes.

“I’m pretty sure you’re aware you’re younger than me?” Jimin says, cocking an eyebrow, trying not to be caught in a memory trap for the first time they met.

“Call me hyung."

Jungkook pretends he doesn’t listen.

“So,” he continues as casually as he began. He’s sitting right behind Jimin, taking the chance the teacher is writing on the board to talk, “About the history work. What are we gonna do?”

“Oh. Right.” Jimin tries not to be embarrassed when he asks, “What is it about?” he’s scared the boy will take him for irresponsible, so he adds, “I’m sorry, I just didn’t get the time to catch up on the last class with anyone.”

“It’s fine.” he dismisses it with a shake of head, eyeing the teacher in the front, whom starts to talk,
“Can we talk at the end of the class?”

“Sure.” Jimin nods, as dry and unaffected by the close proximity as he can, and turns his torso to the front, trying to spare the teacher as much attention as his brain allows him.

Sooner than he expects his focus is drifting, chemistry not helping his endless interest in that amazing class. He lays down his head and starts going through the apps on his phone, randomly opening and closing tabs. He scrolls down the upper bar repeatedly, the teacher’s voice lullabbing him to a mid-slumber, until his eyes catch the hour and the date on the screen. 11:48 am, friday.

Friday. Right. He and Jinyoung planned to go out. He completely forgot. Jimin sighs, hiding his face on his arms for a moment. At least he washed his hair this morning, he doesn't look that bad.

He wonders if Jinyoung forgot. He didn't really text him to confirm or anything, so maybe he did. Should Jimin send him a message? Or will that seem too desperate? He should probably just wait, it’s almost the time for the class to finish anyway, and if he really forgot he won't show up looking for Jimin. Also, if it happens for them to not go out today, it won't be a terrible disappointment. He wasn't exactly looking forward to it.

His phone buzzes on the table almost at the exact time he decides to not stress over this. It’s Jinyoung.

*hello pretty, all good for today?*

Jimin bites his lips. That was his chance to find a good excuse to not go.

*hey there, sure!! all good*

As if he was capable of saying no to anyone when they were being so sweet and lovely.

He wonders if the boy will come pick him up or will wait for him by the school’s gates. A part of him kinda wishes he would come, just to see if it would awake some reaction on Jungkook; just to make sure he really didn't feel not a tiny little thing for him. But at the same time, another part of him is scared shitless of confirming his suspicions that Jungkook really didn't care, that Jimin was just the briefest summer fling ever — if he could even call what they had that.

*i wait you downstairs?*

Came Jinyoung’s message, as if reading his mind, and Jimin couldn't tell if he was disappointed or relieved.

*sure!! i text you when i get out of class*
He locks his phone, waiting for the bell to ring when he realized the teacher had already stopped talking. There’s a light tap on his shoulder and Jimin doesn't need to turn around to know who it is, but he does nevertheless.

“Can we talk now?” Jungkook’s voice echoes in his ears.

“Yeah, sure. Tell me about it.”

“Oh, I,” the boy struggles with the words for a moment, almost as if he’s taken off guard by the straightforwardness, before he’s talking with ease again, “I actually thought about us going somewhere else to discuss it? There’s a cafeteria near here, right?”

Jimin pauses, bewildered, breath hitching. His whole body freezes in place for a second. “Uh?”

Jungkook raises his brows curiously at him as if asking what's the problem. Fuck. Fuck, why is he so cute.

Jimin drops his eyes to the backrest of the chair, nibbling at the inside of his lips, refusing to let his cheeks flush. Is Jungkook asking him out? No, right? That would be embarrassing to assume. Okay, scratch that, erase it from the brain. There’s no way in the world he would mean it that way. He’s interested in Taehyung, Jimin, stop mixing things. Jungkook might be right, a quieter space is better for discussing these kind of things.

“Oh, I,” he forces himself to utter before the silence gets too unbearing, “I can’t today, because I, um, have a thing, so.” he nods, proud for saying it without making a fool of himself.

“A thing?” Jungkook pushes and Jimin looks up, surprised that he’s actually questioning it. He’s about to explain when he realizes he has no obligation in doing that. “Yeah.”

Jungkook raises his eyebrows and exhales a breath, as if Jimin disappointed him or something. He frowns. “What?”

The younger stares at him, cocking his head to the side and Jimin can already feel his blood starting to boil. “Nothing. Just expected you to be more responsible when it came to school needs.”

Jimin scoffs, almost a breathy laugher of utter shock at the insult. “Excuse me ?”

“You heard me.” he says, in that arrogant posture of his and Jimin is sure he never wanted to deck someone on the face so bad.

Unbelievable.

“Well, I’m sorry if I can’t please your oh so responsible last minute plans, but, shocking information,” Jimin leans forward, closer to him, cupping a side of his mouth and whispering for effect, “the world doesn't revolve around your needs.”

Jungkook has the audacity to narrow his eyes and tilt his head to the side to say, “You sure? Cause I have my doubts.”

Jimin has to close his eyes and take a deep breath to not lose it. It’s worse when he opens them and finds Jungkook smirking at him, completely and way too amused at the situation.

The bell rings.
“Okay, we’re done here. I text you or something when I get home.” he gets up, hanging his bag on a shoulder, ready to leave.

“Sure, hurry up. I bet your oh so important commitment of today can’t wait to get you on your knees.”

Jimin turns around, completely horrified by the words that just left his mouth.

He steps closer and shoves him hard on the shoulder before he can even think of anything else. The boy falls two steps backwards. “What the fuck is wrong with you?!” he shouts.

Jungkook doesn't answer, just laughs shortly, maintaining eye contact while wearing that fucking stupid smirk in the corner of his mouth, his tongue sticking to the side of his cheek.

The teacher’s voice reaches their ears loud and clear, firm. “Is there a problem over there, by any chance?”

Jimin gulps, forcing all the frustration down his throat and stepping backwards, staring straight into Jungkook’s eyes, before turning around and walking out of the room without a word.

Jinyoung is waiting for him at the entrance, as he said he would. He wears a charming smile on his lips, one Jimin can’t see past the self loathing clawing his way up his heart. He’s so pathetic, he feels so stupid. He doesn't want to go out with Jinyoung anymore, but he's caught between deciding if this is a thing he doesn't want, or if he just gave up because Jungkook made him feel bad about it.

If it’s the latter then he refuses to back down.

He shakes his head, forcing a breath into his tight lungs and breaking his lips into a smile.

They greet each other like this, through stares and smiles, under the eyes of the people passing by them on sidewalk. Jimin is the one to pick where they eat, with a fake amusement that convinces Jinyoung he’s having a good time.

He never lets quietness settle between them, coming up with multiple topics that keep the conversation going — until they reach the other’s empty house and Jinyoung is kissing down his neck, stripping him off his shirt. Jimin closes his eyes, pouring all his best efforts into trying to get lost in the moment.

But he can’t. Can’t stop his mind from running back to downwards memories and thoughts that tie his throat up, even when he’s choking on Jinyoung’s dick — on his knees, just like Jungkook said he would be.

His skin prickles, as if it doesn't belong to him, as if he isn't meant to be in that moment, living on that reality. Jinyoung cums in his mouth with a loud cry and Jimin swallows it down without a wince. He has tears in his eyes and maybe it’s a good thing that he can disguise the cause with the blowjob he just gave. He feels so dirty. Everything just feels wrong and he doesn't find the courage in him to let Jinyoung touch him any further. He’s barely out of his shirt while the other lays on the bed completely naked and in apparent indescribable bliss.

Jimin’s not sure Jinyoung hears him when he grabs his stuff and says he’s leaving.

The walk home feels like torture. Every step that follows the other seems harder to take while keeping it together. His head hangs low in utmost shame, eyes filled with tears that he tries so hard not to shed.
His mother is sitting on the couch reading a book when he opens the door. And that’s when he breaks down.

She’s so startled to hear Jimin’s sobs strangling his throat and filling the room that she doesn’t know how to react for a moment. It’s only when his legs fail him, and he falls sit on the ground with shaking shoulders that she rushes to him, taking his small figure in her arms and stroking his hair, her heart heavy with worry.

She holds him, tight and warm, swinging her frame back and forth while whispering reassuring words on his ear, along with soft kisses over his forehead, until his breath is slow and easy.

“I’ve got you, baby. I’m here. I’m with you.”

Jimin clutches on her arm tighter, lonesome tears striking down his cheeks quietly.

“I’m so sorry, mom.” he chokes out, “I’m so— sorry.”

She caresses his back, delicate palms soothing the trembles out of him. “Shh… It’s okay.”

Jimin wants to tell her it’s not, it’s not okay, because she doesn’t know what he’s sorry for, but he does, and it hurts so much to think she could not be hugging him like this if she knew. “You don’t need to talk now, I’ve got you, uhm? Let’s go to your bedroom.”

She helps him on his feet, and guides his steps until they’re on his bed — she using her fingers to caress the strands over his forehead while humming soothing melodies, and he falling asleep to her calm voice reminiscing his most treasured childhood memories.

He blacks out for the rest of the afternoon and the starting hours of the night. When his mind gets rid of the deep slumber he was in, he realizes there is an arm wrapped around his waist, and the room is still dipped in shadows, the sky behind the curtains a dark blue with no signs of sunlight breaking through.

He searches for his phone, tapping the ground and the mattress blindly, until he feels the gadget in his pocket. He takes it out. It’s 4 in the morning, nearing five. The light coming from the screen illuminates the person’s face by his side and Jimin is surprised to notice it’s not his mother — it’s Taehyung.

A smile involuntarily steals a place in the corner of his lips, his chest swelling. The boy is sleeping with a side of his face over Jimin’s front, bangs falling over his eyes and cheek squished against his body. Jimin uses a hand to thread his fingers through his hair, taking the strands away from his eyes. His mother must’ve called him to come over after Jimin fell asleep and he couldn't be more grateful. He stays like that for a while, stroking Taehyung’s hair and watching him sleep, watching his chest move as he breath, when his growling stomach gets the best of him.

He detaches his figure from the boy’s arms, smiling when he complains in his sleep, groaning incoherent sentences and turning around with a frown, grabbing a pillow to hug in the process.
Jimin walks to the kitchen silently, so he won't disturb neither his mom and brother. The house is warm, no cold winds seeping through the slits to make him shiver in that thin shirt.

He pours himself a glass of grape juice and immediately feels his stomach full after he drinks it. Sighing, he weighs if he should force himself to eat something when he knows he might throw up all out, but also aware he hasn't eaten anything since yesterday’s lunch with Jinyoung.

He settles in taking a chance, searching for something light on the fridge, happy he finds some leftover sushi.

Finding a seat on the stool in front of the counter that splits the kitchen and the living room, he eats two pieces quietly, and knows it’s not enough — but when he tries swallowing the third, his throat closes, and he has to spit it out in the trash can.

Jimin takes the box to the fridge again, trying not to feel disappointed he could barely touch the food. It’s okay. At least he ate something. He’s going to work harder to get better without worrying anyone. He roams to the living room, and opens the window to let some air in.

The sky is dark, still — not black as in the darkest hour of the night, but a deep hue of blue that contrasts with the stars shining bright, like glitter splattered around the surface.

He opens the front door, attracted by the sight and not satisfied with the limited view the window gives him. There’s a comfy chair outside their porch, and it’s there Jimin sits, pulling it forward, so he can have a more expansive sight of all the stars.

He gets lost in them, breathing the night’s air and loving the way it touches his skin, bathes his pores. It feels as if purifying. He’s alone and for once, it’s enough.

His eyes are closed, heightening all his other senses — Jimin listens to the neighborhood’s cats meowing somewhere far away in the street, tastes the sushi and the grape juice on his tongue, feels the cushion’s chair perfectly under his muscles.

He dozes off for some minutes, completely comfortable in his position, legs up and close to his chest. What startles him out of his nap is a slight vibration in his pocket. Jimin is confused for some moments, until he understands his phone is there.

He pulls it off and presses the side button so the screen lights up. He’s getting messages from an unknown number and for some reason he knows it’s Jungkook. The phone vibrates one last time, counting three messages and Jimin takes a deep breath before pulling down the bar to read them without leaving him on read. What could he possibly want at 5 in the morning?

**Hey, I’m sending this because i’m kinda hoping that you’re sleeping and will only see this, like, really late**

**But I’m feeling really bad I can't sleep bc of the things I told you today and I just**

*Can we meet? Idk*

Jimin’s heart drops.

It really does, he feels it, and his blood pressure goes with it.
Is he being serious? Did he send it to the right number?

Jimin watches the screen go black, focusing on something other than how loud his heartbeat rings in his ears.

*Can we meet?* Does he mean now? In this exact moment? Is this why he sent it this late, because he’s expecting he won't answer in time? Should he answer it?

God, Jimin *hates* this.

He’s *so* pissed with Jungkook, he really is, and honestly he doesn't see how they meeting could make things any less worse, but still, the way his chest rises and his stomach swells, so responsive to even the tiniest thing related to Jungkook it’s... overwhelming, and perhaps way too addicting. Jimin hates because all these sensations are everything he’s been yearning to feel for the past years, but *why* would destiny allow the cause of them all to be such an asshole.

He takes a deep breath. Perhaps this is the chance they got to have a serious talk and come clean with everything. Perhaps this is the opportunity Jimin was waiting to have the answers to his questions. He bites his lips, unsure, and opens the messages before he can back off.

Jungkook is online, and Jimin wonders if he’s waiting for his answer.

He taps the screen with his nails nervously, trying to come with something to write. Short and dry, it has to be short and dry.

*unknown — 4:51 am*

*now?*

*you — 4:51 am*

*now?*

*unknown — 4:51 am*

Oh my god

Jimin would laugh at the quick and desperate reply if he wasn't mad at him. So it seems he *was* waiting for his answer, after all. Jimin doesn't address the reason his insides gets extra bubbly at this thought.

*unknown — 4:51 am*

Uh, kind of

Yeah?

I mean, if you want to

Jimin bites his lips. Why does he want to so much? He really does never learn his lessons.
you — 4:52 am

do you even realize what time is it?

unknown — 4:52 am

Yeah, I’m sorry if I woke you up

you — 4:52 am

you didnt

unknown — 4:52 am

Good

Y’know

I just

Fuck

I want to apologize

you — 4:53 am

and why cant you do it here?

unknown — 4:53 am

Cause I need to see you

Jimin’s breath hitches and his lungs close for a second. Jungkook is still typing and Jimin holds his
air until the other messages pops on the screen.

unknown — 4:53 am

I mean, to apologize properly

Personally
I’m sorry, maybe this is a terrible idea

you — 4:54 am

yeah

it is

but im going

His fingers type before he can avoid, as if alive on their own.

unknown — 4:54 am

What?

Oh

Okay, good

Good

Jimin looks ahead at the street. There’s no backing down now.

you — 4:55 am

do you know the park close to the river?

He walks alone on the silent streets. It’s the early hours of a saturday morning, who would be up at this hour? He must be crazy. He considers, more than once, to just spin on his heels and walk back home. He left his mom a note on the fridge in case she woke up, before grabbing a coat and his keys, locking the door and walking away. But that seems such a crazy idea now — even crazier than it first did when he read that message. What does he expect from it? What good did he ever get from expecting anything from Jungkook?

But by the time Jimin reaches that conclusion, he looks up and the park is already in front of his eyes, bathed by the fading moonlight, the playground seeming cold and lonely — if not by a boy’s figure softly swaying on the swing, going back and forth slowly.
Jimin swallows in dry, stepping closer. He stops when Jungkook hears him and raises his head, connecting their eyes in a way that gets Jimin’s heart failing.

Jungkook looks small, engulfed by a gray hoodie with the cap pulled up, to perhaps try and hide the mess his hair makes on his head. Jimin hates that he looks so delicate, his skin clean and red by the cold.

“I thought you weren’t coming anymore.” Jungkook’s voice breaks the silence hanging between them.

Jimin doesn't move from his place. “It did cross my mind.” he admits.

Jungkook puts his feet on the ground, stopping the balance of the swing. His gaze lingers on Jimin and he waits, until Jimin gives in and takes the swing by his side.

They stay like that for what it feels some unbearable minutes — Jimin’s anxiety spiking infinite levels, flowing with his bloodstream, and Jungkook without quitting looking at him for a second. Jimin refuses to reciprocate, though, resolutely staring at the ground beneath his feet, rolling a little rock back and forth with the front of his shoes.

Jungkook escapes a sigh, finally breaking his stare, and turning his head to the front.

“I’ve never been really good with relationships, y’know.” he starts out of nowhere, and Jimin listens, “With my parents always going from a place to another, I actually never had to. And I mean any kind of relationship, really. My family isn't the best example of communication and strong bonding, so dealing with people is not exactly my best quality.” he explains and Jimin remains quiet. Jungkook waits too, seeming to gather courage to continue. “I had never said something so awful to someone as I did to you yesterday.” he turns to look at him again, but Jimin lowers his eyes to his lap, “I’m so sorry. I really am.” he sighs deeply and Jungkook looks away, releasing some of the burden off his shoulders. “I don't know what got into me. I think I was mad about the work or something else, but… I know nothing I told you now justify what I said to you. I know it was terrible and I've been feeling so guilty I couldn't stop thinking about this all day.” The wind passing by them is slow and easy, blowing its cold breeze on their cheeks and hair. Jimin exhales the oxygen in his lungs with it, letting it mix with the air around them. “I’m so sorry, Jimin. I hope you can forgive me.”

Jimin raises his eyes, landing on the empty street in front of them. He sniffs from the cold, rubbing the tip of his freezing nose in hopes to warm it up. The sky above them is no longer a mix of dark blues and bright stars, having their glow slowly fading with the sun lazily rising from its sleep.

“It’s hyung. Jimin-hyung.” he says after some time, stealing Jungkook’s attention back at him. It seems he’s not getting the answers he wants, and neither he feels like making the questions, so he simply settles with what he’s given with a sigh. Jungkook smiles — he sees it by his peripheral.

“Okay, Jimin-hyung.” the boy says, pointing out the last words.

His heart skips two beats at once, but he refuses to let it show.

Jimin doesn't know if he’s ready to forgive him. He accepts the apologies, but he can't just pretend Jungkook didn't hurt him like he meant nothing. He probably does mean nothing to him, but that doesn't give him the right to slut shame him like that. He didn't even know what Jimin was going to do, he simply assumed it was a date and Jimin can’t find in himself to understand why.
What image of him does Jungkook have in his mind to go around making these kind of assumptions?

“Hey.” the boy calls him, smile having disappeared from his face. “Say something…”

Jimin swallows, finally turning his head around to face him.

He has to inhale in deeply, having Jungkook so close to him, all alone in the first hours of the day, as if no else exists in that moment, just them.

It’s a pretty thought, for a ugly reality.

“I accept your apologies.” Jimin chooses to tell him, because there’s no point in saying he doesn't forgive him. That’s something his, that he has to deal with himself — Jungkook already made his part. Besides, the reason Jungkook’s words shattered so much his stability was because Jimin let him. And no one else can fix this but himself.

“Do you mean it?”

“Yes.”

Jungkook breaks into a kind smile, and it’s the prettiest Jimin has seen ever since they met again.

“I’m happy then.”

He nods, biting the insides of his lip and letting his eyes fall from Jungkook’s face. He can’t resist staring at him for too long.

“Should we start over?” the younger asks, extending his arm at Jimin’s direction with an open hand. “I’m Jeon Jungkook, it’s nice to meet you.” he says and it breaks Jimin’s heart, because how many times do they have to start over for him not to get hurt.

He takes Jungkook’s hands nonetheless, aware of all the risks he’s owning. “I’m Park Jimin. Nice to meet you.”

The boy smiles, and this time Jimin can't look away, because Jungkook catches sight of the sun rising behind him, and his eyes glow in awe, his jaws slightly dropping at the show of colours displayed in the sky.

Jimin allows himself some more seconds to watch the sunrise in the boy’s brown irises — feeling his heart fall a little harder at every beat.

His saturday is spent at peace. He comes back home to a silent house, everyone still asleep for Jimin’s greatest relief.

He goes to bathroom and takes a long bath, washing all the energy he didn't want in his body from yesterday. The water is warm against his skin, and it soothes him. He washes his hair too, applying a shampoo with a nice smell and massaging the scalp with his fingertips. He closes the tap when he’s over, dressing in comfortable clothes that smell like soap.
He enjoys his own company in the living room for a couple hours, watching his favorite show on Netflix, until Taehyung surges from the hall, dragging a blanket over his shoulders with closed eyes and a pair of swollen cheeks.

Jimin coos.

“Go back to sleep, baby, it’s early.”

Taehyung pretends he doesn't listen, walking to Jimin and falling on the couch next him, grabbing his best friend’s arm so he can nuzzle him. It doesn't take long until he’s sleeping again, and Jimin simply smiles, shifting down so he can lean his cheek over Taehyung’s head.

Their whole day rolls like this, lazy and comfortable. His mom joins them later, shooting Jimin some worried glances that he works hard to avoid. She prepares breakfast, and Taehyung wakes up with the noise, happy to engage in easy talk with Jimin’s mom. Jimin observes them from afar, and then forces himself to eat the food his mom prepared with so much love — not only because he knows both her and Taehyung are watching, but because he has to try his hardest, for them.

Jihyun appears by the living room a little later, and to his surprise, joins them after preparing himself a bowl of cereal.

They watch Jimin’s favorite show together — it’s a comedy, so it’s able to make them laugh together too, which leaves a happy nuzzle in Jimin’s chest that he doesn't care to repress.

During lunch, they all help Jimin’s mother in the kitchen as best as possible, preparing to eat when everything is settled, and talking about the episodes they watched over the food.

They all scatter around after, Jimin goes to his bedroom with Taehyung and stays there talking nonsense until it’s the time for the boy to leave. In any moment Taehyung questions him about what happened last night, more focused in stealing smiles out of his face, and Jimin can't find the words to express how grateful he is. He hugs the boy at the door, murmuring a soft ‘thank you’ against his chest, to which Taehyung dismisses with a smile and a shake of head.

Jimin knows he can't escape his mother though, and also knows he shouldn't, given how worried he must have let her. So instead of burdening her to come and talk to him about it, he searches for her.

She’s lying on her bed, reading a book, and Jimin climbs the mattress to lay by her side.

He hates that he can't tell her the truth, but he rehearsed the lie so many times in his head that it almost doesn't feel like one. She puts down the book when Jimin hugs her waist and tries being as honest as he feels safe in sharing, not having the guts to look her in the eyes while doing so.

He tells her he hasn’t been feeling the best lately, that sometimes he’s just sad for no reason, which is not a lie, and that since this is his last year, he’s handling with a lot of pressure too, which, again, is not a lie, it’s just not the major cause of his problems. She believes him, and tells all the things Jimin would want to hear if this was the thing pricking under his skin. But it’s not, so he just listens to it all with the acknowledgment that she’s the best mother he could ever have, and then goes to his room, after she hugs him tight and reassures him everything is going to be alright.

Jungkook texts him that night, so they can finally discuss about their work. They have a friendly conversation, which is such a big sense of relief to Jimin’s shoulders. He explains to him what the work is about, and it happens they have to roam around the city, asking random people who live there what they think it’s the city’s past. After they gather enough information from the residents
they have to try and put it all together in a coherent timeline of events, so in the end they can compare what they got with official sources of information that tells the actual history of the place, to see how much popular knowledge differs from scientific knowledge.

Jimin likes the concept, and even though he finds it complex, he’s excited to work on it. Jungkook tells him the same, and they say goodbye promising to start working on it by monday, since it’s due in two weeks.

He goes to sleep with a light heart, softly beating in sync to his calm breaths.

The situation enrolling in front of him seems almost unrealistic. He’s sitting on a table with Taehyung and Jungkook, having lunch — which until that, is normal daily routine —, but the thing is, he and Jungkook are actually talking. Well, of course they are, because it’d be weird if they didn’t after the weekend, but… All the two times he and Jungkook had a friendly conversation, it seemed like a distant reality because none of it happened where they usually spend most of their time. Now they are here, in the middle of the entire school, having an ordinary conversation, without Jimin feeling as turning around and running away. The whole situation is so out of reach that even Taehyung frowns at them, but thankfully pays no comments.

It’s also not like they suddenly have this incredible bond that gets them laughing out loud at each other’s jokes. But they manage to keep it clean and nice, and for the meantime, is all that matters.

Jimin is still hurt by all of Jungkook’s previous behaviors, especially the fact he still hasn’t acknowledged him for all their firsts — first meeting, first conversation, first kiss.

However, it’s all out of Jimin’s reach, and the only thing he can do before this kind of unplanned scenario, is preserving himself and protecting his heart.

So he averts his gaze when Jungkook is leaning a bit too close to Taehyung to say something quieter, or when he smiles at the boy and pours all this attention to him only, or when Taehyung can't open a package of ketchup and Jungkook does it for him without thinking twice.

Taehyung is as invested in trying to make Jimin as comfortable as always. He succeeds to include Jimin in the conversation when he realizes he’s backing off, and squeezes his hand when he feels the boy growing distant.

He’s the bestest friend Jimin could have asked for, and he’s in the middle of his excited ranting on how he’ll create a group chat for the three of them when Jinyoung appears behind him.

Jimin’s smile falters, seeing himself rushing back all the self pity he went through on friday, but he knows he still owns the boy an explanation after running out of his house having barely said goodbye, so he nods to him and forces the smile back on his lips.

Taehyung and Jungkook turn around to see who he’s smiling to. Taehyung’s the first to look back at Jimin, but before he can say anything Jimin is getting up with an apologetic smile. He knows
Taehyung thinks Jinyoung was the one who let him in that state, so he doesn't want any unnecessary misunderstanding enrolling in front of the entire school.

“I need to talk to Jinyoung real quick, if you guys don’t mind.” he excuses himself, picking up his tray from the table and heading to the trash.

Jinyoung catches up to him without him needing to ask him to. “Hey.”

“Hey…” Jimin ducks his head, ashamed of his actions, and finds no other words in his mouth to utter.

“So…” the boys proceeds, walking by his side, “Are you okay?”

Jimin hums, tossing the rest of his food in the trash when he reaches it and putting his tray over the pile together with the discarded ones. “You?”

“I’m good. So…” he puts his hands in his hoodie’s pocket, staring at Jimin and going straight to the point, “What happened?”

“Uh…” Jimin bites his lip, looking around, “Do you really wanna talk about this here?”

He looks around.

“Yeah. Yeah, you're right, let’s go to the hall.”

Jimin nods, turning to look behind him again just to ensure safety, and catches Jungkook and Taehyung following them with their eyes.

The hall is empty, just as they assumed it would be, and Jimin takes a deep breath before starting to speak.

“I’m sorry I left like that.” he apologizes sincerely, “I honestly didn't feel like continuing what we were doing any further, so I panicked. I’m seriously so sorry, that was a terrible dick move.”

“No, it’s not that, I just…” Jinyoung dismisses him, seeming worried, “Did I do something wrong?”

Jimin is quick to deny. “No! Oh god, of course not! I just… I wasn't much in the vibe, I’m sorry. There's nothing to do with you, I promise.”

The boy stares at him a little longer, as if deciding whether to believe him or not, and then sighs. “Okay. I’m sorry too, if I did something you didn't want to.”

Jimin smiles and the bell rings. Jinyoung is a good person.

“Don’t worry about that.” he squeezes the boy’s shoulder to make a point, “I’m good.”

“Okay, then. See you around?”

Jimin nods.

“See you around.”

He watches the boy walk his way back, and then heads to his own classroom, surprised to bump in Jihyun on the way, who stares at him weirdly for a minute too long, before he diverts from Jimin’s figure without saying a single word.
Jimin spends the end of the afternoon with Jungkook downtown, trying to interview people about the city, and growing frustrated when they find out it’s not easy to make people rushing back home from their work to stop by and answer some young students’ questions.

They roam around for almost two hours and get a total amount of 4 interviews, opposed to the 20 they had expected.

Jimin snorts, frustrated when another person passes by him without even sparing a single glance or trying to hear him out for a second, and turns around to search for Jungkook to suggest they head home, since it’s already late and they’re getting nothing here — just to find the boy already standing right behind him, two ice creams in hands, his mouth focused in licking one while he extends the other to Jimin.

He’s totally taken by surprise, so he’s not proud to admit he stutters a little when he thanks Jungkook.

“It’s no problem, hyung.”

Jimin rolls his eyes. He’s been doing that ever since their little moment in the park, and Jimin can't say he doesn't like it — as if it’s a thing only theirs. “Shut up.” Jungkook smiles. “So, we’re leaving?”

“Ah.” the younger scratches his neck, “I actually have to go meet my mom in her work, but I can walk you to the bus stop.”

Jimin blushes, and he doesn't no why. “A-ah, no, don't bother, it’s okay! I can go by myself.”

Jungkook tilts his head, narrowing his eyes a little bit. “You sure?” Jimin nods, trying to cool down his heated cheeks by the force of mind. Jungkook stares at him for a while longer, before relenting. “Okay, then.”

Jimin nibbles his bottom lip, trying to not feel disappointed in how Jungkook doesn't insist on it. It’s okay, he’s the one who dismissed his offer in the first place.

“See you in school, then?” Jimin tries.

“Sure! We can talk later about the work and what we’ve got until now.”

Jimin hums, taking a bite of his ice cream, so he can busy his mouth with something other than nervously abusing his lips with his teeth. He steps back and waves Jungkook goodbye, biting back a smile when the younger does the same, blinking at him with all the night’s stars in his eyes.

The rest of the week is a whole boring session of getting back to the studies they neglected during their break. He and Taehyung spend most of their days together, as it’s their routine to study and
chase their goal together. They need to get this scholarship in Japan. It’s their dream. Jimin doesn’t know to tell when it started, but for him it feels that since forever he and Taehyung have plans of living together abroad, of finding out the mysteries of the world by each other’s side. It’s a nice dream, and he marvels on it every time he feels like giving up, like the pressure is too much to bear. It helps that Taehyung is the most cheerful person in the planet, and he is able to amuse Jimin even with the most stupid things.

He also spends some time with Jungkook — has to. They are a little more successful on Friday, when they leave early and give a shot at interviewing more people. It seems during the rush hour no one is particularly thrilled to be stopped from getting home as soon as possible, so people are a lot nicer when they approach them at 3pm. A total amount of twelve people stop by to talk to them and they’re so sweet it seems the boys’ previous experience happened in some sort of alternative reality. They get everything they need in record time, and go home with some sense of work done in their chests. By Saturday Jimin and Jihyun go spend the weekend on his father’s house. It’s really good since it seems like a whole year has passed since he last saw Eunbi — he hugs her so hard when she opens her room’s door that she has to physically take two steps backwards, making the both of them laugh in each other’s arms.

She tells him everything about this new job she’s got as a tattoo artist — which, by the way, she nails at. Jimin has seen her drawings and damn. He makes her pinky promise to tattoo him when he’s of age. She also talks about this cute guy who came to get a tattoo last week and then proceeds to talk about him for the next hour, but finishes it with ‘oh, it’s no big deal, though’. Jimin just squishes her cheeks without saying anything, which she hates, but lets him.

When she says it’s Jimin’s turn to update her about his life, he sort of freezes for some instants. He wants to talk about Jungkook with someone so bad — and Eunbi is his only option, he knows that, but. The moment he tries opening his mouth, the words playing in his mind never seem quite right, and his voice simply won’t help him.

Perhaps, if he shares everything he’s going through, all his thoughts regarding it — they’ll be out there in the open, with no possibility of taking back, bared to judgments that are not his. What if Eunbi thinks he’s right in his assumptions? That Jungkook really is starting to like Taehyung, and tells Jimin that he should give up on whatever he’s hoping for? Then, Jimin won’t be able to try and convince himself he might be just paranoid, adding details where there’s not even a complete picture. He won’t be able to deny what’s in front of his eyes in order to save a little hope, because he and Jungkook won’t be just his secret anymore. They’ll be someone else’s and just the simple thought of it makes his stomach twirl.

So he settles in telling her just about his classes, the work he’s assigned to do with this new student, and about Jinyoung.

Eunbi frowns upon Jimin’s descriptions of what he felt during the whole situation, and that’s when he knows he got himself trapped.

“Why were you forcing yourself to do that if you didn’t want to?” she cuts him off, sounding genuinely confused.

But Jimin can’t explain Jungkook to her, can’t explain the rollercoaster of emotions he assigned to be in. So he remains quiet, shame washing over him as he lowers his eyes.

“Jimin?” Eunbi calls, searching for his gaze, “What’s going on?”

He shrugs, releasing the breath he was holding.
“Nothing, just… Maybe... Wouldn't it be best to just get this over and done with?”

It takes some beats of silence for her to understand.

“What? Sex?” Jimin nods and his sister sighs. “Of course not. Why would you think that?”

“Well… It’s not like I can wait forever…”

“Honey, you… You don't want to have your first time with some no one, trust me.”

Jimin wants to argue, and tell that doesn't really matter — but he deflates when he remembers how hard this topic must be for her to talk, and how bad she must know of what she’s talking about. Eunbi realizes the change on his posture, so she searches for his hand, squeezing it.

“Hey. It’s okay. I’m fine.” she reassures him, but Jimin still doesn't want to push it, the memory of what happened to her always a cold punch on his gut.

“No, I'm—”

“Hey, listen to me, okay? I don't want you to take me seriously just because of what happened. I want you to understand. Would you really cherish the memory of having your first time with this guy?”

Jimin looks up to her, shrugging.

“It’s just sex.”

“No. It’s your first time. You can call it just sex after you had your first.”

Jimin sighs deeply, falling on his back, the soft mattress sinking under his weight.

“Why are you trying to rush things, huh?” she nudges him with her foot from her spot, “Don’t be silly. You’ll thank me for this conversation later.”

He doesn't think so. The only person he knows he’d cherish the memory of having his first time with, would never think of him the way he wants to. Not that Jimin thinks Jungkook wouldn't want to do it with him — he knows he would, that was left clear on the first time they met —, but, opposed to what he told Eunbi, it would be just... sex. And it was fine having no feelings as long as Jungkook wasn't involved, but when it came to him — Jimin thinks he wouldn’t be able to have Jungkook touching him while thinking of someone else or harboring no feelings at all.

Sunday runs out nicely. His father and his new girlfriend take them to the movies, and then treat them to a nice dinner on a expensive restaurant. He enjoys it all very much, and takes the opportunity to get to know Nayoung better. She’s really sweet and smart — not that Jimin expects anything less, given the fact she raised Eunbi. Jihyun, on the other hand, remains quiet the entire time, the only moment Jimin remembers having heard his voice was when his father asked him what he wanted to eat. It reaches the point of extreme discomfort being next to him, so Jimin chooses to spend his time walking beside Eunbi, laughing about stupid jokes she does once in a while and at the way she fake dubs random, innocent people having — possibly — a normal
At the end of the day, his father drops them at their house and Jimin hugs him before saying goodbye. He doesn't remember the last time he did it, but it feels good. The man is taken by surprise at first, but doesn't take long to return the hug, enveloping his arms around his son's shoulders. Her mom come by the door to take them and Jihyun runs to her. She pats his back with an apologetic smile to their father, who just shakes his head with a dismissive expression. Jimin rushes to hug Eunbi, waves at Nayoung and also goes to their mother, stand by the door. They watch the car leave, while Jihyun remains with his neck buried on their mother's neck.

“I don't like this.” Jimin makes out his muffled voice murmuring, and almost feels sorry for him.

He knows a divorce affects people in different ways, and he understands Jihyun must still be going through a process of denial, but he doesn't think the way he's been acting is an excuse to any of these.

Their mother strokes the younger's hair, shushing him. “It’s okay, baby, I know. I know.”

They go inside quietly and his brother heads for his room without another word. Jimin sighs, backhugging his mom when he sees her shoulder slumping.

“I missed you.” he tells her, honestly.

“I missed you too.” she smiles back at him, pulling him to the couch so they can sit together. “Did you have fun?”

And Jimin tells her all about his days away, happy to see how she gets excited at the things that makes him excited too. He doesn't know if she just acts like it, because he talks so agitatedly about whatever it is that gets him giddy, that she feels the need to reciprocate, or if she’s genuinely just as excited as he is. In any of the possibilities, Jimin thinks she’s the best mom in the entire whole world for it.

It comes as no surprise — rather, a joyful delight — when Taehyung announces on their group chat that he found them a party for the weekend.

They have spent the entirety of the last two weeks studying, studying, studying and oh! Studying. Jimin thinks his mind is going to explode and he desperately needs a break.

He and Jungkook were able to finish their work successfully, and when the teacher nodded in approval after giving a quick look to the pages they handed him, they high-fived excitedly.

They have been in pretty good terms — he and Jungkook — and he can’t say he doesn't feel above the clouds with it. Sure, it still hurts to see how Jungkook has grown the biggest soft spot for Taehyung, lovingly staring at the boy every time he gets the chance — but Jimin likes to pretend he doesn't see it, averting the gaze so the needles poking inside his chest won’t dig in too deep. They are not the closest, but they talk normally, and even laugh together from time to time, which always gets Jimin blushing, it doesn't matter how hard he tries to avoid it.

After Taehyung tells them the awaited news of the party on wednesday, the rest of the week seems
to crawl even slower to an end, stretching the days as long as possible in awful and unnecessary classes, until friday finally gives a shy knock at the door.

Jimin shares his last class with Jungkook, and they sit side by side, ticking the clocks away while the teacher goes on and on about formulas and chemical reactions, boring everyone to death — until the bell rings, and Jimin has to hold back really hard from reenacting the iconic scene from high school music 2, where all the students just throw their books and papers away, chanting and singing all about summer vacation. Of course, he’s not that dramatic, and he doesn’t do that — but the desperate urge to get out of school is a thing they can relate. He runs out of the class to go and meet Taehyung downstairs, leaving Jungkook to trail behind as he always does. He finds his best friend drinking some water, which is the perfect opportunity to jump on his back. Jimin does as he pleases the exact time Taehyung finishes killing his thirst and adjusts his posture. He wobbles in his balance, startled, but is quick to regain it back, settling Jimin straight above him.

“Easy there, cowboy, what do you take me for?!” he complains, looking back at Jimin, even though he shows no struggle maintaining the boy’s weight.

Jimin simply smiles big and bright at him in return. “We’re partying tonight.”

Taehyung sighs, half laughing. “Aish, you party animal. Is that all you care for?”

“Yes!” Jimin bounces happily, and Taehyung slaps his thigh.

“Yah, you’re heavy!”

Jimin starts laughing, but when Jungkook catches up to them he feels his cheeks heating up and looks away.

“Hi, hyung.” he greets Taehyung, probably with the smile he saves just for him. Jimin hates that smile.

“Hi, Jungkookie.” the boy singsongs. “Excited for tonight?” they start walking, side by side, Jimin still stubbornly on Taehyung’s back.

“Ah, a little bit.”

“I’m very excited!” Jimin barges in the conversation, bouncing again despite Taehyung’s second slap, “Will you do me that drink only you know how to? The one that gets me really high?” he pleads, lowering his head until his chin is hooked on Taehyung’s shoulders.

“You’re really full energy today, huh?” Taehyung teases, pinching his ankle lightly.

“I wanna go off tonight.” Jimin tells him and hops off his back, self aware Taehyung wouldn’t tell him if he was hurting — would just diligently carry Jimin all the way home if he remained there.

“Well, go off wisely then.” Taehyung warns him “I don’t want you hangover crying on my lap the other day because all of the bad decisions you made.”

Jimin scoffs in his best ‘I never did that’ attitude. “Bitch. Don’t kill my vibe, ya?”

His excitement gets both Jungkook and Taehyung amused, chuckling at the way Jimin clasps his hands together while rambling about the songs he needs to be played, and the clothes he’s going to wear, the entire way home.
“How do I look?” Jimin poses for his mother. The woman pulls her glasses up her nose and raises her eyes from the magazine she was reading, breaking into a smile.

“Like a prince.”

“Mom!”

Her face contorts into confusion. “What? What did I say wrong?”

Jimin snorts. “I can't look like a prince, I have to look hot. I’m not going to a royalty dinner, I’m going to a party!”

She laughs, shaking her head. “Well. I’m not going to say you look hot, that’s for sure.”

Jimin approaches her with a coy smile, blinking his eyes repeatedly for effect. “But, let’s suppose you would,” he sits by her side, looking at her from his lashes, “Do I?”

“You look like a baby.” she breaks all his expectations, deflating the boy’s attitude in a second and putting a poker face on his features, to which she laughs out loud. “I’m kidding. You’re the hottest boy to step on that party. How does that sound?”

Jimin stares at her with narrowed eyes. “Fake.”

She breaks into a loud laugh again. “Well, excuse me, but I did not raise you to be accused this way.”

Jimin melts his serious facade and giggles, snuggling up to her side. “I love you.”

“I love you too, baby.” she kisses the top of his head, “Now go wear your shoes before Taehyung gets here with the uber and you start freaking out because you can't find them.”

Jimin grunts, feigning annoyance, but gets up anyway, because he knows she’s right.

About fifteen minutes later, Taehyung texts him saying he’s outside and Jimin grabs the rest of his stuff before running to meet him.

“I’m going now.” he kisses his mom’s forehead on the way.

“Be home at midnight!” she yells and Jimin stops by the door, turning around.

“I am?” he wears his best pleading smile.

Her expression doesn't change.

“Midnight.”

“Half past twelve?” she remains quiet, so Jimin joins his hands and squeezes his eyes shut, “Please, please, please.”

“Okay!” she snorts and Jimin smiles wide. “But not a minute longer!”
“Deal! Love you!” he screams, storming out of the house and running to the car on his sidewalk.

He opens the door to be struck by a Kim Taehyung looking fine as fuck, smiling at him.

“How you doin’?” he plays in his best Joey Tribbiani style and Jimin punches his shoulder, making him scoot to the other side so he can get in.

He greets the driver, who nods and starts the engine.

“What’s your deal looking this good tonight?” Jimin questions in a light tone, shoving down his insecurity from how striking the boy looks to the motherfucking hell. Not tonight, he tells himself.

Taehyung wiggles his eyebrows in a stupid way, pulling a dirty face. Jimin wears his eyes before he even forms any sentence. “You know what my deal is.”

Jimin attacks his shoulder again, pushing him away. “Gross.”

“Like you’re one to talk, if those leather pants don't make your ass look yummy as fuck.”

Jimin blushes like crazy and groans out loud, so embarrassed Taehyung would say something like this in front of a stranger. “Oh my god!” he slams the other’s thigh, covering his cheeks with the other. “Never again call my ass yummy!”

Taehyung shrugs, nonchalantly. “Is it my fault if they are? Blame yourself, bitch.”

“Oh, dear god.” Jimin sinks deeper on his seat, his skin positively burning. “Explain me why you’re my best friend again.”

Taehyung scoffs. “Exactly because I say shit like this, you fake hoe.”

Jimin wonders if Taehyung is already drunk from how much he’s cursing around in front of the innocent middle-aged driver. Jimin could bet fifty bucks he’ll come home to his family rambling all about how this youth is already completely lost.

“Jungkook is going later.” Taehyung casually tells him, and Jimin tries to pretend as if the simple mention of his name don't affect him. He doesn't allow him to knock himself over on why didn't Jungkook said this in the group chat, and preferred telling Taehyung privately. It’s none of his business. “He said he has some stuff to do, so he’ll go by himself.”

Jimin nods. “Nice.”

He’s not going to worry even the slightest bit about Jungkook tonight. He doesn't want to, has no intentions to care about his existence while he’s in that party. He wants to let himself go, have fun, dance, get drunk, and if luck is on his side, make out with a pretty boy in one of the rooms so no one finds out.

They reach their classmate’s house in less than ten minutes. After paying the driver with an apologetic smile, they hop off, buzzing with energy.

The inside is loud, and they can hear the muffled noise even before they get in, the loud music reaching every corner of the living room. It’s a spacious house, Jimin notes; even though he’s not surprised. The kids from his school are all pretty wealthy — take Jungkook and Taehyung as an example.

He suspects the living room must be the size of his own house, which is kinda extra, but who is he
to tell people what to spend money with, right? The place is full, yet not crowded. Jimin recognizes some faces from school, but a lot others he has never seen before. Some own an air of college students that gets Jimin smiling with a bubbling stomach full of intent. He’s tired of fooling around with the same people over and over — you see, he can’t say there’s a whole lot of options of boys he’s attracted to who are also attracted by men.

Taehyung pulls him to the kitchen, so they can grab a drink to get them started. The fridge is full with the most sundry types of beverages, and Jimin pulls two beers for him, happy to see there’s the brand he likes. Taehyung gets himself a different one, with less alcohol, and they head back to where the people are dancing and talking.

They’re laughing together on a couch, waiting for the alcohol to kick in while doing stupid challenges for the loser to drink more and faster. By the time laughters are bursting out of their lips without they even understanding why, Jimin knows it’s his call. Stripped from all restrictions a sober mind inputs over him, he gives Taehyung a smirk when his favorite song fills the entire room through heavy beats, which gets the younger rolling his neck back and laughing out loud. He gets up, eyeing the boy the entire time, playing the seductive card, and extends a hand to him. Both Jimin and Taehyung know he’s unable to say deny him a single thing.

So he envelops the older’s small hand in his, and lets himself be pulled up by an energetic Jimin tugging him to the ‘dancefloor’ — it’s more of a place in the living room people decided it was the best to gather for dancing.

Taehyung can’t dance to save his life, so most of the times this situation come around, he simply follows however Jimin wants, and then stands there beside him — admiring him do what he knows best. Which is not upsetting at all, because he’s never the only one to do so. Normally, half of the people dancing drift their attention to watch Jimin in a way or another. Some pretend to keep focused on the song playing — but Taehyung sees their eyes following Jimin’s every move — and others simply don’t care, stopping everything they’re doing to be exactly as Taehyung finds himself: standing still, astonished, amazed.

Jimin knows how to do a lot of things well.

He can cook, he’s terribly smart, a great cuddler, the best non-professional masseur Taehyung has ever met and, honestly, the best person he has ever met in general. But if there’s a thing that leaves Taehyung’s chin hanging on the fucking floor every damn time is the way he moves his body. It’s simply not possible he never ever had a dance class. He’s too perfect, too fluid.

It’s insane.

He shifts from a move to another without leaving room to understand when the last one finished and the next one started, always light on his step, graceful energy. The song enveloping them owns a slow and heavy beat, and Jimin’s hips don’t miss a single opportunity to hit each one just right. Taehyung chuckles at how there’s already a mini group of people encircling him, drooling, both boys and girls.

Jimin’s at the center and he basks at the attention — he loves it, Taehyung knows. Most of the times though, he’s just too shy — and sober — to let it overflow.

When the music ends, Jimin’s panting, and still, nothing erases the wide smile from his lips. He’s thrilled, everyone with functioning eyes can see. Taehyung can do nothing but stare at him with proud exhaling from his every pore.

“Why won’t you dance with me?” Jimin whines with a stubborn frown, grabbing his forearms and
pulling him closer.

Taehyung laughs, amused. “And taint everyone else’s show? No, thank you, I’d get my ass beaten.”

Jimin frowns harder. “What are you even talking about?” he presses, the high pitch never leaving his tone when he’s acting like this. It’s cute.

“You’re really clueless, ain’t you.” Taehyung flicks the boy’s forehead, shaking his head. “Alright, I’ll dance with you.” he relents, very much aware it was a lost battle from the start.

The older breaks into a beautiful and bright smile, eyes curving in two slits.

They lose track of the time, the speakers blasting all their favorite songs one after another, getting them high on the adrenaline, singing loud from the top of their lungs, dancing silly, jumping around and laughing so loud their stomachs hurt.

It’s only almost an hour later when a melody unfamiliar to both their ears take place that they decide to take a break. They didn't even drink so much to be considered drunk, but they are dizzy, chuckling at nothing in particular, slapping each other’s arm from once in a while for no reason at all. Jimin goes to the kitchen to get himself a cup of something, and leaves Taehyung sprawled on the couch, inhaling big puffs of air. Dead tired was the words he used.

He spots a guy mixing some things, so he approaches him.

“Hi!” he smiles at the stranger “I’m Jimin! What are you doing over there?”

“I’m doing the best drink in the world!” he tells him with the biggest smile he has ever seen. “Do you want some?”

“Yes!” Jimin bounces excited on his spot.

“I saw you dancing.” the guy comments out of nowhere. “You’re really good! Like, seriously.”

Jimin’s eyes slightly widen and he blushes, surprised. “O-oh? Really?!”

“Yes! I’m majoring in dance, so you can trust me in this.”

Jimin’s lips part a little. “You are?!” He loves dance so much, but he never personally met someone majoring in it before, so he never really considered it as an option.

“Yes! I’m here with another friend and I bet he’d love to meet ya, cause we were kind of watching you from afar and talking about it.”

Jimin feels his skin heat even more. “That’s cool.” he says, suddenly in a loss for words. He doesn't really know what to answer.

“Here.” the guy hands him a cup with some of the drink he made in it. “There's not much alcohol, because I’m not the biggest fan of it, but it’s really good, I promise.” Jimin takes it with a thankful smile. He’s nice. “I’m Hoseok, by the way!”

“Let’s see if we approve this, then, Hoseok-hyung.” he says jokingly, bringing the cup up to his lips.

The liquid pools sweet on his tongue, and Jimin rolls it around a little to taste it better, longer. It’s actually really tasty, yet Hoseok was right — it barely scratches his throat.
“Hobi-yah!” a loud voice as much as shrieks at their backs, making them turn around.

A tall man stands at the door, and the first thing that strikes Jimin is how fucking beautiful he is. He almost chokes on his drink, trying to avoid an ‘wow’ from falling past his lips. The man looks like he walked straight out of some model’s magazine.

“Oh.” the godly looking man utters, directly staring at Jimin, “You’re the cutie who dances well.” he says naturally and this time Jimin does choke, but gladly takes the cup off his mouth before doing so. He tries coughing his embarrassment away. The two men are laughing around him.

“You’re cute.” the other stranger tells him while approaching them, and Jimin hides his red cheeks with a hand. The guy leans over the counter Hoseok was preparing the drinks, changing his focus to him. “Yah, why are you taking so long? I wanna drink!”

“Aish.” Hoseok exclaims, pouring the liquid in a cup “Here, here. This is Seokjin-hyung, by the way, Jimin.”

“You can call me Jin-hyung.” he says right before having a long chug of the drink, and Jimin nods, still trying to get rid of his blush.

“Do you dance?” Hoseok asks, jumping to sit on the counter.

“Ah, no, no.” Jimin shakes his palms, “Only in parties and at home, when I can.” he chuckles, shy. Neither Hoseok or Jin seem to believe him. “He’s messing with us.” the taller one nonchalantly says.

“I’m not! I really don’t dance anywhere else!” he’s self-conscious his voice came out as it usually does when he’s pout-talking, so he tries to avoid doing it again, not wanting to look more of a kid than he already must look to them.

“You’re not joking?” Hobi questions, to which Jimin shakes his head, plain honesty in his every feature, “Damn.” he and Jin exchange an awed look, before taking another gulp from their cups. Jimin follows them. “You must be gifted, then.”

He dismisses it, scratching his cheek. “Ah, don't say that… I’m not that good.”

“You are!” both of them say simultaneously, and Hoseok continues, “You should come see us in our studio once, to see if you like it!”

Jemin inhales a deep breath — he can almost feel the glow taking over his eyes. “Do you mean it?”

“Of course! Here, let’s exchange numbers.” Jimin hands him his phone without thinking twice, “Text me whenever you want and we can see a date that fits best our schedules. If you like it, you can matriculate there, or something.”

Jemin smiles, already feeling giddy at the perception of making of his dance something serious. “That’d be nice. I’ve never really thought about getting something out of it.”

“I bet you’re gonna love it.” Jin tells him, discarding his empty cup in the closest trash can. Hoseok hops off the counter and follows him. “We’ll stop bothering you now, Jiminnie. It was nice meeting you!” he says, waving him goodbye and heading back to the party. Hoseok gives him the warmest smile and trails behind.

The kitchen is messy and silent — as silent as it can be during an on-going party —, plastic cups
scattered all around the place, empty bottles discarded anywhere but the trash can — which is full to the brim —, and the floor tiles, dirty formed between the mix of drinks spilled on the ground and footsteps over it.

It’s kinda nasty, but Jimin remains there, finishing his drink and observing everything with attentive eyes. The counter is the least worst of it all, the only dry surface Jimin can spot amidst that chaos.

He smiles at the nothing, mind replaying his moment with the two strangers just to get him giddy and pulsating with bottled elation. He would go to a real dance studio soon. Like, to really practice and all, like a professional.

Jimin tilts his head back, the remaining liquid in the cup sliding down his throat with one last gulp — and it’s like this that Jungkook finds him, pumping alcohol into his system.

Jimin’s heart takes a leap when he turns around and finds the boy leaning on the door frame, watching him quietly. It’s like adrenaline directly injected in his bloodstream without his consent, spreading fast to every cell like a virus.

Jungkook looks absolutely breathtaking, and it’s no help they meet like this — alone —, in a party. Jimin can’t help but be washed by a heavy wave of nostalgia in his chest. He has to take a deep breath, lack of oxygen already failing his functions.

Jungkook’s wearing a denim ripped jacket on top of a white tshirt with a loose collar that exposes more skin than Jimin is acquainted to bear. His pants are equally merciless, hugging his thighs tight and showing off the beauty of his legs with all the holes in it.

“Hey, um,” Jimin forces himself to talk before it gets weird — as it usually does — and diverts his eyes, searching for an appropriate place where he can toss away his cup, “What are you doing here?” He means ‘here in the kitchen and not in the party having fun’, but the answer he gets is none he could have predicted.

“Watching you.” Jungkook’s voice is hoarse like he’d just woke up, and quiet like a whisper amidst an orchestra. Something about him feels off.

Jimin doesn’t want to get ahead of himself, doesn’t know if it’s the alcohol finally taking its toll on his blood, but the way Jungkook is calmly looking at him has his skin prickling as if sensing the breeze before a storm.

Jimin can’t help but bring his eyes back to him, mild shock settled in the way his voice fails him. “What?”

The boy doesn’t answer, simply remains with his head tilted to the side, staring silently for some excruciating moments, hanging that tension in the room. “Did you miss me, hyung?”

And Jimin doesn’t know what panics him more — the question, or the fact that Jungkook starts to take approaching footsteps towards him, having Jimin’s own feet reflectively stepping back.

“I saw you this morning.” he reasons weakly, and Jungkook smirks.

“You know what I’m talking about.”

He resists, “I don’t.” Stepping further away, until his back hits the counter and he knows he’s trapped.
“You don’t?” Jungkook has the audacity to fake a pout, reaching and caging him between his arms as he places both hands by his sides on the edge of the counter. The boy’s voice drops an octave and Jimin chest rises high with the amount of oxygen he sucks in. “Have you forgotten all about it?”

He brings his face so close Jimin doesn’t have the time to process it. Dragging his lips over his without really pressing, making Jimin gasp and grab the front of his shirt, attempting to push him away. Jungkook doesn’t bulge.

“Have you?” the boy insists, sliding his lips down Jimin’s chin, and Jimin wants to cry, because everywhere Jungkook touches, burns, and leaves behind a trace of lingering flames that he absolutely hates because it’s like it extinguishes all his body water to steam, gifting him a dry throat; dying of thirst — and Jungkook is a fucking fountain.

“Stop...” he nearly pleads.

Jungkook is deaf to it, mouthing at Jimin’s throat just like he did so long ago, and Jimin has not a single drop of willing resistance to fight him.

It’s like his limbs go limp, as if Jungkook transmits an anesthesia made especially for Jimin to fall into him.

“Push me away if you don’t want it.” he whispers against Jimin’s neck, using his teeth to mark it and Jimin’s breath hitches, his fingers curling tighter around the boy’s shirt.

He can feel the butterflies batting their wings in his stomach, can feel his heart pulling a race against the clock ticking, the way his skin tingles all over, so prompt to give in — everything running contrary to his logical senses, to his brain yelling for him to leave, currently blurry with all the fog clouding up his mind.

Somewhere deep inside, he knows he shouldn’t do this, knows he’s already got a taste of what it’s like and what it leaves him with — but particularly, Jimin has always had a sweet tendency to bad decisions and mournful regrets.

“Fuck you.” he says, furious, and he knows Jungkook understands it.

They meet in rough, not a drop of delicacy in the way Jimin sinks his nails in Jungkook’s skin and tugs his hair down, biting his lips and pulling, tasting the blood mix with their spit. Jungkook is no distant, kissing Jimin back as if he’s been hungry for months, groaning into the kiss, hands grabbing the boy’s thighs with force, lifting him up so he can sit on the cold counter with Jungkook between his legs.

Jimin circles his arms around his neck, sliding closer to the edge so he can have their bodies glued harder. Kissing him again feels like all the things he’s been keeping hostage unwinding from a tight captivity, all at once. Jungkook presses his tongue against him, and Jimin can do nothing but melt, moaning his name into the kiss and being washed by an extreme sense of relief when it comes out muffled, indecipherable.

He pulls back, gasping, not surprised to realize Jungkook looks like the embodiment of sin under him, all unveilled hair and bitten raw lips, a fallen angel offering him his doom with open hands. And Jimin takes it.

“I hate you.” he says against Jungkook’s lips, hot breath and wanting hands.

Jungkook pulls him from the counter to his arms with not a sign of struggle and slams his body
against the nearest wall. “You sound so hot when you say that.” he grunts while teasing his earlobe and Jimin cries, if from pleasure or frustration he can’t tell.

“Shut up.”

He breathes down his neck. “Say my name.”

Jimin closes his eyes. It’s like deja vu and he wants to wake up.

“No.”

“Say my name, beautiful.”

A room with a ground made of shards and Jimin is the one volunteering to walk barefoot on it.

“No.”

Jungkook kisses him in the mouth like he means it and Jimin can’t battle it any longer. He kisses him back just as passionately, pouring all the things left unsaid in the way he sucks his bottom lip into his mouth, in the way he curls his fingers on his hair and pulls him impossibly closer, legs tightening around his waist.

He doesn’t realize when they start walking, Jungkook blindly carrying him somewhere else — it’s only when his back hits against a wooden surface that he realizes they’ve reached a door. He breaks the kiss, looking back to find Jungkook handling the knob and knocking it open while simultaneously sucking bruises on his exposed neck.

The room they enter is empty, and Jimin hops off just enough time to hear the key clicking it shut before Jungkook is surging over him again, pulling him by the waist and licking down his collarbones. He loses his hands on the younger’s hair, eyes closed, completely intoxicated. Jungkook proceeds to kiss lower and lower, until it reaches the point he pulled his collar down so much Jimin has to step back and take the shirt off before he rips it apart.

“Fuck.” the boy immediately gasps, palming Jimin’s abs and grabbing his ass to pull him closer. He can’t help but let a tiny moan escape. “Fuck.” Jungkook repeats at the sound, stepping forward and taking Jimin with him — until the back of his knees hit the edge of the bed and the boy pushes him down on it.

Goosebumps rise all the way over Jimin’s chest when Jungkook crawls upon him and simply takes a moment to stare at him. He says nothing, and neither does Jimin, breath high on his chest, going up and down, up and own.

Jungkook collapses over him, cradling his head gently and kissing him so hard his lips go numb. Jimin needs something to ground himself and his hands find Jungkook’s shirt. But he’s not satisfied.

“Off.” he tugs the cloth, “Off, off—”

The same urgency that his voice owns, Jungkook shows in the way he yanks the shirt off his head in a second, taking Jimin’s lips back in his as if it’s oxygen for him to breath in outer space. With a knee, he sweeps one of Jimin’s leg between his own and presses his hips down on the older’s thigh to show how aroused he already is, and Jimin moans loudly into the kiss. Jungkook swallows most of the sound into his throat, but it still reverberates through the room along with the muffled music outside, spiralling white pleasure straight into his veins. Jimin pulls back with a wet sound, tugging Jungkook’s head back with a harsh grip so he can have his neck exposed and suck bruises all over
the length.

He’s consumed by the unstoppable urge to mark him all over, make him his even if for just a second, and the sounds Jungkook lets out are nothing to ease his greedy heart. A particular moan that cracks as soon as it leaves Jungkook’s mouth, voice failing, sends Jimin mind instantly blank, and then he’s also moaning, and he can’t tell which sound is whomst anymore.

He can feel the warm sweat starting to form on his temples and spine, sliding down his neck, and when Jungkook unzips his pants with no previous warning, going down his body with intent — it turns cold.

“Fuck,” he thinks loud at the sight, “Fuck, fuck.” his voice is barely audible, but Jungkook catches it, looking up and smirking at him, before pulling down both his pants and boxers in one swift move.

Jimin’s heart stops and he knows he could have cum just by the sight if he wanted to. He can’t believe this is happening.

His bare member is struck by the cold air, and before Jimin can even get used to it, Jungkook swallows him, all hot and wet. He arches, heaving and grabbing at the sheets. The boy doesn’t slow down, sucking hard and steady, increasing his rhythm in time with Jimin’s whines growing louder, his stomach relentlessly clenching every time Jungkook goes up and then drops his jaw all the way down. It’s when the head hits Jungkook’s throat that Jimin lashes, spouting jets of cum in the boy’s mouth with no previous warning. Not that he intended to do that — he wasn’t planning to come either —, and he pulls the sheets over to his face with tight closed fists, riding off the high.

Jungkook swallows it all without a complain, wiping Jimin clean with his tongue and then proceeding to kiss his navel when he shivers with oversensitivity.

Jimin waits until his breath is even and he feels in control of his limbs to sit on the bed, pushing the younger’s shoulders with him.

“Up.” he orders, getting them out of bed. Jimin presses the confused boy against a wall and drops to his knees, staring at him through his lashes. “I want you to see me well.” he explains, and Jungkook bites down on his bottom lip with furrowed brows, grabbing Jimin’s hair even before he does anything. “I’m gonna make you feel so good.” he promises, slowly undressing him piece by piece.

Jimin can only see Jungkook breathless above him, before he closes his eyes and takes him in. The boy lets out the loudest cry he’s given the whole night and tightens the grip on his strands, fisting harder. Jimin works a rhythm, a pressure, and when he gets used to the feeling, he pulls back.

Jungkook is flushed all over, looking down at him with heavy lids and parted red lips. It’s a sight Jimin is sure is going to be burnt in the back of his mind, and won’t leave him alone for a long time.

“Fuck my mouth.” he tells him low, staring straight into his eyes.

Jungkook’s stomach sinks with all the knocked air he expels.

“Are you serious?”

Jimin tilts his head back, sticking his tongue out in response and Jungkook keens, abusing his bitten lips even more.
He hesitates at first, careful moves holding back, so Jimin focus on humming in approval, bobbing his head deeper to show he’s not uncomfortable, until the boy slowly picks up his pace, using Jimin’s warmth to its full extent, chasing his release more fiercely at every second that goes by. Jimin chokes, and tears gather in the corner of his eyes, striking down his cheeks quietly, but he remains focused until Jungkook fists his hair so hard he gasps, feeling the boy’s cum flood his mouth.

The bittersweet liquid slides down his throat as he falls back on his heels, panting. Jungkook slumps on the ground in front of him, equally breathless.

They hear their loud breaths be the only thing tainting the silence, the music outside seeming to come from a completely separate reality.

The quiet stretches longer and longer, and Jimin shakes his head. Not again, he thinks.

He attempts a glance at the younger’s face, but it’s with a tight clutch in his chest that he finds Jungkook with lowered eyes, looking distressed. He averts his gaze quickly, as if the image burned, and they stay there, quiet, even when their oxygen settle and their breath is calm. They stay there, sat in each other’s personal space, sensing each other’s warmth, until Jimin can’t bear it anymore, excusing himself to the bathroom and avoiding the other’s eyes. Not that he was searching for his anyway.

The silence when he’s alone, with his back against the door, seems even more overbearing, somehow. He’s so stupid. He can’t recall why he ever considered this would be a good idea. When did he lose grasp of the situation? Did he ever have it, to begin with?

Shit.

It’s amazing how things can turn around in a matter of seconds. What did he even expect to get out of the situation? It had been the perfect recipe for disaster and Jimin ate it all like the naive boy he knows he isn’t.

And now, just when things were getting better between them, they manage to mess everything up for one quick orgasm.

He takes a deep breath.

He should be mature about this. It’s past the time they talk about everything. Right?

Jimin opens the door, fingertips tingling and numb, anxiety high in his throat — and finds an empty room. Completely dark, still. The only proof they were there being the bed sheets completely messed up.

Trying to hold his heart safe in his hands, he returns to the party, searching.

He doesn’t have to look around much, though.

Jimin laughs with half of his mouth, hands clamping so hard he hears when his heart shatters between his fingers.

Of course. He should have seen it coming. After all, Jimin still remembers how Jungkook told Taehyung all about his huge list of brief, unimportant flings, and it was stupid of Jimin to think that perhaps he could not be one in between all those names —to maintain that tiny sparkle of hope that he could be special.
Jungkook is holding a girl on his lap, exactly the way he did with Jimin simple minutes ago, who kisses down over the bruises Jimin marked him with.

The sight churns his stomach, and the room spins.

He feels so used; even though he knows he never consented to anything faster than he did tonight. It’s not a reassuring thought. Embarrassing to acknowledge he was there for far more than sexual needs when Jungkook wasn’t.

The path Jungkook’s hands made on his body still burn, the places he kissed still buzzing with electricity — and his smell still lingers on Jimin like a glue. He doesn’t want it, and that’s what he keeps on chanting in his mind when he bursts out from the front door, walking fast and cutting the cold of the night in direction to his house.

He doesn’t want it, and he cries furiously, because he can’t help his heart from beating, in pieces, and yelling what he so desperately shuts his ears for.

He’s in love with Jungkook, in love. A word that used to soothe him like a mother sounds like raucous noise to his ears now, stinging. He longed for it so dearly and look at what he’s got. A bunch of misplaced wicked feelings for a boy that parachuted his way into his life by accident. What a fucking joke.

The cold wind of the night cuts deep into Jimin’s unprotected skin, numbing his nose and drying his tears.

He wipes his cheeks nonetheless, opening the door to his house and hoping to god everyone else is sound asleep.

What he founds, however, are both his mom and Jihyun sat by the kitchen’s table with very serious expressions that Jimin doesn’t bother to know the reason. He couldn’t care less about the newest shit his brother pulled out this time.

He tries walking straight past them, to his room, in silence.

“Where do you think you’re going?” his mom calls, and her tone is harsh, so Jimin halts on his feet.

He turns around, tired, so tired, and he just wants to curl up with his blanket and cry this pain away. “Bed?” he tries, but she’s not pleased by the answer, apparently.

Jimin shifts his gaze to Jihyun, who stares deep into his eyes, frowning.

His heart squirms in his chest. Something feels off.

Why isn’t his brother’s head lowered, as it usually is when he’s being scolded? Why is he looking at Jimin as if he’s the one at fault?

He looks back to his mother, and liquid dread sets in his veins, because the expression in her face is one Jimin has never seen before.

He doesn’t know what’s happening.

“Mom?” he calls to her, voice quivering.

Instead of answering him, she turns to his brother, raising her chin a bit, as if she’s holding too
many emotions at bay. “Jihyun, leave.”

The boy stands with no complaints.

“I bet Eunbi knew all along.” he comments out of nowhere and Jimin’s frowns grow deeper.

Something twitches in his mom’s face, like the statement is a dagger in her gut and Jimin can’t understand it. His heart is slamming inside his body, once again, already bent, and so hurt, he doesn’t want to know what’s to come.

“About what?” Jimin can’t help but ask, but receives answer from no end.

“I said, leave.” the woman says again, louder and with finality. And he does so, passing by his brother with a careless bump to his shoulder.

Jimin swallows in dry when the door hits shut behind him, the sound seeming to reverberate through the entire house.

And there’s the quiet.

Jimin’s hands are covered with cold sweat, nose burning with the urge to break down again. When his mom speaks after some of the longest seconds he’s ever been through, her voice is fragile. “Is it true?”

His blood runs white. He shakes his head slightly. She couldn’t possibly be talking about this.

Please, don’t.

“What is?” his voice breaks, so weak, and soaked in a mute terror that makes it barely audible.

She waits, before she takes a long breath and releases it, out in the open, like a double-edged sword— there’s no way he can’t get cut.

“Are you gay?”

His heart stops.

And that’s when Jimin’s whole world crashes all over him.

He doesn’t know how to breath, all his functions shut down in sheer panic. Doesn’t know how to speak; forgets every world. All he can do is stare at her, her motionless figure, and helplessly feel the tears heaping in his eyes, blurring his vision.

He searches for the calming sweetness he always used as a shelter in her eyes, but he doesn’t find it. And neither does he find rage, or disgust. He finds nothing, her eyes are dull, and this probably hurts a lot more than it would if he could read the worst feelings in them.

He wants to say ‘no, I’m not’, but suddenly it’s too late, tears roll down his cheeks and he knows he can’t deny it any longer.

“Jimin, I made you a question.” she presses and even though the words are rough, her tone is thin as glass.

He can’t find his voice, can’t find his strength. It’s like he was replaced by a hollow shell, observing the situation from another plane, no action power.
“Won’t you answer me? Am I not worthy of knowing?” and it’s when he spots the glowing tears striking down her own skin that his first sob breaks.

He shakes his head fervently, but his throat is closed, a big lump on it that hampers him to talk, to breath.

“O-of course n-not, mom, I—” he chokes in another sob and the sentence dies down.

The silence is suffocating and Jimin hates himself for not being able to break it for the life of him. He curls his hands into fists, digging his nails on his palms.

His mom takes a long breath, sliding a phone on the table, to the edge where Jimin is closest to. He approaches it, after a moment of hesitation, and doesn’t have to look closer to know what is it.

He closes his eyes, feeling more and more tears warm his cold skin.

It’s a picture of him and Jungkook making out in the kitchen. Shaking his head, he catches a glimpse of the text beneath it.

so ur brother a faggy huh

make sure to pass him my number for when i need a free head lol

Jimin’s face contorts and he bites his bottom lip until the skin breaks, attempting to battle his tears and failing all the same.

He can’t bring himself to level his eyes with his mom’s again, feeling so dirty and heartbroken, ashamed, completely unworthy of anything she has to offer.

He cries quietly, fighting hard to not let the anguish eating his insides take over and let out all the ugly sobs break free from his throat.

He wants to say ‘I’m sorry’, but not even this leaves his mouth.

“Does she know?” his mom questions out of nowhere and Jimin squeezes his eyes shut. He knows what she’s talking about. And he can’t lie to her.

“Yes.”

She’s silent and he tastes more blood on his tongue.

“Your dad?” she proceeds, and Jimin’s head snaps, shaking avidly, searching for her eyes.

“N-no!” but she’s not looking at him.

Her gaze lays on the ground, far away, as if she’s not really seeing what’s in front of her, and Jimin wants to reach her hand.

He tries, but she pulls back, retreating two steps, and walking away from the kitchen. Jimin can’t help it any longer, the sobs chokes up his throat.

“Mom.” he calls, chasing after her and grabbing her arm. She stops. “Mom, please. Please, mom...
And without looking back, she tears his whole being to shreds. “Leave me alone, please.”

Jimin’s hand fall limp beside him, and he watches helplessly as she walks into her room and closes the door, leaving him all alone in that house that never felt quite that crushing before.

He doesn’t know how he finds himself in the streets again, but he knows his cry rings loud in the quiet night, and the loneliness of it does nothing to appease the blades cutting his raw flesh, leaving him to bleed in the cold, all alone.

He reaches Taehyung’s house somewhere along the way and finds the spot where they hide the keys, entering in an even bigger, quieter house in the same night, completely empty and void of any source of comfort Jimin could’ve shelter on.

The walk to the familiar room is silent, and as Jimin lays down on the messy bed, curling on himself in hopes to shrink the swelling pain, he thinks of when his mother held him close in her arms and reassured him he had her.

He should have guessed it wouldn’t take long until that fell apart too.

Chapter End Notes

i’m so sorry the author regrets everything

twitter
two

Chapter Notes

TW: there's physical violence and mentions of bullying in this chapter and it IS graphic, please beware!
thank you for your patience, always <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

No angels could beckon me back

It's hotter than hell where I'm at

The awake from his dreamless sleep comes from a pair of tight arms around his waist. The body pressed close to his is warm, and it slowly sweeps consciousness into his hazy mind, piercing temples. Jimin blinks his lids open, trying to make shape of the dark room around him. They're heavy, resisting to his commands, but when his vision finally settles, he searches for Taehyung’s face.

He’s right there, as Jimin knows he will be, arms secured around his body, protecting — like always. The only surprising fact comes from the realization that Taehyung is not peacefully sleeping, like he expected to find him. His eyes are open, staring right back at Jimin’s while one of his hands card its fingers through his hair soothingly.

He smiles at him and Jimin’s chest tightens.

“Hi.” Taehyung whispers.

“Hey.” he returns — doesn’t know how his voice makes itself audible.

“I was watching you sleep.”

Jimin nods.

They share those following minutes in silence, Taehyung caressing his skin, so, so gently, soft eyes completely undemanding. He’s asking for nothing from Jimin, and it crushes him.

He forgets how to breath.

“My mom knows.” he releases in a sort of broken way, like the words are taking a part of him as they leave his mouth, and doesn’t have to say anything else for Taehyung to understand.

The boy wraps his arms around his shoulders, and Jimin hides in his chest for as long as it takes for
the sun to shine the night away.

When they finally decide to get up for breakfast, Taehyung’s shirt is soaked by Jimin’s tears. He goes to shower first, and while Jimin could also go to any other of the five bathroom’s in the boy’s house — he waits.

He uses Taehyung’s clean clothes when he’s bathed, and they both head for the kitchen.

“So, how was it for you yesterday?”

“You mean at the party?”

“Yep.” Jimin can’t pretend he isn’t curious. He wants to know what happened after he left, and mainly — wants to focus in something else rather than at how his own night ended.

“Well. After you bailed me to go get drinks and never came back,” Taehyung says in an ‘I know exactly why’ tone and Jimin pretends he doesn’t listen, “Guess who came sit right next to me on the couch?”

He cuts himself a piece of the cake on the counter and raises his brows, questioning.

“Chae, dude!” Taehyung bounces excitedly on the spot, wide smile on his lips. Jimin frowns.

“Chaeyoung? Your long term middle school crush?”

“Yes!”


“Please, don’t act all innocent on me now.” Jimin giggles. “She was flirting with me so bad I thought my heart was gonna jump right out of my mouth.”

“I hope that didn’t happen when you were sucking each other’s tongues.”

“It didn’t.”

“Good.”

“So,” the boy claps his hands to get going, “We’re there, this close to kissing, and then bam, Jungkook shows up out of fucking nowhere, looking for—”

Jimin’s head snaps up. “Wait, what?”

“I know, right?!” Taehyung gestures as if they’re on the same page, clueless of the thoughts starting to grow in Jimin’s mind, and goes for an apple. “Anyway, I’m like ‘dude, what the fuck?’, but he was actually searching for you.” Taehyung chuckles, and Jimin is pale — the boy’s voice kinda dull compared to the one whispering inside his ears... The timing was so right. So fucking right. “I told you, I’m sure he’s got a thing going on for you.”

“Of course.” Jimin delivers sarcastically, more than he’d like it. “He catches you with Chae, probably eating each other out with your eyes, and then pretends he’s looking for me. Convenient, huh?”

Taehyung frowns, as if he doesn’t know what he’s talking about. And he probably doesn’t. “What?”
Jimin sighs.

“Forget it.”

So, Jungkook caught Taehyung with someone else, had a jealousy attack and Jimin was the victim he picked to discharge onto. And when he was done with him, he moved on to someone else. Simple and easy like that.

“No, what are you talking about?!” Taehyung insists, but Jimin has no will to continue that conversation.

He finishes his cake and goes to the fridge, looking for a juice while shoving the count of calories intake to the back of his mind. “Seriously, Tae, let it go. I’m just tired.”

“Okay…” the younger seems reluctant for a while, but then relents. “Anyway, after he left, we totally made out, and I’m gonna tell you. The girl’s outta my mind.”

Jimin forces an amused laugh he knows it’s not within him. He’s aware Taehyung is trying to act as normal as possible, and Jimin is glad to follow the lead, but he can’t help a part of him to be mournful and dark, gloomy over his chest, wanting nothing more than to lay on bed all day to the sound of the saddest songs he can find, curled up around his favorite blanket.

But so it happens his favorite blanket is in his house, and he can’t go back there. How ironic.

The night arrives fast — faster after he naps on Taehyung’s shoulder when they’re watching a cheesy foreign romcom movie. His mom hasn’t called, or searched for him in any way for that matter. Jimin fakes a smile to Taehyung as if it doesn’t hurt, pouring his best efforts in trying to fool himself along.

He can’t.

Taehyung treats him to eat in his favorite restaurant, in the complete rich teenage boys scenario. He buys all of Jimin’s favorite things on the menu, tells the best jokes, smiles the prettiest smiles and holds his hand when telling a story. Jimin is staring at him and he is so grateful. He is, truly.

But it’s wrapped in a sugar coated bitterness. Because he is staring at him, and all he can think of is — how could anyone not fall in love with him?

It’s only on Sunday night that Jimin gathers enough courage to leave Taehyung’s house. He walks the steps to his own home thinking about how he didn’t see his best friend’s parents for a single second there. On a weekend. Not even for dinner.

Perhaps Taehyung is better in hiding his own demons than Jimin gives him credit for.

He sighs, and his breath transforms into smoke in front of his eyes. It’s a cold night. Taehyung offered to pay him an uber, but he wanted to walk alone, so he refused. It’s almost a regret, since
it’s a cloudy, starless sky. The only comfort he finds is in how bright the moon shines, up and big against the sea of dark blue. With not a single worry in her; simply existing. Jimin wishes he could be like the moon, glowing gracefully, no matter what tragedies unravelled beneath her.

It’s really late, so he doesn’t expect to find neither his mom or Jihyun awake — but, even though, his heart beats high in his throat as he stands before the front door. It creaks when he pushes it open, but thankfully he’s met by the dark living room, no sign someone was there recently. He closes it behind him, fingers numb from the cold and the dread; stays with his back pressed tight to the door until his nerves relax.

It’s weird, standing there after what happened. Jimin stares at the living room and there’s only one memory that floods his mind. So he closes his eyes, blindly walking to his room. When he decides it’s a little too risky and he might crash against something and wake everyone up, he cracks the lids open slowly. He’s in the hallway, which is a good sign. The door to his mom’s room is open, but she’s nowhere to be seen. Jimin frowns, scared to enter the bedroom and somehow find her, but curious if she’s not home. He doesn’t dare calling for her, so after some torturing minutes, he quietly goes to his room.

○

“Taehyung, please, you have to let me stay over again.”

“Minie, you know I love you, and I love having you over, but you can’t run away from this forever.”

Jimin’s figure deflates. “But…”

“Jimin. You need to talk to your mom.”

“Just one night. I can’t go back there today, so please, let me stay over just tonight.”

Jimin’s pleading session is interrupted when Jungkook sits beside Taehyung looking between the both of them and placing his tray down on the table. “What’s up? Why do you need to stay over at Taehyung’s?”

Jimin’s heart clenches at the sight. He goes silent at the same second, instantly reminding the way Jungkook pulled that girl’s hair and squeezed her thigh. He knows the boy’s question doesn’t surge from concern but out of curiosity, so he’s quick to exchange a ‘you better shut the fuck up’ look with Taehyung.

“No offense, but not really your business.” Jimin can’t help being bitter. Watching Jungkook act so casual, munching on his chips while staring at him unimpressively — it only confirms that what happened between them meant nothing for him. Jimin wonders if he even remembers it. If he was sober enough for the memory to last.

“Damn. Okay.” the younger raises his hands in defense.

Jimin rolls his eyes. If Jungkook doesn’t care, then, neither does he.

“I was about to say that if he can't take you, then maybe I could, but fine, you do you.” he lets out nonchalantly.
Both Jimin and Taehyung halts their movements. Taehyung is the quickest to express a reaction, while Jimin remains motionless, shocked.

“Yah! Are you trying to make me look like a shitty best friend?”

Jungkook looks up to him. “You could come too, hyung.”

Oh.

Jimin’s heart return its normal beats when Jungkook’s intentions get clearer. Of course.

“No, thank you.” he practically spits, focusing on his food again.

Taehyung barges in, “And the whole point of me not letting him stay at my place is to make him step up, not because I can't or don't want to.”

“Step up to what?”

Jimin glares at Taehyung.

“I… Uh— Something.”

“Okay.” Jungkook dismisses it, uninterested. “But think about it, hyung. You both could stay over for us to study and then we could watch some movies at night and eat crap.”

Jimin hates that he's being used to not let it seem like Jungkook is calling Taehyung for a date.

“No, thank you” he repeats, “You two can go and enjoy your sleepover, I’m—” and that’s when he sees Jihyun standing all the way across the cafeteria, staring directly at him.

Jimin’s words chokes him. He grabs at the edge of the table and motions to get up, but his brother shakes his head with a pained expression, as if he’s disgusted to see him, and turns around, walking away.

It breaks Jimin. It completely breaks him.

He doesn’t know what to do, and everything seems frozen around him, he doesn’t hear a single thing — it’s all muffled noise.

He has been trying to avoid the thought, but it’s eating him inside. How the photo had been sent to Jihyun, with that disgusting message. Jimin knows things had been hard between them the last months, but… Are those his friends? Jihyun is friends with people that talk about his brother like that? It hurts so much he can’t put into words.

They used to be tied by the hip, everywhere Jimin went Jihyun would follow, so what happened? Jimin can’t remember exactly, but by some point, Jihyun started to stay back, their bond loosening. Was it because he made friends with people that didn’t like Jimin? That trash-talked him like that? Did Jihyun listen to them and started to believe it? Was that the reason he began to treat Jimin like shit?

Jimin feels like a whole wall is crashing over him. He lost his brother. He lost his mother. Did he not have a family anymore? Would he never be able to go back home?

Are those the sacrifices he has to make for being who he is?

Because it’s too much. It’s too fucking much.
“Jimin!” Taehyung is desperately shaking his shoulders, but his voice sounds so far away. Jimin turns to look at him. He’s all wide eyes and pale skin. “Jimin, please.”

Jimin opens his mouth to answer, and when a sob breaks from his throat, that’s when he realizes he’s crying.

“I lost him, Taehyung.” he covers his mouth with his hand. “I lost them all.”

“Wha— No, you didn’t. Don’t say that.” he denies, but his voice is weak, and Jimin knows he himself doesn’t believe the words.

He cries harder — can’t help it — and then Taehyung’s arms are around him. Like they always are in Jimin’s worst moments. He clutches hard on his shirt and sobs against his neck, as if the other’s warmth could comfort his shattered heart.

The day becomes a long, stressful torture after that. Jimin can’t wait for it to end while simultaneously fearing its closure. When the school bell rings he feels a wave of relief wash over him, just for anxiety to come crashing down at the realization he has to decide whether he’s going to confront his mother or hide away in Taehyung’s house. The choice seems easy, but Jimin doesn’t want to be a coward anymore. He knows his mom deserves better than what he’s given her, he knows it.

So why the fear of walking there seems to eat him whole?

“Hey.” Taehyung bumps his shoulder lovingly. “We going home?” he asks and Jimin loves how he doesn’t confront him with ‘have you decided what to do yet?’. Jimin loves him.

“I think I’m going to my house, Tae.”

The boy nods, and takes a step closer to hug him. “Call me if you need anything. I’ll be faster than grilled pancakes.”

Jimin laughs. “That doesn’t make any sense.”

“I know. I love you.”

“I love you too.”

“So, let’s go?” he offers his hand and Jimin’s stomach churns.

“Uh— Actually, I’m gonna hit the bathroom first, so you can walk home without me.”

Taehyung smiles sweetly and understands. He always understands. “Okay, then. I’m going!”

He runs out of the classroom and Jimin notices with a sinking chest that he’s alone.

He makes a bee move to the bathroom, because perhaps he really does need a stop there. He feels like throwing up, his bile rising fast.

It feels like an eternity to get there, but when Jimin finally reaches it — time stops.
It happens in slow motion. Jimin opens the door and he hears first rather than sees it. A pained groan and the sound of a sharp kick against a body.

It repeats again, and again, and Jimin’s pulse explode in his veins. All blood rushes out of his face as realization falls upon him — he’s in the presence of someone being bullied, beaten. He’s considering going out and calling the supervisors when his instincts make him step forward and he sees it. The familiar disarrayed strands catches his sight and Jimin’s heart becomes so swollen he’s scared he might vomit it. As if he’s the one who’s being beaten.

The scene in front of him feels like from an alternate reality; something so distant from Jimin’s life that he couldn’t even imagine it.

He feels immersed in some sort of lethargy. His limbs are numb, and as he watches the aggressor spit in the boy’s face, his heart is erratic inside his chest. There are two of them — it’s when the one who is standing still, smirking down to the fragile figure beneath him, crouches and takes Jihyun’s hair between his fingers, pulling his face up close, that Jimin’s rage breaks inside him. It consumes every single one of his cells and he sees red.

He slams the door shut behind him, so loud it stings his ears.

The two of them look up startled while Jihyun remains with the same detached expression — as if he’s not really there, and Jimin feels like a hurricane.

“What the fuck is happening here?”

They straighten their posture, features morphing into sheer mockery when they realize who barged in them. The cock of their eyebrows has Jimin’s whole body shaking, and as the boy lets Jihyun’s strands slip from his grip — his head falling on the ground with a heavy thud —, Jimin marches to them.

“Well, well, look who’s—”

He’s not able to finish his sentence, because as soon as Jimin is close enough he punches him on the jaw so hard the boy steps backwards and falls on his ass. He seems caught off guard, pressing a palm where he was hit, mouth slacking, but Jimin can’t give a single fuck. He kneels before him and grabs his collar, sending a second punch straight to his nose and another one to his stomach, before the other kid is pulling him by the shirt and throwing him against a wall. Jimin’s back pangs with a sharp pain and he falls with full force over his left arm.

He scrunches his face, grunting. It hurts like a bitch, but when he opens his eyes and sees Jihyun’s shrunken body on the cold ground, holding his knees tight to this chest with tears striking down his face — that’s all he needs to be up on his feet again.

Jimin notices Jihyun’s soaked fringe, and the open stall behind him, with the toilet’s lid lifted.

Oh, hell no.

It fucking boils inside him. He wants them to hurt and bleed.

But he’s not fast enough the second time — his nails are cutting his palms and there’s a hammer relentlessly abusing his skull when one of them grabs him from behind, locking his arms on his back and soon enough there’s a pointed knee finding his ribs. Jimin gasps and his vision darkens, the pain seeming to spread fast to his every nerve in a matter of seconds. His breath is leaving him too, when the second hit comes. A sharp punch on his cheek that tears the skin. He tastes the metallic blood on his tongue.
He can’t see shit, but he perfectly feels when a hand clutches his hair to raise his face up, just like they did with Jihyun.

“So, you’re the faggy, huh. Pretty savage for a princess, you bitch.”

The face starts to take shape before his eyes and Jimin sees just fine the disgusting smile dancing across the other’s features.

You haven’t seen anything.

“How dare you touch my brother—” Jimin growls, voice so much rougher than it has ever been.

The snickers reaches his ears before he can finish. “Oh, sorry, sorry. Didn’t know you wanted him all to yourself.” the retort comes and Jimin looks up to him, sight finally clear.

They exchange a look for a moment before Jimin spits blood on his face. “I’m going to fucking kill you.”

It’s not hard to break free from the grip on his wrists. The guy holding him is weaker and Jimin has a red belt in taekwondo. He twists his arm around, quickly grabbing the other’s wrists instead and forcefully bending him down, tightening his fingers and wringing the bone until he hears it crack. The boy shrieks and Jimin lets go.

“You broke my wrist! You broke my—”

He can’t think of a single thing, an incessant ringing in his brain that blocks him from having coherent thoughts.

He sees the other one and smiles at what’s swimming in his eyes.

“Are you scared?” Jimin walks closer. “Didn’t you enjoy doing those same things to my brother? Now that’s your turn you’re fucking scared?” He hits him on the ribs, just like they did to him and the boy falls on his knees.

Jimin bends, so they’re on the same level. He is pressing his side with a whine, but Jimin grabs him by the jaw so he looks at him. “Next time you consider touching Jihyun again I won’t hesitate in breaking every single one of your bones. Are we clear?” the boy begrudgingly nods, stare hard as a stone. As if Jimin’s scared of him. He violently shoves his shoulders before getting up and kicking him between the legs the hardest he can. He likes the way the boy writhes down, keening and groaning in pain.

“Asshole.”

It’s only when Jimin’s focus settle in Jihyun that he realizes the boy is sobbing loudly, calling for him. “Hyung, pl— please…” the voice thin as glass.

Jimin runs to him.

Everything in his body hurts, but nothing stings more than seeing his brother so small, searching for a safe hand to hold onto while the cry bursts from his throat, as if he’s finally able to loose from his anguish in Jimin’s presence. He was taking every hit quietly as if he was already used to it, but now, as Jimin pulls him to his lap and hugs him, he cries louder and louder on his shoulder. Jimin’s eyes fill with tears, his teeth ripping the skin of his lips.

“H-hyung is here, Jihyunie.” he calls him like he used to when they were little kids and he would
protect him from everything. How shameful to know he couldn't remain doing the same when his brother needed the most. “Hyung is here. I’m so sorry...” Jimin rubs his back carefully, scared he might inflict more pain on him.

A teacher finds the four of them like that — probably from the loud screams of the boy Jimin broke the wrist or Jihyun’s loud sobs. He doesn’t know.

She screeches at the scene, completely horrified.

From then on, everything is a rushed blur. They take the boy to the hospital, while the other three of them are taken to the principal’s office to be questioned.

Jimin shakes with anger at how they don't also take Jihyun to see a doctor straight away, given his state. He’s full of purple bruises, including around his neck, and the simple thought of him being choked by those sons of a bitch boils Jimin’s blood all over again. Did they do it while they drowned him on the toilet, so it was even harder to breath?

He can’t listen to a single word that falls from the principal’s mouth.

“Is my brother going to stay here having to listen to all your bullshit after he went through all that?!?” he explodes and the man stares at him startled.

“Watch your tone, young man, or else I’ll suspend you for a lot longer!” Jimin wants to spit back that he doesn’t give a fuck, couldn't care less, but the man keeps talking. “I’m trying to understand and for that I need to listen to all of you.”

Jimin scoffs speechlessly, not believing his ears. “Listen…” he repeats the word, shaking his head. “Are you blind?! Take a close look at my brother! They spanked him, spat on his face, choked him until he couldn’t breath and drowned him on the toilet and you want to listen. I’m going to make you listen, then. I did break that fucker’s wrist and I did beat the both of them to protect my brother so sue me if you want, but Jihyun is being physically violated for god knows how long under your fucking noses while you turned a blind eye to it, so if you don't do something about this right now, I swear to god, this is going to blow all over the internet.” he menaces, out of breath, his ears buzzing.

The room falls silent, and the man gulps —Jimin sees his throat bobbing up and down. He switches his gaze to Jihyun, who’s coiled up on that big chair, looking, so, so small and frail. Jimin wants to cry.

“Is that true, Jihyun-ah?”

The boy next to Jihyun snickers evilly and Jimin shoots daggers at him with his eyes. “If you open your shitty mouth, I’m going to break all of your fucking te—”

“Jimin!” the old man slams his hands against the table, getting him silent. “You’ve said just enough, I need to listen to Jihyun now, if you excuse me!” when he makes sure Jimin understood, he tries one more time. “Tell me the truth, okay, Jihyun? What your brother said is true?”

It takes a while, but after some painfully long minutes, Jihyun nods weakly, quiet tears rolling down his cheeks.

The man sighs. “Okay. How long has it happened?”

The boy besides Jihyun fidgets on his seat, suddenly quiet and expressionless. Jimin frowns.
“A… A year.”

The answer knocks the oxygen out of him.

* A year?

The older man also sucks in a breath. No one speaks for a while and Jimin has to sit down not to collapse. He feels the way his pressure drops. His brain seems like it’s going to explode at any second.

“I’m going to call the parents.” the principal announces lowly, bewildered.

Jimin speechlessly stares at Jihyun, with no reciprocity from the boy’s part, who just remains with downcast eyes, crying in silence.

His heart is shrunken, so small it threatens to disappear.

His brother has been going through all that for an entire year? Suffering all alone and Jimin didn't even bear to notice?

He’s just as guilty as everyone else. To think the reason Jihyun was acting like that was simply because of their parent’s divorce. As if he’d completely isolate himself and shut down everyone from his life simply because their parents weren't together anymore. To think Jimin did as much as belittling his brother’s problems to teen rebelty and turned his back to him without thinking twice. Is he always so egotistically caught up in his own problems that he didn’t even manage to recognize his brother’s own turmoil when all the signs were right on his face? He should have known that all that anger had a deeper reason behind it.

If only Jimin tried harder, approached him more, *talked to him*. Would all this be avoided?

He cries too, and he’s so mad. So mad at all the people who used Jihyun as a punching bag and so mad at himself for letting it happen. Has Jihyun had it harder after they started suspecting about Jimin’s sexuality? Were they the ones who sent him the picture?

Suddenly he feels like he could have beaten them up harder.

Jimin is just so *stupid*. He is stupid, irresponsible, uncaring and worst of all, selfish.

What could have Jihyun thought when at the first chance of getting another sibling Jimin clutched onto it so tight as if his own brother from blood never even existed?

He watches as Jihyun cries and feels like the tears rolling down from his own eyes are unworthy. Why does he have the right to cry freely as if he was the one in the line of fire for an entire year? He wasn't. He doesn't. So he swallows hard all of his sobs, choking a little when they threaten to close his throat. His nails sink on the flesh of his palms and he holds his breath, deepening the pressure until he feels blood slide down his skin.

The sharp sting relishes him and he keeps on ripping the skin until the pleasure of hurting himself is replaced only by the pain of the deep cuts.

He deserves it. He deserves it all, deserves to be punished. He should do worse. He should—

The door opens abruptly, revealing his mother’s figure and Jimin’s heart drops at the very same second. He gulps down warily and watches from the corner of his eyes as Jihyun sinks deeper on the chair.
The woman’s eyes widen in horror as she takes a better look at Jimin’s face and it’s as if the recent events never happened. As if she never treated him that harsh way, as if he never disappointed her. There’s only worry in her eyes. She runs to him, and Jimin has to seal his lips into a thin line to not let out a choked up sound.

“What happened to you?” she crouches down in front of him, cupping his cheeks, and Jimin can’t say anything.

Her head turns around, and she’s about to demand all the information from the principal, when she sees Jihyun and she audibly gasps. Her hands halt over Jimin’s skin and Jihyun closes his eyes, quiet tears striking down his cheeks.

“J… Jihyunie…” she breathes, and she sounds so broken that no one else dares to say anything.

The silence stretches, their mom’s lack of response only adding up to the tension in the air — visible at the way the principal picks at the short hairs from his nape and the boy besides Jihyun seems to want to evaporate from there.

After some long seconds, she straightens her posture, getting up and standing closer to the table, quietly. Jimin thinks he never saw her so infuriated before. It’s unnerving how noticeable she’s holding back her voice to maintain a composed facade.

“What happened to my sons?”

The older man visibly gulps. “Y-you see, M-mrs. Park—”

“Mrs. Kwon Seoyeon, if you don’t mind.” she corrects harshly.

“R-right. Mrs. Kwon, I believe that there has been an issue between the kids, and—”

The woman abruptly cuts him off.

“An issue?” she snarls back. “My youngest have finger marks around his neck under your responsibility and you call it an issue? You better start addressing better what happened here, because I’m not scared to drop by the police station to file a damn report.”

“W-what, no! Let’s not… Get ahead of ourselves, okay? I’m sure there’s nothing we can’t fix without having the police involved.”

She takes a step back and crosses her arms. “I’m not so sure.”

Jimin is told to wait outside, along with Jihyun’s aggressor. He sits on a bench beside the door, several seats from the boy in hopes not to fly around his neck again. His eyes are hard focused to his front, without ever shifting nor wavered once. He can’t really see what’s before him, mind flooding with all the information and possible scenarios he positively did not ask for.

Pictures of Jihyun being beaten, swallowing it all to himself, hiding his marks. Crying himself to sleep. And Jimin not being there for him.

He feels so fucking useless it hurts his head.
He remembers the day he had to pick him up on the beach and how he was there all alone and now Jimin understands. He understands it all.

He has to lean his head down on his palms, pressing his eyes with the heel of his hands to see if the pressure inside his skull dies off.

“Jimin?” someone calls, and oddly it feels like it’s not the first time. “Jimin?” he raises his head and finds Jungkook, standing a feet distant from him, worried eyes searching for his attention. When they settle on his face, though, by the expression in his wide eyes, they instantly fly to the probably very ugly wound on his cheek. “What’s this, what happened to you?” he rushes to ask, hand motioning to reach for him, but stopping mid-way.

Jimin shakes his head, choking in his imprisoned sobs. He looks down to his fingers pinching one another, and swallows thickly when Jungkook bends on his knees to take a better look on his face.

Jimin pulls back, startled by the sudden movement and harshly rubs his cheek, feeling the pang hit him immediately. “I’m fine.” he says, squeezing one eye shut when the piercing shoots through his nerves.

“No, you’re not.” Jungkook pulls his wrists down softly. Jimin’s eyes follow his moves — he smudged the skin of his hands with the blood from his cheek, and for some reason, this gets his eyes filling with unwanted tears. “Hey.” Jungkook calls with the most tender tone, and Jimin hates it. Hates how the only way he can treat him sweetly is when he is pitying him. “Hey, what’s wrong?”

Jimin yanks his wrists from the hold and angrily rubs his eyes too, unwilling to let a single tear drop. “I’m fine, I said it.”

“Well, you don’t look fine.”

“Just… Leave me alone, ok?”

Jungkook doesn’t move an inch. Instead, he takes a thumb over Jimin’s cheek and brushes the skin beneath the wound. “Who did this?”

Jimin pretends the touch doesn’t fire a red alarm inside his brain. “I broke his wrist already.”

“You— You what?!”

He repeats, “I broke his wrist.”

Jungkook seems caught in a loss for words. “Well, that’s… An efficient way to make him not punch other people’s faces.” The older resumes to stare at him in silence. Jungkook sighs. “Come, let’s clean you up.”

He pulls him up as if Jimin is just willing to do everything that pleases him. Maybe that’s the idea he has of him. Jimin pulls his hands away from him once more.

“Just leave me the fuck alone, Jungkook! Why do you even care what happens to me?!”

The words seem to hit Jungkook a little harder than expected, because he winces, taking a step back. Jimin can’t care less. He’s about to go somewhere away from him when the boy Jimin had been trying to pretend it wasn’t there this entire time decides to barge in.

“Troubles in paradise already? Can’t the faggies stay normal for a second without snapping and
shrieking?"

Jimin sucks in a breath and his vision blurs.

It was him who sent the picture. He just knows. The way he looks at them. The way he spits the word *faggies* as if it’s cursed. It was him and Jimin feels so angry he hears the blood pounding in his ears.

He’s so focused in what’s going on inside him that he almost misses Jungkook stepping forward with an expression that he has never seen before.

“What did you just say?” he barks menacingly and Jimin’s heart fastens in panic. He grabs Jungkook by the arm to block him from moving further.

“Jungkook, stop.” he feels like he’s pleading and perhaps that’s the only reason Jungkook turns to look back at him.

They’re sharing a glance when the door from the principal’s room opens and reveals both his mom and brother. Jimin lets go of Jungkook’s arm so fast his hand ricochets on the wall behind him.

The movement doesn't go unnoticed.

Jimin gulps, taking a step forward. “How did it go?”

Jihyun has his eyes glued on the ground, hiding behind their mom in a way that completely breaks Jimin’s heart.

The woman turns to the boy who abused Jihyun and says, in the coldest tone Jimin has ever heard, “You can go in.”

He walks inside begrudgingly and closes the door with a loud noise.

The silence lasts less than a few seconds while Jimin’s mom exchanges looks between him and Jungkook, before asking. “Can I know who you are?”

Jimin heads into panic mode. “Mom.”

She ignores him and remains to stare at Jungkook, who seems lost in a sea of unknown waters.

“I, um… I’m Jeon Jungkook, mrs.”

“Jeon Jungkook…” she echoes. “Are you Jimin’s friend?”

Jimin can see in her eyes that she recognizes him from the picture. He presses harder. “Mom, please.”

She finally looks at him, and rather than angry, she seems hurt, and Jimin doesn't know what to do with that information. “Okay.” she oddly settles, wrapping an arm around Jihyun’s shoulder and petting his hair soothingly. The boy hides his face on her neck. “Let’s go home. Nice meeting you, Jungkook-ssi.”

“A-ah—” Jungkook awkwardly bows to her, “Nice meeting you too.”

She nods slightly, and then starts to walk away, leaving Jimin behind.

He takes a last glance at Jungkook’s face, and when he sees the boy is about to open his mouth to
flood him with questions, he wordlessly turns around and follows his mother.

The walk home is perhaps the most tortuous experience Jimin has ever gone through. They walk quietly till the bus stop, and he sits alone when they get in the bus, mortified by the situation he’s in — anxiety threatening to attack with a breakdown every five seconds.

It’s not an easier process arriving home. Jimin wants to talk to Jihyun, he wants so bad, but he lets their mother guide the boy to his bedroom by herself. He sinks on the couch, waiting for her. He knows he should.

The only company he gets is from the cars passing by the street. His phone has been buzzing inside his pocket the entire way home, but he’s mastering the art of ignoring it. It must be Taehyung spamming him with supportive messages and asking how was everything with his mother. He appreciates it, but he can’t bear to deal with it all in that moment. One thing at a time.

His mother only comes out of his brother’s room nearly half an hour later. Jimin doesn’t turn around to look. He waits. Heart held up in the middle of his throat.

She passes by him and heads for the kitchen quietly. He can hear her do everything. When she sighs exhaustedly. When she opens the fridge and pours herself a glass of water. When the glass hits the sink and her footsteps approach once again.

He holds his breath.

“Where were you?”

Jimin has a hard time processing the question. Even though he knows what she means. Even though the answer is on the tip of his tongue, because the memories of him and Taehyung spending the weekend together are crystal clear in his mind. It’s just, the way she asks. With a hint of exasperation and despair coated around her words. Jimin almost forgets he was the one crying his heart out the entire time he was away.

He turns to look at her. She’s leaning on the the counter of the kitchen as if that’s all the balance she can manage to grasp.

“I— I was at Taehyung’s.”

“Really now? Will you keep lying to me?”

“I’m not! I was there!”

“That’s not possible, because I went there and his maid said no one was there.”

Jimin frowns, clutching at the one piece of information that makes his chest swell.

“You went there? Were you looking for me?” Don’t you hate me?

“Of course I fucking was, Jimin!” she explodes, marching to him “The entire damn sunday!”

Jimin stumbles on his words, doesn’t know what to think. Was this why he didn’t find her in her
bedroom when he walked in home late at night?

“Y-you could have called.” he says the first thing that comes to his mind.

She stares at him deadly and doesn’t answer. She’s stripped from all composure by now and Jimin is choking on his tears. “Where were you?” she shoves his shoulders thrice pointedly, but it’s so weak, and her voice is strangled, and there’s tears in her eyes too, so Jimin can’t keep it in anymore.

He sobs, “I was at Tae’s, mom, I swear!”

“So why didn’t you get down to see me?!” she falls down on her knees, crying loudly, hands locked around Jimin’s arms as if that’s the only thing holding her stable. “I was so worried…”

The woman before him bursts in sobs and hiccups louder than he could ever imagine, and it shatters Jimin’s heart. He holds her by the elbow so she doesn’t wobble and kneels down in front of her.

“No one told me you were there.” Jimin tells her through his own tears. “I’m sorry, mom.”

“I-I never meant f-for you to run a-away. I just wanted some time to t-think, but then I woke up and you weren’t home and then I went t-to sleep and you weren’t on your bed either, I was so— I could only imagine how you were, what you were eating, it was so cold that night, Jimin, so cold…”

Her hands hold on tighter and Jimin doesn’t know what to do.

He keeps his arms secured around her while she cries on his chest, barely able to maintain his own emotional control.

“A-and now your brother i-is… God—” she chokes on her words and that’s when Jimin pulls her even closer to him, caressing her tousled hair, looking up to the ceiling in hopes to make it less hard not to cry.

“I’m here.” he assures her, but his voice comes out as weak as he feels. “I’m sorry I worried you.”

The words doesn’t soothe her trembles. Doesn’t make her breathing ease instantly. But as the seconds grow into minutes, and Jimin continues to stroke her hair, she slowly starts to come back to her senses, sobs quieting down and being replaced by uneven sniffles.

“Don’t ever do this again.” she half scolds, half pleads, hitting his chest with a closed fist. “I’ll call the cops on you for abandonment of the incapable.”

Jimin chuckles — can’t help it — the remark so her, so familiar that it settles a warm flow of air inside him, easing his anxiety, melting it down until it’s nothing but a ghostly tingle in his stomach. “That’ll keep me home, alright.” he joins her joke, and despite his rough voice, they both manage to laugh in each other’s arms. It’s easy like that. Jimin knows that from there on he doesn’t need to worry about anything.

“So…” she pulls away from him, sitting straight and cleaning her cheeks with the palms of her hands, “We need to talk about it.”

Jimin scrunches his face. “Can’t you forget you found out like this?”

“Unfortunately, no. I’m really curious.” she reasons, and Jimin gives her a small smile, sheepish.
He leans against the couch. “Shoot.”

“No, first, let’s clean this cut on your cheek.” she props herself up while Jimin touches the skin a little surprised.

“I almost forgot.”

His mother sighs. “Yeah, I didn’t. You’re suspended for a week, by the way, but hopefully that little bastard is kicked out.”

Jimin arches an eyebrow, also getting up. “Hopefully?”

“I tried my best, but you know how those rich families can be.”

They walk to the kitchen, where the first aid box is because it’s the place in the house they most get injured. Jimin sits on a chair while the woman sets everything she needs.

“I don’t care, if they don’t kick him out, we’re suing.”

She smiles weakly over her shoulder. “Thank you for protecting your brother.”

Jimin breaks the gaze, ashamed. “I should’ve done a lot sooner. I’ve been the worst to him.”

She doesn’t deny it, but neither does she pushes Jimin’s statement. “You couldn’t have guessed.”

He hums thinly, not really an agreement, but too powerless to argue that he could have.

Once she dips the lint into the dermatological alcohol, she approaches him. “It’s gonna hurt.” she warns before pressing the wet cloth against his cheekbone. Jimin hisses, feeling it sting, but holds it well after the initial startle fades. “So, I think the first question would be... Are you dating anyone?”

Jimin holds back a humorless laugh. As if. “Nope.”

“So that boy in the… y’know… Was it just a fling?”

He sighs. “It’s more complicated than that, actually.”

“Oh.” she backs out so she can look into Jimin’s eyes, “I smell some spicy drama.”

Jimin chuckles, but dismisses it with a wave of hand as if it doesn’t matter. Only if it was that easy.

“Okay, then.” she goes quiet for a while and Jimin knows it’s coming. “Why did you tell your step sister but did not tell me?” He waits, because he knows she has more to say. “I don’t mean to be immature, because I’m your mom, but I was really hurt with that. I’m sorry I may have come out too harsh on you that night, it’s just that... I was not shocked, because somehow... Something inside of me kind of sensed it? I don’t know if this makes any sense. Anyway, I wasn’t shocked, but I was really caught off guard by the way it presented itself to me and I just... When Jihyunie said that and I saw it in your eyes I was really... I really wanted to be your best friend, but knowing you kept secrets from me and chose to tell someone you barely even knew made me feel so bad. What kind of things was I doing to make you feel like you had to hide it from me? That’s what I thought...”

Jimin takes a deep breath. She’s always so honest and clean with everything that it overwhelms him. They’re extreme opposites. While he hides every feeling beneath a well made up smile, his mom is as translucent as sharp glass.
“I…” he doesn’t know how to start, “Eunbi is… a really type of person, y’know? She makes you feel welcome and like you’ve known her for 20 years when actually it’s only 2 weeks. I know we’ve known each other for so little time, but she…” he shakes his head, trying to reorganize his thoughts, “Only Taehyung knew about it. It was all bottled up inside of me. It’s not that I didn’t want to tell you. You are my mom, and my best friend, and everything to me. But it’s exactly because… You mean so much to me, play such a big role in my life, that I’m scared of letting you down the most.” Jimin can’t say anything while looking at her, so he fixes his eyes on his fingers over his lap instead. “You always talk so dearly about how you want me to have a good family. How you want over five grandchildren,” he smiles bittersweetly at that, “How you want me to get married like it means everything to me. And I just—” he stops, knowing the sentences don’t connect at all.

His mom cuts him off.

“You can still do all that. Right?”

Jimin tilts his head. “Yeah, but I’d have to fly off the country first.”

She cups his cheek with her free hand. “Don’t worry about that, okay? The things I say are what every mom hopes for their kids.”

“Yeah, but every time I knew what type of family you were picturing.”

“Doesn’t matter.” she says pointedly, “Do you think this was what your grandmother idealized for me? A broken marriage, with two children to raise while being single? I’m not complaining, but she’d have ripped all her hair off was she alive.” Jimin chuckles. “What I mean is that, us, parents, can idealize all we want. You are our children, for god’s sake. That’s our favorite hobby! It’d be awkward if we didn’t idealize anything. But, in the end, it’s you who make your paths, not us. I’ll support you no matter what path you choose, sweetheart.”

Jimin can’t begin to describe how much her words are a welcome anesthetic for his restless heart. He smiles, and it’s the most genuine one he has given in a while.

“Of course, unless you choose to be in a rock band with mohawk hair, then I’m disowning you.”

He throws his head back laughing out loud. He can't believe he’s so lucky to have her as his mother. She laughs along with him and it’s the best feeling in the world.

○

The mattress of his bed sinks as he lays there after taking a cold bath to wash away all the marks from that cursed morning. His stomach growls, but Jimin ignores it and pulls his phone from the pocket of the pants he discarded on the ground.

Taehyung sent him ten messages, which is no surprise, but what shocks Jimin the most is the ‘Jungkook’ notification above ‘18 messages’.
Hey hyung
Text me when you can

Actually
Uh
Can you text me when you get home?

Got home yet
??
Sorry this must be annoying
You left it has like ten minutes
I’ll stop texting now

You home?

I have no idea how far the school is from your house so I don’t know if I should be worried
Sorry, I probably shouldn’t you’re with your mom
Right?

What about now?
If you’re home please don’t leave me on read
Hyung?
Jimin looks at the clock. It’s 2:03 pm. Jungkook is online, so he knows Jimin is reading the messages. He doesn’t want to answer him, doesn’t have the energy to put up with whatever he’s dying to confront Jimin with. He just wants to sleep for the entire day and pretend most of it never happened. He closes his icon and clicks on Taehyung’s instead.

soulmate — 12:10 pm

hey, im walking home and im thinking about u!!!!
aint i romantic hehe

in fact when i stop to think about it we rly look like a couple
do you think other people think we’re dating
i wonder if thats the reason girls never hit on me :( they think im taken

that’s def the reason

anyways good luck with your mom!!!
you can do it
i love youuu u u uuuu u

can you hear my voice while reading this lmao

Jimin smiles softly. Taehyung’s presence always a blow of fresh hair into the room even when he’s not actually around. It works like magic.

you — 2:05 pm

they think we’re dating bc they dont know what true friendship is like
but girls dont hit on u bc you scare them away

thanks babe
and yes i do hear

i have so much to tell you

like

so much

but i dont want to right now, i’ll just sleep a little
The second Jimin sends the last message, Jungkook’s face pops up on his screen and it stops his heart midway a heartbeat. He’s calling him. Why the fuck is he calling him? Jimin doesn’t want to talk to him, can’t he get a fucking clue? He hits the red button without thinking twice and it literally takes three whole seconds for Jungkook to call him again.

Jimin snorts.

“What do you want?”

Jungkook seems startled on the other end. “H-hyung, hi. I didn’t think you were gonna pick up.”

“Yeah, well. So?”

“I, um, how… How are you?”

“Did you just spam me to ask how I was?”

Jimin presses. He’s still so pissed with Jungkook it doesn’t matter what he does, he can’t feel sympathetic.

“No, I mean, that too, but—” the boy sighs, “I wanted to know what happened?”

“Why?”

“What do you mean ‘why’, your face was—”

“Why do you keep pretending to care about me, there’s no one here to see, Jungkook, cut it off.”

The younger scoffs and goes silent for a moment.

“Pretending to care, are you serious right now? Can’t I be worried after I see you hurt and bleeding?” Jungkook asks as if he never made Jimin bleed.

“No.” He deadpans.

“Why not?”

Jimin laughs, void of any colour.

“You know why.”

At that Jungkook goes silent. Jimin just wants to forget him. Really, what good has he brought into his life? Why had he to make such a beautiful entrance just to crash everything in the way? Jimin is fucking tired. He doesn’t even know why he is so attached. He should be able to let go easily. It’s not like they have tons of meaningful moments that Jimin can’t seem to unwind from. It’s just…

“Why did your mother talk to me like that? As if she knew me? And why did that boy say that to us?” Jungkook continues despite the thick tension in the line, convinced to get the informations he called for.
“It’s none of your business.”

“Clearly I’m kind of involved, so yeah, it is.”

Jimin snorts out loud. He is so— annoying.

“Someone snapped a pic of us making out and outed me to my family. Happy now? Did I satisfy your curiosity? Good, I’m hanging up.”

“What— No, Jimin, wait—”

He shuts down his phone, closing his eyes, completely exhausted. The gadget vibrates on his hand once again, so Jimin turns it off, not sparing a single glance ‘cause he’s all very well aware what it is.

His stomach growls, and he knows he should have lunch, try and put something consistent inside him, but he fears he’ll only throw it all up, so he turns around on his bed and tries to sleep.

When he wakes up, it’s six in the afternoon. He rubs his eyes, feeling his muscles heavy, as if he could sleep for another ten days. The sun is setting on the horizon, he can see it by his window and it makes him sigh, defeated. He’s fucking up his sleeping schedule.

His pillow is soaked underneath his head since he fell asleep with a very much wet hair, so Jimin fears what he’ll find in the mirror once he gets up. It’s not like he feels like getting up anyway, he could easily sleep the rest of the day away.

But on the other hand, he wants to see his brother. Wants to talk to him, listen to him and see how he is. It’s with that in mind that that he takes a deep breath and leaves his bed behind, ruffling his hair a little so it’s not completely horrible.

Jimin finds his mom and dad sitting in the living room, and it provides him the biggest whiplash he could have asked for. Their father hasn’t stepped into their house since the divorce. Jimin knows the situation calls for it, but it still shocks him a little. The atmosphere is heavy and serious, so Jimin fidgets with his shirt, guilty for intruding. His father spots him, breaking into a tired smile.

“Hello, Jimin.”

“Hi, dad. Sorry for interrupting.”

“You never do.” the man motions for him to come closer and so Jimin does. They hug a bit awkwardly but Jimin appreciates the effort. His father is not the biggest hugger. The man cups his cheek and takes a better look at his face. He doesn’t say anything, but his sad eyes talk millions.

“We’ll make everything right, okay?” he promises in a small voice, “Thank you.”

Jimin shakes his head shyly, dismissing it. “Have you talked to Jihyun?”

His father lets him go, sighing. His mom answers for him.

“He’s still in his bedroom, baby. I think he’s pretending to sleep so he doesn’t talk to anyone.”

Jimin nods, “Oh, is that so?” His parents share a tired look, “I’ll… I’ll try and talk to him, okay?”

“Just don’t push it, alright?” his mother pleads, “I think we’ll have to take him to a psychiatric or something.”

“Don’t worry, I won’t.”
Jimin smiles weakly, before taking off.

He doesn’t knock on Jihyun’s door before going in, just tries to open it as soundlessly as possible so to not disturb him if he’s really asleep.

His little brother’s figure is shrunken on the bed, he has all the blankets pulled up to him and held tight around his closed fists. Jimin sighs.

“Hey, Jihyunie?” he sits on the edge of the bed, “Are you awake?”

For Jimin’s surprise, the boy shuffles, but still doesn’t give any verbal response.

“Can’t you talk to me?” Jimin asks — begs? —, “Let’s talk, yeah? Like the old times.”

It takes a while, and Jimin almost gives up, but when he’s preparing himself to get up and leave the younger be, his brother’s muffled voice reaches his ears.

“I’m so ashamed.” he sounds broken, and Jimin bites his lip, feeling his breath hitch. He places a hand over the boy’s leg, rubbing it reassuringly.

“There’s nothing to be ashamed of. You did nothing wrong.”

And that’s when Jimin hears Jihyun sob. It’s weak, and almost inaudible, but it’s still there.

“I did.” he sniffs, “I outed you, even though I already knew everything, and you still came to me in the end.” he curls into himself even more and Jimin feels his eyes filling with tears, “I’m the worst, I deserve every punch.”

“Hey.” Jimin’s hand stops moving, “Don’t say that.”

“It’s true. I’m so sorry.” he pulls the blanket completely over his head, and cries quietly, not allowing Jimin to comfort him, to be there for him. But he’s already done this for too long.

Jimin gets up and sits by his side, taking the blanket away from his face. He meets no resistance, easily sweeping the cover from his brother’s hands and finding his swollen face, red with tears, as if he had been crying the entire afternoon. His heart aches, and Jihyun’s eyes doesn’t meet his.

“I’ve had my faults too, hadn’t I? You know that. Let’s not blame each other. Let’s talk and solve it all. You’re my little brother, right?” Jimin pleads, waiting for a response, but all Jihyun does is cry, “I’m sorry, too.” he decides to start, “For not realizing what you were going through, for spending so much time away with other people when you needed me the most. I’m sorry for taking Eunbi as a sibling so quickly, I know you must have felt replaced. I’m really sorry, Jihyunie, I wish I could go back and change everything.” Jimin confesses, feeling the tears drop from his eyes easily, sliding down his cheeks in a roll. He doesn’t stop the urge to card his fingers through his brother’s hair, pushing the fringe away from his eyes, wiping some tears along the way. “But you don’t have to hide things anymore, okay? I’ll listen to you, and mom will too. You could always have counted on her, you know that, right?”

Jihyun nods. “I didn’t want to worry her.”

“You should have! This is really serious.” Jimin scolds, and tries not getting ahead of himself, “We’re a family, we’re here for each other, okay? We’re kinda broken, but we’ll get through stuff.”

Jimin finishes and the room falls silent, only their breaths responsible for filling it. He knows
Jihyun has to let a lot of things out, so he patiently waits, stroking his hair as he cries. The bruises around his neck are a lot darker now, and Jimin tries not to flinch as he stares at them. They’re far worse than the one on his own ribs, which he can’t even feel when he thinks about all the ones Jihyun owns.

“I was really mad, y’know.” the younger starts, rubbing his nose and trying to get the tears out of his face, “I was feeling more and more detached from everything. Like nothing could keep me grounded. Like my life was a movie and I was simply watching it. I don’t know how it happened. My friends started leaving me, you grew out of us — started partying, and going out with different people, and I was—” he pauses to breath in deeply, “When mom and dad got divorced it was like unleashing something inside me. Something really ugly. And I didn’t know how to let it out besides the way I treated you all. They— The boys from school… They used to bully me all the time. But it was nothing serious when I still had friends around me. But ever since I started walking alone, they— They’d push me against the lockers and hit me on the head when they were passing by, just to see how I’d react. And when I’d do nothing it’d get worse, they… They…” Jimin cries quietly, watching his brother open up to him like he hadn’t done in so long, “I didn’t know what to do, I didn’t know who to talk to. I was mad at you, and I was mad at dad, and I was kind of mad at mom too. I felt like I had no one and y’all didn’t even see it.” he squeezes his eyes shut, crying harder and Jimin has to cover his mouth with the palm of his hand so his sobs don’t break free from his throat. He feels so ashamed. He’s the older brother and he still allowed all this to happen right before his eyes.

He pulls his legs up, lying down beside Jihyun and wrapping his arms around his body in the best protective way he can manage. “I’m so sorry, Jihyunie… Hyung is here now, I’m sorry I abandoned you.”

The younger boy clutches at Jimin’s shirt and cries loudly. Jimin lets him, rubbing his back with his fingertips and stroking his hair for as long as it takes for him to calm down, for him to feel safe again.

It turns out being suspended is not as bad as it seems. If anything it rubs on Jimin’s face he has a lot of work catching up with his studies if he plans ever going near Japan with Taehyung. He makes a list of all the subjects he needs to get through and plans them accordingly. He’ll start off with literature, math and physics, which is what he’s best at, and then he’ll leave more time for the subjects he sucks at, such as history, chemistry, geography and english. Basically, The Rest.

Taehyung will be held responsible of updating him of every new material the teachers give, and so Jimin thinks he’ll do a pretty use of his week. He did need a break from everything. He wakes up early and makes his breakfast. It’s light, so it doesn’t bother him much, as well as makes him proud for eating. Next, he just has to get through breakfast. He’ll make it. He has to get better for his mother. She doesn’t need to have more on his plate than she already has.

The morning passes by nicely. It’s not hot, so Jimin doesn’t feel uncomfortable and in fact, the day is kind of nice. The wind is fresh and blowing through his windows in a soft breeze. Exactly the type of mornings Jimin loves.

Jihyun decided to skip school so he’s still in his bedroom sleeping, while their mother had taken off to work before they both woke up. The house is silent, but Jimin marvels in it. It does wonders
to his concentration and by the time lunch time arrives, he’s almost finished with math.

He stretches his back and jumps off his chair, walking out of his bedroom and knocking on Jihyun’s door.

“Hey, you awake?” Jimin turns the handle softly just to find his brother still sound asleep. The curtains fall heavily before the window, blocking any source of light inside.

He sighs and closes the door.

Jimin knows it’s going to be hard, and that Jihyun still has a lot to work on, but it hurts a wholesome lot to see him like that.

He decides to make lunch for both of them so his brother can eat when he gets up, but just then, the doorbell rings.

He checks his phone to see if Taehyung said anything about coming over, and when he sees that he hasn't, he goes for the door.

Jimin expects to see his father, the mailman, or even a random person selling milk? Cookies?

But what he doesn’t ever see coming is Jungkook, standing tall and beautiful on his doorstep, sunlight shining on his soft hair strands and making Jimin’s heart take a leap. He opens his mouth to say something, but nothing comes out of it.

Jungkook seems awkward, almost uncomfortable, looking down and shifting his feet in a way people only do when they’re nervous. Jimin holds the door open, not exactly knowing what action to take next. Why is he there?

“Uh—”

“Hi…” they speak at the same time, which only makes everything even more awkward.

Jimin decides to break it for once.

“What are you doing here?”

Jungkook raises his eyes to look at him, and it’s almost innocent, the way his irises glisten, all boyish and doe eyes.

“I— Taehyung told me you were suspended, so I thought of dropping by and giving you what the teachers passed today.”

Jimin is taken aback. What?

“Um… Taehyung is already doing that for me. Did he not tell you?”

Jungkook seems caught in a trap. He scratches the back of his neck. “Yeah, I just offered to do it for him today. Maybe we could study together or something?”

Jimin does a backtrack. Again, what?

He can't suppress the urge to ask ‘honestly, what the fuck are you doing?’, but just then the younger pushes his fringe back from his sweaty forehead and Jimin catches a glimpse of something unusual. It's brief, but Jungkook’s knuckles seem redder than normal. “What happened to your hand?” he asks without really thinking about it.
The boy looks away, hiding them in his back pocket. “It’s nothing.”

Jimin doesn't believe him, obviously. He narrows his eyes at him, taking a step closer. “Come on, let me see.” he pulls Jungkook’s wrist to him, and although Jungkook seems reluctant — nearly flustered — he lets him.

Jimin frowns, eyeing the wrecked knuckles. There’s some dried blood over it, the skin ripped in some parts as if he hit a wall, or someone. He looks up, “What happened?”

“’s nothing.” he dismisses, but Jimin sees right through the lie and doesn't let go of his wrist, stubbornly, “It was a stupid fight, I’m fine.”

“Clearly.” he mocks, pulling him inside, “Come in, let’s clean this up.”

Jimin knows he shouldn't care. Shouldn't allow Jungkook into his home. But he can't help it, he cares, and he cares a lot.

He goes for the kitchen, inwardly scolding himself ten times over, and finds the aid box his mom used on him yesterday still over the counter.

“Sit down.” he orders, but when he turns around Jungkook is still on the living room, eyeing everything with a sort of awed expression. He’s staring at one of the frames from when Jimin was little and he fluses down to his neck. “Yah!” he calls again, “Stop snooping.”

The boy then walks to him sheepishly. “Sorry. You were a cute baby.” he announces, sitting on one of the stools and extending his hand over the counter.

Jimin scoffs. “Of course.” He approaches Jungkook, hating how his heart races at the proximity. He takes a cotton and dips it in the same alcohol his mom used on him. “Give me your hand.” he asks and Jungkook obliges easily.

Jimin works on his injuries while the younger remains to look around, at the new surroundings. “Your house seems cozy.” he says and Jimin frowns at the strange compliment. He sure is talkative today.

“Thanks.”

Jungkook doesn't even hiss at the alcohol on his cuts. Jimin lets out a small sound of disapproval. “Who did you even fight with?” he pries, curious.

“A dumbass.”

“Why?”

Jungkook shrugs, as if it doesn't matter.

“What now? Are you just picking fights for no reason? And even getting hurt like this... Do you even know how to punch?” he scolds further as he starts wrapping Jungkook’s knuckles with a lint.

The younger bluses, “Not really.”

“Aish.”

They fall into a weird silence as Jimin proceeds to work on his injury. Weird, because it’s not uncomfortable. Jimin hates how they can be like this. Push aside every shit that happens with them and pretend as if it never happened.
“Are you alone?” Jungkook asks, looking around.

“My brother is sleeping in his room.” he answers, tapping Jungkook’s hand when he’s over. “There. It’s done.”

The younger takes his hand till eye level and inspects it. “It’s really nice. Thank you.”

Jimin shakes his head, putting everything into the aid box again, reaching a shelf to keep it there. He struggles, but manages to do it, on his tiptoes. When he turns around, red on the cheeks, Jungkook is staring at him amusedly.

He takes a deep breath, trying to ignore the pitter patter of his heartbeats. He doesn't know what to do now. “So…”

Jungkook gets up from the stool, dropping his backpack on the counter and taking his annotations out of it. “Here.” he hands it to Jimin, who takes it feeling a bit awkward. Does this mean they’re going to study together?

“Thank you.”

“You’re welcome.” Jungkook mouths, a little lowly.

It’s clear they’re both embarrassed and uncomfortable, not knowing what to do in that situation Jungkook just put them in. Why would he go all the way out of his path just to do this? He could have spent his afternoon in millions of different scenarios so why did he choose this one?

Jimin bites his bottom lip and looks up to catch Jungkook staring. He gulps. He doesn’t want to be a bad host. So he swallows his pride and tries to smile. “Are you hungry?”

Jungkook raises the stare to his eyes, and Jimin flushes stupidly - feel his ears burn -, how he was blatantly focused on his lips. “Uh, I... Yeah. Were you going to eat lunch now?”

“I was actually going to cook.”

Jungkook arches an eyebrow. “Really?” Jimin nods, and the younger leans on the counter, smiling smugly. “I know how to cook too, y’know. I’m really good.”

He tilts his head, “That’s kind of unexpected.”

Jungkook stares at him as if he is deeply offended. “For your information, my grandma taught me and she’s the best cook, so naturally I learned all her skills.”

“Your grandma?” Jimin asks and can’t contain the surprised glint on his tone.

“Yeah. Why do you sound like you don’t believe it?”

“Oh, it’s not that. It’s just that… Um…” he hits his nails on the counter repeatedly, nervous of prying too much. “You said you traveled a lot, so I guess I assumed your family relationships resumed to your mom and dad.”

Jungkook nods, sitting on the stool again. Jimin doesn’t know what to think of the path the conversation is heading. Are they about to start bonding? “Yeah, that makes sense. But I didn’t travel with them always, y’know. I lived with my grandma until I was 12 right here in Busan and it was the best thing, honestly. She’s incredible. But then, my parents wanted to spend more time with me and decided to start taking me with them on their trips. I left all my friends behind, but
leaving my grandma was the worst part.” he concludes and Jimin nibbles the inner part of his lips. He’s apprehensive of starting casual conversation with Jungkook, afraid he’ll forget all about the party if he does so.

“That must have been terrible. I’m sorry.” he gives the most he can manage.

Is he wrong for being upset? He and Jungkook are nothing to each other in the end of the day. Of course, Jimin knows the act was at least asshole-y, but is it something for him to be so mad at? He and Jungkook are barely friends. He can try and hope all he wants — the harsh reality is that he isn’t one of the things swimming around Jungkook’s thoughts at night, when he lies his head on the pillow to sleep. Probably doesn’t even pass by near it. There’s no reason why Jungkook should be considerate with him, apart from common sense. But in that night, he was a drunken teenager, on a messy party with horny hormones — Jimin’s heart dragged on the ground in the in betweens meant less than nothing for him.

He holds back a sigh. If he wants to start forgetting Jungkook he has to let go of the things hurting him too.

“It’s okay now. I’m happy they finally settled.” he says and Jimin simply stares at him. At every single one of his features and curses at destiny for picking someone so striking for his heart to yearn for. Even after walking under the sun and getting his skin gifted with sweat. The way he pushes his hair back and exposes his forehead. The way his nose curves just the right way. The way his cheeks flush because of the heat. The little moles on his face. He’s so beautiful. Jimin can’t wrap his mind around how is he supposed to get over him. “Anyway, my grandma taught me when I was like 15 during summer break, so I got two years and a half to practice and be the cook that I am today.”

Jimin can’t help but laugh a little at his presumptuous posture. “You’re a big talker, alright.”

The younger scoffs offended, dramatically rolling his sleeves up. “Excuse you, but give me a fucking pan.” Jimin rolls his head back, laughing out loud. Fuck, he’s so easy. “I mean it, I’m gonna cook you the best meal you’ve ever eaten.”

“Get a grip, I won’t let you cook for me and yourself on the first day you come to my house. That’d be rude.”

“Please. You just don’t want to admit that you’re wrong.”

Jimin chokes on the audacity. “Oh? Okay, fine, you cook then.” he marches to the cupboard and comes back handing Jungkook a frying pan. “Amaze me.” he lets out, making sure his lips draw each word.

“You asked.” Jungkook delivers back, leaning really close to his face before completely pulling back, walking to the other side of the kitchen. Jimin almost forgets how to breath.

“You’re really full of yourself, huh.” he says while sitting on a stool to watch him work. Pretending he was not affected.

Jungkook’s wide back stretching against the white shirt of their uniform with the sleeves rolled up, baring his arms all for Jimin to appreciate — he can’t deny it’s a sight. He bites his lips, trying to stop his trainwreck of thoughts. This is going to be a long way down the road.

“You can keep talking like that after I feed you the best meal of your life.”

Jimin chuckles. “You’re on.” He’s probably going to diss Jungkook’s cooking even if it’s amazing
It’s awkward how easily they can fall on small talk. Jimin feared Jungkook would start to cook and then they’d be silent, running out of common topics to talk about. But surprisingly, they click insanely well. Which Jimin doesn’t know if he loves or hates. Probably both.

“Hey, you know pretty much all that there is to know about my family, but I know nothing about yours.” Jungkook notes. “Fill me in.”

Jimin tilts his head, “My parents are divorced, as you know. I live here with my mom and my little brother. My dad… He’s already remaking his life, I guess, but he’s a good father. He struggles a bit, but at least he’s trying.”

“And your mom?”

Jimin smiles fondly. “She’s the best, really. My best friend.” he says proudly after their talk yesterday. “I love her more than anything.”

Jungkook looks at him over his shoulder, a little perplexed by the sincerity. “That’s so unusual to hear. Your best friend? Woah. How cool.”

He nods, “Yeah. I’m lucky.”

“And your parents dealt well with the divorce?”

“I guess. My mom got pregnant of me really early, so my grandparents kind of forced her and my dad to marry. They were dating alright, but it wasn’t like… It, y’know? So it just didn’t work for a long time, but I think they forced themselves to keep at it because of me and Jihyunie. It was mutual when they split up.”

Jungkook nods, hands restless at doing whatever he’s doing. Jimin can’t really see properly. “And your dad already has another family?”

Jimin winces a little at how straight-forward he is. He does a lot of questions too. Jimin had never really picked up on this, since the questions were barely ever directed to him. “Yeah. They’re cool. His girlfriend’s daughter is kind of my best friend too now.”

Jungkook snorts. “You sure does have a lot of best friends, huh.”

He laughs, “I can’t help it, I’m easy to love and dot at.”

The boy goes silent for a bit, shaking his head and Jimin imagines he’s smiling at his words, which kind of makes his chest warm.

The smell from whatever he’s doing rises higher and invades his nostrils so he leans against the counter to try and see over the younger’s shoulder. “What are you even cooking anyway?”

Jimin had showed him the fridge and where they stored the food, saying it was all free territory so he hadn’t completely paid attention to the ingredients Jungkook picked.
“Just bulgogi and rice.”

Jimin hums appreciatively. “When is it going to be ready?”

Jungkook laughs. “This is like, the third time you ask me.”

“I’m hungry!” he whines in his defense.

“Okay, okay, we’re almost there.”

“You’re a slow cook.”

“And you’re impatient.”

“That’s very true. Thanks for noticing.”

Jimin sees him turning off the stove and bounces excitedly on his seat, “Is it ready?!”

“Oh my god!” Jungkook laughs, “Wait for it, for god’s sake!”

His posture deflates and he pouts a little, “Bo-ting.”

“It’s ready, just let me set everything on the plate.”

Jimin blushes, the thought of Jungkook making his plate a bit intimate. “It’s okay, I can do my own.”

“No, it’s part of a cook’s job to do it.” He rolls his eyes at that.

“Did you make enough for Jihyunie? He’s going to wake up hungry.”

“Yeah, don’t worry, there’s enough.”

Jungkook turns around balancing a plate in each hand. It’s the most domestic Jimin thinks he’ll ever see him. He places a plate in front of him and it’s true, he can’t deny — it smells amazing. Jungkook divided the plate in two, a portion of rice and the other of bulgogi. Jimin nibbles the inside of his mouth, hating how he thinks that’s an absurd amount of food. Jungkook takes the stool beside him.

“Come on, give me some credit.” he nudges Jimin’s side with an elbow, “It looks good, right?”

Jimin tilts his head back a bit and looks at him, “No need to stroke your ego.”

“Thanks, that’s definitely a yes.”

He rolls his eyes, taking a spoon to roll the food first. He’s trying not be swept away by his negative thoughts, but he can’t help the count of calories in the back of his mind. Maybe letting Jungkook set his plate was not the wisest idea.

“What is it? Don’t you want to eat?” Jungkook notes, staring at him.

Jimin flushes, feeling so embarrassed he downs a spoon in two seconds, stuffing his whole mouth.

He’s about to fake a ‘mhmhm’ to take Jungkook’s attention away from his small trance over the food when he’s struck by the taste. He widens his eyes, turning to the younger with fingers covering his mouth in astonishment.
He chews before letting out, “Oh my god!” Jungkook smiles big and wide, and it’s such a drastic turn from the smug smirk Jimin was expecting he almost fails his next words. “Fuck, I hate to admit, but this is amazing.”

The boy seems shy now getting the compliments he promised Jimin would make. “Thank you.” he says sheepishly.

They eat silently after that, appreciating the food. Jimin struggles silently, but the knowledge Jungkook made that meal especially for him helps a little. Maybe more than a little. He’s wondering how much he can leave on the plate without Jungkook taking it personal, when the boy suddenly shuffles beside him.

“Hey...” He doesn’t look up to find Jimin’s eyes.

“Mhm?”

“I’m sorry.”

Jimin sucks in a breath, heartbeat fastening. The words so sudden in the atmosphere.

“What for?”

Jungkook sucks in his bottom lip, genuinely distressed.

“For being the reason you were outed.”

He says nothing more, doesn’t elaborate further, leaving for Jimin the role of mustering a sentence so the air won’t turn uncomfortable. What should he say? He doesn’t think this is why Jungkook should be apologizing.

“It’s okay. I was there too, y’know.” he reasons, “I could’ve said no.” and adds apprehensively.

They never explicitly talked about their escapade moments, never really acknowledged it. Will things turn different once they do?

“Yeah.” Jungkook breathes out, sounding nervous. “I could’ve stayed on my lane.”

Jimin can’t disagree with that. It would have spared a lot of troublesome outcomes. “You could’ve,” he nods, thoughtfully. His mind running by unanswered questions and Jimin is tired of never voicing them. “Why didn’t you?” he questions firmly, staring at Jungkook’s profile.

He sees the way his throat rises as he gulps, eyes focused ahead while he pretends Jimin’s gaze is boring holes into his skin. When he finally reciprocates and looks into his eyes, it’s dark and Jimin can’t read him. “You were too irresistible that night, y’know.”

Jimin sucks in the oxygen around him. “You can’t just say that...”

Jungkook laughs a little, shaking his head. “Yeah. Sorry.”

He is having none of it. “No.” He fully turns his body to face the boy, tired of that push and pull bullshit. “Not sorry.” the younger turns to face him too, eyes slightly wide by Jimin’s tone, “I don’t get you. I thought maybe I could do this, but I can’t, really. It’s like you have two personalities in my mind and I just can’t wrap my head around it. Why did you pretend we never met when you saw me in school?”

There. It’s finally out. He can’t breathe while waiting for it. Staring at Jungkook as he holds the
stars in his eyes, and Jimin’s heart is his hands. What a treacherous balance.

“You went along with it.”

“That’s not really the point.”

Jungkook sighs and something in his expression changes. As if this conversation is a burden he didn’t sign up to carry. Except he did.

“What?” Jimin snaps, “What now? This is exactly what I’m talking about. The way you’re about to act, it’s nothing like the you from ten minutes ago, the you I first met. This detached version of you that acts as if everything I say is annoying and useless. Which is it, Jungkook? Who are you?”

The younger lets out a humorless laugh. “Did you just assume how I was gonna act? What I was gonna say?”

“I can see in your face.” Jimin reasons.

“Oh, can you really?” Jungkook stares at him for a good second as if defying him to read what’s on his face now. Jimin hates it. This is all about what he just talked.

“Yes. This ‘don’t fuck, don’t care’ attitude.” he elaborates, “Why is it so hard to answer my question?”

Jungkook gets up and that’s when Jimin’s chest tightens. Is he leaving?

“Why don’t you just find out by yourself since you’re so good in reading me?”

“I’m not, I don’t understand you! That’s the whole point of why I’m asking.” Jimin hops off the stool as well, standing face to face with him. “Why can’t you just tell me?” he insists once again, and sounds like pleading, brows furrowing in frustration.

Jungkook holds his stare while reaching for the bag behind him, hanging it from one shoulder and taking a step back, away from him. “Thanks for the food.” he coldly says before spinning on his wheels and walking to the door.

Except when he’s about to reach it, Jimin’s mom bursts it open with her arms full of groceries bags, startling the both of them to the core.

Jimin watches from his place, terrified, as his mom exchanges a look from him to Jungkook a bit confused, before realization falls upon her face — as if it just hit her who Jungkook is.

Jungkook is standing a feet from her, pale, when something snaps inside of him and he reaches for the bags on her arms. “A-ah, let me help you.” he effortlessly carries them all to the kitchen and places them on the counter, right beside where Jimin stands, frozen.

“Thank you! You’re that boy from school, right? Jungkook-ssi, is it?” she kindly asks, following him and dropping a kiss to Jimin’s forehead. “Hi, baby. You didn’t tell me someone was coming over.”

Jimin stutters over his words, the situation so awkward it ties his throat. “H-he was just leaving.”

“What? No, please, stay! I’ll bake a nice cake for us to eat later, uhm? How does that sound?” she looks at Jungkook with one of her sweet smiles and Jimin wants to die, wants to be buried five feet deep into the ground and never come back. He can almost hear life laughing at all the inconvenient
moments it sends to land on his lap.

Jungkook seems caught in a web, nowhere to run or escape. He’s red on the cheeks and white on the mouth, so Jimin is ready to make up some excuse for him to leave quick and fast, when he hears it, perplexed, not quite believing his ears.

“Okay.” he finds Jungkook with his eyes, as if to confirm the words are indeed falling from his mouth, “I’d love to stay, mrs…?”

“Oh, you can call me Seoyeon, I don’t mind.” she brushes it off with a wave of hand. “And that’s wonderful, you boys can be on Jimin’s room while I settle everything up here!”

Jimin himself feels dumbstruck. He stares at his mother and his mouth hangs a little. “W-why are you home so early?”

She shrugs, taking some milk cartons out of the bags to put it in the fridge.

“I asked the rest of the day off. You know why... Is your brother still sleeping? Have you two eaten?”

“Yeah…” Jimin points to the two plates on the counter and his mom smiles, satisfied.

“Okay, then, I’ll clean this mess now, you two can go.”

He nods, and starts walking to his room with a stomach tied up in knots, like he might throw up at any moment. Jungkook follows him wordlessly, and when Jimin shuts his door, and they’re both alone in his bedroom, he can't believe it.

“Why did you do that?!?”

He doesn't answer at first, letting his backpack fall on the ground with a thud and rolling his head back with closed eyes, as if he hates what he did just as much as Jimin.

“I don’t know. She must already hate me from that picture of us.”

Jimin snorts irritated. “Why do you even care what she thinks of you? It’s not like you’re gonna be a constant here anyway.”

He gets no answer to that. Instead, Jungkook walks to his window and stares outside. “Should we continue from where we left?”

Jimin throws himself back on his bed. “No, thank you. You’re an asshole in the end and I’m just not up for it.”

Jungkook sighs. “You just said things that really pissed me off.” he tries to excuse. Like he always does.

Jimin raises his body on his elbows to look at him. “Yeah? Like what? Where did I lie?”

The boy remains to avoid eye contact with him, running his fingers over the window frame as if a way to distract himself. “I hate when people assume shit about me.”

“It’s not assuming when you give reason to believe.”

“Yeah, whatever. Sorry... You’re right. You can ask whatever you want.”
Jimin feels the words being swept out of his tongue.

Did Jungkook really just apologize and relented in giving him the answers he wants?

“Do you mean it?”

“Yeah...”

Jimin nods, weakly, still stunned, and sits upright, scooting back until he can lean on the headboard, letting enough space on the bed if Jungkook feels like sitting down. “You haven't answered my first question yet.”

But although Jungkook told him he could ask anything, he seems uncomfortable to answer it. He rubs the back of his neck, eyes drifting from a place to another as if trying to form coherent sentences to leave his mouth.

“We... I don't know. I never interacted on a daily basis with people I hung out. It was awkward, I guess I panicked.”

Jimin narrows his eyes at him, the story really bad explained. “So your way out was pretending you never knew me at all?”

He uses his nails to scratch his nape this time. “I guess, yeah...”

“I don't believe you.” Jungkook looks up, finally meeting his eyes, a little bewildered at the statement. “The first time you fucked up you also used this ‘I don't know how to deal with people’ card on me and it was fine back then, but I don't buy it now.” The younger remains to look at him with his open wide eyes, shocked by Jimin’s words. He doesn't know if he’s pushing too much, but he just wants the truth. Is that too much to ask? “Come on, you said you’d answer me...”

Jungkook, then, looks away, sighing and seeming even more troubled than before. “I don't know how to tell you this...” Jimin frowns, curious, but doesn't interrupt. “I don't lie when I say I don't really know how to deal with some things, but also... I was meaning to talk to you. At school. You didn't really see me before that day at the cafeteria, but I did. I didn't really know what to do or say, so I was a little troubled, but then I... bumped into some guys and overheard them talk about... you.” Jimin frown grows deeper, yet he still lets Jungkook follow with his story, his curiosity getting the best of him. “They... were kind of... saying how you’re known by the guys for sleeping around a lot and... all that... not really bothering with the people you hang out with and... how if you were a girl you’d be—” Jimin sucks in the air to his lungs, knowing full well how that sentence ends. “No, sorry, that’s not important. Anyway, I thought maybe I’d be a burden to you, and I was scared you wouldn't remember me either, so I just...”

“Did it first?” Jimin completes for him.

Jungkook goes silent, swallowing his last words. He doesn’t meet Jimin’s eyes, not once, guilt washing over his features. Jimin is so mad he can’t form any words for a while. He is trying to process the informations while his heart rate picks up accordingly, his face flushing in humiliation, shame, anger, all of it.

“You're really one to talk about assuming shit about people.” he cuts the air suddenly, unable to look away from Jungkook. He’s hoping, wanting he reciprocates just so this time he can know how bad he hurt him. “Hearing the hets from school call me a whore and clinging onto it like it’s life depending.” Jimin laughs, shaking his head. “Leave.” he raises his voice a bit, taking a deep breath and leaning his head against the headboard, staring at Jungkook from beneath his lashes.
The younger seems lost in the middle of the room, all the fight in him when they were in the kitchen apparently gone. “What?”

“I said, leave, Jungkook.”

“But… Your mother—”

“I don’t care what you say to my mother! Just— get out of my bedroom, please.”

Jimin is kneeling close to his breaking point. He knows he is. And he fears he might crawl into it right in Jungkook’s presence, but then the boy grabs his bag from the ground and walks out of his room without another word.

Jimin doesn't cry. He closes his eyes and feels all sorts of things breaking inside of him, and it hurts so much, but he doesn't cry. Has no tears left to. At least not for him, not anymore.

Jimin spends his week taking care of himself. He gets back on track for his skincare routine. He makes a meals’ list for the week, wanting to reach the end of it having ate everything accordingly. He wants to get into a healthy diet. One that won’t make him feel like failing for eating a single meal at day. He takes care of his hair too, applying creams and making massages that provides a new glow, new softness to it. He moisturizes his lips, and starts exercising.

It’s almost like he can feel his cells transforming into new ones, as he becomes a better version of himself. Things are still hard as ever, but at least he attempts to pull through. And it’s the small victories that count in the end.

He takes a day of the week to update Taehyung. About everything. Well, almost. He still leaves the Jungkook part out of it. They spend nearly five hours on the phone, and it’s insane how much Jimin misses listening to his voice on a regular basis. Taehyung promises to drop by his house in the weekend and Jimin feels thrilled at the information. It’s true that he’s enjoying his time by himself, but Taehyung’s presence around him just has its way of making him feel lighter, somehow.

Jihyun starts taking therapy. Their parents take him twice a week and Jimin almost feels impelled to ask for his mother to set an appointment for him too — feels like he could use some professional help himself. But he doesn’t look forward for the questions that will rise from it, as to why he needs therapy, so he simply shoves the idea to the back of his head.

He advances a whole lot on his studies and manages to both catch up on the subjects he needed and also not be left behind on the new material the teachers provide during the week.

It’s almost like he needed this break to get back on track.

He doesn’t speak to or see Jungkook since their fight. Nor he wishes to. He just doesn’t feel like indulging into this kind of problematic cycle they’re creating. Of course, Jimin would be lying if he says he doesn’t think about him. But he tries his best not to make it become a habit.

By friday, Eunbi calls him, and he sighs in relief when her voice speaks through the phone. He’s been messaging her from time to time the last few days, but she has been so busy with her new job
that they’ve barely had any time to properly talk.

“Yo.” she drops casually, “What you doin’?”

“Facemask.”

“Uhh, getting fancy, alright.”

Jimin laughs. “What is it?”

“Let’s go out.”

He raises an eyebrow. “Where to?”

“I’ll take you to meet my work place.”

He suddenly sits upright on his bed, excited. “Really??”

Eunbi chuckles on the other side of the line. “Yeah. Get ready, okay? I’ll pick you up in twenty.”

“Okay!”

They hang up and Jimin thrums with excitement. He’s never been to a tattoo parlor before. He wants to get a tattoo so bad. He wonders if Eunbi would really do it for him once he turns 21. Or if maybe he could get one before with his mom’s formal permission.

“Hey mom!” he appears by her room after he’s taken off his mask. She’s in bed, watching some show on the tv. “Eunbi is coming by to take me to meet the place she works. Is that okay with you?”

She nods with a smile. “Yeah, go ahead, get a little of fresh air.”

“Thanks, love you!”

“Love you too, baby.”

Jimin runs back to his room, picking up something to wear. It’s dumb, but he doesn’t wanna look like a nerd, or a weeb when he gets there. He dresses one of his ripped jeans and throws a white shirt on top of it. It’s not too much and neither too little, so he nods to his reflection on the mirror and goes to find his shoes. He’s putting them on when his phone buzzes beside him with Eunbi’s message that she’s outside.

“I’m going!” he yells while making his way out.

“Take care!” his mom yells to him in return.

Jimin closes the door behind him and gets into her car, parked on the sidewalk.

She eyes his appearance as soon as he sits down, holding back a side smile. “This is, like, your best pants. Did you really dress up for this?”

Jimin blushes. “Shut up and drive.”

She laughs, starting the car. “You’re cute.”

They talk all the way while the radio plays some random background music for them. Jimin tells
her all the major things he’s missed to tell by message and she listens carefully as she always does.
She doesn’t say much, but she doesn’t have to. Jimin just needs a shoulder to lean on and to let it
all out from time to time.

When they finally reach the parlor, he smiles wide beside her.

“I really want a tattoo.” he states, probably for the tenth time as they get off the car and make their
way into the place.

“Yeah, I would never imagine!” she says sarcastically, pushing the glass doors open with a
shoulder. Jimin rolls his eyes.

The inside walls of the studio are decorated with all types of arts that leave Jimin’s mouth hanging.
Blast of colours, black and white ones, monochromes. Flowers, people, symbols, butterflies, skulls
adorned with flowers, stars, constellations, everything. He even recognizes some of Eunbi’s
drawings on the wall, which fills his chest with pride. The place looks really clean and
professional, all neat and well kept.

A guy smaller than Eunbi suddenly comes out from one of the rooms in the back. He has light
blonde hair, and both his arms are covered in black tattoos only. Jimin almost has to do a backtrack
to how handsome he is. Eunbi notices his state and elbows him slightly. “Keep it in your pants,
he’s taken.”

Jimin scoffs, offended, but doesn’t comment further on it. He couldn’t really deny a thing.

“Hey, Yoongi!” she calls and the man walks up to them, “This is my little brother, Jimin.”

“Hey you.” Yoongi smiles, giving Jimin a warm nod, to which he mimics.

“Hi! Is this place yours?”

The man chuckles. “Yeah, I wish. Our boss doesn’t stay around much.”

“Yeah, thankfully. She’s not like a pain in the ass, but it’s also nice to stay here without the ‘boss
presence’ y’know.” Eunbi complements and Jimin hums. “Let’s go, I’ll show you around.” she
pats his shoulder and Jimin waves to Yoongi, who waves back, smiling with the corner of his
mouth.

God, he’s really pretty.

They go to her room and Jimin absolutely marvels on it. It’s small, but already so her that Jimin
can’t help but smile. She has a portfolio she uses to present her art to her clients and Jimin listens to
everything she says with loving eyes. It’s so cute the way her eyes glisten while she rambles
endlessly about everything in the shop, even the tiniest things, like the coffee machine. It’s obvious
she’s happier than ever and Jimin can’t ask for anything else, even if that means she has less time
to spend with him. As long as she’s happy, and smiling like that, he’s satisfied.

When they go back to the entrance of the shop, there’s a guy leaning on the reception desk with a
phone in his hands, probably showing the design of the tattoo he wants and Jimin narrows his eyes
at him, the features picking at a memory inside his brain, before it hits him.

“Hoseok-hyung!” he calls and the man looks up, confused, searching for the source of the voice,
until his eyes land on Jimin’s face. He frowns a little, as if trying to recall who Jimin is and then
his whole face lightens up, exactly as he remembers from the party.
“Hey! Jimin!”

Jimin walks up to him with the widest smile on his face. He completely forgot about the eccentric duo he met that night in the middle of all the chaos that unwinded. Hoseok excuses himself to the guy that was attending him for a second to which he simply shakes his head as if it’s no problem.

“If it’s not the best non-professional dancer I’ve ever met! You completely ditched us, man…” Hoseok teases him, but Jimin’s heart sink a little with guilt.

“I didn’t, I’m so sorry! Things just kind of… crashed in my life, and I just couldn’t remember of reaching out, sorry…”

“Hey, it’s alright. You can still drop by the studio any day you want!”

“Really? Do you mean it?!?”

“Of course!”

“Is monday a good day?”

“It’s perfect! I’ll send you the address. Jin will love to see you again, he couldn’t stop talking about how talented you were the other day.”

Jimin smiles only grows wider.

“Jin? Seokjin?” Eunbi speaks behind him, and Hoseok’s eyes raise up to her, interested. “As in Namjoon’s brother?”

Hoseok tilts his head a little, a different kind of smile blossoming on his lips. “Yeah, that one.”

“Who’s Namjoon?” Jimin looks back at his sister, confused.

“Yoongi’s boyfriend.”

“Oh.” he lets out surprised. So he’s gay. “Ah, sorry, Hoseok-hyum, this is my older sister, Eunbi.”

Eunbi points to Hoseok’s phone with her chin, completely ignoring Jimin. “You’re here for a tattoo?”

“Yeah, why?”

“I work here, so I could be the one to do it for you. Let me see.”

Hoseok gives her his phone and as she analyzes the picture Jimin can clearly see him checking her out. He has to hold back a laugh. He can’t believe he’s in the middle of this.

“That’s pretty.” she returns the phone to him. “I could make a nice version of it for you.”

“Really? Thank you! That’d be awesome! Besides… I’d love to have a pretty face like yours to distract me from the pain, y’know.”

Jimin almost chokes on his own spit. He excuses himself and walks up to Yoongi who’s having some coffee while leaning on the reception desk, observing the interaction as well.

“Couldn’t handle all the flirting?” Yoongi asks him, a little smile tugging the corner of his lips. It seems he’s used to smiling like that a lot.
“I can handle some flirt just fine, but that was just awful.” Yoongi laughs beside him. “I mean it, I almost gagged. Poor Hoseok-hyung. Eunbi’s about to crash him.”

“Dunno…” the older states, “She seems to be into it.”

Jimin looks back at the two of them, and he laughs incredulously at how right Yoongi is. He has never seen Eunbi blush before. “Oh boy…” is all he can say as he shakes his head and proceeds to observe the two of them.

"Jimin’s return to school comes in the after morning where he and Taehyung spent the whole night watching a stupid tv show. When his alarm rings, he turns it off growling. But then a minute later Taehyung’s one goes off, and the guy sleeps like a rock. Jimin’s ears are buzzing, so he kicks him on the shin.

“Turn this off!” he practically roars, but Taehyung remains motionless. “Son of a—”

The door of his bedroom opens and reveals his mother, with all the light of the hallway behind her burning Jimin’s eyes. “Hello sleeping beauties. Get up, I’m gonna drop you boys off at school.”

Jimin rolls on his back. “Don’t wanna. I’m on a break.”

She chuckles. “The good life is over. Up in five or I’ll splash you both with freezing water.”

And she leaves just like that. Jimin sits up begrudgingly and slaps Taehyung’s ass, who groans irritatedly.

“What do you want from me?” he mumbles against the pillow.

“I’m up so you’re up too. C’mon. You made us stay up late so you’re not sleeping a minute longer than I am.”

Eventually the both of them manage to get up and somewhat get dressed. It’s a rather cold morning, so Jimin simply throws a hoodie over his uniform and cards his fingers through his hair to undo the knots. He bathed before going to sleep, so he gets ready pretty fast while Taehyung lasts a lifetime inside the bathroom. By the time he comes out, Jimin has already finished his breakfast.

Jihyun is the last one of them to come out of the bedroom. He looks terrible, but he’s pulling through and that’s all that matters. Their mother fixes his hair lovingly, before they all take off.

Jimin spends the entire ride with his earphones playing soft music as he stares outside the window. He’s nibbling on his lips, knowing full well he’s nervous to see Jungkook. They haven’t exchanged a single word the entire week, and Taehyung seems to have picked up on it, because he doesn’t bring the boy up once. Jimin is both thankful and a little bitter. He can’t help be curious. Are they talking? Has Jungkook told him they fought? He wouldn’t, right? He swallows all the questions. He shouldn’t care. Jungkook hurt him for good this time.

He never thought the reason he avoided Jimin was because he believed he was some kind of slut. What kind of twisted reality was that? He thinks back to all the times Jungkook acted out of his
figure towards him. Thinks back to what he told him when he was going out with Jinyoung. “Sure, hurry up. I bet your oh so important commitment of today can’t wait to get you on your knees.”

Jimin knew he could be just as arrogant as all the boys he hated, but he never thought he could reach that point. He must have some sort of chronic bad luck in picking love interests.

Seoyeon drops them off at the school’s gates and he has to physically force himself to not look out for him. He and Taehyung walk Jihyun to his classroom, and Jimin hugs him tentatively before letting him in.

“He’s going to be fine.” Taehyung tells him, as he wraps one arm around his shoulders.

“I know he will.” Jimin snuggles closer, leaning his head against his chest. He has gotten taller. “He’s my brother, after all.”

They don’t bump into Jungkook in the hallways. They don’t have any class with him that day. They don’t find him in the cafeteria either. When their last class is close to finishing Jimin can’t hold it in any longer.

“Have you talked with Jungkook the last few days?”

“Not really.” Taehyung shrugs as he does his last annotations. “He’s been avoiding me. Doesn’t answer my texts properly.”

Jimin tries masking his surprise. “Oh… Really?”

“Yeah. I think he’s going through a hard time. Wanna drop off by his house today?”

He sucks in a breath, picking at his shirt. “Ah… Not really…”

“It’s okay, I can go. I’ve been kinda worried too. Haven’t you two talked last week?”

Jimin shifts his gaze. “We’re not that close, y’know.”

Taehyung simply gazes, letting the matter to die with the silence.

The whole classroom is ready to go home, only awaiting for the clock to hit 12pm, when one of their classmates gets up to make an announcement. “Good morning, everyone. I know you’re dying to go home just as much as I am, but please pay attention to me for just a minute, I promise I’ll be quick. So, since this is our last year, me and some other classmates were considering all of us going on a trip to celebrate it properly! Some people suggested us to make it by the end of the year, but we discussed and decided it’s better we go this month since we’re planning to head to Jeju and we might as well make use of this good weather. We talked with the principal and after a lot of convincing, he gave us permission and said he’d be responsible of the train tickets and all that. Anyway, we’ll share with you all about the prices soon, but it’s probably going to last five days, or a week at most. We’ll be passing a list, so please sign your name if you’re interested. That’s all, thank you.”

Jimin bites his bottom lip, thoughtfully. Taehyung is already bouncing on his place at the news, pulling at Jimin’s arm as he talks all about how amazing it’d be to travel together. All Jimin can think about is how much a trip to Jeju for a week must cost. Probably a lot.

“I don’t know if my mom can afford it, Tae. Also, I don’t know if it’s the best moment, with this Jihyun thing and all.”
His best friend stops jumping in place for a minute. “What are you talking about? It’s the perfect moment. You need to relax, and unwind a little. And as for your mom thing, I can help you pay it. C’mon, it’d be so fun.” he resumes to cling on Jimin’s arm again, shaking him like a nagging child.

“Yes, no way, I’m not letting you spend money on me in something like that. I can see if my dad pays it.”

Taehyung rolls his eyes. “Whatever you say, but we’re going. Even if I have to make an anonymous donation to your mom’s bank account.”

Jimin hits him on the shoulder, laughing. “You try, shithead.”

The grey clouds have left the sky by the time Jimin arrives at the dance studio Hoseok addressed him. He went home and changed clothes, not knowing what to expect. Would they dance, would they ask Jimin to dance with them, would they just show him around? Could he dance there when he wasn’t a student? He carries a lot of questions on his back, but when Seokjin spots him on the waiting room and cracks the widest smile in his direction, Jimin already knows he can’t be more welcome. The older man hugs him, even though they barely know each other, and he floods Jimin with his quick way of speaking loudly and laughing even louder. It’s endearing, at the same time as it leaves no room for awkward silences. They meet Hoseok in an empty room, and he and Seokjin decide to show Jimin the academy before they start their routine.

“Am I gonna watch?” Jimin clamps his hands together in excitement.

“Do you think you came all the way here to watch?” Seokjin laughs, shaking his head.

“Are you kidding me?” Hoseok kicks in, “Boy, you’re gonna dance!”

All the practice rooms are big and spacious, always sporting two mirror walls that make Jimin’s jaw drop. He’s always dreamed to watch himself when he dances and in a room like that he’d be able to catch every angle. They introduce Jimin to same students, and Jimin blushes, shy, hoping he isn’t intruding in anything.

When it’s finally the hour they start practicing, he’s almost thrumming. He always knew he loved dancing, but he wasn’t aware he loved this much.

It’s soothing how easily Jimin fits in. Hoseok says they’re gonna start nice and easy for him after stretching and when the song finally sweeps into the room, Jimin just feels like he belongs. He doesn’t dare say he masters the first set of steps, but Seokjin does, and he doesn’t shut up about it, stroking Jimin’s ego so much he feels like he’s going to burst.

They stay at it the entire afternoon, pushing themselves over their limits and bonding over the dance. When it’s almost the time the studio closes, they crash on the ground, sweating till their fingertips and running out of air. Jimin has never felt more complete before, more in tune with himself.

He walks home that night feeling like he could take the world in the palm of his hands.
The following days are dull compared to Jimin’s blissful monday. Actually, if he’s being honest, everything seems kinda full after he took that dance class with Hoseok and Seokjin. He thinks back on it a lot, and even practices the choreography they learned by himself, in his bedroom. He attempts mastering the steps, so the next time he meets them, they can see how much he improved.

He also studies a lot, more focused than never in getting that scholarship in Japan. He can imagine his life with Taehyung closer every day. He can imagine them walking downtown the japanese streets, laughing from the top of their lungs, probably drunk from some party they went. And then they reach their apartment, falling asleep on top of each other, in the worst way possible, but in such a them way. He can't wait for it.

Thinking about his passions and future help in keeping his mind off Jungkook. But when the clock strikes the late night hours, Jimin’s mind can't help but drift.

He’s not going to school — at least, neither Jimin or Taehyung have seen him for the entire week. And he’s not home either, as Taehyung checked twice. A small part of Jimin is terrified that he might have left, flown away with his parents and disappeared without a trace. But the biggest part of him is too prideful to send a message. To reach out. And he knows he’s not in the wrong. Maybe if Jungkook vanished from his life it’d be better. Maybe that’s how it was supposed to happen. That's what he’s used to do anyway. Maybe the detached version of him Jimin mentioned is the original one. Maybe he found his way into Jimin’s life simply to teach him a lesson.

But if so, why does it sting so bad the possibility of never seeing him again? Of never hearing his smooth-playful kind of voice in his best boyish way? Of never again seeing his eyes crinkle in the corner when he smiles so bright it clenches Jimin’s chest?

Something inside of him hopes dearly for Jungkook to send a message. To come running to him, and apologize in the middle of the night like he did the first time. A memory just for the two of them to cherish.

But would Jimin take him if he did?

Probably not.

He’s stuck in this kind of sick maze where he’s pulled by his emotions with the strings around his body yet has no idea where they take him. He doesn't want to forgive Jungkook — feels like he can't —, but he also doesn't want him away from him.

Is he too selfish?

The dream comes to him like a venomous snake crawling inside his veins.

Jungkook is behind him, arms secured around his waist, while his mouth works like magic on his nape. Nibbling, kissing, dragging his lips on the skin as Jimin’s ones fall open, a silent moan drawn in their shape.

“You’re so beautiful.” Jungkook tells him, and it's cruel how real it sounds.

He turns Jimin on his arms, pulling him close to him and attaching their lips together, kissing him hard and deep, as if they’re in love. Jimin clings on him, hands tight on his shoulders, scared he might disappear does he loosens.
He feels his throat closing.

“Come back to me.” he mumbles against the kiss, panting, kissing Jungkook never an experience he can get used to.

“I’m here.” Jungkook whispers to him, holding his face like Jimin means everything to him. “I’m here.”

He wakes up in cold sweat, heart beating high in his chest while the knot in his throat thrums with it. He looks around, disoriented, and feels his eyes warm with tears. Wiping them away, he turns around on the bed and pulls the blankets closer as if they can protect him from the heartbreak.

Taehyung is fucking restless about the trip thing. Jimin sees himself in a dead end street when the same girl who announced the trip sets a final date for the first half of the payment.

He carefully approaches his mom about it one afternoon, having told Taehyung he absolutely won’t insist if she says no. Only he and Jihyun know how much she struggles and works hard to sustain the three of them.

But he has the most loving mom in the world and she can't say no to him. Perhaps that's why Jimin didn't want to ask, because he knew she would say yes even if she had to take double shifts to afford it. He tells her he'll message his father too, so he can give half of it and it'll be less demanding for her. She simply nods and hugs him, saying he deserves to live all the great moments.

When his father answers him with a smiling face emoji and a thumbs up Jimin messages Taehyung, rolling his eyes with a smile on his face, knowing exactly how he’ll react.

The boy answers instantly, keysmashing his way throughout the next thirteen messages and Jimin laughs to himself a little. He knew it.

“Won’t you message him?” Jimin blurts for probably the tenth time that day at Taehyung, who is miraculously still handling him with patience.

He barely looks up from his paper. They’re studying together at the younger’s house. “I already did a thousand times. He doesn't answer me. Why don't you try?”

Jimin lets out a ‘tch’. “What makes you think he’s gonna answer me when he doesn't answer you?” he points out and Taehyung seems to have a reason behind his words, but he simply shrugs and doesn't answer. “Can't you try a more urgent tone? Like ‘where are you, I need you now’?”

Taehyung finally drops the attention from his assignment, looking Jimin in the eyes. “Chim, I went to his house like four times. There’s nothing more urgent than that.”
“What if he’s gone?” Jimin throws what’s been eating his insides for a while and Taehyung’s lips curl downwards a bit. Jimin can see he’s upset for Jungkook’s suddenly disappearance too, but he’s trying not to show. Taehyung gets attached fast, Jimin knows he must be missing him a lot.

“I thought you didn't like him that much.”

Jimin juts his mouth in a stubborn pout, eyes falling to his pencil hitting the table in a nervous quirk. “I’m just curious.”

“Maybe something happened in his family.”

He bites the inside of his lip. Jungkook wouldn't go away just because of what happened between them, right? It must have something to do with his family.

“Yeah, maybe.”

Jimin pays one more visit to the dance studio on the day before the Jeju trip. If possible, the experience is even better than the last time. He dances for the Hoseok and Seokjin, showing how he perfected the choreo they learned the last time, and by the time he’s over, they’re clapping so hard and letting out all types of ‘woahhhh’ that Jimin has to hide his giggles before a fist.

“You’re seriously so good... Like… So good… You should join us.” Seokjin tells him.

He blushes on the tip of his ears, and scratches his cheek a little, suddenly timid. “Ahhh… I don’t know…”

“What? Why not?” Hoseok turns to face him, wiping his sweat with a towel.

Jimin averts his gaze. The thing is, they’re college students. They practice at the dance studio to master their movements, get better at their specialty, because they plan to make a living out of it. But not Jimin. His plan is to go to Japan with Taehyung, to study something that’ll manage him success enough so he can give his mother everything she wants. He wants to make enough money to give her the life she deserves and he doesn't know if he can pursue that with dancing.

“Just… Maybe it’s not the right time, things are crazy as it is with just school.”

Seokjin sighs longingly by his side. “Ah, high school… But you’re right, though, you should focus on your studies.” he pats Jimin’s back and he hates how much of a kid he feels, “But think about it, you’d definitely take big things out of dancing.”

He nods, appreciating their concern, but keeps his worries to himself.

When he arrives home he has all the packing he procrastinated the entire week to do. They’re going to be spending five days in Jeju, which in Jimin’s opinion is a lot, but he’s staying six days out of home since it takes 12 hours to get there by train. Taehyung has been incessantly talking about this trip for as long as Jimin can remember and, honestly, he’d be annoyed if it wasn't so endearing. They have never traveled together and he’s so excited he can't keep it to himself. Jimin puts up with all his antics, jumping around with him and planning their days ahead with as much enthusiasm as he can manage.
He packs everything neatly, and makes a list so he doesn't forget anything. It’s sunny so his mom shows up in his bedroom about five times to ask if he’s taking protection — which he said he was, inwardly promising to himself he’d pack it in the end, but almost forgot last minute. Once he has everything inside his bag, he takes a shower and messages Taehyung before instantly falling asleep.

The alarm goes off at 6 in the morning, and Jimin can't even spare himself a five minute bonus, since the train takes off by seven. He drags his feet to the bathroom, muscles working similar to a sloth’s as he brushes his teeth and puts on some clothes. His mom goes full mode on breakfast for him and even prepares some snacks, to which Jimin is grateful for. It’s a long ride and he’s working really hard on his bad habits towards eating, taking at least a fruit every four hours, never allowing his stomach to go empty. He’s put on a little more weight, but he trains his mind to focus on how his thighs are thicker or how his ass is bigger. In fact, he likes this path of thoughts so much he’s learnt how to spend a good amount of time in front of the mirror admiring the parts of his body he likes — his ass definitely the top winner.

His mother drops him off at the station twenty minutes early and spends half of it showering him with kisses and warnings of all the things he should take care of.

“Don't stay out in the sun too much.” she says, both hands over Jimin’s cheeks, making sure he pays attention to every word. It’s funny, because she’s smaller than him, so Jimin has to bent his knees a little so they can be eye level. “And eat well. Drink lots of water. Don't go out without your teachers. Don't get lost. Sleep early.” Jimin starts laughing.

“Mom, I’m 18, not a 3 years old kid.”

“Oh my god, you’re 18...” she places a hand over her chest, a dramatic crying voice and face that makes Jimin throw his head back laughing. “How did you grow up so fast...”

“Aish...” he cradles the back of her head with a hand, pulling her close for a hug, “Okay, okay, I have to go now, Taehyung is probably late and we’ll get the worst seats.”

“Okay. Message me as soon as you get there! I love you.” she pulls him down so she can kiss his forehead, and Jimin does the same to her in return.

“I love you too.”

He waves her goodbye, and waits until her car takes off so he enters the train.

He can't see Taehyung anywhere and also seems there’s no two-seats empty for them anymore, so he snorts annoyed. They’re not gonna sit together and Taehyung should already be there by now. It’s also weird how he hasn't texted him at all, so Jimin pulls his phone and calls him.

He picks up at the fourth ring, crestfallen voice on the other end of the line nothing like Jimin expected to hear. “Hi...”

“What's wrong, where are you?” he blurts out, nervous. He can already feel his heart rate picking up.

Taehyung stays silent for what it seems like forever, until he finally sighs, and drops on Jimin’s lap:

“At the hospital...”

He inhales deeply.
“What?!”

“I-I… I’m food poisoned…”

Jimin tries his best not to panic in the middle of the train. “You’re what?!”

“I had some leftover pizza last night, but it seems it was too leftover, so I kinda of fainted this morning…” he says, and sounds really desolated, but all Jimin wants to do is scream at how irresponsible he is. What is he supposed to do now? Endure this trip all by himself?!

“I’m going to kill you.”

“I’m sorry.”

“I’m really going to kill you.”

“I’m really sorry.”

Jimin sighs, knowing there’s no way he can get a grasp of the situation. And as much as he’s annoyed and terrified, Taehyung is in the hospital. “How are you?”

“They say I have to stay hospitalised for at least three days, so they can be sure I won’t faint again… Jimin-ah, I’m really sorry…”

He bites on his bottom lip, looking around. He’s not really close to anyone so what is he supposed to do? He can’t go back home after all the money his parents spent. “It’s okay.” It’s really not, but there's nothing they can do and Jimin realizes Taehyung must also feel terrible just by himself. He doesn't need Jimin’s judgements on top of it all. “I can survive on my own.”

“I know you can, but I really wanted to go…”

“Hey, it’s okay. We can travel together on the next break. Don't worry about it, focus in getting better quickly.”

“Okay…”

“I have to go find a seat now.” Jimin says, observing how his options had shortened a lot in the small amount of time he lost standing in the middle of the train talking to Taehyung, all the window seats definitely taken. He wishes he could go back home so bad. “I'll message you when I get there.”

“Send me all the pictures.”

“Noted.”

Jimin hangs up, anxiety high in his throat as he walks further into the train, trying not to feel out of place as he watches all his classmates indulge in easy conversation with each other. Seems like everyone from their grade went, because Jimin sees kind of unknown faces that must definitely be from another classes.

He finally spots an empty seat beside a boy swallowed by his oversized grey hoodie. Walking closer while observing the bridge of his nose — mindlessly looking out the window —, when he is suddenly struck by it, halting his movements.

He sucks in a breath, feeling trapped in a sort of a weird deja vu, remembering the same situation happened in the bus.
He stands there like an idiot, simply staring at him, wondering if he’s not hallucinating his pretty face, until Jungkook feels the stare burning and looks back at him.

His eyes widen, like he couldn't expect Jimin’s presence just as much as Jimin couldn't expect his.

“Everyone sit down and make sure to put your belts!” A teacher yells from behind him and Jimin stupidly flushes.

He rushes to put his bag on the luggage rack, and plops down beside Jungkook wordlessly, struggling with his belt, which only results in his skin heating up more, embarrassed that his fingers keep getting in the way while Jungkook’s stare linger on him. He can feel it.

Once he’s done, the urge to reciprocate is gnawing inside him, so he turns his face to him.

The younger recoils a little at the proximity, bottom lip caught between his teeth. Jimin can’t help but stare. “Do… Do you want me to change seats?”

It’s what he asks and Jimin takes a while to process it — distracted, lost. Hazed.

“What?”

Jungkook motions with his fingers to the seats in the back. “If you’re uncomfortable… I can…”

His frown deepens. “What? No, I… I was the one to sit here.”

Jungkook releases a breath, nodding to himself and turning to keep his eyes at his front. “Okay…”

Jumin swallows a knot as a wave of thoughts consume him.

The train takes off and he is having troubles breathing, trying to disguise it playing with his fingers, distracting himself watching the people around them — talking, laughing —, yet still all he hears are his heartbeats faster than ever, loud, as Jungkook’s profile never leave the corner of his sight.

Jumin leans his head back on the seat. He’s right here. Right next to him. After thinking he was gone, for never to be seen again, never to be heard of. Jungkook is right beside him, and will be for more twelve excruciating hours. He gulps in once again.

He’s dreamed about him again the last couple days. Wasn’t able of keeping him away from his mind when his body was seeming to exude all the signals of abstinence. Jimin’s already so given, dipped till his last hair strand, and it doesn’t matter how much strength he pours into swimming back to the surface, he’s drowned.

“Where have you been?” he questions suddenly, startling the younger and himself, never expecting his voice to come out at all.

“What do you mean?”

“You… disappeared.” he elaborates shyly, “Where were you?”

Jungkook seems distressed in answering, averting his eyes back to the scenery outside the window. “I… changed classes.”

Jimin blinks back at him, shell-shocked. “What?”

“Yeah…” he mumbles, scratching his cheek, slightly going pink. Jimin has never quite seen him like this before. He’s so shaken off by the information that he almost ignores how his heart tugs at
hearing Jungkook’s voice again, after he thought he’d never be able to anymore.

“Wh… Why…?”

The younger doesn't answer to that, simply sinks deeper on his seat as if he wants to disappear. Jimin is unarmed from everything about this situation.

Jungkook looks nothing like the Jungkook who broke his heart a thousand times over. He looks… softer, red on the cheeks with his hair falling over his eyes in weak curls. And the fact he’s acting all shy and quiet does nothing to ease the stupid butterflies in Jimin’s stomach.

“Jungkook…” Jimin calls again, “Why?”

He sighs resignedly by his side. “I didn’t want you… to keep seeing and interacting with me, so you’d keep remembering... what I told you…” he confesses and Jimin feels lightheaded.

“You stopped talking to Taehyung…” it’s the first thing that comes to his mind, and he hates how he knows exactly why.

Jungkook winces a little at the comment. “Yeah…”

“But you…” he tries to avoid using the word love, a stab on his own chest. “…adore him.”

“Yeah…” Jungkook repeats and turns to look into Jimin’s eyes, who has been unable to make them stare at anything that it’s not Jungkook’s profile.

He simply can't believe he’d do that for him.

He breathes, breaking the eye contact. “Um…” Jimin doesn't know how he should process this information. “You weren't home either.”

Jungkook’s comeback is quick this time around. “How do you know that?”

His cheeks burn redder as he stammers, looking around to keep the flush from spreading down. “T-Taehyung went to look for you.”

The younger is taken back. “Oh…” he sounds surprised, a little too caught in his own thoughts, “I… I was at my grandma’s.”

Jimin hates how curious he is, how is willing to make every question, understand everything about his reasons, knowing full well he’s indulging in the attention when he should be doing his best to stay away.

“Did— Did something happen? For you to… You know…”

The way Jungkook avoids Jimin’s eyes and plays with the hem of his hoodie is such a harsh contrast to the confident, arrogant side Jimin is used to witnessing that it physically hurts him. “Not really. Just thought I should give you space.”

“You… You didn’t have to…” he says, but it comes out weak, and even Jimin knows he’s lying.

Jungkook seems to know it too, because he leans his head back and gives him a look of narrowed eyes. “You know I did…”

They allow the silence to swipe between them while they stare at each other. It’s overwhelming, feels like they’re talking without words, and it almost feels a bit too intimate for them, but at the
same time, it’s just right.

Jimin is so confused.

“I didn’t…” Jungkook begins again, in the softest tone he has ever used on him and it melts his thin cloak of resistance away, “Didn’t want to just… Do everything I did the first time. The way you put it to me that day… It made me realize how fucked up what I did was… I felt like a piece of shit, honestly.” he chuckles without any sign of humor on his features, “And I felt so guilty. But I knew that apologizing like I did the first time was not what you needed. It’d just be selfish of me, a need to soothe my conscience, to tell myself I was a good person while I forced my apologies down on you, knowing you’d take them just out of politeness. Because I kind of feel this was what you did the first time too…” Jimin is taken aback on how right Jungkook is. He simply hears everything he has to say, kind of zooming out to his own memories, on how healthy he felt without Jungkook’s presence around him, nevertheless longing. Not that Jungkook was the reason making him sick, but rather the feelings Jimin was harboring towards himself because of the mindset he was creating for their relationship… It was toxic. “But…” Jungkook continues, fidgeting around the issue, “I know I still owe you an apology, so… I’m really sorry, Jimin. I mean it. I just… I thought a lot about everything that happened between us and I feel like an asshole.” he chuckles a little, lowly. “Actually I asked my nana for advice and she called me an asshole, so… But, anyway… Really… I know I projected my assumptions on you in the way I acted and, just… I’m sorry. You don’t need to accept it, or actually forgive me or anything, I just want you to know.”

Jimin takes a moment to simply allow his air to flow in and out of his system, soothing his nerves, his erratic heart. Everything is just too much and too sudden for him to deal with. He wishes he could get some fresh air. “I… Uhm, that’s… a lot to take…” he confesses, throwing his head back a little.

“Yeah, sorry. You can pretend I’m not here the rest of the way, I don’t mind.”

“No, I…” Jimin doesn’t know why he rejects the offer, “I just… Never expected this, honestly.”

“To be honest, I didn’t expect to meet you here either. I mean…” he starts correcting himself, “I kind of guessed you and Taehyung would come, but… It’s just you.” Jimin tries not to read too much into his words, knows it’s exactly his sense of inferiority that messes with his mind, “Where is he, by the way?”

Jimin sighs relieved, finally a neutral topic for them to talk about. “He got sick.”

“Oh, really?” Jungkook exclaims, worried, “What happened?”

Jimin shakes his head. “He’s just stupid, he got food poisoned for eating old pizza. And now I’m here.”

The younger clicks his lips. “Sucks…” he seems like he wants to say more, but chooses to remain quiet.

“And you…?” Jimin asks, tentatively.

If he’s being the most honest, he never expected Jungkook to show up. And yet, here he is, like a comic irony from destiny.

“I made some friends in my new class, so they convinced me to come. I was also hoping to see you, so I could… Say all the things I just said, but like… Not here.” he laughs a little and Jimin’s heart definitely does not take a leap at his words and smile.
He laughs along with him just so it’s not awkward, but, truly, he’s dying inside.

“Yeah, definitely not here…” Jimin looks around, feeling this conversation couldn’t have picked a worst place to happen. All the loud noise coming from the excited teenagers around them. Yeah, definitely not it. “You should text Taehyung…’’ Jimin says all of a sudden, “He’s been really missing you.”

Jungkook nods, and swallows thickly, making Jimin frown at the way his lips part open and then close, as if he can’t decide whether to ask something or not. “Have… Have you… told him… about, uhm, us?”

He curls his fists, something about the word ‘us’ managing to steal the breath away from his lungs. “Ah, not… Not really.”

Jungkook hums, and Jimin can’t read what’s on his expression. “Okay, so I should… Probably make something up, right?”

He bites his lips, guilty on being the reason he pulled them apart and even guiltier at the fact his chest swells with something akin to euphoria knowing Jungkook made him his priority. “Yeah… We were… kind of thinking something happened in your family, so maybe… Something along those lines and he’ll believe it.”

“Got it…” Jungkook nods, “I’ll message him later.”

Jimin doesn’t necessarily enjoy the prospect of lying to Taehyung, but he enjoys it even less telling him the truth, knowing Jungkook might have feelings for him. He’d just feel dumb, for Taehyung to know he’s sort of in love with Jungkook while being aware it’s not mutual. What if Jungkook confessed one day? He’d be so humiliated.

He closes his eyes, and feels grateful that Jungkook doesn’t say anything else. He needs time to process everything and try to sort out his feelings the best he can. And he can’t get that with the constant reminder that the boy is right next to him, so he plugs in his earphones, leans his head back, and indulges in the introspective thoughts he’s been needing to for a long while.

He falls asleep without meaning to, and when he wakes up, he’s sitting alone.

Rubbing his eyes, heart racing at the possibility of having dreamed all of it, Jimin looks around, stretching his back so he can have a better look of the seats behind him. He catches sight of Jungkook walking back to where he is, and it’s pathetic how he releases a breath of relief.

“Were you looking out for me?” Jungkook nudges, a knowing smirk tugging his mouth as he passes by to sit next to him.

Jimin denies without a second thought, sitting upright in a way too straight posture. “Nope.”

“Aw, don’t be shy.” he teases a little and Jimin scoffs. The younger chuckles behind his fist.

“I was looking for the food.”

“It’s 10 am.”

“…so? I’m hungry.”

Jungkook laughs. “I see. Okay…” he leans back on his seat and Jimin looks at him, doesn’t know why. Maybe he’s missed seeing his stupid pretty face for too long. “But if you’re asking yourself, I
“went to the bathroom.”

“Mhm…” Jimin tries humming uninterestedly, despite his eyes not leaving the boy’s face.

“Were you?”

“What?”

“Asking yourself.”

“No.”

“Okay.” he giggles, and it shouldn't be as cute as it is. “Why are you staring at me?”

“You look different.” Jimin confesses, scanning every little feature of his face like it’s the first time he’s seeing him.

Jungkook tilts his head back, exposing that thick neck and Jimin almost commits the mistake of letting his eyes wander. “How so?”

He doesn’t know how to answer to that. “More… soft… around the edges, maybe.”

“Mhmm…” he licks his lips, “You look different too y’know.”

Jimin’s cheeks taint in pink, like a drop of watercolor spreading through wet surface. “How?”

It doesn’t go unnoticed. Jungkook sports a small smile, his eyes very obviously staring at his cheeks. “You blush easily.” he notes.

“Yeah.” Jimin agrees, “Damn the dna.”

“'s cute.”

Jimin pinches his thigh in reprimand for his heart being so responsive to the words. Two fucking syllabes and a half, for god’s sake. “You were saying?” he presses, changing the focus of the conversation.

“You look healthier.”

“Is that your way of saying I looked sick before?”

Jungkook’s lips drop almost as if he was stabbed in the back and Jimin laughs. “I never said that... You never look sick.” Jungkook’s eyes also travel over his face, his every feature, and he feels exposed. Makes him shy. “Just... You look happier, somehow. You look like the first time I met you, actually.”

He drops on Jimin’s lap as if the whole statement doesn’t hamper him from breathing instantly.

“Oh, really?” he somehow manages to utter.

“Yeah…” and everything feels too much. From the way Jungkook is looking at him to his velvety smooth voice, all soft and exclusive for him. He can’t handle it. He watches as a small smile grows on the younger’s mouth, and his heart fails at the way he bites the bottom lip to stop it from growing wider. “You’re not easing that blush, y’know…”

Jimin’s heart tugs on the strings inside his chest, and he instantly looks away, desperate to hide his
cheeks from Jungkook, using his hands to shield it away from his vision. “Shut up.” he mumbles, “Don’t get ahead of yourself, it’s in the family.”

“I didn’t say anything…”

Jimin looks back at him accusingly.

“I can hear it all in this stupid smug of yours.” he uses his finger to point and Jungkook instantly turns the smug into a sad face, curling his lips downwards.

“You just made it sad calling it stupid.”

Jimin simply stares at him, trying to hold back his own smile. “You’re stupid too.”

And he hates to admit that Jungkook looks a lot more like the first time Jimin met him too. As if they’ve come all the way down, to finally reencounter here, in a train heading to Jeju from all places.

“Since it’s your trip, we’ll let you choose who you want to share a room with.” one of the teachers starts to speak once they arrived at the inn. “Only two people per room, and boys and girls aren’t allowed to sleep together.”

A collective chorus of disappointed sounds burst and Jimin lowers his head, fidgeting with his shirt. He hates that Taehyung is not here. What is he gonna do now? Sleep by himself? He doubts he can do that, the price would be a lot higher if he could. He gnaws at the inside of his lips, stressed. Jungkook has taken off to indulge with his friends and Jimin is dying inside, looking around to see who he could possibly share a room with. He somehow can’t trust any of the guys from his class anymore, ever since Jungkook told him his name has been rolling around between them in the most demeaning way. He spots Jinyoung in the middle of the little crowd standing on the hall of the inn and wonders if he knows anything about it. If he helped spread the rumors. Only someone who hooked up with him could’ve started this and Jimin really tried restricting his relationships with people at school. Not that he had many options being gay, but still. Some other of his past hookups catch his sight and he’s deep in thought when a bump on his shoulder startles him out of his reveries.

“Hey.” It’s Jungkook.

“Hey.” he smiles softly, a sense of relief in seeing his face amidst that chaos. Jungkook, on the other hand, looks sheepish, pushing his hair back as he avoids Jimin’s eyes.

“Uhm, do you… Do you, like… Wanna share a room with me, maybe?” Shit. Shit, shit, fuck. “It’s totally okay if you don’t want to, I understand, but like…”

The words die in his mouth.

Jimin never imagined his heart could beat so fast before.

“Won’t your friends be mad at you?” he questions, voice scratching his throat at the breathlessness.
Jungkook finally looks back at him. “Please... You’re my friend way before I even knew them.”

Jimin is the one to break the eye contact this time. He refuses to allow him redden his cheeks again. “O-oh.” Jungkook is expectantly looking at him, piercing gaze on his skin and Jimin’s insides heat on how much he wants it. “Okay.”

The younger smiles big and wide, his eyes curling prettily and it’s the most adorable sight Jimin has seen in awhile. He clutches his fingers closed behind his back.

The inn they’re hospedated is homely and cozy, as it brings together all the nostalgic feelings only a countryside lodge could. The colours inside match well, easy on the eyes, the cream walls contrasting with the dark wooden floor.

Jungkook hums a song beside him as they make way to their room.

Their room.

Feels awkward to say that.

Jimin is jittery on the inside, weak on the knees, as the younger turns the key and opens the door for them. He looks at Jimin over his shoulder with a heart-throbbing smile and says, “Don’t worry. I don’t bite. And I won’t jump on you this time either.” he casually walks into the room as Jimin remains motionless on his spot. He physically feels Jungkook taking his heart away when he spins on his heels to look at him again, the glint in his eyes way too amused at Jimin’s lack of response. “Unless you want me to...” he bites his lips, smiling the kind of smile that makes Jimin want to grab his face and kiss his mouth just to shut him up.

That’s it. He thinks, as he makes way into the room, lightheaded, feeling his lifespan be cut down by a half. This is how I die.

Chapter End Notes

here we go on boarding sexual tension and unresolved feelings yeehaw !
sdkjhkf sorry
hi guys
just wanted to take this little end note to say something real quick, like, on a heavier side note
take care of the people you love. pay attention to them. don't leave them just because you can't understand them. really. sometimes people are needing a hand to hold onto just as much as you are, so don't let your own struggles be the reason you don't take each other's hands.
we make mistakes and we're here to learn and become our best versions of ourselves so take a deep breath and believe it. you're getting better and you're not alone. it'll be alright.
merry christmas and happy new year, everyone <3
see you next year, hopefully sooner than you're expecting <3
maybe walking on jungkook shirtless won’t be the most unbearing situation Jimin will find himself in during that trip.

maybe isn’t even close to it.

But it definitely is in that night. When they are barely three hours in the inn, not even properly unpacked or settled.

They had arrived around 7 pm, right when dinner was being served. The both of them had walked together to the dining hall, where there was a buffet for them to freely delight as much as they pleased. Indulging in easy conversation, Jimin tried to shove to the back of his mind the bothersome sense of warning, firing shrilling alarms everywhere inside his head. It helped that he couldn’t hear it over all the noise of his heart beating louder and louder inside his chest.

Jungkook didn’t leave his side once. He seemed to sense Jimin’s uneasiness for being there without Taehyung, because he was putting his plate while doing his very best at maintaining their conversation going, even if that meant spilling rice out of the plate, or letting a piece of meat fall on the ground. It wasn’t until a classmate Jimin used to talk to on his first year appeared and kindly asked if he wanted to sit with her and her friend that Jungkook stopped talking. Jimin gnawed at his lips, unsure, a polite and warm smile on his eye shape. She was very kind and funny back then, but since they got different classes in their second year, they drifted out. He was exchanging looks between her and Jungkook, when the younger’s expression melted to a soft smile and Jimin’s heart went down with it.

“It’s okay, hyung, you can go.” Jimin’s eyes widened slightly at hearing Jungkook calling him hyung. He never did that. “I’ll sit with my friends.”

Jimin didn’t remember if he nodded or not, too focused on his smile.
All he remembers after this is getting in a table with his friend and another girl, who seemed pretty welcoming as well.

They made him comfortable almost instantly, taking his mind off from how displaced he felt. When they were done with their dinner, the girls called him to join on a karaoke room they had found. Jimin looked around, searching for the one pair of shining eyes, something inside him scared Jungkook would just disappear again.

He was a few tables across them — to Jimin’s biggest surprise, staring right back at him. He watched as Jungkook grew a smile only for him and tilted his head a bit, as if saying hello in the cutest language that there was to exist. Jimin couldn’t help it, he smiled back and mimicked the movement, stealing a laugh out from the younger. He pursed his lips, fighting his own chuckle and eased his erratic heart, taking the girls offer. He could use some distraction.

It went along with the popular sayings: when you were having fun, time indeed flew by.

That’s how Jimin finds himself sneaking into the shared room close to midnight and being welcomed by the rather heart-stroking yet not so uncalled for extension of Jungkook’s naked chest.

Well, you see, the thing is, there’s only so much a hormonal teen deprived from his sexual life for a determined period of time can take. And Jimin’s standards for resistance are really, really low.

He gulps.

“H-hey.”

Jungkook looks up, using a hand to ruffle his hair dry with a towel. “Hello.”

Jimin allows the silence to stretch and crawl under his skin as the younger maintains his eyes on him, glinting with amusement.

He closes the door.

“So…” he starts on making a fool of himself, hating how Jungkook seems to be having the time of his life, “You, um, you washed.”

“Yeah. It’s expected from roommates, y’know.”

“Really?” he remains glued to his spot by the door, as if going any closer to Jungkook might burn, “Glad to know only roommates set those kind of expectations, I was already starting to doubt my dynamics with other people in my life.”

Jungkook laughs. It’s a very pretty laugh, if anyone wants to know. Not that Jimin pays much thought to it. Because he doesn’t.

“I could set other expectations for you, if you want to,” he casually discards the towel on the bed and Jimin’s heartbeat drops.

“I’m fine with the taking a shower one.”

“You are?”

“Definitely.”

“Okay.”
The yellow light from the room glows on Jungkook’s skin. His highlighted collarbones and cheeks, Jimin glares at them accusingly, as if they’re at fault for his heart having no self control or whatsoever.

“You’re staring.”

He chokes offended. “’m not!” rushes to grab some clothes from his bag on the ground, skin heated, “I was thinking how annoying you are, actually.” he counterattacks, as if his voice doesn't come out waverly and sells him off.

“Huh-uh?”

Jimin gets up. “Huh-uh.” he mimics in a dumb away and stomps to the bathroom without another word, not daring to look back and watch Jungkook laugh.

Well.

This was mature, alright.

He facepalms himself silently, resting against the cold door. He’s suddenly five again.

When he finally comes out again — nearly 40 minutes later having ran out of things to do in there —, he hopes to god that Jeon Jungkook is already dead asleep and off to annoy him.

But so it happens, god is a bitch. With a very huge grudge against Jimin, it seems.

Jungkook is sitting on his bed, one leg up against his chest as he applies moisturizer over the golden skin. The smell is impregnated in the entire room already, Jimin notices with a coiling stomach.

“Did you get 40 minutes to simply apply moisturizer?”

Jungkook doesn't look up, his big hands running over his milky, soft — and now, scented — skin. Well. “Not really, I got distracted with my phone, so I’m doing it now.” he answers truthfully, which takes Jimin aback just slightly, “You?”

“I was jacking off.” he jokes, for some reason hoping to hear the younger laughing, but what he gets instead is a horrified expression instantly snapping at him in big wide eyes.

“What?”


Amazing.

He can't hold back his laugh. “Geez, I’m kidding, what’s with that face?”

The boy lowers his eyes embarrassed, palms squeezing his thigh as if unconsciously, in a nervous manner. Jimin tries (and fails) not to get distracted by it. “O-oh.” is all he says.

There’s something rewarding in making Jungkook flustered. Maybe it’s the way he carries himself, all high posture and confidence, that shit eating grin that won’t leave his stupid beautiful face, like no one can take it down.

But Jimin can and just did.
He smiles to himself in silence as he fumbles with his bag. He’ll unpack tomorrow. He needs a
good night of sleep now.

“Where did you went to?” Jungkook’s voice flows casually in the air, “After dinner.”

Jimin tries not to think too hard on why he’s interested. “There’s a karaoke room here, I went there
with the girls.”

“Oh, really? We could go there anytime.”

Jimin halts. His hands stop moving and his stare freezes. “What?”

“I-I mean…” he’s not looking at Jimin, but it’s okay because Jimin isn’t looking at him either (his
turn to get the red on his cheeks at the impromptu invitation), “If you want to.”

Jimin takes awhile to give an answer, but before it can near a tense atmosphere he strangles out
some sort of ‘okay’ that’s too high-pitched for his liking.

They fall silent after that, the unsaid question hanging in the air.

*Where do they stand?*

It’s awkward that Jungkook is just casually asking him to hang out like that after everything that
happened. Jimin knows he apologized, but it’s not like he forgave him yet. It’s also not like he’s
necessarily mad with him (because he’s not), it’s just… Complicated.

It’s more of a protective measure, as if testing the waters before going in. Jimin knows more than
anyone that he needs it.

He goes to his bed after setting his stuff in his bag and hanging the wet towel on a chair. Jungkook
is leaning against his headboard with an arm behind his head, some strands still wet and sticking to
his cheek, as he goes through something on his phone.

Jimin bites his lip and closes his eyes, pulling a pillow close to his chest so he can cuddle. It’s
warm so he lets the blankets curl on his shin and eases his breathing, attempting to fall asleep.

Should he say good night?

“Hyung.”

He’s caught by surprise. Both by the honorific and the fact he was about to open his mouth to call
for him too.

“Yes?”

Jungkook has completely lied on the mattress now, body turned to Jimin and hands beneath his
pillow while he stares at him with his undivided attention. “Am I coming off too strong on you?”

Jimin blinks. “Huh?”

“I mean, like…” the boy shuffles with his legs, “I’m… I don’t know, I’m trying to make us
comfortable again, but I understand if you’re uncomfortable and want me to stop or something…”

Jimin listens quietly, hoping that the sound slamming against his chest won’t whisper through his
skin for Jungkook to hear. “I just thought maybe I could…” he breaks the eye contact with him, “I
mean, I know I can't take things back to when we met at that party, but… I don't know what I’m
saying anymore, sorry…” he laughs awkwardly and Jimin releases a breath he wasn't aware he was
“You know, we… We always talk about the party, but we never talk about the new year’s night.”

Jimin simply drops like that, as if it doesn’t take every ounce of courage from his body. He’s glad he’s lying down, because his legs feel limp.

He doesn’t dare look at Jungkook, but he’s aware he’s not staring at him. He supposes he caught him by surprise with this one. He doesn’t blame him — he caught himself by surprise too.

But he can’t help it, he’s like that. He’s impulsive, doing things at the spur of the moment and instantly regretting moments later.

Although, he can’t turn back now. Even if Jungkook decides not to say anything, Jimin can’t take it back. Neither would he. How unfair would it be to his heart — on how brave it was to say it out loud. To steal the words out of him.

When Jungkook speaks, it’s like a whisper, travelling through the wind.

“What do you want to know?” the way his voice sounds, it’s so soft that Jimin can’t help but snap his head back at him, curious.

He has curled his body around himself, arms around his knees as he avoids looking into Jimin’s eyes, almost as if he’s trying to… protect himself. Jimin frowns.

“I…” He doesn’t know. What does he want Jungkook to say? “I don’t know, it just feels wrong to always address the party situation where we were drunk and horny rather than the new year’s one when we were…” Jimin chokes, eyes widening slightly as he realizes what he’s about to say. His heart starts beating in his throat, “I-I mean…”

Jungkook is intently staring at him now — he feels it burn on his skin.

The fearful silence falls upon them once again. Jimin can’t believe he almost sort of confessed. He’s about to pass out.

“You’re right.” Jungkook’s voice comes to soothe him, and it’s instant, “It really feels wrong.” Jimin gulps, toying with the blankets in front of his eyes as a source of distraction, “That night was magical. And all thanks to you. I was having the worst night ever and like a magic trick you just pulled me into your bubble… I was so thankful.” he pauses and Jimin is not sure he can hear anything above his heart beating. What is he saying, what is he saying? “If I could choose, I wouldn’t have spent it with anyone else but you.” he confesses, easily, quietly. Jimin is breaking apart and rebuilding back up in a matter of seconds. He doesn’t know what to feel. His fingers have halted over the duvet. “Thank you, really.”

He feels like crying, if he’s to be completely honest. He doesn’t know what is it with Jungkook, that makes him feel everything this intensely. Gets him emotional without meaning to. He’s not like that, so why? Why…? Why is it feel like his heart is being ripped in two? Is pain even supposed to hurt this good?

“Y-you’re welcome…” is all he manages to utter, and for some reason, Jungkook judges it enough.

The sound of the ac fills the room. The wind outside is there too, just in a lower key, as if a far away background symphony to their melody. Jimin sighs. There’s a sea right behind the inn so maybe that’s the reason he feels so nostalgic. He closes his eyes and imagines the waves crashing down the shore, he imagines the sounds and his feet sinking on wet sand, the night sky
stretching for miles and miles above him, until infinity and beyond.

HE falls asleep like that, the soothing feeling on his chest easing his frown, lullabying him to slumber with a soft hum echoing in the room.

Jungkook’s much needed sleep comes to him too — hours after his eyes grow tired of admiring Jimin’s every feature.

“Hey, let’s go to the beach.” Jimin pokes Jungkook’s sleeping figure with his feet as he brushes his teeth, “Hey, wake up.”

The boy groans and shuffles on the bed before falling completely motionless again. Jimin huffs, walking to the bathroom to rinse his mouth. He was reading a book before getting up, so his glasses almost fall from his face when he leans down to wash his mouth.

“Ah, shit.” he catches them midway and settles it on the bridge of his nose again. “Jungkook!” he tries calling again, louder, using a towel to dry his face. Still no answer.

When Jimin returns to the room, he finds the younger completely hidden by the duvet, his figure beneath it all curled up like a baby. He can't help but laugh a little at the sight. “Aish, seriously…” he throws the towel on a chair in the corner of the room and kneels down before Jungkook’s bed, “Hey.” he pets where is supposed to be his head, “Jungkook, let’s go to the beach. It’s 9 am already. What hour did you even go to sleep?” As it seems the only vocabulary he owns, Jungkook groans again, “Come on…” Jimin whines a little, pulling the blanket from his face to find a mess of hair on top of his head with squeezing eyes, “You’re awake already… Pretty please?”

Jungkook sighs and slowly starts blinking his eyes open, until they properly settle on Jimin.

“…what’s wrong?” he murmurs after some time, his voice low and rough. Jimin backs away a little, self aware of their faces proximity.

“Let’s go to the beach.” Jimin repeats smiling, matching his low tone, “The day is beautiful. The girls texted me to go with them and I said I’d call you too. They said you can call your friends if you want. It’s more fun with more people.” Jimin explains, hoping it’s making Jungkook more awake rather than more sleepy.

“Mhm…” Jungkook hums, staring attentively at his face despite his swollen eyes and Jimin doesn't know if he’s just humming to agree or to show he’s listening. But then, all of a sudden he takes his hands out from the blanket and bops Jimin’s nose, “You’re wearing glasses…” he says a little slurred.

Jimin’s skin warms and he licks his lips, trying to scowl his expression the best he can. “Yeah. I was reading...”

Jungkook nods, fingers still lingering over his nose almost like a caress before he pulls away. “It’s pretty…”

Jimin’s stomach coils. “T-thank you. They’re new.” he pushes them up his nose in an instinctive act.
Jungkook remains to gaze at him for some seconds before he chuckles softly and shakes his head. Jimin is about to question him on what’s funny, but then he sits up, rubbing his face. “Okay then!” he hits his cheeks twice as if it’ll help him to wake up faster, “Let’s go to the beach.”

The weather is perfect. Or, at least, perfect for Jimin’s taste. The beach is not too crowded, which allows them to choose a nice spot to sit on. The sand is pearly white and the waves crashing down twinkle before their eyes on how clean the ocean is. It’s a crystal blue sea and Jimin is delighted, unable to keep the awed smile from his face. He’s a boy from Busan, but to be completely honest, it’s not often that he goes to the beach. Usually he and Taehyung have other plans in mind, but looking at that paradise right now he thinks that maybe he should give it a change.

“It’s so pretty…” he sighs, content, speaking to no one in specific.

Jungkook pokes his ribs lightly. “You?”

Jimin knows he’s teasing — or like, his brain knows, but his heart… He rolls his eyes.

“Yeah, me.” he agrees and Jungkook chuckles, looking down.

The girls have already settled the big sheet they brought so it could fit everyone while some of Jungkook’s friends are managing the parasol. He drops his bag over the sheet and sits down.

Junghwa is squeezing sunscreen on her hands so Jimin scoots closer and stares at her with twinkling eyes. She throws her head back, laughing loud at his expression.

“Would you want me to apply some sunscreen on you, Jimin-ssi?” she asks in an overly formal tone and Jimin holds back his laugh too, getting in character.

“Oh my! What a surprise that you asked. If it’s not a bother, Junghwa-ssi…” he bows to her and then the both of them break out laughing.

“Aish…” Heeyeon gets up, dusting her legs even though there’s no sand on them, “Now I have to deal with two crackheads, Junghwa was enough, Jimin!” he winks at her and she can’t help but giggle, throwing her headband on his face, “I’m gonna swim, losers.” she warns, before walking off.

Jimin and Junghwa remain with their antics as she spreads the cream over his back, laughing their asses off when the bottle makes a fart noise and then proceeding to accuse one another, alleging they could feel the bad smell all around. When she’s done she covers his face in white and then sprints as fast as she can, laughing her ass off.

“Yah!” Jimin yells, but she’s already too far and the sand seems hot so he huffs and tries to spread the cream as best as he can over his cheeks.

“You seem to have hit it off pretty well.” Jungkook comments beside him, rubbing sunscreen over his arms. “With the girls.”
Jimin avoids staring at him, fully conscious he’s shirtless yet also painfully aware he won’t be able to ignore the sight the entire day.

“We already knew each other, actually. We were from the same class some time ago.”

Jungkook hums, watching him. When Jimin sighs and gives up on the mess Junghwa made, Jungkook uses two fingers on his chin to turn his face to him. He almost forgets how to breath, looking at him as if he saw a ghost.

“What are you doing?”

Jungkook smiles, and with the most tender of the touches, starts spreading the cream left on Jimin’s face, over the places he couldn't see. “She did a great job on using half a bottle on your face.” he comments, amused on how white the boy’s skin looks. Jimin bites his lip, creating such a harsh contract of colours, the screaming red glistening.

Jungkook gulps a little, and distracts himself rubbing the sunscreen down Jimin’s neck, so it can disperse.

They fall silent, Jungkook’s big hands working on his skin and if Jimin closed his eyes he could almost pretend it was a massage. He starts spreading it over his shoulder too and his breath hitches. If he goes down any further he’ll definitely feel Jimin’s heart roaring and that’s possibly the last thing he wants.

“That’s alright now.” he taps Jungkook’s arms, who seems to hesitate before pulling back. “Do you want me to apply it on your back?” he questions out of politeness, hoping to god he’ll say no, but of course that would never happen.

Jungkook doesn't answer, simply turns around so his broad back is fully on display for Jimin. It’s insane how a high school student own all those fucking muscles and apparently Jimin can't keep his thoughts to himself, because he simply blurts out of nowhere: “How are you even so muscular, anyway?”

He’s happy Jungkook is not staring at him because he instantly turns beet red.

“I had a lot of free time going around with my parents.” he doesn't laugh or tease Jimin, which is not expected. Jimin hates when he does this — is so honest and sincere when he’s expecting a snark comeback. It sets him off. “So I used to hit the gym a lot. Why?” he throws his head back and Jimin thinks, there it is, “Do you like it?”

He pours some of the sunscreen on his palm and starts on Jungkook’s shoulders. “Not really, I prefer the scrawny ones.”

The younger shakes his head, probably laughing and Jimin smiles too. “Liar.”

He doesn't say anything else, proceeding to rub Jungkook’s back and it’s not his fault his fingers take the opportunity to feel every single ridge.

“You say you don't like it, but you seem to be enjoying yourself a lot back there...”

Jimin doesn't know what gets into him — maybe it’s the heat. All he knows it’s that suddenly he’s leaning in, lips stopping when they brush against Jungkook’s neck to whisper, “Oh, yeah?” there’s something extremely rewarding in watching Jungkook suck in a breath and get speechless. He smiles against the skin and pinches his side to mask the atmosphere and his intentions, making Jungkook jump and hiss in pain. “You’re right, I’m enjoying myself.”
Jungkook turns around to look at him with an accusatory frown, so Jimin taps his nose with sunscreen and gets up. “You’re welcome.” he says before running off to the water.

The thing about sea and Jungkook is Jimin’s perverted mind. The duo is simply no good for his aesthetic — in the health issues kind of way.

He lost the counts on how many times he thought he was having a stroke when it was in fact just his heart pulling a trick on him.

It was just too much — the getting out of water with droplets sliding down the naked torso while throwing the hair back scenario — it was too much.

“Jungkook is hot as fuck.” Junghwa comments beside him on the sand as if reading his thoughts. They decided to stop fooling around after the heat took a toll on their energy.

Jimin hums, not knowing how to answer. Does she know he’s gay? Does everyone in the school knows? Jimin is sort of insecure after what Jungkook told him.

He draws absentmindedly on the sand, random patterns and circles.

“You two seem close.” she continues and Jimin tilts his head, thinking how it’s ironic that last morning when he was waking up this kind of comment would never cross his mind.

“Not much, really.” It’s not a lie. It’s not like they're best friends. “I'm just friendly.”

“I see.” she stares ahead quietly for awhile, in thought, “You look cute together though.” she says finally.

“What?” Jimin is so surprised at the words that he can't help his tone.

“You look cute together.” Junghwa repeats as if saying ‘the weather is nice today’.

He nods slowly, unsure of what to say. If she treats it so casually why should he make a big thing out of it then? He decides to let it slide and attempts at lightening the mood.

“I'd be the hottest one, though, right?”

She looks at him with a pitiful expression and pats his shoulder. “Oh Jiminie… You're too soft for this.”

“Hey! I'm sexy!” he leans back on both hands and winks at her, biting his lips, which positively gets her cringing and laughing out loud.

“What are you crackheads doing?” Heeyeon shows up casting a shadow over them, before she plops down and settles her head over Junghwa's lap.

“I'm trying to seduce her, but apparently she’s immune to my power.”

Heeyeon laughs and nods. “It's okay, you get used to it. I've been trying to get into her pants for years now, but perhaps she's asexual.”
“Oh my god!” Junghwa can’t stop laughing, now with flushed cheeks, which is amusing to watch. Jimin and Heeyeon chuckle behind their fists, loving her reaction. “I just don’t fuck with idiots!”

“Ohuch.” Heeyeon pretends to be shot in the chest and wipes a nonexistent tear, “That hurt. Me and Jimin would make out to make you feel bad if we weren’t both gay.”

The statement throws Jimin off a little bit and he laughs in lack of better words. It’s not like he’s shocked that Heeyeon is gay, but rather the naturality she treats the matter. It kind of reminds him of Eunbi and it’s a little inspiring, to be honest. It makes him want to talk about his sexuality like that too.

“Is it really that obvious?” he finally says, self conscious.

“Heeyeon continues, “If you singing and dancing to snsd yesterday on the karaoke didn't give it away, then you drooling at Jeon Jungkook today definitely did.”

Jimin laughs, embarrassed, feeling the blush creep up his neck.

“Speaking of the devil.” Junghwa says and Jimin snaps his head around.

Jungkook is walking to them with that breathtaking smile and he has to try really hard not to smile back. It's almost an instinct. He looks particularly stunning today.

“Hey.” he crouches down on his heels in front of Jimin, “Let's swim a little. You're ignoring me the entire morning…”

He scoffs at the accusation. Truthful accusation, but still. “‘m not!”

“Yeah?” Jungkook squints his eyes at him, that annoying smile still tugging the corner of his lips, “Let's swim then. I won't bite you.” he winks and gets up.

Jimin can see Heeyeon and Junghwa holding back their laughs by his peripheral, but he ignores them and gets up as well, following Jungkook into the water.

He feels awkward, and he feels like it’ll get even more awkward if they walk side by side in silence to reach the ocean and realize they have nothing to do there.

So Jimin sinks his feet in the sand to take impulse and sprints, pushing Jungkook down in the way.

“Catch me!” he yells over his shoulder, guffawing at the younger’s scandalized expression.

It doesn’t take long for him to react to, quickly jumping off the sand and darting to catch up to him.

Jimin reaches the water first, but his steps are slower there which provides time enough for Jungkook to shorten their distance by a lot. He screams, pushing further into the water, but somehow Jungkook manages to move easily even there so Jimin dips and disappears. He swims with eyes squeezed shut, hoping he’s getting further and further from the younger, so when his lungs start to get tight he emerges.

It’s hard to see at first, with all the salty water dripping from his hair, so he uses his hands to push the strands away and get the excess of water away from his eyes. He can still stand, but looking around Jungkook is nowhere to be seen and Jimin’s heart fastens at the knowledge he’s underwater and he can't see him.
He steps back cautiously, attentive of his surroundings, the soft waves hitting against his chest. He’s about to yell for the other when his back crashes against a sturdy chest and a pair of muscular arms instantly wrap themselves around his shoulders.

“Gotcha.” Jungkook whispers on his ear, lips brushing over the shell and carrying goosebumps all over his skin.

“What are you, Aquaman?” Jimin squeaks, trying to break free from the hold, “I didn't even hear you!”

Jungkook laughs, and the sound like this, so close to his ear and vibrating on his back — it’s a bit too overwhelming.

The younger doesn't answer, instead he resumes to spin Jimin around and hold him by the waist, pushing their chest flush against one another.

Jimin pretends his inability to breath is from all the running and swimming.

“What’s my reward?” Jungkook murmurs, staring down at him.

Jimin’s hands are awkwardly resting on his waist, not sure of what to do.

“What do you want?” he urges and Jungkook raises an eyebrow.

“Do you really wanna know?” he leans down, his hands sliding to his lower back so he can pull him closer.

Jimin fingers tighten around the younger’s waist.

“Jungkook…” he warns, but the boy remains to smile down at him and angle his face in a way that almost knocks Jimin off.

He shuts his eyes when he’s close enough, torn between giving in and pulling back.

Jungkook takes a hand to hold his chin and softly turns it the other way, pressing his lips against Jimin’s cheek.

Fuck.

Perhaps this is worse than what he was expecting.

His lips are hot against the skin, and Jimin breathes hard, something about the act so delicate that he feels like bursting.

Jungkook takes his time, and before he completely pulls away, he places a kiss on Jimin’s jawline too.

“Mhm…” he hums, “That’s possibly the greatest reward ever. Thanks.”

Jimin doesn't want to, but he blushes — he knows.

And before he can form a coherent sentence, the loud banters from Jungkook’s friends reaches their ears, making them turn around.

“Hey! You two! Let’s play chicken fight!” they’re running off towards them and suddenly Jimin feels even more embarrassed that their little exchange was happening in a public place, surrounded
by people.

Jungkook sighs behind him. “I hate them.” he declares, before resigning and making his way to where they’re standing.

By 1pm, all of them collectively agree in one thing: beach is exhausting.

After they head back for the inn in time for lunch, the professors are announcing they’ll be taking whoever wants to go to a famous waterfall. Jimin practically glows — he loves waterfalls so much —, and bounces excitedly on his seat. Everyone agrees to go which gets him even more excited.

Jungkook falls asleep on the bus. They’re sitting side by side and Jimin is quietly admiring the view out the window when he feels a weight on his shoulders. Jungkook’s hair tickles his neck, but he simply smiles, shuffling down a little so the younger is more comfortable.

It’s a bit awkward that he’s being so close and touchy. Jimin can’t help but wonder if things would be any different if Taehyung was there.

He sighs and shakes those kind of thoughts away.

Before he knows it, he’s falling asleep too, and they only wake up when the bus finally reach the destination. The position is awkward: Jimin’s head is pressed against the window while Jungkook’s hangs against his chest, having probably rolled off his shoulder.

He cracks his neck, uncomfortable muscles straining, and pushes the younger so he can wake up.

They all have to walk a small trail to reach the waterfall, since the bus had no way of getting any closer. It’s not long, and when the sound of the water hitting the rocks is finally heard, Jimin smiles.

The sight is framed by trees’ tops, the dark and light green of the leaves contrasting with the water falling down like millions of glistening diamonds, sparkling against the sun.

“It’s so beautiful…” he muses in a daydreaming voice, to no one in specific.

The rest of the day runs by like no other has ever. Jimin plays in the water the entire time, and no one seems to be able to take him out of there. He swims and floats, the refreshing water soothing him along with the sound of the water falling down on the rocks.

If the sea is weary and exhausting, the waterfall is like washing his soul. He stays there, listening to his own thoughts, thinking about everything and nothing at all, and when it’s finally time to go home he feels like a new person. It’s cheesy, he knows, but he doesn't care.

On the ride back, it’s his time to fall asleep over Jungkook. When he wakes up, he’s being carried on the younger’s back. Jimin groans something incomprehensible, and falls right back asleep.

He doesn't remember much of it, the only memory in his mind before blacking out being his hand around Jungkook’s wrist, and the younger staring down at him with slightly wide eyes and parted lips.
Waking up to a body pressed against his isn't completely unfamiliar for him — he almost reaches back to pet Taehyung’s head when it hits him — Taehyung is not there.

Jimin jolts fully awake, turning around with his heart climbing up his throat and then dropping down to his feet when Jungkook’s face enters his sight. It doesn't get better when the younger shuffles closer to him and nuzzles against his arm, brows furrowing at the sudden movement on the bed.

Jimin raises his body on his elbows, trying to ease his breath so he can call Jungkook. For a brief moment of horror dizziness, he wonders if they did it, but then he notices they’re fully clothed and sighs in relief.

“Hey, Jungkook.” he calls in a shaky tone. “Jungkook, wake up.” it’s firmer and louder this time.

The younger turns around, untangling himself from Jimin, which weirdly doesn't make Jimin relieved at all. Rather…

Jungkook blinks awake, slowly. It’s still dark outside.

“What’s up?” he croaks.

“Why are we sleeping together?” Jimin shoots straight to the point.

Jungkook yawns and stretches his muscles as if it’s not really a big deal. “You held me down and asked me to stay yesterday.” he says casually. “Said you didn't want to sleep alone. So I stayed.”

Jimin’s mouth drops. “I— I did?”

“Mhm.” Jungkook nods, rubbing his stomach, still a little sleepy. “What's the problem?” he finally looks up to Jimin, seeming fully conscious now.

He’s caught off guard. He doesn't know if he’s more shocked that he asked Jungkook to sleep with him or that Jungkook actually did.

“N-nothing, I was just surprised, I guess.”

The boy chuckles, rubbing his face so he can be completely awake. “What time is it?”

Jimin reaches for his phone on the nightstand, the lit up screen lightening the whole room and hurting his eyes a little. “5 am.”

“Mhm. Wanna find something to eat? We crashed at 9pm yesterday and skipped dinner.”

Jimin nods, mostly because his stomach is really hurting a lot and he can't go on a long time without eating anything. Scared he might get used to it and fall onto old patterns.
“Yeah, let’s go.”

Jimin is still on his clothes from yesterday while Jungkook had apparently changed before laying down with him, so he goes to the bathroom for five minutes and puts on a clean set of clothes. Jungkook is waiting for him on the bed with two cups of noodles in hands.

“Where did you find these?”

He motions to the frigobar with his chin. “There are 2 more left in there. We just need to find somewhere to heat water. Let’s go.”

They roam side by side through the quiet inn, and it’d be a little scary if they were alone, but Jungkook makes sure to indulge him with easy conversation and Jimin forgets about everything. It’s really like they’re the only people in the world.

The kitchen is open, for god’s mercifulness, so Jungkook grabs a pan from the shelf and pours some water in it. Jimin observes quietly, leaning against the door frame.

“Are we even allowed to use the kitchen?”

The younger shrugs. “We’re paying, right?”

Jimin shakes his head, but voices no complaint.

When the water boils, Jungkook pours some into his cup and then the rest in Jimin’s, closing the lid of both and proceeding to the sink so he can wash the pan.

Jimin watches everything and only realizes he’s smiling when Jungkook walks up to him and smiles back.

He takes his cup from his hand and is grateful that his blush can't be seen in the dark.

They sit by the pool area. There’s an outdoor pergola bed in the middle of the yard, with see through white curtains falling from the rips and giving everything a way too romantic air for Jimin’s claustrophobic lungs. He hesitates, but Jungkook confidently walks to the bed and Jimin has no other option but follow.

“We’re gonna get the sheets dirty.” Jimin warns, but Jungkook is already climbing up, balancing the noodle in one hand and he knows it’s a lost fight.

“Come on. It’s so comfy.” he bounces to demonstrate, making Jimin roll his eyes, but he gives in anyway.

It’s quiet in the beginning — the simple sounds of them slurping on their noodles while watching the calm waters of the pool in front of them — the sound of the waves breaking on the shore a background melody (quite literally) for their scenery, as the beach stretches behind them.

“Oh you know…” Jungkook speaks up after a while, putting his cup aside, “I really love this time of the day.” he exhales in a relaxed breath, laying down on the mattress with his arms behind his head.

“Yeah?” Jimin munches on his noodles, and then nods, “Me too. It’s quiet.”

“Yeah.” the younger agrees with his eyes closed, “It’s like no one else exists.”

He doesn’t know what to say, so he brings the cup up to his lips so he can drink the remaining
broth of the noodles. He puts it aside on the ground and lays down too.

“What’s your favorite color?” Jungkook asks out of a sudden, staring at him, while Jimin stares up to the sky. He can't completely see it, the pergolas with the curtains partially blocking his vision, but it's alright. It’s pretty anyway — a nice contrast.

“Blue.” he answers truthfully.

“Why?”

“It's the sky’s color.” Jungkook hums. “Yours?”

“Red. And black too.”

“Why?”

Jimin isn't looking at him, but he can see Jungkook shrugs.

“No reason.” he confesses simply and Jimin licks his lips.

“You remind me more of white, somehow. I mean, if people were colours, I think you’d be white.”

Jungkook seems amused at that, and supports his head on his elbow to have a better look of Jimin’s face. He’s impelled to reciprocate the gaze now.

“Why is that?” he asks with a hint of smile on his lips.

Jimin shrugs, heart racing.

Because white is the result of every colour. A whirlwind of colours blossoming into a new one. And this is so like you it's comical. A confusion of colours and feelings I can't decode. “No reason.” he says and the younger narrows his eyes at him.

“Mhmm… I think you’d be yellow, then.” says Jungkook, with a pair of too close lips to his vulnerable skin.

Jimin’s brows shoot for a second, as if urging him to reason. “Why?”

He’s curious, but Jungkook smirks and he knows he’s getting no answer. “No reason.” he throws back and Jimin rolls his eyes.

“Fair enough.”

The boy laughs and falls back on the bed, finally backing away from Jimin’s personal space. He can properly breath again.

“Sun or moon?” Jungkook continues.

“Moon. You?”

“Sun.”

“You’re a little bit like the sun, indeed.” Jimin notes, looking at him and analyzing his face.

“You’re a little bit like the moon, too.”

He smiles softly, and Jungkook doesn't see, because he’s looking at the stars, but it's okay.
“My grandma used to tell me the sun and the moon were in love. She’d say the sun loved the moon so much he’d die every night to let her breathe.”

Jimin absorbs the words quietly, and remains silent for a while. Jungkook turns his head back to him, wondering if he fell asleep and so Jimin snuggles a little bit closer, reciprocating his gaze.

“How did she know it wasn't the moon giving up on her stars every night to allow the sun to shine bright?”

Jungkook’s eyes glow at the sentence. For a moment, it’s like he's the one holding all the stars captive in his orbs — the stars keeper —, and Jimin feels like something is crashing over him.

“She’d love to meet you…” is what Jungkook answers, his voice soft and mellow, and Jimin hates that he never wanted to kiss someone this bad in his life before.

The first ray of sunlight casting itself over Jungkook’s cheek is what snaps him out of it, making him turn around and look at the sky behind them. “Hey… The sun is rising.”

Jungkook breathes out, long and steady. “Yeah… It is…”

Jimin looks back at him, nudging his shoulder. “You’re not even looking.”

The boy laughs, and then shuffles around to be in the same position as Jimin, admiring the red bleed into the night sky.

Jimin sighs softly, and lays his head down on the pillow, feeling so warm and full.

It’s the second sunrise he watches with Jungkook — and he thinks it’s not a bad thing to get used to.

“This is the only moment the sun and the moon get to meet, y’know…” Jungkook murmurs quietly, and Jimin smiles to himself. “We’re in their magical moment.”

He could definitely get used to this.

The day runs by rather smoothly. They spend the entirety of it in the pool, fooling around, bonding and having fun. The teacher announces the plan of the day is to go on a trail, but the both of them and all their friends prefer to stay at the inn.

The pool area is insanely gorgeous and aesthetically pleasing, so time flies by and they don't even realize. When it’s around 6pm they finally get tired of the water and resume to their rooms. Yugyeom, one of Jungkook’s friends, suggest they order some pizzas and meet in one of the rooms later so they can eat together and play. Jimin doesn't quite get the ‘play’ part but he simply lets go.

Taking a shower, he observes his reflection in the mirror of the bathroom. His cheeks are pink and sunburn, while his skin has gone a shade darker. He pushes his black hair back and smiles. He kind
of looks cute. That skin tone really matches his dark hair.

When they’re both clean and fresh, Jungkook says Yugyeom texted him for them to go to his room, alleging the pizza was there already. Jimin was fumbling around their room for his wallet, before Jungkook softly held on his wrist to stop him.

“It’s okay, I’ll pay for us.”

Jimin halts.

“What? Absolutely not—”

“Hyung, it's okay? Please? I owe you a lot more than a simple pizza for what I did.”

He’s taken aback by that, gulping and running out of coherent words for a second.

“O...Okay.”

Jungkook smiles and slides his fingers down until he’s holding Jimin’s hands. They walk through the hallway like that, intertwined fingers.

Jimin gently pulls back when they reach the boy’s room, though, pretending to scratch his cheek.

The room looks exactly the same as Jimin’s and Jungkook’s except for the fact it’s a lot more messier.

Jimin is startled to notice that there is three boxes of pizza on top of one of the bed and suddenly he’s a little bit relieved that Jungkook is the one paying.

Heeyeon and Junghwa are already there, sitting on the ground and discussing something over Heeyeon’s phone.

“Here. Jimin-hyung already gave me his half so this is mine and his.”

Jimin hears behind his back and blushes. Something about Jungkook not telling he’s paying for the both of them warms his heart entirely. As if he knows Jimin would feel uncomfortable if people acknowledged that.

He smiles and sits beside the girls.

“So, now that everyone’s here...” Mingyu announces, chuckling evilly and pulling a bag close to him, “Let the games begin...” he unzips it and reveals 4 bottles of untouched alcohol inside of it.

Everyone cheers, Jimin included, which ends up in a set of loud laughers at their stupid banter.

He can use some loosening alright.

“Shut up, you idiots.” Jaehyun snarls, yet unable to contain his own smile, “We’re gonna get caught.”

He takes the tequila out of the bag and Jimin’s mouth almost waters. It’s one of his favorite drinks by far.

“I want it mixed with some juice, I can’t take this shit pure.” Jungkook says out of nowhere and everyone coos.
“Ah poor Jungkookie, still a baby.” Heeyeon teases and the boy rolls his eyes, returning from the frigobar with a strawberry juice in hands, not giving a single fuck to his friends around him. The act is oddly badass for someone who can’t take some shots of tequila dry. Jimin shakes his head, laughing.

“Okay, how should we do this?” Junghwa claps excited. “We have to make it fun.”

“I call body shots!” Mingyu yells, supported by Yugyeom.

“No, let’s make spin the bottle.” Heeyeon barges in.

“That’s too cliche.” Jimin says.

“So? These are always the best. We’ll write down punishments on cards and spin the bottle and then flip the card. What’s written on the card, the person who spinned have to do on the person which the bottle landed. You can include body shots on that.” she finishes and everyone “oooo”s.

“That’s interesting.” Jaehyun smiles and sits down. “Okay, let’s do it! Everybody write down 3 punishments and put it in the middle face down! No sneaking!”

Yugyeom grabs a block from the nightstand and two pens. They take turns to write while eating the pizza. Some papers turn greasy thanks to their finger but none of them really care that much. When everyone’s done, Junghwa claps excited.

“That’s lesbophobic though, there’s like 5 guys here against 2 girls and I bet all those punishments are at least a bit sexual.”

Jungkook starts laughing out of nowhere. “Actually, no. You’ll be disgusted by mine. Pray to god you won’t take it.”

“Okay, then, let’s start!” Jimin claps his hands once to call everyone’s attention. “We’ll toss the card that was already used away so it’s not repetitive.”

“Yes! And we’ll rank the punishments to see if they’re good enough! If they’re not then you have to drink!” Junghwa bounces on her spot and everyone cheers, agreeing.

“Okay, okay, less talking and more action, let’s go!” Jungkook raises his slice of pizza in the air, before shoving nearly the entire thing into his mouth.

They use a bottle of water, putting in the center, and then taking rock, paper and scissors to decide who’ll go first.

Mingyu loses and he crawls forward to spin the bottle with a crestfallen face. They’re watching carefully and in odd silence as the bottle moves and moves and moves, until it starts slowing down to stop on… Heeyeon.

Everyone bursts out laughing as she rolls her eyes and drops her shoulders, disappointed.

“Oh man.” Her expression is priceless and Jimin chokes on his pizza as Mingyu takes a card and turns around.

“Feed the person a slice of pizza with— your feet?!” he screeches and Heeyeon proceeds to choke beside Jimin as everyone else laughs even harder.

Jungkook is rolling on the ground, seeming especially satisfied with the card and Jimin is 100%
sure he was the one behind that punishment.

“That’s fucking gross!” Mingyu yells, while Heeyeon seems to be witnessing her soul leave her body and Jimin’s stomach hurts from how hard he’s laughing, “Jeon Jungkook!!!” he roars and Jungkook’s laugh strings even louder in all their ears, “You brat, it was you, right?!”

Jungkook sits upright, panting and cleaning a tear from the corner of his eyes. “Oh my. Life sure is great.” is all he says.

“I’m gonna die.” Heeyeon breathes, “But I’m going to kill you first.” she threatens, eyes deadass glaring Jungkook’s figure who’s not the least intimidated.

The next scenes are way too disgusting for Jimin to describe, because:

1. Feet.
2. Heeyeon almost puking.
3. Feet and pizza.

Yeah. So. Moving on. They all rank them 10 points, because it’s a mutual agreement they suffered enough. Although Heeyeon seems especially displeased to not pour a single drop of alcohol in her throat after that.

It’s Jaehyun’s turn to spin the bottle, and so he does, while everyone else rides off their previous hysteria, a little bit lightheaded.

Everything feels so dizzy, that Jimin takes a while to realize the bottle has landed on him.

He gulps at the sight, raising his eyes at Jaehyun who seems a bit too red.

He’s one of Jungkook’s friends that Jimin thinks it’s the prettiest, but he doesn’t really… know whether he likes guys or not. Probably not, but still. Would he be comfortable with this?

Jimin’s anxiety is trying to throw him off, but before flipping the card the boy goes and smiles to him, so he breathes a little more easily.

Not that he’s prepared to what’s to come next.

“Kiss the person on the mouth.”

Junghwa starts fangirling at the words at the same time Yugyeom starts fanboying so they simply scoot closer to one another to slap each other’s arms excitedly.

Jimin rolls his eyes, but he bites his lips, unsure. He can’t help but steal a glance at Jungkook. He has the corner of his lips stuck between his teeth with an unreadable expression.

“Okay…” Jaehyun proceeds, kneading the paper and tossing it away, “You’re okay with that?” he addresses Jimin, stealing his attention back to him.

He smiles. It’s kind of sweet that he asks.

“Sure.”

“Okay. I’m gonna kiss you, then.”

Jimin chuckles, amused, and tilts his head. “Am I the first boy you’ll ever kiss?”
Jaehyun is crawling to him, so he halts his movements for a second to blush before he continues. “Actually, yeah.” Jimin leans forward, interested.

“Okay. I’ll make it good, then.”

Apparently everyone loses their shit at this sentence, but Jimin is focused in the boy in front of him.

He places his hand on his neck when he’s close enough and tilts his chin up so their lips brush. It’s been awhile since Jimin last kissed someone, and Jaehyun is pretty, so he feels that familiar buzz inside his veins before he pulls him down and closes the distance.

Jaehyun gasps and grabs Jimin’s shirt at the initial contact, which is kind of endearing. He seems way too nervous and willing for a straight guy, so Jimin smiles and opens his mouth, tentatively licking over his lips. The boy almost instantly welcomes him, and they kiss for a little while, Jimin increasing the pace in order to make him breathless before he pulls back.

He feels proud inflate his chest when he looks down at the boy and he has his eyes closed, panting.

He snaps out of it quite fast, though, blinking a few times before returning to his previous position.

“Oh. My. God!” Junghwa screams once they’re done and Jimin can’t help but laugh, “That was like, hot. Shit. I thought you were going for a peck. You’re all so dirty.” she shakes her head, “It’s ten for me.”

“No doubt. Ten.” Yugyeom nods, and everyone else agrees, humming.

Jimin takes a deep breath and looks at Jungkook, but he’s looking down, so he simply lets it go. It’s not like he owns him anything and it’s not like Jungkook is interested in him besides friendship-wise, so…

The game goes on, and the next one to play is Yugyeom. He has to kiss Junghwa’s cheeks and everyone ranks them 0 because they blush like two middle-schoolers after it happens. It’s kind of cute how they down their cups at the same time with those red cheeks. Junghwa spins the bottle after wiping her lips on her sleeve. Jimin bursts laughing when the bottle lands on him.

“Yah! Is this a joke? Why is it landing on me all the time?”

“The bottle loves you, accept it.”

He ruffles the back of his head, nervous of what Junghwa will have to do with him. “Aish…”

She seems nervous too, but as she takes a card and reads what’s written she seems to ease a little bit, her shoulders relaxing. “Take a chocolate chip from the person’s mouth with your lips.” she reads out loud and wiggles her brows funnily at him.

Jimin throws his head back laughing. He can't believe this. “I wrote this!”

“Woo, kinky.” Heeyeon teases, winking.

“I am.” Jimin answers, winking back, making her choke a little on her drink and then high-five him in respect.

“Someone give me a chocolate chip, for god's sake!” Junghwa yells from her place, crawling to where Jimin is sitting.
Mingyu instantly pulls the bag from where he took the drinks of and takes a chocolate bar out of there. Jimin chuckles, shaking his head. Just how many things is he hiding in there? He wrote that hoping there would be no chocolate chips so that's what would make it fun, but it seems he was wrong. Rich kids really have it all.

He cracks a piece of the bar and hands it to Junghwa, who motions for Jimin to open his mouth. He raises an eyebrow at her, laughing. “You little shit.”

“Obey me, bitch.” she says in the most funny way ever. Jimin is happy they’re making it funny so things won't be awkward afterwards.

He bites the chocolate from her hand and keeps it in place with his teeth. She leans down and takes it with her lips without effort, which gets the both of them surprised and buzzing with excitement. Jimin was hoping for the chip to fall down or something, but they do it with easy. They high-five happily, but everyone else seems displeased.

“This was no fun, I rank it 2.” Jaehyun says, and Mingyu hums along.

“Yeah, the lips didn't even touch!”

Jimin rolls his eyes while everyone starts chanting “drink, drink, drink, drink”. He goes with it because he could really use a tequila shot right now.

When he’s downing the cup effortlessly, his eyes and Jungkook’s meet. Jungkook is unabashedly staring at him, eyes lingering from his eyes to his throat. Jimin thinks maybe it’s the alcohol invading his system, but he makes sure to put on a show, inclining his head back even more so his muscles and veins can stand out. He smiles, putting the cup down on the table when he sees Jungkook gulping. He loves the attention, so he basks on it, licking his lips clean of the tequila. He’s so distracted he doesn't even feel the familiar burn in his throat, just the warmth spreading through his chest.

“Jimin, what are you staring at?” Heeyeon nudges his ribs with an elbow, “It’s your turn.”

“Oh, sorry.”

He blushes when he sees Jungkook smiling smugly. Shit.

He spins the bottle with a hazy mind, watching it intently until it stops on Mingyu.

Junghwa whistles. “Damn, you’re really out there for all of Jungkook’s friends.”

Everyone laughs at the comment, but Jimin is still looking at Jungkook and he's deadass serious. His eyes are focused on Mingyu’s figure and something about the way he’s curling his hands on his shorts has Jimin chuckling to himself. Isn't he enjoying this? Jimin making out with all his friends? He licks his lips in anticipation when Mingyu turns a card.

“Put a candy in your mouth and fight for it with the person the bottle chose. The one to lose drinks.” he reads and frowns, “Fight for it?”


“Oh, I will.” he says while still eyeing Jungkook, and that's when the younger returns the gaze, eyes hardening at the words. Jimin loves it. He looks up to Mingyu, “Will you lose to me, Mingyu-sssi?”
He adores the way he makes people nervous. Mingyu looks down, suddenly shy while sliding the gum into his mouth. “I’ll try not to.”

“I’m good at using my tongue, though…” Jimin teases and watches the boy gulp.

“Jesus…” Yugyeom pretends to have goosebumps, rubbing his arms, “Jimin is so confident.”

He chuckles quietly at the words. Mingyu is crawling to him cautiously, unsure of his movements, so Jimin grabs him by the collar and crashes their lips together with no previous warning.

It seems everyone collectively sucks in a breath, Mingyu included, but Jimin doesn’t mind. He darts his tongue out and licks over the boy’s lips, hoping to find some resistance, but instead he instantly opens up for Jimin.

The gum inside his mouth is strawberry — Jimin feels the taste flooding his mouth instantly, and he chases it. Mingyu is trying to hide the gum with his tongue, but at the same time it seems he’s impelled to kiss Jimin back. He feels so powerful at that, that he grabs the boy’s neck and kisses him harder, hearing him gasp. When Jimin feels the tip of his tongue touch the gum, he smiles, opening his eyes and searching for the ones he knows will be glued to the scene. He finds Jungkook’s eyes in no time. He’s staring as if he’s one step away from jumping on them and pulling them apart. Jimin loves how it seems he’s driving him crazy. He maintains the eye contact, swiping his tongue over Mingyu’s and effortlessly stealing the candy out of him. He pulls back leaving the boy with parted lips shining with spit and chest rising up and down.

Jimin sticks his tongue out with the gum resting there, so everyone will see, before he pulls back with a victorious smile. He winks to Mingyu, “Told you I was good with my tongue.”

Mingyu coughs, blushing bright red. “Yeah. You are.”

Junghwa is about to start screaming — Jimin sees it in her face —, but then they’re all surprised by Jungkook pouring himself a pure shot of tequila and downing it in one gulp.

“Woooo.” Jaehyun slaps his back repeatedly, “Look at our boy go. No juice, Jungkook-ssi?”

Jungkook doesn’t answer, simply wipes his lips with the back of his wrist.

Everyone seems a little taken aback, the reaction not expected at all. Jimin sits back on his place holding back a smile. Maybe the tequila is starting to project its effects on his mind, but— is Jungkook jealous? Of him? For real? This sounds too good to be true.

Mingyu drinks a shot of bacardi for losing and then the game continues to Heeyeon. Jimin is fidgeting in his place because Jungkook is up next. He’s so focused in attentively watching the boy’s every move that he doesn't bother paying attention to the mess unravelling around him when the bottle stops on Yugyeom and the card tells Heeyeon to lick his abs.

Everyone breaks out laughing — Jungkook included (and the sight is too endearing — when Yugyeom lifts his shirt and they find out he has no abs. Then, Heeyeon proceeds to act disgusted before she goes for it while Yugyeom’s face is positively terrified.

“I thought she was gonna bite my skin off.” he confesses when she pulls back, making everyone laugh even harder.

“I could.”

Jimin ranks them 3 points for the effort, but stands for the fact it was a mediocre lick at best.
Junghwa agrees with him, and if Junghwa agrees with something she’s loud about it, making everyone else agree too. Both Yugyem and Heeyeon drink and Jimin eyes them enviously. He really wants another shot of alcohol in his blood.

Especially now that Jungkook is reaching for the bottle and spinning it. Jimin is nervously gnawing at his bottom lip and watching the bottle go round and round, round and round. He doesn't realize he’s holding his breath until it stops spinning and finally points to Junghwa. Jimin bites down on his lip harder. It’s fine him making out with other people in front of Jungkook because he was enjoying his unexpected reactions, but for Jimin? He doesn't really think he can take it easy. He hates to admit when his feelings get the best of him.

He eyes his hands on his lap and listens to Jungkook’s voice reading his card.

“It doesn't matter who the bottle landed right now. Blindfold yourself and spin it again. The person chosen the second time will have to leave two hickeys on your neck.” Jungkook laughs when he finishes, tossing the paper away, “Kinky. Does anyone have something to blindfold me?”

“I have a sock.”

“Thanks, but I’ll pass. Anyone else?”

“I think I might have a tshirt loose enough to wrap around your big head somewhere around.” Jaehyun teases, going to fumble with his stuff and then throwing a black long sleeve on Jungkook, “Here.”

Jungkook folds it until it’s just a long strip of cloth that he manages to wrap around his eyes. It’s a bit thick, but he blinds himself with it anyway and Heeyeon helps him tie it behind his head. Jimin watches everything with a frantic heart. He doesn't know why he’s so nervous.

Once Jungkook is properly blindfolded and reaching for the bottle — guided by Heeyeon —, everyone seems to have an urge to burst into a fit of giggles. They are holding themselves back, because the fun of it is Jungkook not knowing who’s kissing him at all.

Jimin is the only one immersed in his own thoughts. He’s having a hard time trying to merge and fit into the playfulness when anxiety is eating his insides.

Jungkook spins the bottle and he sucks in a breath so loud he’s sure everyone hears it. No one comments on it, though, and Jimin keeps his oxygen trapped, caged — watching the green bottle spin and spin and spin, so fast it makes him dizzy and he feels sick, the lack of oxygen failing him, until suddenly—the bottle is pointing at him. He releases all his oxygen slowly and looks up.

Everyone is covering their mouths with their hands, probably finding it even funnier that Jimin was chosen again, but truly, all Jimin sees is Jungkook.

He’s fidgeting with the hem of his shirt, lips parted and breathing through his mouth as he does when he’s distracted or nervous — Jimin grew to learn this recently.

“Did it stop?” Jungkook asks.

“Yeah.” Heeyeon answers, holding back her laugh. She looks back at Jimin, mouthing ‘go’ while she gesticulates over to the younger.

He gets up, feeling his fingertips tingle and his heartbeats thrum, but he still manages to get a hold of himself. He stops right in front of Jungkook, who feels his presence because he looks up even though he can't see a single thing.
Jimin’s heart tugs when he starts to wonder if Jungkook might recognize him. He wouldn't, right? That's so unlikely. It’s not like he memorized Jimin's touch or something. And they haven't touched in so long...

But, somehow, Jimin wishes he did memorize. That he would recognize him.

He places his feet on both sides of Jungkook’s thighs, using a hand on his shoulder to steady himself, and then lowering his body to settle comfortably on the other’s lap.

Jungkook moves his hands cautiously to his thighs, rubbing at it slowly as if to test the waters and Jimin feels a string of jealousy be pulled inside at the fact Jungkook doesn't know who this is, and yet is still caressing his skin so intimately like this.

He purses his lips, staring at the younger’s face. It feels like ages since they’ve been so close like this, and something about Jungkook being blindfolded gives Jimin the liberty to admire his features as much as he wants. Jungkook has such a smooth skin, and his lips are exhaling nervous breaths while he pokes out his tongue to lick the flesh from time to time. Jimin wants nothing more than to duck his head and catch his lips on his, but everyone is waiting and watching, so he slides his hand from Jungkook’s shoulder and threads it into his hair, curling his fingers to give it a tug. Jungkook almost instantly leans back, exposing his neck, so willing and pliant, that Jimin has to bite back his bottom lip to stifle a moan at the sight.

He breathes down the boy’s neck, heart rate battling the bloodstream flooding his veins. Jungkook’s skin is warm, and he smells like the sun just as much as he smells like spring.

Jimin noses the skin up, inebriated, until he reaches his ear and mouths at it, letting his lips brush the shell slowly, loving the way Jungkook shudders under his touch.

Jemin can feel the younger’s hot breath hitting his shoulder, starting to come out uneven, and he feels powerful by it.

Without any previous warning, he leans down and sticks out his tongue, licking a stripe of wet, hot saliva over the bulging muscle that gets Jungkook gasping loudly. Jimin smiles, biting the skin lightly before he wraps his lips around it and sucks in the most teasing way he knows. He also fists Jungkook’s hair tighter, thriving for a reaction, and when Jungkook shifts beneath him, a moan that’s more like a whine on the back of his throat, coming out low and sensual by Jimin’s ear, only for him to hear — it’s like his stomach is set on fire. He sucks harder, wanting to mark him, wanting people to see. He feels especially possessive tonight, even though he was the one kissing other people and not Jungkook. He just looks so beautiful, and it’s so effortless that it drives Jimin crazy.

He releases the flesh with a wet sound and when he ducks his head again to suck at the junction of his neck and shoulder, Jungkook turns his head, nuzzling his face on the back of Jimin’s head and suddenly inhaling deep. Jimin is taken aback at first, halting his movements in confusion of what he’s doing, until it falls upon him that Jungkook is smelling his hair, inhaling so deep like Jimin’s scent is the last amount of oxygen in outer space.

Jimin wonders if he’s doing this because he's getting horny, but then Jungkook’s grip on his thighs tighten and he slides his hands further up, using them to pull Jimin even closer to him, their chests now flush. Jungkook’s breathing pattern grew worse, and Jimin can feel the way his heart is beating desperately inside his chest.

Or is it just his own?
It doesn't matter.

He pulls Jungkook’s hair harder, exposing even more his neck and trying to calm down his hormones exploding barely under the surface of his skin, wanting to break free and take over Jimin’s entire body.

Did Jungkook just recognize his smell? That’s crazy, right? He wouldn't.

Jimin detaches his lips from Jungkook’s skin reluctantly, not wanting to let go. He gets to admire his blooming red marks only for a few seconds before Jungkook is turning his face to him, scarlet cheeks and parted lips heaving. Jimin is caught by surprise, and so remains motionless, watching the boy’s next movements when Jungkook warily takes a hand over to his face and grabs him by the chin. His eyes widen, the skin where Jungkook touches burning. Is he going to kiss him? In front of all his friends? Why would he kiss him? He doesn't even know who he is.

Jimin frowns, feeling jealous all over again, ready to get up and go back to his seat, but then, delicately, as if he’s touching a flower petal, Jungkook grazes his thumb over his lips.

His heart stops. His oxygen is cut short, blocked by his throat closing.

What is he doing?

The younger slides his finger over the whole length of Jimin’s flesh, delineating his bottom lip, pressing down at it, and then following to his upper lip — the touch so tender it's like he’s touching paper glass. Jimin parts his lips to him, something about the whole situation so genuine that it eases his defences, until it strikes him—

His whole chest is set on fire when he realizes what Jungkook is doing. The goosebumps rise all over his arms, and he presses down harder on his lap, desperately needing to be closer.

Jungkook smelling his hair, drawing the form of his lips with his fingers — he knows. He knows it's Jimin.

Jimin doesn't have the time to process this information because right when it crashes on him, Jungkook cups his jaws with both hands and pulls him down, searing their lips in the most sweet kiss Jimin has ever received.

He can't help but whine against the touch, his heart tight — so, so tight —, and Jungkook feels like heaven. Jimin presses his lips more against his, wanting to chase the feeling, be overwhelmed by his warmth, and Jungkook seems to share the same urge, as he swipes his hands to Jimin’s hips and pulls him closer— closer .

They don't have time to deepen the kiss (if a barely longer than four seconds peck can be called a kiss) because everyone explodes in yells and screams as the loud and slightly drunk teenagers they are.

“Get off, off! You horny assholes, that's enough, you got your ten points!” someone says, but honestly, Jimin doesn't even care who.

His breathing is almost nonexistent and he doesn't know how his heart is still working.

Did Jungkook really pull him down for a kiss after delineating his lips and recognizing him by it? By his smell?

After their new year’s kiss Jimin honestly thought no other could top it, but this— this is a close
second. Too close second.

He’s dragged from Jungkook’s lap and sat down on his previous place by Junghwa, still a bit dazzled, not knowing how to act. He looks down when he sees Jungkook is taking the shirt off his eyes, too embarrassed to maintain any sort of eye contact knowing his heart won’t stop beating desperately inside his chest just for him.

Always him.

Jimin is the first to leave the room.

He sneaks out when Jungkook is on the bathroom, so he won’t follow him.

He just needs to be alone for awhile.

The realization of how gone he is for Jeon Jungkook always a bit too hard to handle.

He was feeling extremely overwhelmed under Jungkook’s intense stare in that tiny room. He just needed an easy escape to spend a little time with his own thoughts.

He gives some excuse that no one really cares much, because they’re already way past the tipsy stage. Jimin himself didn’t drink a lot — couldn’t, after all he could think about was Jungkook’s lips against his. His heart still races when he thinks about it.

So he leaves, and instead of going to their room, Jimin heads for the beach.

Something impells him to go there, like a magnet.

When he sits by the sand alone, the beach completely deserted with the waves crashing on the shore softly, that fresh breeze blowing against his cheeks — he takes a deep breath. He looks up at the stars and thinks about himself. The person he is, the person he was. The person he’s becoming. Is he proud of himself? Is he good enough? Good enough for someone to fall for.

Good enough for him to fall in love with himself.

He sighs, taking some dry sand in his palm and raising it to watch the grains slip through his fingers.

His chest is withholding a pressure that Jimin knows all too well. He doesn't think he can keep it to himself anymore.

He takes his phone in hands and searches for that number he’s so familiar with.

It rings, and rings, until—

“Fucking finally! Do you, by any chance, forgot you have a best friend? I know you’re mad at me
for not being able to go, but you're so not keeping your promise of updating me every single—"

“I think I’m falling for Jungkook.”

The line goes dead silent.

Jimin breathes.

And then,

“What?!”

He breathes again, deeper this time.

“He just kissed me.”

“What?”

Jimin shakes his head, laughing.

“It was stupid, we were playing spin the bottle and he— We— I don't know why I’m telling you this right now, it’s just—” he’s starting to get annoyed at his incapacity of forming full sentences.

“He just kissed me.”

“Hey, hey… Calm down, baby… I’m listening, there's no need to rush.”

“I’m just not sure how he feels about me.”

Taehyung doesn't miss a beat, before he’s saying,

“I think he's in love with you too.”

Jimin disregards his input with a scoff that’s half a laugh and half a sigh.

“I think you’re crazy. If anything, he might be slightly interested, but in love?” he laughs again. “Not really.”

Taehyung huffs in the other end of the line.

“Why is it so impossible in your head the idea of someone falling in love with you?”

Jimin winces, the accusation a way too straight punch in his gut. Taehyung knows him too well.

“It’s not that,” he lies, “It’s just…” Jimin blushes, so embarrassed to admit this out loud. But it's Taehyung, his best friend. His bestest friend. If there's anyone Jimin can share his fears and insecurities with, that's him. Even when he’s the source of his turmoil. Jimin squeezes his eyes, before letting out in one go, “I just think he’s been interested in you from the start.”

He can hear Taehyung sighing tiredly. “This again? I don't even know why you think that. Honestly, our relationship is pretty normal. He never did or said anything weird. On the other hand, when you and Jinyoung were having whatever you two were having I was waiting for the moment Jungkook would pulverize the poor boy with his own eyes.”

Jimin does a sound with his mouth. That's too far-fetched to believe, even for Taehyung.

“Now you’re just pushing it.” he says, drawing random patterns on the sand.

“I’m not! Do you ever look at him at all?” Jimin laughs. As if that's not all he does. “Are you sure
you’re in love? Because it's not possible you missed all of his glares to Jinyoung.” he shakes his head, “Besides, when you’re not looking, he can't stop staring at you either. It's endearing to watch, actually. The moment you look at him he averts his gaze so fast it seems you could disintegrate him on the spot.”

“Tae, I know you love a love story, but that's just not it. Whenever the three of us are together he can barely even talk to me. All he sees is you.” it's sad how melancholic his voice becomes all of a sudden.

“I think you’re creating all these obstacles and putting them on your path just because you’re scared of falling in love.”

Jimin smiles bittersweetly, “That’s the thing, though. I already did. A long time ago.”

Taehyung goes silent, and for a moment, all Jimin hears are the waves crashing down.

“What are you afraid of, then?”

“Getting hurt.” he says, lowly, voice barely above a whisper, too scared to put his fears out there, exposed. “Why would anyone even fall for me?” he trails, voice even smaller, wanting to take this out of his chest, but at the same time hoping Taehyung wouldn't hear at all.

“I— Don't say that…” he sounds baffled, nearly offended that Jimin would ever talk about himself like that. If only he knew. “What's so unrealistic about it? I, myself, can't count the amount of times I’ve fallen in love with you.”

Now, that makes Jimin laugh. He was getting a bit too gloomy for his liking. Maybe he is a bit drunk, after all.

“You can't ever be reliable on this, you’re like my mom or something.”

“I hate you for saying this.” Jimin chuckles behind his fist, “Disregarding my opinion like I’m nothing!” he goes overboard just to keep Jimin laughing and Jimin knows it. He laughs anyway, just because he’s so thankful.

“Shut up…” he murmurs softly, “I miss you.” he confesses, finally, looking up.

He does, really. He's having fun with his new friends (can he call them that already?), but Taehyung’s presence is just something else. Something completely different anyone can ever provide him. They like to joke around saying they're soulmates, but deep down, above all the teasing remarks, they know they mean every word.

“I miss you too… But now tell me this story straight. I didn't even know Jungkook was there. I mean— he just disappeared.”

Oh. Shit, right.

“Ah— yeah, he… he got some family problems, so he changed classes, or something.”

“Wh— really?!”

“Yeah, he said he was going to message you, but I think he just didn't have the time yet.”

“That’s okay. I mean, I was upset, of course, but if it’s family related then he must have been really burdened, right?”
Jimin squeezes his eyes. He hates lying to Taehyung. But he just doesn't feel like telling him about their whole story either. He doesn't know why, but some part of him, some selfish part of him, just wants to keep those memories between he and Jungkook only. A secret only they can share.

Anyone else barging on it and it might be tainted. It’s stupid, he knows, but he can’t let go of it.

“Yeah.” he agrees meekly, and then proceeds to update Taehyung about everything else that has happened in the trip so far.

He talks about Junghwa and Heeyeon, and Taehyung is excited to remember about them. He talks about how he kissed Jungkook’s friends and can almost see his best friend wiggling his eyebrows on the other side. He talks about how the inn is pretty, about the beach and the waterfall. Taehyung listens quietly, adding some funny comments here and there that makes Jimin laugh, and then talks about his own not-so exciting stay at the hospital and how he’s getting better. Jimin is happy to hear it, and when they finally fill each other in about everything from the last couple days, the line goes soft-quiet.

“Are you on the beach?”

“Yeah.”

“I can hear the waves.”

“It’s really pretty.” Jimin says, staring ahead.

“Hey, Jimin?”

“Mhm.”

“Don’t deny love to yourself.” Jimin sighs, not really wanting to go into that subject again, but listening anyway, “You deserve so much more than you give yourself credit for. Honestly, you deserve the whole world. I’ve never met someone more kind-hearted than you.”

“You’re hanging out with the wrong people, then.” he jokes to lighten the mood. If he’s being completely honest, though, he can’t agree with Taehyung. He thinks he’s pretty selfish.

“I’m serious… You may not believe me, but can you please try? For me.”

“Mhm.” he hums dryly. It’s not really a question of trying or not.

“I love you so much. It hurts me to hear you talking about yourself like this.”

Jimin knows it. That's why he almost never voices his thoughts. He’d hurt people who has absolutely nothing to do with his self-destructive mentality.

“I love you too.” is all he answers. “I’m a bit tired, though, so I’ll head back to my room, okay?”

“Okay. Take care of yourself, and call me more! I want to know stuff, I’m so bored here.” Jimin laughs.

“I will. You better go to sleep, it’s late and you’re still sick.”

“Yeah, I will. Good night, Jiminie.”

“Good night, Tae.”
Although, contrary to what he told Taehyung, he remains there, listening to the sounds of the nature around him, reminiscing on the times he’d confidently claim he wouldn’t ever be scared of heading into unknown waters fearing the depth. Fearing drowning. He wonders where that Jimin went, and when he will come back.

Jimin entered the room yesterday to a Jungkook already snoring loudly. It’s just fair, since he stayed on the beach to ungodly hours, but when he wakes up and catches no sign of the boy in the bedroom, his anxiety attacks. Is he avoiding him? Why didn’t he wake Jimin up? Not that he ever did in the last two days, but they spent all of them together and now he’s just not here and Jimin’s breath is starting to rag and—

His phone buzzes. He looks around and finds it tossed with his blankets.

Looking at the screen, his chest seems to instantly deflate in peaceful warmth when he reads Jungkook’s name.

It’s insane the power he holds over him, Jimin realizes.

“H-hello.” he hates that he stutters, remnants of his previous restlessness clear on his voice. He takes a deep breath to normalize his actions.

“Hey there. Did I wake you?”

“No, I just woke up now.” Jimin trails, absently playing with the blanket with his fingers. He’s still wondering why Jungkook left the room without waking him. Is he being too clingy? He is, right? He shouldn’t ask about it.

“Oh, sleeping beauty indeed, then.” he teases and Jimin frowns, “Do you even know what time is it?”

He shakes his head, and then remembers Jungkook can’t see him. “No.”

“It’s past noon.”

“What?! No way!” he pulls the phone from his ear for a second to check the time and it’s, indeed, past noon.

Jungkook is chuckling.

“The guys called us to play volleyball on the beach in the morning, but you were sleeping so tight, I didn’t have the heart to wake you...” it’s pathetic how Jimin sighs in relief. Everything is okay. “Besides, I came back yesterday 1 in the morning and you still weren’t in the room. You left so suddenly... Where were you?” Jungkook asks casually, but there’s an edge to his voice that sparks Jimin’s interest.

“I was at the beach.”
“Alone?” he sounds genuinely surprised by Jimin's answer.

“Yeah.” he answers, releasing a breath.

“Are you okay? I mean, did something happen?” Jimin bites his lip to hold back a smile. Jungkook is worried about him.

“No… I called Tae, actually, and then I just… stayed there.”

“Oh… I see. Mhm, how is he? Taehyung, is he better?”

“Yeah. He’s probably out of the hospital today. I told him you’d text him about suddenly disappearing into existence. I, uh, said you had family problems…”

“Okay, I’ll call him later.” Jungkook answers, but it sounds like he’s smiling. “Were you talking about me?”

Jimin almost chokes. “H— No?” his voice comes out oddly pitched, “I mean, we were talking about our days so you kind of made it into the conversation a little bit, because you’ve been a constant these last days, but yeah, whatever, just the basics, the basics!” he rambles endlessly and blushes just as bad. He sinks his face onto a pillow, dying of embarrassment. He’s such a loser, how does Jungkook does this to him?

“Huh-uh.” he sounds way too amused, despite agreeing with Jimin’s discourse, “I believe you.” as if he couldn't be sarcastic enough, “Anyway, get changed and come have lunch, sleeping beauty. We’re all waiting for you to eat.”

“Mhm, good friends… I’ll be right there!”

Jimin hangs up with a smile that he’s not able to erase even after he washes his face and rubs it with force. He doesn’t shower, since he did it late at night before going to bed, but he does put on his lotions and perfume before heading out. It's sunny, so the last thing he wants is to end up smelly.

Jimin finds everyone by the dinning hall. He spots Jungkook first, obviously — as if he could see anyone but him in a crowd. He’s wearing a white tank top and some flowery shorts that's just the face of summer. His hair is swiped back, and his skin is glistening a little with sweat, but he looks gorgeous. His skin is sun kissed already, golden, and Jimin marvels at it from the distance whilst he can, without getting caught. His features are all sharp on the edges — he looks nothing short of a greek god.

“Oh, look who’s here! He’s the one to bail us early and yet sleeps till noon!” Yugyeom protests and Jimin smiles sheepishly.

“Hi guys.”

“Did you sneak out to hook up with someone? Come on, tell us.” Junghwa asks excited beside Jungkook, whose smile falters a bit at her words. Jimin thinks he might be seeing things, but Jungkook definitely averts his gaze after she says that, his bright expression falling a little.

“I didn't.” he says firmly, hoping to assure him for who knows what reason, even though he already told him the truth earlier, “I had to update my best friend of the trip’s gossips so I was dissing all of you to him on the phone!” Jimin says and is happy to see some of the glint returning to Jungkook’s eyes.
“Ohhh, Kim Taehyung? He should’ve come, why didn’t he?”

“The idiot got sick.” Jimin answers, looking around to the buffet with hungry eyes, “Are we gonna sit here around on this empty table or are we gonna eat?”

“Eat!” everyone says in unison and scrambles off to the buffet table. Jimin unconsciously waits for Jungkook, who’s the last one to follow the group.

He smiles warmly at the younger, who flicks his forehead and then bops his nose. “Morning, you.”

“Ouch.” Jimin rubs his forehead, and they start walking side by side, “What was that for?” he doesn't comment on the light and soft bop on the tip of his nose, because his heart is still reeling from it.

“For sleeping till noon.”

“You could have woken me!” Jimin accuses and Jungkook scoffs.

“I could have not! Excuse me, but you didn't see how cute you were sleeping, I’m no monster!” Jimin’s eyes widen and he stops. “What?”

Jungkook continues, like he said nothing much, “Yeah.” the older then starts following him again, so he won't look dumb standing there, but he’s still trying to process that Jungkook just called him cute, “You and these sunburnt cheeks, all plump and rosy, you should have seen yourself…” and then he snaps his fingers like some realization just downed upon him, “Actually, I took some pics, do you wanna see?”

This time Jimin gasps and he gasps for good. He grabs Jungkook’s arms to turn him around. “You did what?!”

“I took pics.” Jungkook repeats as if Jimin is asking because he didn't hear it and not because he’s utterly speechless.

“W-why?”

“You looked cute.” Jimin slaps his arm and he doesn't know why. He’s burning, his ears are burning, his neck is burning, his cheeks are burning — everything is burning.

“Hey! What was that for?” Jungkook complains, rubbing his arm.

“For taking pictures of me! I must look horrible.”

Jungkook’s frown softens and he shakes his head, “Oh, no, hyung…” he pulls his phone out and unlocks it, clicking on the gallery to show Jimin his photos, “Look.” Jimin reluctantly looks at it. He hates having pictures being taken of him without his knowledge. How is he gonna work a proper angle to look good if he's unaware? But Jungkook’s pics are not bad, at all — at least, his baby fat is not showing. “See? Adorable.” Jungkook reasons, swiping his finger to another pic from a different angle.

“Just how many of these you took?”

“Nine, but some were from the same angle so I deleted them. I have five now.”

“Oh my god.” Jimin facepalms himself, dying of embarrassment.
Jungkook seems to finally pick up on it, smiling, “Are you shy? You’re all red…”

“It’s the sun!” Jimin excuses himself at the same second, “You said it yourself!”

“But you’re red from head to toe, hyung.”

“Then this must be a hell of an insolation.” Jimin quickly cuts the matter, grabbing Jungkook’s hand and marching to the buffet, “Come on, let’s eat.”

Jungkook laughs loudly, but doesn't add anymore comments to it — and, more importantly, lets his fingers curl around Jimin’s, pretending to have to be dragged towards the food.

After everyone is perfectly fed, they part ways. Jungkook’s friends are crazy about playing sports on the beach, and Jimin and the girls are not exactly thrilled by the idea of spending the entire afternoon under the sun and covered in sweat. So they head for the spa the inn owns, and the rest of the day is spent doing what Junghwa calls ‘princess cleansing’. Heeyeon accuses the term of being sexist and they enter on a never ending bickering that rends Jimin giggling on the background.

He gets an out of body experience when the masseur touches his back. For a moment there, he swears he saw the light of paradise and came back. The woman seems to have fairy hands and when his session is over, he almost begs her for another one. He also gets a hair hydration, the strands being massaged and taken care of with creams and oils he never even heard of. The spa also provides a whole pack of skin care that leaves Jimin feeling like there’s not a single grain of dirty inside his pores. When he looks in the mirror, all the blackheads on his nose are gone. He’s so awed by it (since blackheads vs Jimin is a daily battle he always loses) that he can't stop bowing and thanking the ladies that took care of him. When it’s time for them to leave, dinner is already being served.

Neither Jungkook or the boys are in sight, so Jimin pats his pockets to call him, missing his presence, but only then it hits him he left his phone in the room. He wonders if Jungkook texted him, and what he spent the afternoon doing. Did they only play volleyball, or did they get in the water, did something else? He eats dinner with those thoughts in mind, but when he enters their room Jungkook is still not there.

Jimin sighs, not liking how much he’s missing him. Only three days ago he wouldn’t even bear to look the boy in the eyes and now he’s all melancholic over his absence for what? Six, seven hours? He needs to get a grip.

Although when he throws himself face down on his bed all that makes way into his mind is the way Jungkook cupped his face and pulled him down for a kiss yesterday. His chest tingles. Did Jungkook really know it was him?

He sits up restless, ruffling his hair in annoyance. Jimin hates feeling like this. He just wants to kiss Jungkook again. They haven’t been alone ever since what happened last night, though. How is Jimin supposed to look him in the eyes? He is going to blush his way through their entire
conversation, for sure. He presses his cheeks with his palms unconsciously. Why are they so responsive to the younger’s actions? Most of the times he’s just teasing and yet…

Jimin groans out loud, throwing his body back on the mattress.

Where are you?

As if an answer falling from above and landing right on his lap, Jungkook opens the door of the room.

Jimin raises his body on his elbows to see him and frowns when he spots the younger with an ice cream in hands, licking the white cream of a cone and closing the door behind him.

“Where did you get this?” he asks curious.

“Mhm?” Jungkook raises his brows, lips dirty. Jimin doesn’t dare stare much. “I sneaked out.” he says casually, “Don’t you ever read your texts?” he asks then, pouting, “I called you a thousand times for you to come with us.”

Jimin feels a pang of guilty at the same time his chest tugs with something akin to euphoria, but just not quite there yet.

“I forgot it here. I just came back.”

The younger hums, taking off his shoes and sitting beside Jimin, who remains laid down. “What did you do today?”

“I went to the spa.” he pushes himself up so Jungkook can have a better look of him, winking his eyelashes repeatedly, “Don’t I look prettier?”

Jimin was expecting Jungkook to chuckle and use some teasing remark that would make him roll his eyes and fall back on the bed. But instead he takes a hand to Jimin’s face and softly pushes his bangs backwards, threading his fingers through the length of his hair and then sliding his index over his jawline to lightly squeeze his chin in the end.

Jimin feels every touch with a heart falling harder within every beat.

For a moment there, he thinks Jungkook might kiss him, but then the boy returns his attention to the melting ice cream.

“Yeah, it’s better you didn’t come with us.” he says finally, and before Jimin has the time to feel offended, he completes, “My friends would have jumped on you the moment you appeared looking like this.”

“I—” he’s utterly speechless by the unexpected comment, thrown in the air out of the blue, “What?”

And so Jungkook snorts, seemingly annoyed. He proceeds to eat the ice cream, but his expression turns sour, as if the sweetness is suddenly distasteful. “They won’t stop talking about you, those assholes. Damn, I’m straight, but Jimin knows how to kiss. Oh, Jimin’s so pretty I can’t believe he’s a guy. If Jimin was a girl I’d definitely date him.” he changes his voice to an oddly high-pitched one to match the poor imitations of his friends. Jimin has to hold back not to laugh. Jungkook looks so pissed. “That’s literally all they talked about the whole day, me and Yugyeom were like ‘okay, enough is enough!’, but still they wouldn’t shut up, so we suggested going out for ice cream and that was literally the only way to get them quiet.” he bites the cone, chewing angrily, turning to
Jimin with a scowl, “Why do you have to be such a great kisser? You got them infatuated.”

Jimin hides his face with a hand, unable to hold back his chuckles any longer. “What can I say? I’m the straight cure.”

“Funny.” Jungkook takes another bite, “Joke all you want, but wait until they’re knocking here to piss you off.”

“If they’re coming for a round two, then I don’t see why I would be annoyed.” he teases, anticipating the reaction.

Jungkook glares at him, straight in the eye. “Okay, now that’s not funny.” he says with a very serious expression and Jimin tilts his head in fake innocence.

“Why not?” he inches closer to the younger’s face, “Are you jealous?”

The boy nearly chokes, shoving almost the entire cone into his mouth and proceeding to cough endlessly. When he looks up, he is blushing like he never did before and Jimin thinks there’s something powerful about finally being the one with the upper hand.

“No?” he squeaks out, but it sounds more like a question than an actual answer, “Why would I?”

Jimin pulls back, shrugging. “Dunno.” he doesn’t bother to hide the smirk on the corner of his lips, but chooses to focus his attention in something else rather than Jungkook’s fierce eyes.

Jungkook gets up, cheeks stuffed with the ice cream and wiping his fingers on his shirt. “Anyway, next time answer your phone so we can sneak out together to grab some ice cream. I’d have bought one for you, but it’d melt on the way and also I didn’t know your favorite flavor.”

Jimin is looking at him with a smile dancing on his lips. Jungkook looks oddly pretty under the yellow lightening of the room.

“Pistachio and strawberry.”

The boy makes a face, sitting back on the bed. “Really? Pistachio is green.” he sounds disgusted.

“So? It’s delicious.”

“It looks bad.”

“What’s your favorite flavor?”

“Chocolate caramel.” he announces proudly and Jimin rolls his eyes.

“Tell me why I’m not surprised.”

“Because I have a sweet-like appearance.”

“Are you telling me I have a greenish appearance?”

“Yes.”

He drops his jaw in a dramatic display of offense. Jungkook throws his head back laughing. “Excuse you, but my skin is the one glowing right now in this room.”

“Right. I’ll have to drop by that spa later. How will I manage to keep up with you walking around
Jimin shakes his head, laughing and disregarding Jungkook’s compliment. He knows he’s teasing, there’s no reason for his heart to race pathetically. But still, he’s leaning back on his hands, with his head tilted and he’s just so beautiful. Jimin bites his lips.

“As if you have to try to keep up,” he answers truthfully and the honesty seems to swipe Jungkook off his axis for a moment. He opens his eyes wide and his lips part, so Jimin averts his gaze, embarrassed.

He misses when Jungkook’s expression softens and he starts to stare at him in complete fondness. “You don’t look yourself much in the mirror, do you?”

Jimin flushes. Just when exactly did this turn into a competition of compliments?

“Mhm…” he hums to gain some time, mind racing to find something to change the subject, “Did you spend your entire day on the beach? You’re tanned.”

Smooth.

“Yeah.” Jungkook nods, scooting further on the bed so he can rest his back on the headboard. Jimin has to get on a new position so he fully face him. “Do you know what I saw?” his eyes glint in excitement and so Jimin raises his eyebrows curious, “People hang gliding! That was so cool, I really wanted to go and try it!”

“Woooh!” Jimin shares his excitement, “Hang gliding is so cool! I really want to try it before I die.”

Jungkook laughs out loud at his statement. “What kind of sentence is that? Before I die? How depressing!”

Jimin scowls, offended. “It’s not depressing! It’s motivational, motivational!”

“How is that motivational when you’re doing it thinking about your death?”

“Huh? So what? We’re all dying a little more every day as we grow older, that’s just reality. Getting goals and things you want to do before you die gives a reason to keep going.” he explains and Jungkook’s features morph to something Jimin can’t decode.

“You’re weird.” he says after some seconds, and Jimin simply sticks out his tongue to him, “What are the other things, then? That you want to try before you die.”

Jimin crawls closer to him, giddy. “I have a list.” he plops down beside Jungkook and also leans against the headboard, “Do you wanna see?”

“Do you have a list?” Jungkook repeats, chuckling and Jimin hums, stretching his arm to reach his phone on the nightstand, “Show me, I’m curious.”

He absentmindedly opens his notes and gives the phone to Jungkook. He wrote it a long time ago, when he was really depressed, trying to get back on his feet. It was incredibly helpful, as Jimin realized some of the things he wrote he had already done, and as the days went by and he checked more things from the list — it was extremely rewarding. It provided him a sense of accomplishment and it allowed him to feel proud when he tried to convince himself he had no reason for that — there was solid proof he was making progress so there was no way he could sabotage himself tossing around those damaging lies.
Jimin is especially fond of that list so maybe that’s why he's excited to show it to Jungkook. He doesn't even remember everything he wrote.

Jungkook starts reading out loud, which makes Jimin smile shyly.

“Get a puppy. Name it wow so when I call him it seems like I’m barking.” The younger throws his head back, cackling. His eyes crinkle and it’s so cute. Jimin hides his face in embarrassment, even though he's very proud of the creative name he came up to his future dog. “That’s golden.” Jungkook comments, turning his head to him. Jimin is laughing along without even realizing. “Please get a puppy as soon as possible, I can't wait to see you walking down with him at the street, people thinking you’re barking when you call his name. Shout out to your mind.”

Jimin wears a cocky expression and bows to him. “Thank you very much, sir.”

Jungkook chuckles breathily one last time, shaking his head before he continues.


“Artsy. Quotes. All monochrome black. I want my body to be a whole canvas!”

“Ohh, really? I can't really picture you with tattoos.”

Jimin raises a brow. “Just you wait. I’ll slay that look.”

The younger hums in agreement. “I bet you will.” he turns to Jimin’s phone again, “Create my own choreography and perform it to a lot of people.” Jungkook stares at the screen for a moment before raising his head, “For real? Do you dance? That's what you want to do?”

Jimin scratches his neck, feeling a bit ashamed that dance is not his main goal. It feels wrong to say that. “No… I’m trying that scholarship in Japan with Taehyung, remember? I might go for engineering or something. Dance is just a hobby.”

Jungkook is listening carefully, his whole attention on Jimin as if he’s telling a secret. “Really? Engineering doesn't sound much like you, not to be offensive. Do you like it?”

“It’s not…” Jimin doesn't know how to explain, “When you’re not from a wealthy family your goal is not really to achieve your dream career. It’s to provide for your family. Kind of give back everything they did for you, y’know? I want my mom to have the best life I can give her.”

Jungkook nods quietly, eyes glazed as if he’s not completely in the moment, absorbed by his thoughts. “That's really selfless, you know? I never stopped to think about this, how it can be a worry for other people. I’m sorry.”

Jimin smiles. “It’s okay. A job is not everything in life. There's other ways I can do what I want.”

Jungkook smiles back, but it doesn't really reach his eyes. “It’s still sad, though.”

“I’ll be rich!” Jimin jokes in an attempt to lighten Jungkook’s mood, “What’s sad about that, huh?”

He seems to recognize Jimin’s effort, because he curls his eyes and leans back on the bed, sliding down a little to get more comfortable. “Mhm-hm, you’re right. Earn a lot of money and buy me an apartment.”

The older slaps his arm, “You spoiled brat. Don't you already have enough?”

He laughs, “I want a present from you.”
“Does it have to be an apartment?”

“No, I was joking. You can give me a rock and I’ll cherish like it’s worth millions.”

Jimin laughs, a bit baffled and shoves Jungkook’s shoulder in lack of better thing to do. “What are you talking? What got you so cheesy all of a sudden?”

He simply shrugs and returns to his previous task of reading Jimin’s wishes out loud in the open. “Visit all the continents. Learn different languages. See the stars without the city lights. Learn how to drive. Donate blood. Dye my hair.” he reads everything very matter-of-factly, and then he turns to Jimin with a funny expression, “Your wishes are all quite simple.”

“Are you insulting my list?”

“No, I’m just saying they’re simple. I was hoping for some crazy things like swim naked at dawn or something.”

Jimin laughs, “I wrote that down once, but then I deleted it. I realized I didn’t really want to swim naked but rather do something not expected when the world was sleeping. Maybe not unexpected, but just something, y’know? I have no idea how to put this, and also had no idea back then so I just gave up on it.”

“Mhmmm… I kind of get it, but I still think swimming naked is a promising wish. We could check that from your list today if you wanted to.” he wiggles his eyebrows and Jimin falls back with the force of his laugh. Jungkook’s remark was so out of the blue that it hits him completely unarmed. He hides his mouth as he laughs hard, using his other hand to hit the boy on the arm.

“Yah! You really…” Jimin shakes his head while all Jungkook does is stare at him with that boyish grin that tugs his heart’s strings, “You’re shameless.”

“Tell me something I don't know.” he winks and Jimin rolls his eyes, pushing his hair back, “Moving on, let’s see what else you got… Visit an orphanage twice a year. Oh, that’s nice… Adopt a child— Wait, really?”

Jimin pouts shyly, averting his eyes. “Yeah.”

“You want to be a father?”

“Yeah… Of course. I love kids.”

“Mhm…” is all he says before continuing, “Fall in love. Marry by the beach.” Jungkook goes quiet for a moment and Jimin blushes, “This is cute. Have you never fallen in love?”

He shakes his head timidly. It feels like a lie denying it now, but it’s not like he can just confess out of nowhere. Jimin changed a lot ever since he met Jungkook, he realizes. “I tried a lot, though. I’d fool around with anyone that would give me just the slightest hope of falling in love. It never worked, so I just didn’t carry on with them.” he explains plainly. Finds it easier to talk about it of the Jimin in the past. He’s a completely different person now.

Jungkook tilts his head, staring at him as if he can make out the shape of his soul inside his orbs. Jimin feels bare, despite all the clothes enveloping him. “And now?”

He stares back at the boy, blinking slowly. “Now what?”

“How do you feel about falling in love now?”
He purses his lips, thinking a little, pondering how can he not expose himself more than he already has. “It’s scary.” he concludes, at last.

Jungkook seems surprised. “Really?” Jimin nods. “Mhm… We have very different perspectives about things, y’know… I think it’s beautiful.”

“You do?” Jimin asks quietly.

When Jungkook thinks about falling in love, who does he think of?

Beautiful… Jimin doesn't know why that makes him want to hide. Maybe because deep down he knows that word is hardly related to him.

“Yeah. It made me see things completely different. Like new colours I was blind to until then.”

Jimin’s chest tightens. “Are you in love?”

Jungkook looks at him with something written inside his eyes. But it's foreign and Jimin can't read. “Yeah.” he breathes. “Are you not?”

Jimin inhales deeply. How can he lie to his face like this, when the question is so clear?

But it still stings to admit out loud.

“Yeah.”

Jungkook’s eyes are wandering through his every feature, as if he’s only discovering them now and can’t bring himself to focus on a single one. Jimin watches him gulp when he finally settles on his eyes. “We should cross that off, then.”

He mimics him, swallowing hard. “Yeah. We should.”

Jungkook nods, and slowly brings his finger to the screen to click on the little box beside the text, checking it. Jimin doesn't know if he should feel relieved or terrified. Maybe a combination of both is a shitty match, but it's what he’s got.

“Hey…” the younger calls softly, locking the screen and putting the phone on the bed, so he can have his full attention on Jimin, “Those flings you mentioned… How was it? You never dated anyone?”

Jimin chuckles, finding the question oddly innocent. “Have you never had a fling with someone?”

He lowers his eyes, rubbing the hem of his shirt through his fingers. “Uh, I just… I never really got with someone long enough to know stuff or bond… Sometimes not even their names. I moved around a lot, you know that. I don't know how these things work.”

Jimin nods, understanding. “I never dated.” he answers finally, “I don't know how to explain, a fling it’s a bit like what I had with Jinyoung.” Jungkook’s muscles tense a bit at the name, but Jimin is too caught up in his explanation to notice. “We knew each other, we texted, talked, we hooked up occasionally… I don't know, we went to eat sometimes, but I don't know if those count as dates.” he trails and Jungkook immediately steps in.

“It doesn't.” he shoots and seems to regret it the same instant, “I mean, for it to be a date you need to have feelings, right? So it doesn't count.”

Jimin bites his lip, thoughtful. “Yeah, I guess. Though, I did have like…” he stops, pondering if he
really should talk about Doyoung.

Would Jungkook find him stupid once Jimin opened up about it, bared to him how dumb he was to believe the man’s words when all he wanted was to snatch Jimin’s virginity with hungry, fetishized fingers? An old, adult man lusting over a teenager that could as well have been his younger brother. Jimin feels sick to the stomach just remembering it.

“What is it?” Jungkook scoots closer to him, sensing something is wrong.

“Are you not going to judge me?”

“Of course not…” the boy answers, softening instantly, “I’m sorry I ever did, before.”

Jimin smiles, a warm little flame flicking inside him at the way Jungkook is still worrying about that. “It’s okay.” he clears his throat, pondering how to start, body unconsciously sliding down more, closer, seeking Jungkook’s warmth. “I kind of had a thing with… a man a lot older than me. Perhaps he was the closest thing of dating someone I ever experienced.”

“A lot…” Jungkook repeats warily, “A lot how?”

Jimin hates how this answer always hangs heavy from his tongue. “He… I, um, I was seventeen at the time, he was… Mhm, he was twenty seven.”

Jungkook gasps, pulling back to fully look at Jimin’s face. “Oh my god? What the fuck, what a pedophile!” he sounds so angry and all of a sudden Jimin doesn't want to talk about it anymore, something about the word pedophile ripping a bandage from a scar that it’s still bruising. He lowers his eyes, heart beating fast. “I’m sorry, I didn't mean to snap I just… This… What did he do to you?” Jimin can sense Jungkook is holding back when he asks — he sounds desperate.

“Are you angry?” he asks instead, and Jungkook's eyes go tender just for him. He reaches for Jimin's hands.

“Not with you.” he pulls him closer to him, arms pressed against his chest, “I’m angry because he used you. You know that, right?”

His voice fails. “Yeah.” he somehow hopes for the subject to die there, but Jungkook is still expectantly looking at him waiting for an answer. Jimin takes a deep breath. “We… we just did what I was used to do with other boys, I… we just hooked up… like, handjob, blowjob and those things…” Jimin’s cheeks redden upon the words falling from his lips, “I was considering going all the way with him, so I talked to my sister, but when she found out he was twenty seven she freaked out and talked some sense into me… I broke up with him and he— he kind of… exploded.” Jimin winces a little at the memory and Jungkook squeezes his hand, attentive of his every move, “He said some horrible things, but thankfully it was just that.” he finishes, strangely with some sense of relief.

Jungkook is looking at him as if he’s worth more than all the stars in the universe. “I’m so sorry, Jimin. Truly, I… I don't even know what to say. You didn't deserve to go through that.”

He gives him a tight-lipped smile. “No one does. But it’s okay. His words still haunt me sometimes, but…” he pops his lips, shaking his head, “I’m just glad I didn't have sex with him. It’d be pretty shitty remembering my first time with someone like that.”

Jungkook nods quietly, and something about the way he shifts his eyes and gnaws the corner of his lips gives away he wants to ask something. “Are you satisfied… with the one you had your first time, then? Since it was not him…”
Jimin tilts his head, “I haven't had it, yet.”

The younger’s jaw slowly drops, “What?”

He simply shrugs.

“You’ve never had sex? You? Park Jimin?”

Jimin lowers his eyes under his inquisitive gaze. “So what?”

“Are you messing with me? Because, really, just— how?”

He snorts, beginning to feel offended (and ashamed) by Jungkook’s incredulity. “I just didn't do it… What about it?!”

The boy seems to sense Jimin’s growing irritation, because his eyes widen and he shakes his hands in front of his body. “No, hyung, there’s nothing about it, it’s just… unexpected. I mean, it’s you. You’re all sexually confident and you kind of exude this type of flirting aura… It’s just hard to believe, that’s all.”

Jimin blushes. “Well, I’m only 18 so that's completely normal.”

“I know.”

“...why? Did you do it already?”

Jungkook looks down, ruffling the back of his head. “Uh, I… yeah.”

“Really?” Jimin tries to hold back his surprised tone. Jungkook is a year younger than him. “How… How was it?” he asks and regrets it the same second because it just sounds so dumb and why would even Jungkook want to answer that? What if he starts getting into details? That’s so not what he wants, he might combust into flames.

“It was in the US. I was sixteen.” Jimin’s eyes go wide, “Oh come on, don't give me that face, it was last year on… march? April? Somewhere along that. I turned seventeen on september.”

“Um, I know, but that's still… early… I guess.”

“Yeah, I guess it is.” Jungkook agrees, pulling a loose string from his shirt. “It was at a party. The only good part of it is that I was able to remember the girl’s name. She had already done it, so it was a bit embarrassing… Anyway, I’ll never see her again anyway, so.” he looks at Jimin waiting for a response but when Jimin gives him none he adds, “I never did it with a boy, though.”

Jimin hums. He wonders if Jungkook would like more having sex with a girl after he tries it with a boy. Would he want to try it both ways? Jimin knows he wants, but what if Jungkook is scared of being a bottom?

And why the fuck does this even matter when the two of you are not having sex?

He gulps. “I think I… tried everything besides actual… sex.” he doesn't know why he’s so embarrassed to talk about this, why his cheeks are burning so hard. He's usually so easy-going with these subjects, he doesn't understand why Jungkook’s presence ignites a reverse reaction on him.

“Even… y’know… putting the finger in there?”

“Even... fingering. I tried it alone, though, because I was scared to do it with anyone else.”
Jungkook blushes. “Is it good?”

Something about the question, and the way he asks — voice low, eyes zeroed on his lips — unleashes a swelling heat in the pit of his stomach.

“Yeah.”

The boy’s throat bobs up and down. Jimin watches it a bit dazzled.

“But you don’t trust anyone to do it?”

“I’m not intimate like this with anyone. It’s the same for sex, I… I don’t want it to be meaningless. Don’t want to do it just because I’m horny. I want it to be a memory I’ll cherish rather than one I’ll be ashamed of.” Jungkook laughs and just then Jimin realizes what he said. “Oh my god, I’m sorry! I didn’t mean to—”

“Jimin, it’s okay. Really, I’m aware my first time wasn’t the most ideal. But I don’t regret it, not really.”

Jimin nods, and waits for some seconds of building courage before he asks, “Have you done it… a lot? After your first time?”

“After it I was so ashamed that I just tried again in august. It was so embarrassing, hyung, I came in like 3 minutes and I didn’t even know how to thrust properly. Seriously, I almost buried myself alive!” Jimin throws his head back laughing, Jungkook’s dramatic tone purposeful for that. “But then I was like ‘if you want to know how to do it, you need experience’, so I stopped avoiding advances at parties and just went with it.” Jimin nods, something warm in his chest about Jungkook sharing details of his life with him, despite it being about him banging other people. “It’s not like I did it a million times, though. After my birthday, my parents flew to Spain and stayed there until we got back to Korea in december and I met you.” the older flushes at his words, but he bites it back with a blank expression, nodding. “What about you, though?” Jimin’s brows shoot up, trying to understand. “Your hook ups.”

“A-ah…” he stutters, suddenly gawky. “What about them?”

“Were there a lot?”

Jimin laughs awkwardly. After he and Taehyung turned seventeen and got their fake ids they’d literally crash a party every weekend. Saturdays for losing it, sundays for healing, was what Taehyung used to say. Jimin would make out with at least 4 boys every night. He kind of regrets it now, but back then he was all about live fast, die young, be wild and have fun.

He bites his lips, sheepish. “Uh, yeah, kind of.”

“Was everyone from school?” Jungkook sounds really curious, but Jimin can’t help but laugh.

“Not really… Just some, but most of them I met at parties and such. I always had kind of a thing for older men. Guess I learned my lesson.” he murmurs that last sentence, not wanting to sour the mood.

“Mhmmmm?” Jungkook prompts with a suggestive voice, “What about me, hyung? I’m younger than you.”

His heart skips a beat.
“You’re an exception.” You’re the exception of my every rule.

“I see… We’re not that different, y’know. You and me.”

They fall silent, bodies pressed together. Jimin's hand is still clutched tight around Jungkook’s. The younger starts absentmindedly playing with his fingers.

“Young hands are really small.” he comments with no bite. Jimin says nothing, a bit swiped of his feet by the sight. “You mentioned a sister earlier,” Jungkook says suddenly, not letting go of his hand. It makes Jimin want to pull him even closer, “but I thought you only had a brother.”

Jimin explains to him all about Eunbi and his family's relationships, while Jungkook listens to everything, popping some questions and comments here and there. When he finishes, the boy starts sharing about his family as well.

Jimin learns that Jungkook doesn't resent his parents like he imagined he did. They just don't have much in common, Jungkook inputs, they don't really know how to talk to him, missed too much time, but they’re trying. He says he’s aware that everything they did, they did it for him; always trying to do the best for him. Even when their good intentions reversed into shitty consequences, he never complained. My grandma raised me well, he boasts proudly and Jimin smiles. It shocks him to find out both his parents as well as his grandma know about his bisexuality and are okay with it. After he tells Jimin this, he decides to also open up about his coming out story. Jungkook only knows bits about what Jimin harshly told him over the phone, so he clears up about what happened to Jihyun and everything. They talk for hours and before they know it, it’s past 1 am, the clock almost hitting 2. They’re closer than they were when they started talking, sides pressed together and fingers intertwined. Jimin doesn't know what to read from the situation, so he simply doesn’t — he just goes with it.

They have placed some pillows behind their backs for the position to be more comfortable and Jungkook’s head has fallen over Jimin’s shoulder since then.

He is breathing down his neck and their voices are more like quiet murmurs than anything else. No need to be loud when they’re this close to each other.

“Hey.” Jungkook mutters after some minutes into the quiet, “Isn’t it crazy how we can do anything we want to?” his breath tickles his skin, but by this point Jimin has already grown used to it.

He frowns. “That's not true. I can't fly.”

He almost thinks he can feel Jungkook rolling his eyes at the remark, which makes him smile. “Possible things, hyung. Like, we could start yelling from the top of our lungs or break this entire room down if we wanted to.”

“We’d be kicked out.”

“That's not the point…” Jungkook mumbles softly, “The point is that we could.” He is drawing the patterns of Jimin’s shirt with his fingers, the touch making his chest buzz and spread goosebumps all over his arms. “Our whole life could be changed by that. We would have to find another place to stay the night. Maybe we wouldn't, maybe we would have to sleep on the street. We would have to find another way to get back home, because we might be kicked out from school as well.”

Jimin laughs.

“You have quite an imagination.”
Jungkook tsks.

“I’m serious, hyung. We can do so many things. I could run away from home. I could rob a bank. I
could start a new life sailing. I could try and travel around the world in a little boat. Doesn't it
sound exciting? All the possibilities. Your whole life can be changed in one second. By one single
event.”

Jimin can't deny. It does sound exciting. But he’s trying to deflect from all the reasons Jungkook is
giving him to fall harder in love tonight, so he tries joking and says the worst possible thing.

“Yeah, like, I could kiss you to shut you up right now.”

Jungkook’s hand stops moving and his breathing staggers inside his throat. Jimin belatedly realizes
his words are not going to be taken as a joke. He’s so scared of Jungkook’s answer that he squeezes
his eyes shut, prepared for the hit, but what comes is the sound of a deep inhale and the hushed
whisper,

“You could…”

Jungkook slides his hand up to Jimin’s jaw and pulls him down to crash his lips against his neck.
He gasps, feeling the boy’s warmth all over his body, heart battling all his reasonable senses.

Jungkook gives no advance warning, no signal, just trails the skin all over with his kisses, lightly
sucking but not bruising. He’s making little sounds with his throat as if he’s desperate, that it’s like
liquid fire into Jimin’s veins.

Dragging his lips up, he mouths all the way down his jawline, nibbling at the skin softly before he
pulls back panting, just when Jimin was preparing to pull him down and kiss him senseless against
the mattress.

“What is it?” he asks, breath failing and Jungkook sits upright, tugging at his hands so he’s up as
well. “What, what's wrong?”

“Let's do something. Get up.”

Jimin tries to keep up, but his mind is clouded. “What do you mean?”

Jungkook is already putting on his shoes. “Come on, hyung!”

“Jungkook, it’s two in the morning.”

He grins at him in response, clearly excited. “I know.”

Jimin can't understand, they were about to kiss, so what is he doing now? Does he not want to kiss
him, so he’s making up some excuse to cover it up? But it was him who started, though, right?

Jimin swallows all the questions and finds his flip flops. It feels like a crime to taint Jungkook’s
joyful expression with his obscure anxiety.

The younger extends his hand to him and he takes it, every single worry tossed away from his
mind.

They follow down the hallways of the rooms on their tiptoes. Not that walking around is
prohibited, but somehow whatever it is they’re doing seems to be private, no one else can barge in.

“Jungkook, where are we going?” Jimin whispers, but gets his answers when they reach the pool
area in a few seconds.

He smiles, thinking Jungkook wants to lay down and watch the sunrise again, but suddenly he lets go of his hand and proceeds to step closer and closer to the pool. Jimin opens his eyes wide. “Jungkook, what are you doing?!” he prompts, whisper-yelling.

The boy simply looks over his shoulder and gives him a sly smirk, before his shirt is flying off his head.

Before Jimin can even react, he’s jumping into the water without a care, the splash loud and thunderous in the silent summer night.

He emerges from the pool in no second, shaking his head with a smile to get the water from his eyes. “Come in.” he invites and looks so effortlessly irresistible down there, wet and messy hair dripping onto his golden skin, cheeks sunburnt and lips red, shining prettily under the moonlight.

_Fuck it._

Jimin shakes his head in disbelief that he’s actually doing this, pulling his shirt up and taking his shoes off. He takes two steps back and then runs, diving in before he can lose the courage.

The water is freezing cold, the goosebumps take over his skin before he can even hit the ground of the pool. Getting impulse a few seconds later, Jimin goes up for air. He emerges right beside Jungkook, who is still spotting that beautiful smile with its boyish glow that’s so charming.

Jimin splashes water on his face. “You’re fucking crazy.”

He cackles, crinkling his eyes. “You’re here with me, though. I thought you were going to resist more. That I’d have to run around you to get you into it by force.”

The older stares at him with a face and then morphs it into a flirtatious one. “I’m unpredictable, sweetheart.”

“You are.” Jungkook agrees, approaching.

Jimin steps back instinctively.

“What is this all about, anyway?”

“You said you wanted to do something crazy when everyone else was sleeping.” he says simply, voice mellow, so close and all the same closer, until Jimin is caged against the wall.

He sucks in a breath, surprised by the words. His brain is working a million per hour alongside his heart and he’s falling short on the smart answers. “There’s nothing crazy about swimming, though.” is what he manages to croak out, eyes fixed on Jungkook’s lips just a few inches from his own.

“We’re not just swimming.” he murmurs, thighs brushing against Jimin’s. Jimin is so focused, so attentive of every move, that he reads every word from his mouth, “We’re falling in love.”

Everything stops.

Jimin’s breathing, the heartbeats, the blood pumping through his veins. It freezes, and for a moment, it’s like time does also.

And then, it’s a dam breaking, flooding. Too much, too soon, and Jimin is overwhelmed,
overflowing.

“What?”

Jungkook steps even closer.

“Is was you, right, hyung? Yesterday, on the game. It was you.”

If Jimin thought he couldn’t head more overdrive, he was completely wrong.

Everything is heightened. Is Jungkook confessing to him right now? To him? “How could you know!” he exclaims, accusing, desperate, but Jungkook is giving him nothing to ground himself apart from his huge, enchanting presence and Jimin is being drawn to his orbit with not a single will to resist. “You were blindfolded…”

“You think I don’t know? The shape of your lips, the taste? Your smell.”

He’s so close. Jimin curls his fists under the water. “You can’t… you can’t know…” he protests weakly.

“Can’t I?” Jungkook leans down and grabs Jimin’s wrist, “Want me to prove it?” Jimin looks up to his eyes, completely ready to do anything he wants to, and nods.

The younger bites his bottom lip, staring at Jimin as if it’s physically hurting him to stay away.

He takes Jimin’s hand to his eyes and softly places the palm over them, letting his sight be taken away from him. When his eyes are properly covered, he searches for Jimin’s waist and pulls him closer, holding him tight. “Kiss me.” he demands lowly.

Jimin’s heart cannot possibly take this much drops without breaking. He breathes in deep.

“Wha—”

Jungkook presses him against the wall. “Kiss me.” he urges again, chin inclining towards Jimin’s mouth, “Kiss me, hyung. Ki——”

Jimin grabs him by the neck, chasing his lips and shutting him up like he’s starved — and maybe he is. He cages Jungkook’s bottom lip between his owns, marvelling at the softness, tugging and biting, until he feels Jungkook smiling and hears his voice mumbling,

“Told ya’ it was you.”

Jimin’s stomach flips over and he locks their lips one more time, not wanting to be distant, needing to be as close as possible. He slides his hand over Jungkook’s eyes to his hair, swiping his bangs back and fistig the strands. The younger’s lips part at that, tongue poking out to let Jimin in and he does. They kiss intensely, inhaling in deep amounts of air in between the kiss just so they won’t let go.

Jungkook grabs him by the thighs and latches him around his waist, hands roaming down Jimin’s naked chest and squeezing the curve of his waist. Jimin gasps every now and then, jaws dropping at Jungkook’s burning touches which only gives way for the boy to kiss him deeper — not that he’s complaining.

Something about being sober while kissing Jungkook works its own magic — almost like that night, but all the same so different.
It’s when the past events make way into Jimin’s mind that it hits him — a strange sense of deja vu so strong he has to break the kiss apart, breathing hard.

Jungkook doesn’t seem to mind, sinking down to his neck and to proceed from where he left off in the bedroom. Everything about their desperation for each other feels like the party night — but the clear mind, free of alcohol and fully conscious on why they’re doing this— Jimin thinks it will stop him from breathing.

“You have no idea how long I’ve been wanting to kiss you like this.” Jungkook groans, lavishing his tongue over Jimin’s skin and sucking down on a spot. “I want to kiss you all over.” His chest tingles with the words. He pulls him back up by the hair, searching, chasing for his lips.

Jungkook smiles again when he kisses him, and he can’t help but do the same. “I’m happy we’re sober.” Jimin admits, truthful.

“Me too... Not that I didn’t mean it the times I was tipsy, but kissing you sober is just out of my mind.”

Jimin blushes stupidly. “You’re exaggerating.”

“’m not.” the boy nuzzles against his neck, nosing his collarbones and leaving a peck there, “Have you kissed yourself to know?”

He can’t help but laugh at his goofiness. “Of course not.”

Jungkook tsks. “Too bad. You have no idea what you’re missing on.”

“Are you always this cheesy?”

“Do you want me to stop?” he teases, pulling back and Jimin almost pouts.

“No.”

“So you like it.”

He doesn’t comment. Jungkook simply smiles, smug and makes Jimin roll his eyes at that. “Oh, shut up.”

He leans over, brushing their lips tauntingly. “Make me.” whispering, he almost knocks Jimin off from how hard his heart leaps in his chest.

Jimin shakes his head out of pettiness, which gets Jungkook laughing.

He just doesn’t want to obey. Not so easily.

“Won’t you kiss me?” Jimin remains quiet, “I’ll kiss you, then.” he squeezes Jimin’s thighs in his hands as a warning.

“I won’t kiss back.” is his response, playful, the headspace already familiar for them.

“You won’t?” Jungkook presses, even closer, the movement of his mouth making Jimin’s own lips move with them, his hot breath inebriating. “I’ll make you.” he promises.

Jimin’s eyes fall to Jungkook’s mouth the exact moment he darts his tongue out and tentatively licks over his lips, from the bottom up, messing it with saliva. Jimin feels the warmth spreading. He curls his fingers on the younger’s hair, jaw dropping a little to make way for the kiss, but
Jungkook doesn't go for it. Instead, he proceeds to tease, taking Jimin’s bottom lip between his teeth and nibbling, playing with it as it pleases him, as if it’s his own.

Jimin whines, and it's small, barely audible in the back of his throat, but Jungkook still seems over the moon when he hears it. He licks over Jimin’s lips again, more insistently this time and Jimin pokes his own tongue out, chasing for him but still too proud to properly kiss.

Jungkook takes his tongue into his mouth and sucks, and that’s when Jimin decides he’s had enough with that foreplay.

He arches his back, higher, pulling Jungkook’s head back by his hair. He looks down at him through lidded eyes, hazy sight. Jungkook has never looked more beautiful.

“Kiss me now.” he orders, lips open and inviting.

The boy smiles, victorious, but it doesn't feel like Jimin is losing.

Jungkook does as he’s told, and in the middle of the kiss, he puts Jimin down, changing their height and adding a whole other dynamic to the kiss. He holds Jimin by his cheeks, kissing him so deeply but at the same time it’s so sweet that Jimin has troubles keeping up.

It feels like Jungkook is confessing a million things through that kiss and Jimin wants to cherish every single one. They stay in each other’s arms for what it feels like hours, and yet, it’s still not enough.

Although when their fingers start to get wrinkled, they’re forced to leave the pool.

Jungkook gets out first and takes the opportunity to snatch both their shirts from the ground and run away.

Jimin screeches, chasing him, the wind freezing like ice, way too cold for him to be standing wet and bare.

“Jeon Jungkook, give that back!”

Jimin has followed him to the beach, the boisterous laugh of the younger echoing through the night. He turns around so he’s facing Jimin, running backwards and slowing down a little, both shirts on his wiggling hand above his head, like a flag or a trophy.

“Come and get it!”

Jimin reaches him in no time, but somewhere along the way their feet tangle, and they fall with everything on the sand. The grains stick to his wet skin and Jimin’s eyes are squeezed shut, Jungkook above him cackling, but suddenly he’s being kissed, Jungkook’s laugh dying down in his mouth. He’s being pressed down and it’s hard to breath, but he instantly complies, reaching for the younger’s neck and waist, pulling him closer, lips moving like they were made to do it.

Jungkook cups his head on the sand, and despite the cold outside, they’re burning.

Jimin rolls them over so he’s the one on top, so he can kiss Jungkook any way he wants it. Sand is covering their skin, sticking to every exposed inch, but it’s the last thing on his mind. Jimin is floating and bursting at the same time. Is it possible to pass out from euphoria?

He kisses Jungkook harder, holding him still by the chin and moving his head expertly, kissing him like he owns him. Because maybe in that moment, he does.
Jungkook is holding on his waist as if it’s the last string of life he has.

Jimin detaches his lips from his, hearing the soft pop that squeezes his stomach, stirs all the butterflies. He kisses the boy’s chin, his collarbones, his neck, scratching down his chest, absolutely loving the way Jungkook pants, the way he hisses, tightening the grip on his waist.

“We’re on the beach.” he whispers, breathless, and Jimin raises his head to look at him.

Their eyes lock and it’s like something flicks inside both of them in that moment.

“We are.” Jimin whispers back, matching the delicate tone.

Jungkook smiles. “I guess the beach is our safe haven.”

The feeling inside his chest is so all-consuming that it’s impossible to describe. He breathes. “I guess it is.”

The way they’re staring at each other, as if they’ve personally hung up all the stars in the sky, it stays eternalized in that instant.

Jungkook raises his body on his elbows, never breaking the eye contact, chin tilting upwards — nearly bidding —, and Jimin does the only thing he knows right now.

Loves him with everything he has.

Chapter End Notes

are you ready for what's to come on the next chapters? hhhhhhhhhhhhh im not

twitter
Chapter Notes

hey did you miss me? hehe i hope this makes up for the wait <3
also this is not proofread as usual so bear w all my typos !! lov u guys

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Love is timing.

“Can you, for the love of god, stop squealing and tell me what the hell happened?” Taehyung snaps after Jimin’s fourth attempt of telling him about the trip ends with him facedown on the mattress, hugging his pillow and letting out incomprehensible, high-pitched sounds.

He raises his body, looking up at the boy with a contained smile and a pair of red— no, scarlet cheeks.

“We kissed, Taehyungie.” he melts while saying it.

The other rolls his eyes with a fond smile, “That I know already. What else happened?”

Jimin lays down on his back, staring at the ceiling with a daydreaming demeanour. “We kissed so many times, and we cuddled by the beach and then we fell asleep there and woke up because it was raining all of a sudden and everything was so…” he sighs, so in love, “His friends started teasing him, asking why we were alone on the beach and he blushed, blushed.” he raises his head to look at Taehyung’s reaction, “Can you believe that, Jeon Jungkook blushing? It was so cute.” he falls back again, smiling.

Taehyung throws a pillow at him from where he is sitting on the armchair. “You’re such a sap.”

Jimin takes that pillow and hugs it as well, attempting to calm the butterflies in his stomach. “Can’t I be? Fuck, he was so adorable, Tae, he went to play with his friends for awhile and when he came back I was reading on my bed. He got so flustered, saying my glasses looked cute and that I also looked cute and I nearly died, seriously.”

Taehyung laughs. “Well, you do look adorable in glasses…” he pauses, “Don’t you kissed after the beach?”

Jimin shakes his head, pouting. “He slept on my shoulder on the way back, though.”

“You two are so disgusting. I can't believe I’m gonna be the third wheel.”

Jimin bites his lips, holding back a smile. “Well, we’re not dating.” he reminds him.
“Yet.” Taehyung very wisely complements.

“Yet…” Jimin sighs for probably the tenth time that day. He wonders if Jungkook is feeling all the somersaults in his chest as well.

It happens not being from the same classes are much harder now. It was okay when Jungkook was downright ignoring them, but now that all Jimin wants to do is see him, it’s tearing him apart to not catch sight of him walking around. He really did put an effort in planning a whole new agenda that wouldn’t make him run in either him or Taehyung in any possible scenario. Even their breaks seem to be in separate times, so when the bell finally rings for lunch Jimin nearly sprints down the hallway.

Taehyung is supposed to wait for him by the cafeteria, but Jimin’s heart is racing with the simple thought of seeing Jungkook again after everything they’ve experienced on the trip.

He’s deflecting from every figure walking slower than him on the hallways, but somewhere along the way his feet trip and before he sees it, he’s running face down against a sturdy chest.

"Sorry, sorry—"

He’s ready to walk away without as much as batting the person a single glance, when an arm stops him and wraps itself around his waist, a whisper on his ear, “Where are you running off to?”

Jimin feels the goosebumps as instant reaction. He looks up with the flurry of butterflies taking flight in his stomach and making a mess out of his heartbeats.

“The… the cafeteria.” he mumbles as Jungkook pulls him close, properly hugging his waist. Jimin curls his fingers at the front of his shirt. They’re both smiling. “Hi.” he finally greets with a breathy laugh.

“Hi.” Jungkook repeats with a warm smile, “Why are you rushing down to the cafeteria like this? Is your stomach killing you for food?”

Jimin pinches his shoulder. “Actually, I was… Um… Kind of, y’know… Hoping to see you.”

Jungkook stares at him wordlessly, mouth hanging. “What?”

He ducks his head down, blushing. “Anyway! We should get going, Taehyung is waiting.”

“Are you serious?” a light chuckle makes Jimin look up, “Were you really looking for me?” he swings a little side to side with Jimin on his arms, happy grin plastered on his lips.

“Shut up…” he hits his chest, “Now you’re just teasing me.”

“Mhm.” he leans down, “Maybe… But I’d lie if I said I wasn’t looking for you too.”
Jimin swallows. “Really?”

“Yeah.”

They’re standing in the middle of the hallway, being run either by hungry teenagers marching to the cafeteria or tired ones rushing past to get home as fast as possible — and still, they can only see each other.

Until, of course, a nosy Kim Taehyung simply throws himself in between them, tearing them apart and hooking his arms around both his friends’ neck.

“Okay, ground rules! We’re a trio, so I definitely won’t be the third wheel in this relationship. No kissing in my presence until I get a girlfriend! No hand holding and no leaving me behind like a stray dog, got it? Also,” he tightens his hold around Jungkook’s neck and pulls him down to talk directly with him, “you won’t be stealing my best friend from me, so don’t hold your breath!”

Jungkook looks over Taehyung’s head to share a look with Jimin, who’s smiling amused. “Didn’t you say he was waiting at the cafeteria?” Taehyung slaps his head. “Yah!” Jungkook rubs the back of his head with a frown, “What was that for?”

“For disappearing without a word.”

“Ah…” the younger looks down, scratching the bridge of his nose, “Sorry, hyung.”

“It’s fine as long as you never do it again, or I’ll fucking beat you, got it? Also don’t break Jimin’s heart or you’ll never walk again.”

Jimin nudges his ribs harshly. He needs to immediately stop talking like he and Jungkook are dating or else he will be the one to never walk again. “Shush, will you?” he grumbles menacingly, yet apparently not enough, because it gets Taehyung laughing.

“What if he is the one to break my heart?” Jungkook goes on, perking Jimin’s ears in interest, and Taehyung simply humphs.

“Then you deal with it.”

Jimin bursts out laughing.

He is such an idiot.

He is best friends with an idiot.

The other two also laugh upon hearing his laughter ring in their ears, although Jungkook is shaking his head in disbelief while Taehyung is just enjoying the situation. And that’s all it takes for them to be normal again, with perhaps an even stronger bond tying them together.

Jimin hugs Taehyung’s waist a little tighter as the three of them get in the cafeteria.

By the end of class in the afternoon, the day has been a little disappointing, Jimin concludes. He didn’t get any alone time with Jungkook after lunch and also had his last classes without Taehyung,
left to sulk alone in a corner the entire time.

He definitely should make more friends, but it's not his fault high school’s heteronormative bubble chokes him. Everyone just seems uninteresting and boring. Honestly, he wishes he had some classes with Junghwa and Heeyeon, or even with Jungkook’s friends.

Life's a bitch, for sure.

He’s sighing frustrated, walking down the steps of the stairs to find Taehyung on the school’s gate. They are going home together, like usual, but the thing is, Jungkook has not even texted him a single hi. He was pretty normal during lunch, but Jimin was hoping he’d message him so the three of them could go home together.

He bites down on his lips in a nervous habit. Perhaps he texted Taehyung instead?

He reaches the gates and is about to message Taehyung to know if the younger boy gave any life signal to him when, as on cue, his phone buzzes inside his pocket.

Speaking of the devil.

*dramatic bitch — 5:02 pm*

im the bestest friend ever and you should love me forever

you can thank me later

Jimin frowns. Did he hit his head or his ego is really inflating this big? He looks up to search for him and find out what the hell is he on about when he spots Jungkook standing among the passing students on the sidewalk set to go home. He has his back against the school’s brick wall, a bent leg up and hands casually inside his pockets, as he stares directly at Jimin with a smile tugging the corner of his pretty lips. He inhales deep while his heart skips more than a couple beats.

He can't help but reciprocate the smile, jogging up to him as blood thrums inside his veins.

Yeah. He’ll definitely have to thank Taehyung for that later.

“Hey.” the younger says with ease, effortlessly beautiful under that sunlight.

“Hey.” Jimin smiles, “How much did you pay Taehyung to leave us alone?”

Jungkook tilts his head. “What do you mean? He's right there.” he points behind his back.

“Uh?” Jimin turns around to look for him. There’s a couple students walking out of the gates, but no sight of Taehyung whatsoever. He motions to look back at Jungkook. “Wher—” but in a second, before he can even make a full turn — take a full breath —, he’s having his personal space invaded. In a second, Jungkook is cupping his cheeks and pulling him closer. It's a mere heartbeat, and he's being kissed by the boy he’s in love with, in public.

Jimin breathes deep, lungs shrinking, and he curls his fingers around Jungkook’s shirt, simultaneously seeking support for his weak legs and yearning to have him closer. He tilts his head, fitting their lips properly and Jungkook smiles amidst the kiss.
“Ki-dding.” he singsongs and Jimin laughs, stepping forward and pressing their lips harder so the boy can’t speak.

He easily complies, opening his mouth so they can share a proper kiss. Swiping his tongue against Jimin’s, he coaxes a pleased sigh out of him as all the butterflies swirl inside his chest, fluttering underneath his skin. Jimin raises on his tiptoes — can't help it —, wraps his arms around Jungkook’s neck who slides his hands down his waist so there's not an inch of oxygen keeping them apart.

The older giggles in between the kiss, a sense of newborn euphoria that arouses all elation in being close to Jungkook. The younger follows behind, gluing their foreheads together so he can laugh along.

“Are you walking home with me? Taehyung definitely must have asked something of you to take this out of he and I.”

“I told him he can pick any game from my collection to take.”

Jimin stares at him with disbelief. “Your collection that you don’t even let your family touch?”

“Yes.”

“Oh, I doubt it.”

“Well, so start to believe it. It’s true.”

“You know you could simply go home with us and just make him uncomfortable, right?”

“Oh, I considered that. But it’s not the same as being alone with you.”

Jimin chuckles, shaking his head. “Oh, Jeon Jungkook, you're such a charmer. I don't fall for these simple pick up lines, did you not know?”

“No.” Jungkook agrees, tightening his arms around his waist, “You fall for the late night conversations and the 2am kisses.”

Jimin feels a faint blush spreading over his heated cheeks. “Ain't you a cocky boy?”

He shrugs with a smug demeanor. “I do my best.”

“I’m sure you do.”

They stare at each other with glittering eyes, the sparkles hidden under layers of held back adoration. Jimin leans in to kiss him again, softly, just a simple touch, pressing their lips together for a moment and then pulling back, wearing his heart on his sleeves. “Let’s go? We're gonna miss the bus.”

“Sure.” the younger nods. “Just let me see something in your hand real quick.”

Jimin frowns. “My hand?” he takes a step back to bring his palm to sight, “What's wrong with my hand?”

At that, Jungkook grabs it and starts walking casually, pulling Jimin with him. “Nothing. Let's go.”

He laughs out loud, throwing his body back, heart full and face warm. He can't believe he just used
that as an excuse to hold his hand.

“You’re such an idiot.” with laugh still clear in his voice, he says, “Next time just do it. You don't need an excuse.”

Jungkook doesn't answer, but his ears taint red by the edges as he stares forward, and Jimin judges it enough.

It's the weekend, so Jimin and his mother are cleaning the house. Jihyun recently made a new friend at school and is currently spending the day with him at some arcade downtown, to the delight of both of them. After things broke loose, everything has been especially hard for their family. There are days when the younger has episodes and becomes extremely revolted, falling back on past habits of treating Jimin and their mother like trash. It's quite hard, but unlikely before, he's quicker in regretting his actions, and now he apologizes, in tears. Jimin has learnt a lot of things with him in this process, and being patient is one of them. Sure, he's still short-tempered, and despite his best attempts, he can't accept things in silence, so they still constantly fight.

His mother assures him there's nothing wrong with that, says it's healthy, even. *Brothers have to fight,* she says, *that's the funniest part of having a sibling. Just remember to always make up with each other, and say I'm sorry.*

And they do.

In the end, everything really is a process. Temporary. It makes him breath with a little more ease knowing that.

“What happened to you lately?” his mother asks, squinting her eyes.

“What do you mean?”

“You’re, like… giddy.”

Jimin laughs, rearranging the pillows on the couch. “Giddy.” he repeats.

“Yes.”

Shrugs, “I'm just happy.”

“Oh, please. No reason at all?” she stops in the middle of the living room with both hands on her hips, “You don't fool me, Park Jimin, I know this kind of look.” she, then, scoots closer to him with a knowing smile, grabbing his hands and sitting the both of them down on the sofa, “Go on, tell me everything.”

“Tell you what?”

“You think I was never eighteen? I also had my adolescence, y’know.” she breaks out in a fond smile. “Is it a boy?”

“Mom…” Jimin whines, hiding his face on a pillow, embarrassed. Is he that obvious? “There's no boy.” he lies, without looking at her eyes.
Oh, but there is.” she presses, clearly amused, “Who is he? Do I know him? Does Taehyung?”

Jimin deadass glares at her, hoping she'll raise her hands and give up, but, of course, that’d not be his mother if it happened.

“Fine.” he begrudgingly relents, cheeks warm, “Yes…”

“I do?” she sounds surprised, “Who— oh, wait, I think I know. Is it that boy? Who was here one day when I came early from work? And he suddenly left?”

Jimin hides his face in his hands. “Yes…”

“Oh my god.” she squeals, “I knew there was something in there! I wanted to ask, but I read in a website that you shouldn't assume every boy you meet is a boyfriend.”

Jimin cocks his head, amused by the information. “Were you googling how to treat your gay son?”

She slaps his arm. “Oh, don't make it sound awkward. I was reading an article about things we think are harmless but are actually homophobic. It just popped in my timeline, that's all!”

Jimin smiles, pure fondness in his chest. “You’re so sweet.”

“Okay, I’m the love of your life, I know.” he laughs out loud, shaking his head, “Now back to the love story. What was his name again? Jaebum? Jongho?”

Jimin bites his bottom lip. “It's Jungkook, mom.”

Her smile stretches wider. “Oh, Jungkook, that's right! We saw him in the school on that horrible day too, didn't we? I knew you two were acting sketchy! Are you dating?”

Jimin deflates a little, but remembers they should take things slow. After all, they have a particular taste for disaster and broken hearts. Or just heart. Jimin's, to be more specific. “No. But we're kind of going out it has a week or so.” he scoots closer to the woman with a smile, “Do you know the school trip? It started there.”

“Really? Baby, that's so cute.” Jimin chuckles, chest inflating high to be sharing this with her. Somehow, he’s happy that she asked. He was dying to tell her everything, but to be honest, he was pretty scared she’d feel uncomfortable to know about it and perhaps say something that’d hurt him, even if unintentionally. He should have predicted she’d surprise him in the best of ways. It's his mother we’re talking about, after all.

He stares at her and ponders for a moment.

And then, after taking a deep breath, he does what feels right. She really is his bestest friend, in the end.

“Actually… It started last year… kind of. But it was really messy.”

She frowns. “What do you mean?”

Jimin exhales. “I… If I tell you this, do you promise you won't hate Jungkook? I mean, I did for awhile, but things have really changed now.”

“Okay, you're scaring me. Depending on what he did to you, I can't promise that.”

“No, please,” he takes her hands, “believe me, it’s nothing too serious, just teen drama, but…” I
haven't told this to anyone?" he confesses, "And it's kind of taking a toll on me."

"Not even Taehyung?" she asks, baffled. Jimin shakes his head in agreement. The woman straightens her posture as she forms her next words, like she's weighting them. "And Eunbi?"

"No one, mom. If Jungkook also didn't tell anyone, only he and I know about our story."

"Oh, love..." her shoulders deflate and her eyes twinkle with held back emotion, "You know you can tell me everything."

They exchange a sincere gaze, and Jimin squeezes her hand between his before he inhales deeply once again and decides to let loose.

He tells her about everything — save the naughty details. He doesn't mask it or twist the events to make him or Jungkook look good or bad. He hands her everything raw, without sharp edges, hoping that he'll get an honest opinion out of it. When he’s over, it's like a weight has been pulled from his shoulders, as cliche as it sounds.

"Let me know if I understood. You think Jungkook liked Taehyung from the start, even though he never explicitly said that, and even though the two of you met first and experienced all those moments you told me about before he even got into school?"

"Well, yes."

"Honey, you have a serious problem of self esteem right here." she declares funnily and Jimin snorts, just partially amused.

"Tell me about it."

"I mean, what does it even point out that he liked him in the first place?"

"I don't know, I guess him ignoring my existence and only having eyes to Taehyung when we met after everything and also a little bit because Taehyung is, well, Taehyung."

She frowns once again.

"What does that mean?"

"You know him, mom, he's the model-looking face, the social butterfly who’s able to befriend anyone anywhere. I can't compete with that."

"You know Taehyung would kill you if he ever heard that, right?"

"Yeah, that's why I never told him about it."

"And why do you think Jungkook and you are together now?"

"I mean, we're not together, but I think he started to like me in the trip, since a lot of things happened, but..." he laughs without humor. He hates talking about this. "I feel like the only reason he gave me so much attention there was because Taehyung wasn't with us."

"And, at least, now you're sure Jungkook is liking you and not Taehyung?"

Jimin stops for a moment to think about it. "I mean, yeah, kind of. My mind is really tricky, y'know. There was one time this week, all of us were having lunch together. Me, the girls, Tae, Jungkook and his friends, everyone. It was being really funny, but then Jungkook and Taehyung
entered a kind of banter that was actually just them being fond of each other and fake fighting, but that got me really irrationally jealous, because Jungkook barely looked at me during the whole lunch. And I don't know, maybe it's crazy, but sometimes I feel like he resigned to being with me because he wouldn't ever have a chance with Tae, since he's straight and all.” he says with a final sigh, “What do you think?”

His mother tilts her head and brings a hand to caress his cheek. “I think you think too much.” she pinches the fat lightly and brushes his hair back, “I think Jungkook is in love with you, and that he ignored you at first because he was jealous, and now that he knows you also like him, he’s over the clouds. And since I’m the mom, you have to believe my every word, because moms are always right.”

Jimin chuckles lowly. “I mean, don't get me wrong, I’m really happy how things are right now, but it doesn't matter what happens, these thoughts never leave me alone.”

“Do you ever consider talking about this with Jungkook? Getting some answers?”

Jimin immediately frowns and shakes his head, resolute. “God, no. How humiliating would that be? I’d rather die.”

She rolls her eyes. “You’re as dramatic as your father, the stubborn little Parks.” Jimin smiles coyly. “I mean, I’m not gonna tell you what to do, but in the end, that's really the only way to stop with these thoughts. You know that, right?”

“Yeah. Maybe someday, but definitely not right now. We don't even know what we are, yet.”

She laughs, shaking her head. “I give a month for you two to start dating. I think it'll happen in less time, but you know, safe measures.” Jimin blushes a little, ducking his head. “Why don't you call him over?” she proposes.

“What?!”

“What? I want to properly know him, since that day he just sprinted.”

“Yeah, not happening. I can do that when we're official, not now, you’ll embarrass me for sure.”

“Oh, come on, I won't. You're friends, right? Just call him over to study, all casual. But, of course, just the living room for you two.”

A idea sparks in Jimin’s mind and he smiles maliciously to her. “Oh, why is that? Since we're just friends. That day he was here you sent us off to my bedroom.” he raises his eyebrows at her, to which she squints her eyes.

“Nice try, but I still want him to come over.” he deflates, “You can take the bedroom, don't worry, the house has thin walls.”

Jimin goes beet red. “I was joking! Oh my god, I’m not crazy.”

“Oh, please, I’m not stupid, you’re turning nineteen soon, I know how these things get.”

“Mom!”

“What? I’d rather have you making out with someone I know in the safety of our house rather than with some stranger in a place who-knows the type of person goes to.” Jimin licks his lips and shuts his mouth. Oh boy, if only she knew. “Deal? I want to know him.”
Jimin rolls his eyes. “Deal, but I’m not making out with him in our home and definitely not with you and Jihyun in it.”

She snorts. “Yeah, don’t say things you’ll regret later.”

“Oh, because you know a lot about making out hidden with your parents home,” he delivers sarcastically and she raises her eyebrows.

“How do you think I got pregnant at 20?”

“Oh my god,” Jimin suddenly gets up with both hands covering his ears as the woman laughs out loud on the couch, “Definitely didn't need to know that!” he irks, scrunching his face. “Thanks for the gag.”

She waves him off with a satisfied expression. “You’re welcome, sweetie.”

Jimin walks to his bedroom making disgusted faces, but easily basks on the relaxed feeling taking over his body after their conversation.

He plops on his bed with a smile that he's not even aware of, and reaches out for his phone on the nightstand.

_hey_

__wanna come over tomorrow?__

“Does she knows about us?”

Jimin tilts his head, staring deep in his eyes fondly.

“Do you want the truth or what will make you stop freaking out?”

“Oh my god.” Jungkook buries his face deeper in his hands. “She hates me, doesn't she?”

Jimin laughs. “She doesn't.” the younger peeks at him through his fingers, “I think.” he adds as an afterthought just for his own amusement.

Jungkook groans out loud, completely hiding his face again. “I don't wanna get in.”

“Oh, please.” he takes a step closer to him and gently pries his hands away from his face. His cheeks have its whole length rose coloured. “Technically, you're here to study and she's supposed to act as if she does not know a thing. Come on, it's gonna be ok.” he reassures, intertwining their fingers “It's a really rare chance for us to be alone together, right?”
It has been eating Jimin inside. Public displays of affection are not usually an option, and when they do have some chance to be with each other they’re normally with Taehyung, or just their other friends in general. Jimin thinks the last time they shared an actual kiss was when Jungkook’s reckless ass pulled him and did it right there in front of the school. It has been a week. He is missing his touch like crazy.

Jungkook seems to feel the same, because it's like his barriers melt in a second upon Jimin's words.

“You could come to my house too, y’know.” the younger proposes in a lower voice, as if there is someone around who could hear them, “There's rarely people home.” he’s leaning closer, his intentions clear in his tone, and Jimin's heartbeats uneven a little at that. He squeezes the boy's hands.

“We gotta figure out how to do that without going through an endless monologue of Taehyung explaining all the reasons why we’ve abandoned him.”

Jungkook chuckles, holding Jimin's chin between his thumb and index to pull him for a quick kiss. His eyes shoot open and he slaps his chest, looking around. They’re on his neighborhood, on his doorstep.

“Sorry.” the younger smiles apologetically, but if Jimin knows him well enough he knows he's not sorry at all, “It was getting hard with you this close to me.”

He rolls his eyes, upholding the smile threatening to blossom on his lips. “You’re quite daring for someone who was freaking out nearly two minutes ago.”

Jungkook shrugs. “I do my best.”

“I’m sure you do.” the older throws back sarcastically and takes a step back to establish the distance between them. “Ready? I’ll open the door.”

“Is she already home?”

“Guess we'll find out.” Jimin turns the key and pushes the door, laughing at the return of Jungkook’s terrified expression. “Mom!” he calls out.

The living room has the lights out and the kitchen seems void of any human presence — he notices while he takes off his shoes and Jungkook does the same beside him. Jimin throws his keys on the coffee table and lets his backpack slide from one shoulder, walking to the hallway while Jungkook follows close behind.

“Mom?” he tries again, peeking inside her room but he already has an idea that she hasn't gotten home yet. The inside is perfectly tidy, as she always leaves before she goes for work.

“There's no one home?” comes Jungkook’s low voice from behind.

Jimin shivers a little. “Jihyun might be here soon.” he reasons, attempting to maintain his posture, but as soon as Jungkook’s hands curl around his waist, he inhales a sharp intake of breath.

“So we’re all alone until he gets here?” he murmurs, lips brushing the bare skin of Jimin’s nape, who lets his backpack fall on the ground with a hollow thud, breathing cut short.

“I-I mean,” he stutters like a pre-teen, but gasps when Jungkook slides a hand under his shirt, caressing his lower belly, which thrums with all the butterflies and shivers. It's like his fingertips
ignite electric shocks inside him. He is so undeniably sensitive, more than ever from the lack of exchange between the two of them. Perhaps the most they were able to do the past week was a simple kiss on the neck and a backhug one time during lunch. He’s so on edge.

Jungkook opens his mouth and starts mapping the length of his nape while his hands slide to his sides to stroke his waist. “Missed you so bad…” he hums against the older’s skin, “I think there was not a single night this week I didn't dream of you and me close like this.”

Jimin breaths a little deeper, a little harsher, holding back the need to whine. Jungkook’s words affect him in a way no one else’s manages to do.

He brings a hand backwards and threads his fingers over the younger’s hair, sighing when the boy reaches the curve between his shoulder and neck and leaves a heart-stopping hickey there.

“Baby…” Jimin whispers, eyes falling closed, and Jungkook groans in response, as desperate as him, “Want… Kiss me… Miss you… Kiss me, please.”

Jungkook raises his head without a second thought, uses his free hand to curl around Jimin’s jawline, turning his face to him. He catches his lips in a heated kiss that feels a little like kissing for the first time. Jimin opens his mouth for him and spins on his heels, properly wrapping his arms around his neck and pulling him closer until they’re forced to step backwards and he ends up trapped against the wall.

Jungkook’s hands mold around his waist and presses his body against his own so tightly that he might actually feel the sparkles dancing beneath Jimin's skin.

He’s so eager for the younger’s touches that he cries out a complaint when Jungkook pulls back to kiss his neck.

“Did you miss me?” he nudges, clearly entertained by Jimin’s state.

“Yes.” he pants, closing his eyes at the feeling of his mouth. “Too much.”

“Me too… Wish we could live in that trip.”

Jimin smiles lazily upon the memories they created on those few days. “Wish I could kiss you every day.”

“Come to my house.” he offers tauntingly, the rough kind of voice that makes impossible to deny a single thing. He probably could ask Jimin to run away with him in that tone and he’d say yes. “I promise you we can do everything you want there.”

Jimin licks his lips and laughs, tugging at his strands when he sucks harder. “But it's more fun when we do it while we can't, right?”

Jungkook pulls back to look at him, a mischievous glint twirling inside his eyes. “You’re terrible.”

Jimin cocks his head to the side, staring deep inside his irises while running his hands through his soft, slightly curly hair. “Don't you like it?”

The boy's eyes drift down to his lips as he speaks and it lights a fire deep in his gut. “It's hard to find something I don't like about you.” he says before he pulls Jimin by the neck and ends the distance between them.

For someone who believes there's hardly anything to like about himself, hearing those words
makes the oxygen be knocked out of his lungs. He holds onto Jungkook a little harder, kisses a little more eagerly.

He's gripping the boy’s hair in both hands and before he sees it, he's stepping forward and then he's the one pressing Jungkook against the wall. He kisses him like he wishes he did when Jungkook disappeared. Like he might lose him anytime, like he's slipping right past his fingers every passing minute.

The younger doesn't step back — fed by Jimin’s own urgency, he grabs his hair as well, while the other hand holds his hip tight against his own. The kiss seems to be a newborn language to communicate how desperately they needed each other this past week. Jimin doesn't know how to describe it, but every minute beside him seems not long enough. Every moment seems to not last the way he needs it and it all results in his want for him growing bigger, hungrier. He worries Jungkook doesn't feel the same, but perhaps the way he's holding Jimin is a little telling.

They pull back to catch their breaths and Jimin runs his hands down to grab his collar and pull him closer, kissing him again while stepping backwards and guiding them to his bedroom. Jungkook closes the door with his foot without even breaking apart and then lays Jimin down on the bed, going down with him a little gentler this time — a knee between the older’s legs that makes him sigh pleased.

“That's a nice way to know your bedroom.” Jungkook teases as he leaves a bite on his bottom lip.

Jimin snorts. “Shut up. I can tour you later. The house is not that big.”

“Yeah, I have something else bigger in mind right now.” he says pressing down his thigh against Jimin's crotch.

He simultaneously gasps and laughs incredulous, heat coiling deep down in his stomach. “That was so awful, I almost considering walking out on you.”

Jungkook follows him, laughing lowly and burying his head on his neck. “Do your best in trying.” he dares, licking a wet stripe over the skin that makes him shiver. He missed the feeling of his tongue so bad.

“I would,” Jimin answers, prideful, “but it's not up to you to tell me what to do.”

Then, he pushes Jungkook’s shoulder back just slightly to be able to wrap his legs around his waist and spin them around, sitting on top of his thighs and straddling his sides. The younger moans brokenly when Jimin purposefully moves until his ass is nestled between his erection, bringing a smirk out of him.

“Not so smug now, huh?” he says, leaning down and kissing Jungkook’s jaw.

“Fuck, hyung.” the boy whines, hand tightening around his waist. “Don't do that.” he complains when Jimin rolls his hips teasingly. “My heart’s going to explode.”

The older chuckles, ghosting his lips past his pulsing point.

He’s about to plant a hickey there when the sound of the front door closing echoes in the whole house making his bloodstream drop. His eyes shoot open and he immediately climbs out of Jungkook’s lap, running his hand through his hair and shirt as fast as he can while he sees Jungkook panicking on the mattress.

He holds back the urge to laugh and makes him get up.
“Hurry up, fix your face.” he demands, threading his fingers between his strands to try and at least pretend he wasn't making a mess out of it a minute ago. There’s nothing he can do about their swollen lips, though. “It's probably just Jihyun, act normal.”

He waits until Jungkook releases the breath he’s holding to open the door.

“Jihyunie?” he walks into the hallway, collecting their backpacks from the ground silently and handing them to Jungkook so he can put it in his room.

“In the kitchen.”

Jimin breathes with a little more ease. Not that his mom would do anything but he’d die of embarrassment if it was her. Especially after he so confidently declared he was not going to make out with Jungkook inside their house, yet that was the very first thing he did the second they stepped inside.

Blame it on the hormones.

He pulls Jungkook by the hand just until they’re not in sight.

“Hey.” he greets when his brother’s figure drinking water reveals in front of the counter. “You know Jungkook, right? He's staying here this afternoon, say hi.”

Jihyun glares at him for calling him out as if saying ‘I was already going to’. He gulps the rest of his water and nods to Jungkook.

“Hi.”

“He’s your hyung.” Jimin reiterates and feels like laughing when he sees Jihyun holding back his roll of eyes.

“Hi, hyung.”

“Hey.” Jungkook answers with a small smile. It's endearing how oddly timid he is.

Jihyun turns his eyes to Jimin, clearly communicating how this is his time to tease. “So this is the Jungkook?”

He shoots his eyes open. “Shut up.”

Jihyun doesn't even know anything, Jimin just talked about it with their mother. Unless she's a big mouth, that traitor.

Jungkook’s interest perks beside him. He turns his body to Jimin and he doesn't need to look to feel the smirk in his voice. “The Jungkook?”

“He doesn't know what he's talking about.” Jimin brushes it off, cheeks vivid.

With the mercy of the lord, Jihyun settles in only laughing and shaking his head, throwing the remaining water of his cup in the sink and letting it there. Jimin bites his tongue to stop himself from telling him to wash it just because the boy’s simply too dangerous right now.

“Nice to meet you, Jungkook.” the youngest says when he walks past them to his bedroom.

*I’m going to fucking kill him.*
“So,” Jungkook starts upon Jihyun’s exit and Jimin already closes his eyes hoping to god to knock him out, “You talking a lot about me to your family?”

“Don't get so full of yourself, will you?” Jimin answers with all the confidence he harbors inside his chest despite his cheeks burning crimson, “He knew you were coming home and since I’m out now he’s grown confident to tease me.”

“I see. Cause you got a lot of your past hookups coming here right?”

Jimin narrows his eyes. “Yeah. I liked bringing them home to bang them in my room with my oblivious mother next door, cause I live for the danger.” he delivers sarcastically.

Jungkook tilts his head to the side with a breathtaking smile dancing on the corner of his lips.

How can a simple smile have so much effect over a person? It must be the eyes too. It has to be.

“And here I was thinking you were a virgin.”

Jimin blushes from head to toe. “Shut up!” he slaps his arm. “Oh my god, I can't stand you.” he complains hiding his face.

Jungkook laughs and takes a step towards him, gently prying his hands away. “Don't hide from me.” he whines a little and Jimin hates that he’s so weak, already being pulled to his orbit that easily.

“You’re making fun of me.”

“I’m not.” the younger says, breath ghosting over his lips. “I'm hoping to be your first.”

Jimin inhales deeply, stomach coiling, clenching and making his oxygen shoot straight up to his brain — he feels dizzy.

Jungkook is once again staring down at his lips and exposed like this what can Jimin do? He kisses him, as careless as it is. He wraps his hands around his neck and kisses him slow and sweet, until he’s standing on his toes and Jungkook is pressing him against the counter.

He places both hands over the boy’s chest and pulls back, breathing hard while their foreheads remain glued. “My brother can walk on us anytime. My mom might be here soon too.”

Jungkook stands with no real distance from him, open mouth searching for his lips again. He wraps his arms around Jimin’s middle and bites his bottom lip. “Come to my house. No one will bother us there.”

Jimin laughs breathlessly, scratching the other’s scalp. “You’re needy.”

“You’re not making it easy for me.”

"What would be the fun in being easy?"

Jungkook's smile is full of second intentions.

"If you let me, I can show you."

Jimin only has the time to blink before the sound of the front door is coming through again.

"Boys, I'm home!"
He all but jumps nearly a meter away from Jungkook in a second, heart in a frenzy watching the younger go pale in front of him. He silently mouths for him to keep it together. *For the love of god, don't panic.*

"Hey, mom." he greets, turning around, kind of wobbling on his posture but barely notable for a normal person. Although, Kwon Seoyeon is his mom and absolutely nothing goes through Kwon Seoyeon.

Jimin watches her slight rise of eyebrow at their faces but besides that she expresses no surprise. "Oh, hey there, Jungkookie. I heard you were coming over, please feel welcome." she greets as she takes off her shoes and walks towards them to drop a kiss on Jimin's forehead.

"Thank you, Mrs. Kwon." the boy bows politely, cheeks a deep shade of red.

"Oh, please." she waves if off, "Just noona is fine. Where's your brother, baby?" she returns his attention to Jimin.

"In his bedroom."

"Oh, great. Are you guys hungry? I think I'm gonna order some fried chicken, I've got no will in me to cook today. Do you eat chicken, Jungkook?"

"O-of course!"

"Okay, then. Now I'm gonna go take a shower, but please feel at home. And you, little one," she narrows her eyes at Jimin and calls him little as if he's not taller than her, "be good."

"I'm always good."

"Huh-uh. Study hard, boys."

If possible Jungkook flushes even more at her words, guilty so clear in his expression that has Jimin having to hold back a chuckle.

"Chill." he says when his mom disappears and they're alone again. He places both hands on his shoulder and kisses him one last time. "She's just teasing. Let's go."

He takes his hand and guides him to his bedroom, where Jimin starts setting his table so they can study — *for real.*

Jungkook starts to look around his room and take in every single detail in silence, which honestly makes Jimin nervous, but he doesn't say a thing.

"Do you wanna change? I can lend you some clothes."

"Will they fit me?" the younger asks in a mocking tone, so he rolls his eyes.

"Shut up, we're almost the same size."

"Mhmmm."

"You can take anything you want in the wardrobe. T-shirts and shorts in the top drawer and sweats in the bottom ones."

Jungkook clicks his tongue and goes for it, while Jimin pulls out their books. He might ask Jungkook some help with English, since he's fluent. He's almost sure he might bomb his next test if
he doesn't put a little more effort in it.

"Well, doesn't this look kind of familiar." Jimin hears from behind him and turns around to find Jungkook with a denim jacket in hands, sporting an amused smile.

He frowns for a while until he recognizes it and his cheeks are set aflame from the memories.

"A-ah…"

"You kept it."

"Well, I wouldn't throw it away, would I?"

To be honest, Jimin didn't even fully remember he had this. Everything happening in his life and between he and Jungkook kind of occupied his mind with too many things at once for him to remember that jacket.

Jungkook simply hums eyeing the piece of clothing with a small smile as Jimin gets more and more embarrassed. "Do you want it back?" he asks sheepishly.

Jungkook shakes his head and gently places the jacket back on its place. "No. I want you to wear it on our first date." he says it like it's nothing, and Jimin's heart performs a triple loop inside his chest that renders him speechless. Meanwhile, Jungkook picks out the clothes he wants and looks back at Jimin, blinking innocently. "I think your mom is still in the bathroom, can I change here?"

"S-sure." he answers way too fast, way too energetically, turning around so the boy won't see him burning from head to toe. He hears as Jungkook closes the door and starts changing while he pretends to have something really important to settle on the table so he can't look back at him.

When he's over, Jimin finds out he's wearing one of his favorite shirts with a pair of worn out sweats and can't help but think how his smell is going to linger on it afterwards. The younger hugs him from behind and kisses his neck after Jimin has changed too, before they finally sit down to focus on their studies.

"He mentioned a first date."

"You know that we need context, right?"

Jimin rolls his eyes. "Jungkook, you guys, who else?"

"No, you dumb bitch." Junghwa butts in, who's sitting next to Taehyung. "I mean, why did he say that? When?"

"Last week. When he went to my house."

"Oh…" Heeyeon wiggles her eyebrows while Taehyung fake huffs in his made up jealousy. "Did
he meet your mom already? I don't see why you need a first date to get serious, then."

Jimin sighs. "It wasn't like that. We went to study." when he watches everyone's expressions, he adds "And we did! I mean it."

"We believe you." Taehyung says. He knows they don't, but it doesn't matter.

"The point is," Jimin looks around just to be sure there's no friend of Jungkook around. The boy himself skipped classes today. "I don't know where we stand? How do I know we're, like, exclusive?"

"Do you think he's seeing other people?"

"I mean, no, but he could? How do I know he couldn't? No one ever said the b word."

"Well, it's understandable, since you're seeing each other it has like, what, 2 weeks?"
Jimin bites his tongue to not say they're dated a lot longer than that. "Yeah."

"Why don't you just ask him? Like, hey dude, are we a thing or not? By the way, let's go on a date."

Taehyung eyes Heeyeon as if she just stabbed him on the chest. "I'm so sorry for whoever goes out with you."

She rolls her eyes. "I've probably been with more girls than you ever did, Kim."

"Let's not bring my romantic life to the table, okay?!" Taehyung says out loud, getting them all to laugh.

"Hani's right, though." Junghwa goes on. "Why don't you just ask him? Why does it have to be him the one to do it?"

Jimin bites his lips. It sucks not to be able to explain his insecurities to them since they have absolutely no idea about the whole picture.

For example, he's been strangely anxious over the fact that he thinks Jungkook is acting kind of distant. Well, the truth is, he can't separate what's real and what's made up by his self deprecating mindset. Like today, Jungkook skipped classes and when Jimin asked why, he just texted it's nothing, don't worry. There's supposedly nothing wrong with his answer, but Jimin's already overthinking.

Maybe he's putting too much expectations on this, hoping Jungkook will exclusively open up to him about everything, but they just started to get close recently, so he can't expect much, right?

He sighs again.

"I'm just not sure if it's too soon." he finally answers. "Besides, I think I started liking him before he ever even saw me, so."

He avoids looking at Taehyung, but he knows the boy is staring at him with that look.

"That's ridiculous." Junghwa says at the exact same moment Jimin's phone goes off in his pocket.

He instantly ignores them the moment he reads Jungkook's name on it, getting up and walking a few steps away to pick up.
"Hello?"

"Hey…" Jimin holds the gadget a little tighter at the sound of the rough voice so close to his ear.

"Did you just wake up?" he asks, teasing.

"Not really. Are you on the break right now?"

Jimin releases a breath. He wishes he could see him today. "Mhm-hm." he answers as he scratches the ground with the tip of his converse.

"Can you come over later?"

His movements halt, heart stopping in the middle of a beat. What?

He swallows in dry. "Why?"

"I also want you to meet someone."

Jimin's mouth parts as he tries to answer, but initially no sound comes out of it. His heart rate picks up startlingly fast. "Okay."

"Okay?" Jungkook repeats and he can almost hear the smile in his voice.

"Yeah."

"Okay. I'm gonna pick you up at the gates, then?"

"Yeah." Jimin repeats, a little dumbstruck. Who does he want him to meet? His parents?

"Okay. See you later, pink cheeks."

The older inhales deeply, blushing. He has been calling him that again ever since he found out about the jacket. It makes his heart race in all kinds of flustered.

The boy hangs up before Jimin can even answer, but he carries a smile all the way back to the table where his friends sit.

"Let me guess. Jungkook?" Heeyeon prompts and Jimin doesn't say a single word, just purses his lips and looks away, unable to hold back his satisfied grin.

"Oh god. I hate being single." Junghwa dramatically sighs and rests her head on Taehyung's shoulder, who pats her hair before they start bonding over their loneliness.

○

Jimin huffs, swiping his hair back. "Are you ever gonna tell me where you're taking me?"

They're walking under the sun — his cheeks flushed from the heat and the fact Jungkook won't
stop smiling coyly at him with mysterious side glances and sporadic eye rolls.

"You're so impatient."

"I'm curious, that's different." he very matter-of-factly corrects. Besides, he can't understand why they're walking under that scorching sun when they could pretty much have called an uber, or whatever. Don't get him wrong, he's all about exercising and that nature stuff (woohoo!), but there's a boundary between connecting with mother nature and being actually murdered by it. (Dear Sun in the sky, if you're hearing these thoughts, please, get a fucking grip, dude.)

"Oh, and how's that?"

Jimin clicks his tongue. "It just is."

"Huh." Jungkook simply hums, amused.

"And why are we even walking by the way? We could have called an uber."

The younger turns around, pinkish cheeks from the warm weather too. "Do you want me to carry you?"

Jimin crosses his arms and stops on his track. "Actually, yes. Glad that you asked."

Jungkook halts in the middle of the sidewalk, head falling back as he laughs out loud. "God, you're so annoying." He remakes his previous steps until he's standing right in front of him, who never breaks the eye contact, chin raised as he has to look up to maintain the stare.

Jungkook squeezes his cheeks in both palms. "Come on, baby, we're almost there."

"No." he mumbles through his squished lips and Jungkook nearly coos. He leans down and kisses him on the mouth, brief and soft.

"Please?"

Jimin fights the urge to relent.

"No, carry me."

"I'm weak."

"You go to gym every week."

"Do I get a smile if I carry you?"

"No."

The younger snorts, faking annoyance. "Ah, so hard to get this boy of mine."

Jimin's heart skips a beat. Maybe two, maybe ten.

This boy of mine?

Jungkook much obviously notices his skin darkening in red hues, because the corner of his lips twitch in a barely noticeable smirk before he turns around and leans down. He looks at him from above his shoulder. "Come on, hop up."
Jimin is momentarily struck with surprise. "Are you serious?"

"Yeah."

He can't contain it — he giggles with a grin that curves both his eyes and instantly climbs up Jungkook's back, legs wrapping around his waist and warms settling around his neck. He smiles contently when Jungkook hoists him up further and holds him stable from the back of his thighs.

After the younger regains his posture, he starts walking again. Jimin nuzzles against his neck, comfortable despite Jungkook's body heat clashing with the one from the sun making the ground beneath their feet burn.

"So I did end up gaining a smile, after all." he comments, pleased and Jimin hums, inebriated by his smell. He pays no mind to the people eyeing them as they walk by.

"I didn't think you were gonna do it." he confesses honestly.

"Well, wouldn't you do the same for me?" Jungkook questions and Jimin's mortal silence says it all. The other gasps in utmost offense and stops walking. "Oh my god, get down, I'm dropping you!"

It's Jimin's turn to laugh out loud as he hugs him tighter. "No. You're stuck with me now."

Jungkook huffs. "I can't believe you wouldn't carry me." He starts walking again.

"You're too heavy."

They both know he's lying — he probably could carry Jungkook with as much ease as he does to him —, but he likes teasing just for the sake of getting a reaction out of him.

"This is an one sided relationship." Jungkook goes on, and Jimin stomach flutters with the impending butterflies whenever he talks about them like that.

"It's not." he says softly before he starts scattering small kisses below his ear, on the side of his neck. "Not at all."

Jungkook sighs."You win too easily."

Jimin smiles, kissing his skin a little more open-mouthed. "Missed you."

The younger uses the hands around his thighs to squeeze gently, making it clear he's not the only one. "If you keep doing me like that I'll be forced to put you down and kiss you senseless against the nearest wall."

Jimin giggles. "I wouldn't deny you," he says, nuzzling against the side of his neck, "but I want to keep feeling your smell for a little longer."

"That sounds nice. But sorry," Jungkook says, actually sounding apologetic, "you'll really have to get down now. We kind of arrived."

Jimin peaks up, curious, and is met by some huge steel gates and a elevation that goes up and up, adorned by various types of trees and plants. It's a bit like a forest. A private one.

His jaw hangs slightly.

"Is this where you live? Is this like your garden?"
Jungkook chuckles, putting Jimin down and interlacing their fingers. "Come on."

"Come on where? I can't even see the house. Are you really this fucking rich? I mean, Taehyung is and he lives in almost a mansion, but at least I can see his house from the entrance." he starts rambling, "Am I dressed properly? God, I hate you so much, you brought me out there in this fancy land to meet who knows who in my uniform and if that's not bad already, you made me walk so now I'm completely covered in sweat and disgusting and, oh my god. Do I smell? I do, don't I?"

He's starting to freak out, he knows he is, and while his mind races a mile per minute, Jungkook watches from the side in amusement.

"Are you done? Can we go?" Jimin frowns at the way he blatantly ignores his crisis. "And besides," he scoots a little closer, putting a strand of Jimin's hair behind his ear, "if it's of any help, you look absolutely gorgeous."

Jimin falters on his posture.

"You're lying."

Jungkook chuckles softly.

"I'm really not." he slides a finger down his cheeks until he can hold his chin between his thumb and index to bring him forward for a kiss.

Jimin eyes fall closed instantly and he opens his mouth like an unconscious reaction, but Jungkook doesn't deepen the kiss. He indulges Jimin for a fleeting moment and presses two more chaste kisses on top of his mouth before he's pulling away. "Let's go? Trust me, I know what I'm doing. There's no need to worry."

Jimin is looking into his eyes intently — those ever glowing orbs — and all he wants to do is reach a little higher to kiss him again. But instead, he simply nods, so Jungkook tugs him by the hand and guides him.

They start going up the hill, and between the leaves and flowers in the shrubs that adorn the path around them, a big house appears, framed by the grandiose trees — the view too perfect for it to not be previously planned. Jimin feels his anxiety high in his throat, palms clammy against Jungkook's.

The house shows off an old, yet elegant architecture — the hints of modernity are in the details and somehow this mix of temporalities makes the magnificence of the construction even more latent.

He gulps. He's really not prepared to meet Jungkook's parents like this. But as they walk further into the land, Jungkook abruptly lets go of his hand and sprints towards the pool area in front of the main facade, leaving a confused Jimin behind.

Only when Jungkook is almost reaching a tree of medium height near that area does Jimin spot the small white-haired lady, climbing a wooden stair, apparently in an attempt to get something from the branch.

"Nana!" Jungkook yells with urgency.

The lady turns her head around with unfazed expression by the urgent tone and her face lightens when she spots Jungkook.

"Oh, hi there, sweetheart."
"What are you doing?!" Jungkook urges when he reaches the tree and holds the legs of the stairs to give better support, ignoring her greetings "This is dangerous!"

She scoffs and turns back around, returning to what she was doing before she was interrupted. "Silliness. Poor little Minie got stuck and I'm getting him down."

"Nana, I can get him for you, come down!" Jungkook asks one more time which presents him another scoff.

"Why? I'm doing this already. Just hold the stairs tight for me, 'cause I'm almost—" she reaches with her hand a little further and smiles when she's able to come back with a kitten curled around her palm, frightened, "Oh, there it is. It's alright now, baby, mommy got you." she soothes the poor little things that's holding onto her for dear life.

When she lands with her feet on the ground after some torturous seconds of Jungkook telling her to be careful every step she made down the stairs, Jimin is feeling a little less restless. The scene is amusing him and he has approached them quietly while the interaction enrolled.

His chest is warm all over at the thought Jungkook brought him to meet his grandma from all people.

"You really have to be careful, you know?" Jungkook is giving her a lecture as she plays with the paws of the kitten, completely unbothered. "You're not at the flower of age anymore, nana, you can get hurt bad and then what will we do? You really have to settle down a little."

"Oh, baby." she eyes him with a particularly fond expression, reaching with the free hand to caress his cheek, "No man has ever told me what to do and you will not be the first." Jimin raises his brows at the boldness of her words despite the sugary tone. She pulls back, "Besides! Life is made of movement. A body that doesn't interact with the world is a dead body, it doesn't matter if it still breathes." she looks down to the kitten, "Right, Minie-ah?"

Jungkook simply sighs, defeated, then scratches the back of his neck and looks back around to find Jimin, who's quietly smiling at the exchange. "Ah, nana... Jimin's here."

It's somehow surprising and heartwarming the way he simply says that, no introductions needed as if he already talked about him with her.

She raises her eyes and finds where Jimin stands, smile on full display with all her pearly white teeth. "Oh my, oh my!" she crouches a little to put Minie on the ground, who instantly sprints inside the house through the huge two leaf door that opens to a spacious living room. "You told me he was gorgeous, but you didn't tell me he was this gorgeous." Jimin's eyes widen and his cheeks flush with the praise and attention. Jungkook simply smiles at him. "Come closer, Jimin, let me take a good look at this young face of yours!"

Jimin is blushing terribly, but he walks towards her even so and finds himself in a loss of words of what to say.

"U-uh, hi—" he realizes he doesn't know her name, "It's really nice to meet you." he bows his head as much as he can without looking weird, "Jungkook didn't tell me he was bringing me here, so I'm sorry if I—"

She stops him from saying anything else by delicately placing both hands on his cheeks to better see him.

"Aw, look at you." the old lady coos, "All red and smooth skin, so pretty. Jungkookie made you
walk here, didn't he? I told him so many times to get a bus or a taxi, but he refuses, he only ever gets here by foot, the stubborn bastard."

Jungkook speaks from behind them. "We used to walk these streets from end to end when I was a child. I don't want to taint the memories."

The woman rolls her eyes in a way only Jimin can see, making him genuinely chuckle. "He's such a sap, just like his grandpa was." she says in a lower tone so only him can hear, and then raises her voice louder so it can reach Jungkook, "Memories are not tainted like that, Jungkookie. If they were, us humans would suffer a lot less, right?" she's intently eyeing Jimin, so he nods. She smiles at him and lovingly pats his cheeks before pulling back. "Who's hungry? I was waiting for you guys to taste my delicious food and see your reactions! I tried a recipe I found out on the internet." They start walking together towards the house and she turns around to establish eye contact with Jungkook once more. "Did you know, Jimin, that these days people record themselves cooking to show the recipe properly? It's so helpful! They have various videos on a thing called youtube."

Jimin sincerely smiles at her. She's too cute. "Yeah, it's pretty cool, right?" he answers.

Jungkook is still caught in the first piece of information, though. "Did you cook? Grandma, didn't I tell you I was going to order chinese for us, you didn't have to—"

The woman turns around again, so Jimin can't see her face anymore, but he's pretty sure she delivers yet another roll of eyes. "Oh my, here we go again." she sighs dramatically.

He can do nothing but laugh.

"You guys bicker a lot." he comments with fondness as they walk down the hill, hand in hand. The uber they called for Jimin is going to be there any minute now, so he needs to go. It's late evening already, the sky dark with fading stars. Jimin holds on Jungkook's hands a little tighter.

"She's too stubborn."

Jimin chuckles. "Guess you have someone to take this from, then."

The younger scoffs, but doesn't deny the statement. Deep down he knows Jimin is right.

"She liked you. A lot. If you didn't realize by the two cakes she baked just so you could take half of them home."

Jimin openly laughs this time, the plastic bag dangling from his arm truthful to Jungkook's words. "I liked her too. A lot." he admits and then a peaceful silence settles between them.

Once they reach the gates, Jungkook peaks outside to see if the car is already there and when he makes sure its not, he leans against the wall beside it and pulls Jimin between his legs. His hands automatically curl around Jungkook's broad shoulders, fingers absently drawing circles over his
"Thank you." Jungkook says out of nowhere, making him frown.

"For what?"

A breath. "Coming here. I'm really happy."

Jimin decides to mask the riot inside his chest with a light-hearted joke. "Not much like I had a choice when you wouldn't even tell me our destiny, right?" the boy laughs, but most of all just keeps on staring deep into his eyes so he continues, "You don't have to thank me. I'm really happy you brought me here."

He releases a peaceful breath and pulls Jimin close so he has his arms wrapped around his waist and Jimin's head resting against his chest. He reciprocates the hug properly wrapping his arms around Jungkook's neck, nuzzling his cheek on the softness of his shirt.

They stay like that for awhile, in the silence of the night.

Jungkook keeps on tightening Jimin's waist and pulling him closer from time to time, as if he wants to say something and is about to call his attention, but gives up every time.

Jimin's heart tugs with every attempt and he restlessly wonders what is it that it's bothering the younger.

But when he pulls away and looks into his irises, the boy leans down and presses his mouth against his.

It's warm, and kind of surprising, so Jimin releases a pleased sigh, raising on his toes to curl his arms tighter around his neck.

This time, Jungkook is the one opening his mouth and demanding more, which Jimin happily indulges, sliding an arm down his chest so his hand is on his hair to toy with the strands.

They move almost lazily, not a single rush in the world.

Although, contrasting the calm outside, Jimin's chest is swirling with a thousand million emotions.

If this is what it feels like to have a boyfriend, then he wants to date Jungkook. Kissing under the stars, meeting families, merging into each other's days. Are they dating?

He pulls away.

"Hey."

Jungkook's eyes hold a hopeful glint — or perhaps it's just the glow of the moon, but either way, Jimin has never felt more in love.

He gnaws at the flesh of his bottom lip, but just then his phone vibrates in his pocket and a car honks on the street. He peaks outside the gates and confirms that his uber has indeed arrived.

He sighs. "I have to go."

Jungkook curls the corner of his lips in thought, but nods in the end. They take the bag his grandma gave him and Jimin's backpack from the ground, and as he's about to step outside, Jungkook pulls him back to kiss him one last time. Jimin chuckles and reciprocates with a peck before he's
stepping back again.

"The car is waiting." he reasons, but the boy is resolute.

"Me too, give me my proper good night kiss or I won't be able to sleep."

Jimin lets himself be pulled close again, despite playing a little hard to get. "I gave you plenty."

"I need more."

"That's just being greedy."

"I know." he says, mouth already attached to Jimin's. "I like being selfish when it's about you." the older shakes his head laughing, but parts a little wider so their tongues can meet.

They're hidden by the shadows of the trees and the high wall, but Jimin still feels on edge knowing they're kissing while the street is just behind them. It stirs the butterflies in his stomach in a way he has to find ground by gripping tighter on Jungkook's hair.

When they have to pull apart, it's not without a sense that something is missing. Jimin takes a deep breath and places a last kiss on top of his lips before he's pulling away for good.

He resists the urge to tuck the strand falling over the younger's eyes behind his ear. "Bye, Kook."

His pretty pink lips merge into a smile. "Bye, hyung. Text me when you get home."

"I will."

He turns around and makes his way to the car waiting for him, the tugging in his chest somehow more insistent than ever.

He sighs.

*Please, let us make it right this time.*

---

Overthinker.

It's a bit contradictory to call him that considering he can be pretty much impulsive at times.

But most of the days, overthinking.

After exhausting hours of procrastinating study to walk around his room considering every little thing he did the previous week, he barges into Jihyun's room.

"Hey." he throws himself on the bed, part of his body crashing his brother's, but he doesn't really care. The grunt he receives as a response is nowhere near inviting, though. "Jihyunie, come on, hyung needs you."

"Go away, it's too early for this."

Jimin lets out a choked sound of disbelief. "It's literally six in the afternoon."
"Early!"

"Ah, come on, pretty please." he begs while tugging the duvet in hopes to find his brother's face, but with no success rate whatsoever.

"No, go bug mom, I have no time for this."

Jimin is resolute. "You have all the time in the world, come on now. Five minutes and I'll do anything you want."

This seems to perk the younger's interest.

"I want sunday free of your annoying ass."

"You mean tomorrow?"

"I mean every sunday."

"Wow, mean."

"Hyung."

Jimin grunts. "Fine, deal."

Jihyun finally lets him pull the covers from his head so he's fully on display. Jimin climbs further on the bed so he's laying right beside him.

Although when he finally has the chance to speak, the words miss him.

Jihyun sighs. "Is this about Jungkook again?"

The older chews on his bottom lip, ashamed. He has long broke his rule of not venting about his love life to his brother, which led to him being his constant source of whines and afternoon lamentations.

"Listen, if you're so impatient about this asking to date you thing then why you don't you do it instead?"

Jimin releases a breath. "It's not that I'm impatient, it just ticks me the wrong way when I don't know where we stand. I mean, can we see other people, is he seeing other people?"

"You know he's not seeing other people."

"Actually, you never really know know with him." Jimin answers in a smaller voice.

"In that case, you just have to come clean with him, right?"

He doesn't hold back the urge to whine in protest. "But coming clean sucks… Besides! How do I know I'm not getting too ahead of myself?"

"You've been going out for nearly a month, hyung, you're not getting too ahead of yourself."

"But what if I am?"

The younger sighs.

"Guess you have to try to find out, right?"
It takes a moment of silence. Jimin hates not being right.

"Yeah, I guess so."

The younger boy, then, rolls on his side and pulls his blanket with him. "If that's all please leave my bedroom and go take a shower. It's a hot saturday and you haven't showered all day."

He gasps in horror offense. "And how do you know that?"

"Because you smell."

He gasps once again. "I do not!" But as he raises his arm to take a sniff under his armpit he might realize that he, in fact, does. He groans. "I hate you and your sensitive nose."

He jumps out of the bed and walks out of the room.

"Close the door!" Jihyun yells when he's already two meters of distance in the hall.

He rolls his eyes and takes two steps backwards to bang it closed.

The shower is refreshing when the cold drops hit his back. It slides down his skin and it completely shuts down his thoughts for some welcoming minutes.

Jimin doesn’t like how much space Jungkook takes up in his mind sometimes. It gets him wondering if it’s healthy. For example, the way he postponed his studies without a second thought today in order do to do absolutely nothing but to think about him. And the worst of all, it’s that Jungkook does nothing wrong to trigger this. (Besides existing, of course, damn him three times). Jimin just doesn’t perform this being in love thing very well.

It should be over by now — his never-ending, forever growing insecurity. After all, they are going out for nearly a month and Jungkook has been nothing but sweet and kind, goofy and annoying, every moment beside him making Jimin fall harder and harder. So why, why can’t he be sure about this? Why does he get this gut-wrenching feeling that Jungkook might slip between his fingers any moment?

He wraps a towel around his hips and pushes his hair back as he stares at his reflection in the mirror. He still has such a long way to go. Honestly, it’s exhausting just realizing it. Every time he takes a step forward it feels like he’s retreating five. Is the length ever narrowing it down?

After applying lotion on his face and neck to get rid of some acne that decided to settle beneath his jaw, he walks out of the bathroom and curses out loud for not having taken some pair of clothes with him as the fresh wind hits his bare chest.

He opens the door of his room and almost misses the figure sitting on his bed in the rush to grab a tshirt. He stills for a moment.
Jungkook is just there, sitting by the edge of the mattress with his phone in hands, looking up at him with an amused expression at the situation he got himself into.

“What are you doing here?” Jimin questions, arm instinctively coming up to cover his chest to some extent.

The younger cocks his head to the side, mischievous glint in his eyes. “What are you trying to hide from me?” he nudges in a teasing tone, extending an arm so he can grab Jimin’s wrist and pull him closer, right between his thighs. He looks up to him, both hands resting on his hips, and Jimin is still too shocked to even blush.

“Who let you in?”

“Your mom did.”

But it's with a twinge of satisfaction that he notices Jungkook's eyes drifting down his chest as his brings his hands forward to caress the skin of his belly. Jimin automatically sinks his stomach at the cold touch. His breathing halts and it finally dawns upon him the situation he's in. His cheeks begin to heat up.

"She told me to wait in your room..." the younger continues, still solely focused on the display of skin right in front of him. It makes Jimin gulp. "Because you were showering."

He's about to ask once again what is he doing there when Jungkook slides his hands to his lower back and pulls him forward until his warm lips softly collide with the cold skin of his stomach.

Jimin inhales probably the deepest breath known to humankind, fingers instantly going to Jungkook's strands to curl around it.

"J-Jungkook!” he gasps, completely taken aback by the boy's boldness.

They haven't made out in so long, let alone touch anywhere underneath clothes that's not from the neck up. The whole ordeal makes Jimin feel like he's catching fire. To be honest, it doesn't even feel like he experienced any sexual thing with Jungkook before what they have going on. When he looks back to the them of the past, they seem like a completely different story, two different people. Well, somehow, they kind of are.

But that's exactly what makes everything even more thrilling. The nostalgia is there, soaking him from head to toe — yet, nonetheless, everything is new.

Deaf to his complaints, Jungkook traces a path of kisses all over his belly, mapping the dip of his waist with an open mouthed kiss that is sure to leave a mark.

Once he pulls back with shiny, red lips, Jimin is panting.

His eyes are closed and he only dares to open them when Jungkook's palms start caressing his sides.

"You have no idea how much I hate to say this," Jungkook starts out of the blue, getting a frown out of Jimin, "but you need to put some clothes on."

He throws his head back, laughing.

"Not that I wasn't already intending to do that, but—" he stops to get a proper look of the younger's eyes, "may I ask why?"
Jungkook bites his bottom lip, once again distracted by the other's stomach, as if it's physically torturing him to stay away. He presses another kiss over the skin, letting his lips stick to it like glue. Jimin's scared he might feel the butterflies thrumming underneath it.

"I'm taking you somewhere, so unfortunately I need you dressed."

Jimin chuckles. "Are you sure? I could parade around like this."

Jungkook shakes his head with a smile. "Don't tease me. I'm one breath away from pinning you to this bed so I can kiss you senseless."

Jimin licks his lips, tempted by the offer and leans down just enough for his lips to brush the younger's, the hand on his soft hair pulling his head back just so he can get a better angle. "What's holding you back?" he whispers and Jungkook brings his hands up to cup his nape and pull him down for a slow, yet brief kiss.

"Our first date is." he breathes against his mouth.

Jimin's eyes widen.

He pulls back in shock. "What?"

The boy simply leans back on his hands with a smirk on his lips and motions to the wardrobe with his chin. "I told you, go get dressed. And don't forget to wear my jacket. Today's a special occasion."

"You're insufferable." Jimin pouts with crossed arms tight against his chest.

"Will you stop pouting and hold my hand already?" the younger offers with his palm hanging in the air, open fingers inviting, perfect for interlacing. Jimin looks away.

"A heads up would've been nice, I'm not prepared for this. Did I even dress properly?"

"Okay, stop." Jungkook halts his steps and makes Jimin turn around with a hold of his shoulders, right before he cups his jaws so he can stare solely at him. "What's wrong? You were fine until we dropped off the bus. We're almost there."

Jimin breathes. "Is it fancy? You should tell me in advance, because I'm not used to these places and—"

"Listen. I'm not spoiling anything, but you've really got to stop worrying, because—"

"Kook, I'm serious, this is important, right? I-I mean, it is our first date, and oh, no, I mean, maybe it's not that big of a deal and I'm overthinking, I know, I do this a lot, I'm sorry, but it's just that I was considering maybe—"
"Okay, that's it." Jungkook lets go of him and he starts panicking more than he was panicking in the first place, heart a mile per hour as he watches the younger grab a scarf from his backpack.

"What's that?" he questions in a tiny voice.

"Turn around."

"What?"

"I'm blindfolding you."

"What?!"

"Come on, I'll be your guide, you can trust me."

"But—"

"No, there's no buts. You'll not see where we're heading or else you'll get even more nervous and I don't want that, so come on, turn around, you big stubborn baby."

Jimin huffs, but turns around nonetheless. Suddenly, his sight is being stolen from him, Jungkook's breath hitting his nape as he ties the thing on the back of his head. He places his hands on his shoulders then, leaning down so he can whisper on his ear,

"Better?"

Jimin gulps and nods. Strangely, it is.

"Good. Now focus only on my voice, okay? Tonight is important and I don't want you doubting it, so just trust me on this, okay?" he kisses Jimin's cheek in reassurance — as if they weren't red enough. "I'd never make anything to get you uncomfortable, I promise." he slides his arms around his waist, tucking him in his hold for a moment, in the middle of the street, "Do you believe me?"

He resumes to nod, words completely stolen from his throat.

"Turn around and kiss me if you really do..." the boy demands in a singing tone, clearly joking, but Jimin spins on his heels and does just that, getting a surprised yelp out of Jungkook, chest puffed out with the deep breath he inhales.

Jimin grips on his shoulders and kisses him harder.

It's not in his mind that it's nearing seven, people are walking around all over, streets busier than ever. The only thing in his mind is how much he doesn't want this to be a dream.

Jungkook holds his waist and reciprocates softly, apparently over the initial shock. When Jimin pulls back, the younger is chuckling.

"You just kissed me." he notes.

"Well, you asked."

"In front a whole lot of people."

He can't see a thing, but he can pretty much picture the face Jungkook is doing now. He'd kiss that one too.
"I did."

He feels a hand on his cheek and then he's being kissed again. "I might blindfold you a lot more in the following days when we're in public. Just a heads up."

Jimin laughs. "Shut up."

"Come on, lets go." Jungkook takes his hand and finally gets them walking again.

It's after a solid thirty seconds of silence before Jimin is talking again, Jungkook’s hands on his waist as he guides him just like he promised he would. “Hey, aren’t you nervous?”

“Like hell.”

“You don’t seem nervous.”

“The fact we’re debating this now makes me less nervous, actually.”

He giggles. “Me too.”

“But you also being nervous helped on the me calming down process.”

“Well, I’m always happy when my anxiety is benefic for other people.”

It’s Jungkook’s turn to laugh. “Shut up, you know what I mean.”

“Where are we now?” Jimin suddenly asks, head turning around despite his temporary blind state, “The sound has changed and my steps are on softer ground. My voice is echoing too— Jeon Jungkook, where are we?”

“Chill, will you? We’re almost there, told you.”

Jimin releases a breath, one that’s being kept hostage for a little while. “Oh. Okay. Almost there, got it.”

Jungkook is giggling behind him. “You’re cute.”

“Well, lucky you, right?”

They suddenly stop, and Jungkook backhugs him right before there’s the sound of doors closing. Elevator doors closing. And then they start going up.

“I’d be a super liar if I said this didn’t just make me more nervous.” Jimin starts rambling again, and the younger has his chin resting on his shoulder, intently listening.

“We could make out against the elevator walls if that’ll take your mind off things.”

"Or , you could give me a hint of where we're going, this would also be super."

"Tsk. Just got rejected by my date, this is definitely not starting well."

Jimin laughs. He's such an idiot.

"You're such an idiot."

"Okay, you want a hint, I'll give you a hint. We're in a building."
Jimin lets the silence swallow them for two solid seconds.

"Gee, thanks, Sherlock, guess that didn't cross my mind at all. Genuinely thought we were getting an elevator in the middle of the street straight up to Olympus."

"Always glad to help, but I'm pretty sure they went into the Empire States in Percy Jackson to get to Olympus, so don't cross that off your list yet."

Jimin throws his head back, resting it on the younger's shoulders so he can openly laugh. Mental note: never again let Jungkook kidnap him and, most important, do *not* let himself be blindfolded by free and spontaneous choice. Much regrets to come.

"Just tell me if we're going to a restaurant, just yes or no. A restaurant in a building smells fancy to me."

"I wouldn't be so sure. Let me tell you, I've been to some in the States and boy—"

"Jungkookie…" he whines, demanding an answer.

"You don't do fancy, noted. What if it's too late for that?"

Jimin groans.

"Of course I don't do fancy, Kook, I'm poor, I'm not used to this. What if I speak too loud, bang glasses, eat in the wrong way?"

"Don't worry, rich people nowadays are all about looking like they're poor with their 13k outfits with holes in it. They'll smile at you to seem kind-hearted and when you turn your back they'll curse you with their friends for going to the same school that their kids go."

"Well, if that doesn't make me feel any better."

"I'm not forcing you to interact with these people. Didn't you tell me ten minutes ago that you trusted me?"

"Well, yes, but—"

"While we're at this recalling things we said thing, I might just go and kiss you to get you to stop talking." he threatens, turning Jimin around in his hold, which gets him rolling his eyes.

"Actually, now that you mentioned, aren't we going up for quite awhile? I mean—"

But before he can even complete his sentence, he *is* being pressed against the elevator wall like promised, Jungkook's warm lips snatching all the heartbeats right out of his chest.

He whines against him and in response, the younger holds him by the neck and opens his mouth, which lets be honest, could only result in Jimin melting any resistance straight away.

He tries to take a deep breath, fingers finding Jungkook's soft strands that are styled in slight curls tonight — which are getting him completely enamored if he hadn't mentioned it yet, by the way —, and parts his lips as well, welcoming the younger's tongue that's coaxing all the sighs out of him.

They kiss slow and soft, which is a hazard for the health of his weak heart, so he holds on tighter, pulls him closer.
Jungkook is pressing two long kisses on top of his mouth before he pulls back, in perfect sync with the sound of the doors opening.

"Wow, you're a psych." Jimin says jokingly to muffle the sounds of his heart.

Jungkook laughs, which is no help for his vulnerable state.

"We're here." he warns, pulling Jimin out of the cabinet.

"Wait, seriously?"

"Yeah."

There's no sound of voices around, so Jimin guesses they're definitely not in a restaurant — but to be fair, it doesn't sound like anywhere indoors either. There's the gust of soft wind on his ears and the actual feeling of it on his cheeks. But, also, other than that, everything just seems… quiet.

"Are you going to let me see?" Jimin asks, heart in a frenzy.

God, he's so nervous. He has been being a pain in the ass the entire way here, he doesn't know how Jungkook didn't give up on him yet.

"Yes, but, wait." he hears him say by his side, before his hand is being grabbed and he's guided towards somewhere. Jungkook helps him with a step and so they stop.

He tries easing his breathing when the younger walks behind him and starts undoing the knot of the scarf.

He's so, so curious. How are they outside after entering a building and an elevator?

"Are you ready?" Jungkook whispers close to his ear.

A smile grows on his lips in advance. "Yes." he responds in one quick breath.

"Okay... Surprise." the boy says as he clears his sight, the scarf softly sliding down his face, until Jungkook collects it.

The first thing Jimin realizes it's that it's dark. Like, really dark. The glow of the moon shines weakly on a pink blanket carefully placed in the middle of the concrete ground. There's some small candles lit around it and a bluetooth speaker too. Which leaves them to where they are. Jimin looks around, curious and confused, when it sinks.

They're on a rooftop of a building. He turns around to look at Jungkook.

"Where is this?"

The younger has a hopeful glint in his eyes. "The tallest building in the city."

He gasps. "What?"

Now that its mentioned, it is weird that he can't see any other building around, considering they took a bus straight downtown. He runs to the edge to take a look at the view and the breath is almost knocked off his chest.

It feels like he can see the entirety of Busan. He can see the rooftop of every other building beneath them.
So that's why the elevator took so long. He can't believe it.

The lights of the city lit up at night seem like a bunch of fallen stars on the horizon. His chest swells. It's so beautiful.

"H-how?" he stutters, still in complete awe, looking back to find Jungkook with a pleased smile, hands in his pockets, silently watching him. He backs away from the edge, head ducked down, shy. He must've looked like a kid.

Jungkook scratches his nape before he answers, tone sheepish, "It's my parents'."

Jimin gapes at him for a whole minute.

"The building?"

He looks away, red on the cheeks. "Yeah…"

"Oh my god."

"Did I go too overboard? Sorry, I told you I wouldn't make you uncomfortable, yet here I am doing just that. I just thought it'd be a nice view and cool to—"

Jimin walks towards him with a coy smile and pulls his hands, that are gesturing all around, down. "Hey," he calls him, who only responds with an unsure look, "This is absolutely incredible. Thank you, really. Thank you so much, Kook. I love it."

"Do you mean it? Are you not only saying this so I won't be sad?"

Jimin kisses his knuckles, eyes never leaving his own. "I promise I'm not." it's his honest answer. He's so touched.

Jungkook smiles, then, and interlaces their fingers.

"Okay, then. Come, I have something else to show you."

"Another surprise? Oh boy, I'm so spoiled today." he jokes as they sit down on the blanket — which he realizes now, it's on top of a mattress, with some white pillows on it. Everything just feels so cozy and comfortable. Jungkook really thought about everything and that alone makes Jimin want to burst from happiness.

He watches as Jungkook pulls a couple paper bags from a dark corner and his mouth hangs when he realizes where they're from.

It's a small restaurant he used to go with his mom when he was smaller that does his favorite ddeokbokki in the whole world. He commented it with Jungkook a while ago, about how much he missed it and that it was a pity the place didn't do deliveries and was on the other side of the city.

"You didn't." Jimun gapes, smile loud on his voice as he eyes the bags being placed in front of him.

Honestly, he never would think a brief piece of information like that would stick to Jungkook's brain enough for him to chase it on the other side of Busan.

The younger boy has a wide grin on his face while he pulls the food out of the bags. Jimin salivates just by looking at it. He can't help it, he jumps on the younger's neck, nearly knocking the chilli sauce down in the process, but he can't care less. He hugs him tight, face buried on the curve of his
"Thank you, thank you, thank you. You're amazing, thank you so much."

Jungkook laughs and reciprocates the hug before Jimin pulls away.

"Always good to know I can lure you away with food."

"You usually can't, but this is my favorite comfort food in the world. It reminds me so much of my childhood."

Jungkook smiles. "I know. Look, I ordered some fried dumplings as a side and there's boiled eggs and also fries and ice tea."

Jimin giggles. "A whole feast."

"Go ahead, eat before it gets cold."

And so Jimin does, with his chest so warm that he can't stop but make tiny noises every now and then that gets Jungkook to laugh and blush, telling him it's too cute.

The food is impeccable, exactly how Jimin remembers. It's spicy and salty and everything he loves. The coldness of the ice tea also makes a good contrast and he eats everything with so much want to eat that he surprises even himself. He can't remember when was the last time a dish made him this happy.

They talk about Jungkook's trip to go get the food, Jimin still in an absolute loss of words about it. They feed each other fries and laughs when Jimin stains Jungkook's white shirt with ketchup. The fried dumplings are a little withered and cold when they get to them, but Jungkook makes him double over laughing when he challenges him to see who can stuff more into their mouths. Jimin wins (but at what cost). He's coughing and hitting his chest as he tries to gulp everything down. There's tears in his eyes and his throat is trying to resist the chunk of food going down, but he forces it anyway. Jungkook is laughing behind his fist as he watches him with sparks on his orbs.

"You're evil." Jimin says when he's finally able to, gulping the rest of his drink down to ease his pain. "And I won, so what's my prize, huh?" he demands, eyebrows shooting up in defiance and Jungkook stares at him with an amused smile and big round eyes that could only ever be found on that perfect face of his. Jimin controls the urge to sigh.

The boy sits up, scooting closer and Jimin has an idea of what's to come. He almost rolls his eyes at how cliche it is. Not that he's complaining.

There it comes.

"Close your eyes."

"Will you give me my prize if I do?"

"Absolutely. Don't peek." he holds back his smile and does as he's told. "Pinky promise me."

He gives him his pinky and holds back a laugher. He's prepared to have his lips stolen in a kiss anytime now, but Jungkook is taking longer than expected. He patiently waits, lids closed and mouth waiting, parted, but the shot never comes. Instead, he feels Jungkook's hands hovering next to his face and then there's the cold touch of metal on his collarbones. He's startled, so he opens his eyes and looks down, finding a silver necklace with a star pendant on it.
"Hey, you promised not to peek!" Jungkook reprimands, finishing to put it on him.

"Sorry." Jimin mumbles out distracted and honestly, confused. He takes the pendant in hand, the frown on his features showing he doesn't understand. "What's this?"

"Turn it around." Jungkook instructs, and he has his bottom lip caught between his teeth, fingers nervously playing with the hem of his shirt. Jimin frowns deepen, but he brings his gaze back to the pendant and spins it on his fingers. His lips part in awe as he realizes there's something carved on the back of it.

You shine brighter than the whole night sky.

"I told you I brought you here because of the view, but that wasn't completely true." Jungkook starts to explain softly, and Jimin listens, hypnotized, standing on the peak of confusion, but with his heart tight in a vice with how much he's feeling right now, "Remember when you showed me your list of things you wanted to do before you die on the trip? There was a lot of things and one of them was how you wanted to see the stars with no city lights around?" Jimin's lips part further.

"Well, look up. Best seats in the house."

He takes his eyes up to the sky, mind floating in a sort of anesthetized state. The air is squeezed right out of his lungs, because there they are, shining bright and beautiful.

It's so dark around the two of them and the lights are so far away beneath their feets that it feels like Jimin is looking at the entire universe. Every single constellation, right in front of his eyes.

It's like someone spilled silver glitter all over a black sheet. It's so…

"Jungkook, this is…" he starts, voice failing him altogether, but it seems like the younger is not over yet.

"I've been planning this for days and I was so scared something was going to go wrong. I needed everything to be perfect, because god knows I already fucked up with you for a lifetime. But," he takes Jimin's hands in his, "I'm willing to do everything in my power to make things right this time."

Jimin stares at him, eyes shining with a sort of emotion he can neither describe or put a name on. It's so raw and leaves him with nothing.

No air, no words, no heartbeats, no nothing.

"This time?" he repeats, voice tiny, and watches Jungkook scoot closer to take his face between his hands, eyes never faltering on the connection with his own.

He brings a finger to caress Jimin's cheek in the most tender of touches while leaning down his forehead so it can touch his. It's so delicate that he closes his eyes for a moment, and it's when Jungkook says,

"Be my boyfriend."

Jimin opens his eyes, bewildered, wondering if he heard right.

“What?”

The boy cups his jaws and pulls him closer so he can place a soft kiss on the corner of his lips, “I want to date you so bad. Please, date me.”
It’s hard to believe those words are coming out of Jungkook’s mouth. He hears them, but he doesn’t process them. And it’s funny, because he waited so long for this moment, and now he’s stuck in this limbo where his heart doesn’t beat and the air doesn’t reach his lungs.

Jungkook, though, continues to supposedly convince him, when he has dived into this way before he asked him to.

He drags his lips down his jawline and starts scattering kisses down his neck. “I promise I’ll be an even bigger idiot if that increases the amount of times I make you laugh. And I’ll always be there when you need me.” he brings his lips up to kiss his cheeks, “I’ll make up for all the times I made you cry.” and his nose, “I’ll be the best I can be, I promise you.” and his forehead, “If I ever make you feel like you’re not enough, please just break up with me, but right now…” he lowers his head so he’s staring deep into Jimin’s eyes and it feels a little hard not to tear up. He’s so overwhelmed. “Please, give me a chance to make us both happy. I’ll make you so so happy, I pinky promise.”

Jungkook kisses his cheeks, “I’ll be the best I can be, I promise you.” and his forehead, “If I ever make you feel like you’re not enough, please just break up with me, but right now…” he lowers his head so he’s staring deep into Jimin’s eyes and it feels a little hard not to tear up. He’s so overwhelmed. “Please, give me a chance to make us both happy. I’ll make you so so happy, I pinky promise.”

Jimin bites down on his bottom lip, trying his best not to let a tear or something spill, because that’d be so embarrassing, but fuck it, he can’t help the way he feels. Not right now when it feels like Jungkook is handing him the entire world on those pretty hands of his. “Be my boyfriend, Jimin-ah.”

He opens his mouth, and his voice barely makes out of it. “Do you mean it?”

Jungkook scoots closer. “Every word.”

Their voices have suddenly dropped an octave, matching the intimate atmosphere.

“I’ll hold you to that, then.”

“Please do.” he whispers, their lips a breath apart, and he’s anxiously waiting for an answer. "Hold me to everything, I beg you."

Jimin smiles.

“If I kiss you right now would that count as a yes?”

Jungkook smiles. “Yeah, but I kind of was waiting for a thousand yeses, so y’know—”

Jimin chuckles and opens his mouth just enough to catch Jungkook’s lip in his, hand on his neck pulling him forward like he’s hoping to merge the two of them together. It tastes exactly the same as their every other kiss and it’s that sense of familiarity that takes Jimin by surprise. Because that’s something he’ll be experiencing over and over from now on until it’s even more familiar than it is right now.

Because they’re dating. He and Jungkook, boyfriends.

He starts laughing in the middle of the kiss, and then proceeds to pepper Jungkook’s whole face with small pecks just like he did with him, making the younger fall back, laughing out loud. He follows him, straddling his hips on the mattress and continuing to leave a thousand tiny kisses on his lips just like Jungkook said he wanted it.

When the rush of laughter leaves their bodies, Jungkook circles Jimin’s waist with his arms and deepens the kiss once again. They sigh into it, just like lovers — show no hurry, no impeding limit over their heads imposing how much it’s okay to kiss and how much it’s not. They can do that for the whole night now, if they want to. There’d be no complaints from his part, he can assure.

His heart does a leap when Jungkook softly turns them around, so Jimin is laying on his back with
one of the younger’s leg over his thigh, the intensity of the kiss rising when that particular position gives the entire control in Jungkook’s hands.

He holds Jimin still, a hand sliding down his chest to hold his hip and press it against the sheets, while the other guides his face to the side so he can kiss his neck.

Jimin lets out a relaxed sigh.

"I missed you. This."

Jungkook follows up with kisses till his chin. "Me too. Do you know these alone times with you are precious?" he asks, kissing his throat. Jimin laughs, gut twisting when he feels the younger tug his shirt to expose his collarbones. "I get to get you all for myself."

Jimin laughs breathlessly. "Selfish."

"Guilty." the boy confesses.

Jungkook mouths at the whole length of skin he just exposed and so Jimin runs his hands up his back until he's tangling them on his hair, spurring him on.

"God, you're so hot." Jungkook mumbles, "And this jacket on you... It puts me right back in that bathroom, watching you try to dry your hair with no success whatsoever. I was so gone for you that night."

Jimin fails in the attempt of hiding his smile. "Were you?"

He comes back up to look at him, an elbow propping him up, "Yeah. I was so disappointed when you had to leave, we could barely talk."

Jimin kisses his nose. "Look at us now."

Jungkook smiles lovingly. "Look at us now..." he repeats, "You're my boyfriend."

He giggles in response. "I'm your boyfriend."

The younger sighs, resting his head on top of his chest. "I'll tell everyone about it, just you wait. Tomorrow you're going to get to school and everyone will be talking about us. I want the whole world to know."

Jimin laughs openly, fingers absently caressing Jungkook's scalp and ear. He looks up at the sky, at all the stars, and he can't believe his luck. Now everytime he looks up at night it's Jungkook he's going to see.

"You're not alone. I'll help you with that." he kisses the top of his head and the boy snuggles closer to him.

They stargaze together, the silence wrapping them in its magical bubble — a moment frozen in time, where Jungkook's smell is all around.
“Hey, mom.”

“Hey, love.” she answers, up on her feet with crossed arms, glaring at the television.

Jimin laughs, hand in hand with Jungkook as they make their way in, taking their shoes by the door.

“What horrible thing did the tv say to you this time?”

She tsks. “Nothing. But I think it’s broken.” she mumbles out and Jimin pulls Jungkook with him as he steps in further and that’s when his mother sees him.

“Oh, Jungkook, hi honey. I didn’t see you there.”

He smiles and bows slightly. “Hi, noona.”

Jimin is nearly jumping on his feet, fighting a smile with bunched up, red cheeks. “Mom, I want you to meet someone.”

She frowns, tilting her head to the side. “Okay?”

Once given the head start, he motions the younger forward, who chuckles shyly, ducking his head down. “Mom, this is Jungkook.”

She takes a moment to stare at him as if he’s gone crazy.

“Oh, yeah? Baby, are you okay? I know Jungkook.”

Jimin shakes his head, skin burning redder than ever. He’s so giddy. “No. Mom, this is Jungkook. My boyfriend.”

She stops, eyes widening as they drift from one to another.

“Oh.” she blinks. And then, “Oh.” she covers her mouth to hide her own smile, “Oh my god? Are you kidding? Since when?”

“Since tuesday.” Jimin answers.

“Tuesday?” the woman almost chokes out, “You’ve been living under my roof for three days as a taken man and didn’t say a word to me? Oh, I feel so betrayed.” she goes on, making Jungkook laugh as he watches her antics. He’s probably used to it by now. “And you,” she points to him in an overly dramatic way, “You contributed to this, Jungkook-ah. After I took you in, gave you food, let you hear all my embarrassing stories? I can’t believe you two, planning this behind my back.” she fakes a loud sigh, turning her back to them.

“Well, if it’s of any help, noona, it was his idea to announce it like this, I was all for telling you the moment it happened.”

Jimin slaps his arm. “Ah, you cheater!”

Seoyeon waves if off as if it was never a big deal to begin with. “Ah, I always knew I was raising the bad guy all along.” Then, she wears the biggest smile on her face, turning to fully face the two of them. “Oh my god. Come here, you two.” Jimin giggles his way to her, but she has to snatch Jungkook by the arm as he’s too shy to come closer, engulfing the two of them in a tight hug. “Oh, my, I’m so happy for you guys. Really, really, so happy.” she kisses their foreheads before letting them go.
They’re both flushing, pleased smiles rounding their cheeks, like the two stupid kids in love they are.

Seoyeon throws a look at Jimin. “Told you it’d happen in less than a month.”

“Mom!” he gasps, “We’re right in front of him??”

Jungkook butts in, amused. “You two making bets on me now?”

“Oh, please. We make bets on everyone.” Suddenly she clasps her hands together, a glint in her irises and a smile wider than the previous one. “We need to celebrate. Let’s go out!”

Jimin laughs, can’t help his fondness at her excitement. “You just said the tv is broken.”

"So?"

"Are you sure we can be spending money like this?"

“Ah, who cares, honestly? Television is killing all of our braincells anyway, so we should just leave it at that.” she mumbles as she hurries to take her coat, “Jihyun! Come on, we’re going out.”

“What, now?” Jimin questions, bewildered.

“Of course now, let’s go. Get your shoes on.” she hastens them, “Come on, come on. Jihyun!” the woman yells once again.

Jungkook is already by the door, putting his shoes back on, as the obedient son-in-law he is. Jimin's heart flutters at the thought.

He catches his mother's hand mid-air, before she can slip into the hall to call out for his brother again. “Hey, mom?”

She stops for a second to look back at him. “Yeah?”

“I love you.”

Her features seem to melt with the unexpected words. She cups his cheeks, leaning forward until their foreheads are touching. “Oh, baby.” pulling back, she kisses his nose. “I love you.”

They share one last look that's all theirs and speaks more than a thousand words could, before she’s disappearing into her youngest's room, all her joy visible on every step she takes.

Jimin spins on his heels and catches Jungkook leaning on the doorframe by the entrance, watching him.

“What you’re looking at?” he says, defiantly teasing.

The boy shrugs, nonchalant.

“Oh, nothing. Just my pretty boyfriend and my incredible mother-in-law.”

That gets him speechless alright. At least, for a second, it does. “Oh, shut up.” Jimin scratches his nose, the tip of his ears burning.

He's gotta get used to this soon enough.
“Come on here.” Jungkook demands, extending a hand. Jimin walks to him until he can take it, allowing himself to be pulled right into the younger’s arms. “Next up we’re hitting my parents, right? And then my grandma, although I think she already got the hint pretty well, and then your sister… We still got the whole world left, that’s a long way to go.”

Jimin chuckles, arms secured around his waist.

“Did I ever mention how much I like you?”

Jungkook’s smile turns sheepish. “No…?”

He raises on his toes to get their lips on the same level. “Well, then. I do. Very much.” murmuring against them, makes Jungkook tighten his arms around his shoulders, bringing them closer. "Very, very much."

“Well, that’s good to know. I mean, we’ve been dating for a few days now so it’s good to know we’re headed the same road.”

Jimin once again falls weak to his enticing words, head lolling sideways to laugh against his neck.

“You’re such an idiot.”

“You’re ready?” his mom’s voice comes from behind with the tap of her and Jihyun's steps.

“Jimin’s deciding whether he should go barefoot or not.” Jungkook answers her, so he slaps him on the chest.

“Shut up.” he clumsily sticks his feet inside his shoes, “I’m all ready. See?” he twists his torso to throw a forced smile at her. She just narrows her eyes at him and throws a jacket on his face.

“Great. Let’s get going, the cab is waiting for us.”

As he’s pulling the thing down so he can actually wear it, Jungkook nudges him. “Hey, recognize this?” he questions, pointing at the denim on his hands.

By the tone of his voice, Jimin knows it before he has to look. He laughs either way when he sees it. “I think that's destiny.”

“You call it.” the younger agrees, interlacing their fingers when Jimin has finished sticking his arms into Jungkook’s jacket.

“Lets go, boyfriend.”

“Lets go, baby.”
they still treat him with respect and some level of fondness, even. Jungkook said they must feel weird with him sharing things with them, since he did that, well, never. And it makes him feel part of something important in his life. It sounds cliché, but being 'the first' for some special situations really does the trick.

Jungkook's grandma reaction is the funniest of them all. When they stood there, like idiots, smiling coyly and announcing their relationship to her, she put her hand on her hip and let out,

"And what the hell were you two the first time Jimin came here if not in a relationship?"

Well, she does have a point and they tell her that, which she smartly replies with "oh, yes, big news, I was right, what a surprise. So! Who wants to try out the cookie rolls I learned on youtube?"

Eunbi is a whole different story. Jimin tells her when he shows up by the parlor to hang out while she tattoos a client.

She halts in the process, turning around to look at him. "How old is he?"

Jimin's mouth hangs, caught by surprise. "U-uh. Young— Er. Younger than me."

"Are you lying to me?"

"No! I promise, no." he looks down embarrassed. "He goes to my school, actually." playing with his rings, he feels her eyes on him, "I'm not doing that again, noona. Promise."

It takes a while before the buzzing of the needle starts again. "Okay, good." the girl sitting before Eunbi is silently watching their interaction. "Can I meet him?"

Jimin stills, once again not expecting what comes out of her mouth. "Really?"

"Yeah, why not?"

"Uh, sure, you can meet him."

He pops his lips, waiting for something else. It comes a minute later, when the needle buzz stops again, followed by a sigh.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to sound like that." she twists her body so she can look him in the eyes and show that she means it, "I'm really happy for you, I just—I'm constantly worried about your flings ever since you told me that."

Jimin smiles. "I'm happy you worry about me, but he's not a fling, noona. This is serious, he and I."

She nods and it seems like she wants to reach out and pat him, but she can't. "Okay. Is he nice?"

Jimin's smile spreads wider. "Yes."

She narrows her eyes. "Handsome?"

"Crazy handsome."

"Good. You've got standards to keep, y'know? With that pretty face of yours."

Jimin throws his head back, laughing. He loves how her out of the blue compliments make him feel good about himself, because he knows they're honest. Eunbi never lies.
"Hey," he calls when something sparks inside his brain, "and what about Hoseok?"

He watches her turn red and go back to the tattoo so she can hide her face. "Who?"

"Oh, you know who. Handsome dancer, stylish from head to toe, recently tattooed by you, Jung Hoseok."

She shrugs. "We're texting."

"You're texting? And you didn't bother to tell me that why?"

"Please. It's not a big deal."

"Not a big deal?" he repeats, "Well, excuse you, but I thrive off information about others people lives, okay?"

"You totally don't."

He rolls his eyes. "Okay, maybe not, but I do with yours."

"We're just texting, there's nothing major about it."

Jimin hums as in a hum sounding I totally do not trust you, but carry on. "Uh-huh."

"Anyways. Have you told your mother?"

"Yes. She was the sweetest ever. We even gone out to have dinner and then went bowling. Fancy, huh?"

"Fancy alright."

"Yeah, Jungkook beat us all. He's bonding pretty well with them."

"Them? Jihyun included?"

"Yeah. They keep having all these super long conversations about the games they play, which I think is helping Jihyun a lot to come out of his shell. It's cool."

"That's amazing to hear, Jiminie. Is he accepting you two well?"

Jimin leans against his chair, relaxing a bit more. "Yeah, actually. He listened to all my rants prior dating, so he was already kinda expecting it."

She smiles genuinely at him. "I'm so glad things are going this well. Do you, uh," she cuts the eye contact with him to focus on her work, "do you plan on telling your dad?"

Jimin slightly tenses. "I don't know. Maybe, someday. Like, later."

She nods, and they fall silent for some minutes, but the thought keeps on nagging his mind, now that she mentioned it.

"Hey, uh, does he, like, know about you?" Jimin asks, hoping for a positive answer.

"I don't think so."

He bites the inner part of his lip. "Oh."
"Sorry. The subject never came up, obviously, and I don't think my mom would've told him without talking to me first."

"It's okay. I'll figure something out."

"Yeah. Don't worry too much, though. I don't think he's gonna be an ass."

He nods, although the words doesn't do much to soothe his restlessness now that it's been awaken. "Yep."

"Hey, kids." Yoongi shows up by the door, looking gorgeous and pierced. Jimin still gets a little stunned by how pretty he is. "I just made coffee, you want some?"

"Who's kids?" Eunbi retorts without looking at him, focused, "I'm older than you."

Jimin laughs. "Hey, Yoongi-hyung? What info can you give me about Eunbi's new boyfriend?"

"Who, Hoseok?" he instantly answers, making Jimin nearly fall off his chair from how hard the laugh hits him.

"Yah!" she yells at the two of them and proceeds to blush like a schoolgirl as if she didn't just threat to shove her needle up their asses. "I hate you both so much."

June arrives like a blow of fresh air. Middle year break is near the corner, just a month ahead and that alone would already be great news, but somehow Jungkook's presence in his life is managing to make everything feel better. For starters, he's continuously motivating both him and Taehyung to study so no one falls back and has even showed interest in the exchange program they're going to apply to. Their grades are a pleasant consequence to their hard work and Jimin feels proud inflate in his chest when he sees all of their top results. They've still got one last round of exams to go before the break and they're carrying on the spirit.

Jungkook also lived up to his promise, and they're the talk of the whole school for awhile. He makes sure to backhug Jimin every chance he gets and it makes his whole being glow whenever he has this urge to show some public display of affection. Taehyung's rules of no third wheeling, of course, remains the same and so he's always whining like a petulant child when he's feeling left aside.

Also, his insecurity has been subduing by a lot and he has to admit it's all Jungkook's doing. Not that he's aware of it, but his constant reminders of how beautiful Jimin is and how he likes him so much does wonders to his health. Of course, Jimin should be the main reason for his own recovery, but there's nothing much he can do if the voices of his insecurities are not shut and Jungkook represents an amazing help for that.

There was only one time in the past two weeks, and Jimin had to do an extraordinarily good job in dealing with his thoughts by himself.
It was during a lunch break. Everyone was gathered at one table — the two of them, Taehyung, the girls and Jungkook's friends. It was a bit of a mess, really, and Jimin was feeling a little left aside as Jungkook and Taehyung were sitting side by side and talking about a tv show they were simultaneously marathoning that he had no interest in. Jungkook's hand was still on his thigh, though, so he was pushing the feeling of misplacement aside and tried to focus on what Junghwa was saying. But it was when Jungkook removed his hand and turned his body around so he could completely face Taehyung, and consequently give his back to Jimin, that his heart did the thing it didn't do in so long.

The familiar feeling crept its way between the cracks that were still healing and made itself comfortable. Jimin gulped and forced a smile to carry on the conversation he was having that he didn't even know what it was about anymore.

And he'd have these terrible thoughts, because, they were so lost in conversation, it was like they were entering their own world. And it was okay, really, but he couldn't help but wonder whether Jungkook would have a better time was he with Taehyung, which lead to him questioning once again if Jungkook was only with him, because Taehyung would never be available. Was he the second best?

And it didn't take long for the other paranoid thoughts to make their way in, either. Jimin kept wondering. Everyone was talking about them. People had said things about him before, as it reached Jungkook's ears and lead to all that trouble in the past. Knowing that, what would people say once they saw Jungkook with his back to him, deep in conversation with another boy (his best friend, per se)? Would they be talking about him again? Would he be talked about as if he's a fool, like Jungkook is fooling him?

Or worse, would they think Jungkook and Taehyung suit better?

This carried on for the entire day as the two of them never really stopped talking. Even when the three of them went to Taehyung's house to study, Jimin had the strange feeling he was the one third-wheeling.

It was all stupid, he knows that now.

But he had to have a lot of alone time thinking that night, trying to convince himself that it was alright. They're friends, friends can lose themselves in conversation, it's alright. And also, it didn't matter what people think. It doesn't.

It's the only time he can remember. But he's fine now. It's good that it happened, because it helped him realize that in the end of the day, he's all alone to fight his own monsters. People can be of some help, but at last, you're the protagonist of your own fights.

He and Jungkook are currently watching kimi no na wa, cuddling on Jimin's couch. It's the first time Jungkook is staying over. It's nearing the end of the movie and the sun has already set it has awhile now, so Jimin is discreetly yawning behind his fist. It's friday and they really don't have to wake up early tomorrow, which is a blessing, but going to sleep late is an habit Jimin has failed to break, which always takes a toll on him by the end of the week. So it's no surprise he's super sleepy, but at the same time, he wants to enjoy this night as much as he can with Jungkook.

Suddenly, he hears the sound of a sniffle and looks down since he's the one spooning. He laughs when he catches the boy weeping.

"Yah, why are you crying? Isn't this, like, the third time you're watching this?" Jimin questions.
Jungkook doesn't seem to mind. "So?" he says defensively, wiping his eyes, "It's just so sad."

"Aish." Jimin chuckles against his nape, hugging his waist tighter, and tangling their legs to give him some more comfort. "Don't cry, baby." he pleads, kissing his neck.

Jungkook sniffs again. "Only if you give me more kisses." he demands in a pouty tone, making Jimin laugh again.

He doesn't object, though, pressing his lips against the side of Jungkook's neck instead, and repeating the act over the same spot until the younger's eyes are drifting from the television to slightly close as he exposes his neck further.

Jimin starts kissing open-mouthed then, aroused by the ragged breaths Jungkook lets out. He shuffles down and the younger turns to lay on his back, one of Jimin's hand pinning him down on the couch by holding his hip still while the other rests above Jungkook's head. Jimin uses the position to his benefit and hooks one of the boy's legs between his, raising on his elbow to reach the other side of his neck.

He sucks a hickey there, and another downwards his collarbones, carding his fingers through his hair simultaneously, loving the way his breaths turn heavy.

It's pleasant, watching Jungkook's cheek flush and his lips part as he tries hard to keep a regular breathing with those half lidded eyes. Jimin bites his own lip at the sight. He wants more. Wants to feel more of the powerful energy he's having over him. Wants to turn those irregular breaths into whines, wants to make him cry out his name on his ear.

Jungkook's hands are suddenly gripping his arm, nails sinking on the skin as he sucks his belly in, searching for air. "Fuck, you're hard." he says, and Jimin can't even be embarrassed. He is.

"Because you're beautiful." he murmurs and Jungkook squeezes his eyes shut.

"You can't just say things like that..."

Jimin smiles teasingly, leaning down to leave another open mouthed kiss near his jawline. "Why not?" he questions, lips brushing the corner of his mouth.

Jungkook tightens his hold. "Because—"

"Are you getting hard too?"

"Jimin."

He continues, "I could take care of that for you." taunting, he slides his hand away from his hip and cups his clothed erection, squeezing it on his palm.

This time, the breath Jungkook sucks is loud and clear, resounding through the room.

"Fuck. Fuck. We're in the living room."

Jimin's own mind is drifting away from reasoning.

"So?"

He closes his eyes, feeling Jungkook's width in his hands and he's so fucking aroused. They haven't touched each other ever since that godforsaken party and it honestly feels like years. Jungkook moans lowly by the edge of his ear.
"Fuck, baby, stop that." he pleads, although his hips are slightly raising to meet his touch, "I'm so deprived."

Jimin completely ignores him. His heart is tight with want and anticipation. "You're big. I had completely forgotten how much." he marvels, giving Jungkook's member light squeezes and loving the way he feels it twitch in return. "Let me see it..." he asks, mouth watering already.

He wonders if Jungkook is getting wet.

"Jimin, for the love of god. We're in the living room, someone might walk on us any moment now." "They won't." he assures him. He knows they won't. It's that limbo time of the night, where everything is quiet and everyone has retreated to each other's own little shell. His mom is probably reading her novels or taking a bath and Jihyun simply never leaves his room anyway.

"How do you know?" Jungkook asks weakly when Jimin's fingers start dancing around the waistband of the sweats he borrowed him.

"I just do." he answers, voice low, "Can I see you?"

He observes Jungkook gulp and then slightly nod, so he kisses his cheek before he's tugging the waistband of both the pants and boxers just enough to see the head, leaking.

Jimin's lungs stop working mid-air. "Shit."

Jungkook is looking down at it too and his stomach sinks when Jimin brings his index to collect some precum from the head.

"You're wet." he says.

Jungkook nods, hiding his face on his neck.

It's so endearing at the same time as it is completely unexpected for him to be acting like this. It's just so out of character, but Jimin is enjoying every single second of this new side of him.

He slides his hand inside his boxers and grabs the boy's cock on his palm with no warning, making him shamelessly release a very obscene moan.

Jimin pats his head, heart beating high on his throat. "Shhh... Keep it low, baby." he asks, caressing his hair while he starts working his way up and down with the other hand, slowly.

Jungkook presses his mouth against Jimin's neck to silence his loud breaths.

The older, though, is not fond of the idea of ending this soon, so he takes his time, jerking him off lazily, marvelling at the mewls Jungkook lets out. He's so pliant today.

Jimin squeezes the length in his hand and his stomach flutters at the way Jungkook leaks some more. He pulls back to look at him — all soft eyes and bright red cheeks.

"I missed you so much." Jungkook tells him honestly, "Been thinking about you for so long, fuck."

He smiles, "Yeah?" A nod. "What about me?"

"Your hands..." he says, running a hand down his arms and then bringing it to rub his mouth, "your lips. Your eyes." he continues, shifting his focus towards his eyes when he says that, "Your
eyes are so pretty."

Jimin almost stops what he is doing with the strength his heart is shaken inside his chest. "They are?"

"Yes. Love them. Love your face, love everything, fuck." he grabs Jimin's shirt and closes his eyes, biting on his bottom lip to stay quiet.

Jimin loves the view, but his arm is getting tired, so he lays his face down on Jungkook's chest and watches the movement of his own hand, the head of his boyfriend's cock peeking from the pants whenever he tugs harder and resulting in his own erection getting worse.

He tries exhaling long breaths and looks up see Jungkook's face, when his eye catches something that sparks his interest. He observes the little nub disrupting the smoothness of Jungkook's shirt and licks his lips.

"Kook..." he calls for him, anticipating, and the younger looks down at him as if he could say yes to anything he asked. "Can I suck your nipples?"

Although, Jungkook is definitely caught off guard by that, eyes widening. "What?"

"Can I, please?"

He seems to be having a hard time between deciding and having himself stroked, so Jimin stops the movement of his hand.

Jungkook looks embarrassed before he speaks, "No one ever did that to me." he confesses in a small voice.

The butterflies inside Jimin's belly respond eagerly.

"Did you ever play with them?" he asks, instead, curious; to which he nods.

"I'm really sensitive." he warns.

Jimin's dick twitch in return. "Really?" Another silent nod. It's so cute. "Raise your shirt for me, Jungkookie."

He starts pulling his shirt up by the hem, but then stops, looking back at the hall with a worried look. "Are you sure?" he whispers at Jimin again.

"I'm sure." he assures him with a kiss on his chin, "We just have to be really quiet." he says, regaining the rhythm of his hands to stroke his dick.

Jungkook continues to pull his shirt up, until its resting on his collarbones, his entire chest exposed to view.

Jimin stares at it in silence for a moment, eyes running over his smooth skin, slightly defined abs and brown nipples, standing hard already.

He licks his lips. Jungkook is looking down at him in anticipation, so Jimin meets his gaze before reaching out for one nub and wrapping his lips around it.

Jungkook hisses at the first suck, dick twitching in Jimin's hand, so he sucks it a little harder, watching him close his eyes and throw his head back.
"Ah, fuck." he whines breathlessly.

Jimin smiles, taking his hand off his cock to tease his other nipple and Jungkook practically squirms, turning his lower body to the side so his crotch can meet Jimin's thigh. He rubs himself on him, up and down, and Jimin wonders if he could come just by watching the younger fall apart like this.

"Ah, hyung…” he whines, “It's too good…”

Jimin releases his nipple to look up at him. "Yeah?" Jungkook searches for his gaze just to urgently nod.

"Please, keep going." he begs, so Jimin smiles and licks over the abused tip a few times to soothe it, and then he takes it into his mouth again.

He works it messy, as this seems to edge Jungkook even further, and then couples it with jerking the boy off again.

Jimin almost moans back when Jungkook covers his mouth with his hands to stifle the sounds. It's not long until he's cumming on Jimin's hands, hard and fast, the liquid sticking in between his fingers as he milks him off.

He shuffles up to scatter kisses all over Jungkook's jawline while he comes off his high, wiping his hand the best he can on the boy's underwear before he takes his hand off, pulling Jungkook's shirt down too.

They stay like that for a while, Jimin running his hand up and down Jungkook's side, kissing his neck and cheeks, while the other eases his breathing with closed eyes.

He's about to turn off the television and suggest for them to take a shower and eat something when Jungkook turns on his side and starts kissing him, pressing his back against the couch's backrest.

He kisses with his mouth open, licking Jimin's bottom lip and then playing with his tongue, firm grip on his hip pushing their bodies together.

Jimin is caught off guard by his eagerness, settling a hand on Jungkook's hair as his other arm is stuck under the boy's neck. He reciprocates the kiss with equal urgency, his erection still going hard between the two of them.

Jungkook tugs on his bottom lip and then pulls back just enough to lean his forehead on his and catch his breath.

He's staring down at Jimin's collar when he looks at him.

He's parting his lips to question him what's wrong, but just then Jungkook looks back at him, a determined gaze sparkling in his irises.

"I wanna do it to you too…” he says, the hand on his hip sliding under his shirt and making Jimin gasp.

"Do what?” he asks, even though he's one hundred percent sure what he's talking about.

Jungkook doesn't immediately answer, but instead, reaches Jimin's closes nipple with his thumb and starts rubbing it in circular motions.
Jimin's hips unconsciously jerk to meet Jungkook's crotch.

"This." the younger answers, hopeful eyes, "Can I?"

Jimin gulps, cheeks flushing hard. He bites on his bottom lip when he nods and watches as Jungkook licks his own lips in response.

Jimin is wearing a tank top, so it's not with difficulty that Jungkook easily pulls the shoulder strap to the side a little and reveals his nipple. Both of them take a deep breath, and then Jungkook slides down a little, so he can reach it.

He's careful at first, almost as if he's scared, or just making sure to enjoy every single moment of it.

He brushes his lips over the nub, closing his eyes and just feeling it with his mouth. Jimin can't help but moan lowly at the sight. It's so simple, but it turns him on like crazy.

Jungkook then sticks his tongue out and starts licking it, fingers hooked on the shirt's strap to keep it off his way. Jimin curls his fingers on his hair, leading him on, so Jungkook finally stops teasing and takes the whole nipple into his mouth.

Jimin gasps, and has to seal his lips shut in a tight line so he doesn't moan right back.

Jungkook works him up with ease and Jimin knows it's from previous experience.

He's suddenly too confident, sliding his hand down to take Jimin on his palm and start jerking him off. He tugs on the roots of his hair harder, but the younger doesn't seem to mind, pleased hums crawling from his throat when Jimin starts rocking back on his fingers.

He moves his lips up to kiss Jimin's neck. "You move so good, baby, fuck. I'm getting turned on again just by watching you."


The boy does so, increasing the pace of his fists and pulling his head back to allow Jimin to hide his face on his neck so he can muffle his moans.

He's cumming in his pants before they know it, squirming his whole body with the force the orgasm hits him.

Jungkook strokes him until there's nothing left, kissing his temple and cleaning his hand on Jimin's underwear, just like he did a few minutes ago.

He brings his arm to hug Jimin's waist and they cuddle like that for what it feels like some good minutes.

"We should clean up," Jimin is the one to speak up, pulling his head back to stare at Jungkook, "Do you wanna go first?"

He wiggles his eyebrows, teasing. "I wanna go with you."

The older laughs, hitting his chest. "Stop being so horny."

"How can I? With you all beautiful in my arms like this."
Jimin blushes, pursuing his lips shyly before he smiles. "You go first. I'll order some pizza for us."

"Still think we could save some time if we showered together, but okay." he jokes a little more just to get a laugh out of Jimin — which he does.

They both get up and check if the bedroom doors are really closed, so no one heard them. Thankfully, they are, so they release a worried breath and Jungkook hits the shower.

After the both of them are clean and smelling good, they take the pizza to Jimin's room and share it with some background music on. Jungkook is sitting on the bed with his back resting on the wall, while Jimin rests his head on his thighs, the box of pizza beside him.

They talk until the pizza is long gone and the moon is too high in the sky. When it's finally time to go to sleep, Jungkook has to climb down to the mattress next to Jimin's bed as his mother strictly told them Jungkook could only sleep over of they didn't share the same bed and that would follow until Jungkook turned 18.

They laughed, but agreed anyway. Jimin also promised her they wouldn't have sex until then too, so there's also that. It's not like he can't tether on the corners of that limit, but he knows she's just worried because she did it too soon and regretted it, so he's planning to talk about it with Jungkook when the opportunity comes. It's just three months anyway, they can wait that long.

Surprisingly, they keep on talking even after the both are settled on their beds. Jimin has rolled over to the edge of the bed on his belly, so his arm can hang off it and he can caress Jungkook's face or hair when he feels like it.

Eventually, the younger starts playing with his fingers and they fall asleep like that, calm breaths flowing out of their lungs and linked hands keeping them connected even when they're apart.

The next day, he wakes up to a text from Taehyung.

*dumbass of my life — 10:34 am*

hey picnic at our place today?

They’ve been missing each other for a couple of days now, their alone time shortened by a lot ever since Jungkook waltzed into their lives and Jimin honestly just wants a day full of his best friend. So he immediately types back a positive answer and gets up to shower. When he comes back, Jungkook’s awake already saying he has to go back early to take his grandma in an appointment.

“That’s alright,” Jimin answers, “I’m going on a date with Tae today.”
He arches an eyebrow. “A date, huh? Should I be jealous?”

Jimin rolls his eyes, laying down with him a little on the mattress, “Please, Taehyung was here way before you even thought to.”

Jungkook laughs, hugging him and digging his nose on his neck. “I’m just kidding.” he smells him, “Maybe I’ll call him on a date too.”

Jungkook takes his hand and gets up. “Ten kisses.” he answers with a sweet smile.

She did, there’s a whole feast waiting for them out there, the minute they step out of the bedroom. When he sees it, he stops Jimin in the hallway and gives him ten quick kisses that makes him melt in a bunch of giggles.

There was never a losing end in that bet, to begin with.

Taehyung and Jimin meet by the beach with everything they need for the picnic and walk together towards their place hidden by the rocks. It’s a secluded space, and you have to climb the rock to get there, so they struggle a little bit — but once they land on the sand, it’s like a mini private beach. The waves still hit there, although with barely any force. There’s just a small flow of water in and out to remind you that you’re still on the beach, but it’s mostly just sand and the trees all around. There’s space enough only for five people at most, so the two of them make room comfortably with all of their stuff.

Jimin is intently listening to Taehyung’s update on his life in general, the details he’s missed since there are some things they only talk amongst themselves. He listens and then he talks about his own life, talks about Jungkook and family and how he’s thinking of going back to the studio with Hoseok and Seokjin to maybe practice a real routine to which the younger completely supports him on. By the time he’s done they’ve already finished almost all of their food.

“Oh,” Jimin sees, popping a grape into his mouth, “Almost forgot to tell you. Jungkook’s decided to try the exchange with us.”

Taehyung’s mouth hangs. “Oh. Did he really?” He nods. “Damn, you’ve really got him whipped, don’t you?”

Jimin flushes, waving his hand in front of his face. “No, no. We talked about this. He’s been wanting to be independent from his parents’ for awhile now, and he can’t do that while living right under their noses. If he gets in, he’s going to find a part-time job there, so he can provide for himself.”

Taehyung pursues his lips, nodding and then releases a sigh. “Aish. We’re never getting rid of him now, are we?” he says in a jokingly tone, “It’s a triplet now, no more Jimin and Taehyungie.” he says with a pout.
Jimin flicks his forehead, leaning down to establish a strong eye contact. “It’s always gonna be Jimin and Taehyungie, silly.”

The younger grabs his chest as if he just been shot in an overly dramatic way, so Jimin throws his body back, laughing.

“Oh my. Jungkook better watch out. I almost fell for you right now.”

Jimin looks at him with a fond smile, shaking his head. “He wouldn’t stand a chance against you.”

Taehyung clicks his tongue. “I’ll pretend I believe you for the sake of my ego. I know you like them ripped.”

Jimin laughs harder. “Oh my god, shut up! Jungkook’s not even that built.”

“Compared to this fragile sausage like me? He’s fucking hulk.”

Jimin loses it at fragile sausage, but the rest does the trick too.

It takes awhile for him to recompose, and when he does, he has tears in the corner of his eyes. “You’re such an idiot.”

“That’s ‘I love you more than anything’ in Jiminian.”

He shakes his head once again, the fond look never quite leaving his face. He doesn’t deny him, though.

If there was a list of things Jimin is be more scared of losing in life, Taehyung would be definitely nearing the top of that list.

He does go back to the studio to meet Hoseok and Jin, and they establish a routine to practice on every wednesday. He has to pay for it, of course, so he messages his dad, and he says he’s more than happy to help him with something he likes. Apparently, he’s doing way better in his job recently, so Jimin is more comfortable to ask things for him than for his mother as he knows she’s been struggling with bills for awhile.

Eunbi and Hoseok start going out, which comes as a surprise to absolutely no one. Jimin is happy to see this side of her, where she blushes and gets crazy shy in some situations, but just generally with an uplifted mood. He wants her to be happy more than anything, so it’s cute to see her slowly falling in love with someone. She’s constantly messaging him about stuff like that and freaking out sometimes, so Jimin gets vip tickets for the whole thing. He feels privileged. Hoseok better feel too.

It’s a late friday night and he’s practicing alone in his room. The volume in his phone is loud enough only for him to distinguish the beats, since he doesn’t want to disturb anyone. It’s way past 1 am, but he’s simply thrumming with energy. Seokjin choreographed this song for them, and it looks so cool that Jimin just has this urgency to get it right as soon as possible, even if it makes him postpone sleep.
He’s so focused on his reflection in the mirror that he almost doesn’t notice when the music stops and his phone starts playing a different melody. He looks back and walks to it on his bed to realize it’s ringing.

The screen reads Jungkook’s name, so he frowns.

“Hello?”

The line is silent at first, if not for some heavy breathing on the background that gets Jimin alert instantly. He takes the phone off his ear for a second to check if it’s really Jungkook and if the call is still going, all positive answers. He glues it right back to his ear, frown deepening. “Jungkook? Are you there?” Nothing. “Baby?”

That’s when Jimin hears it. A faint, low sob that sends him haywire. But before he can question any further, Jungkook’s voice comes up.

“J-Ji— Jimin—” it’s with a wave of throbbing worry that Jimin notices how distressed he sounds, “Ah—” he chokes on whatever he was trying to say and starts crying.

“Jungkook-ah? Hey, what’s wrong?” his voice is thick and he’s turning around in his room as if that’s gonna help him calm down.

“I’m— I-I’m…” he can’t seem to form any phrases from how hard he’s crying and this only sets Jimin off even more.

“Baby, where are you?” he tries asking more concrete, easier questions.

“D-door…”

Jimin tilts his head. “Door?”

“I-I’m— I’m on t-the doorstep.”

He stops. What?

“Where? At my house?”

“Ung.”

Jimin almost trips on his own feet on his way out of his bedroom. He’s by the front door in a blink of an eye, and nothing could possibly prepare him for the sight he’s presented with the moment he opens the door, trembling hands trying to manage the keys.

Jungkook’s face is swollen, eyelashes sticking together with all the tears rolling down his cheeks. The white from his eyes have gone completely red and his hair is simply a mess.

Jimin has never seen Jungkook like this and it’s such a surprise that he stalls for a moment, where they just look at each other. It’s completely different hearing him on the phone and seeing it.

He feels like his heart shatters in a tiny million pieces and the first thing he processes to do is to look for injuries. He scans Jungkook’s body and then pulls his arm up to look closer, but the younger instantly falls on his arms, violently sobbing.

Jimin wraps his arms around him immediately, chest hurting with how much his heart seems to have grown in size with the worry.
“Hey, hey.” he strokes the boy’s sides, “What’s up, what’s happening?” Jimin asks while attempting to bring them inside but Jungkook refuses to get away from the doorstep.

“No, we—” he pulls back to look at Jimin’s eyes. They’re so desperate, pleading without words. Jimin is getting choked up just by looking at him, but he knows he has to keep strong to be able to help him, “We have to go.” Jungkook says, forehead all scrunched up in distress. He’s trying really hard to subdue his crying so he can speak and it’s completely heartbreaking.

“We have to go where?”

“T-the hospital.”


That’s when Jungkook starts crying again, face contorting and Jimin almost feels guilty for having said anything. “Na— Nana…”

Jimin’s heart stops. Oh god. He bits down hard on his bottom lip.

He doesn’t know what’s happened and knows he has to, but if he’s sensing that if he asks Jungkook any more questions he’s going to have an even worse breakdown, so he just rubs his arms up and down while saying, “It’s okay, we’re going, okay? Let me just grab my things and call an uber for us.”

Jungkook nods, and hugs himself when Jimin steps away, crying silently.

It feels like torture leaving him alone by the doorstep, so Jimin makes incredible quick work, calling their car with trembling fingers. He’s gulping in dry, mind running a mile per hour, already shooting for the worst and his eyes pool with tears just by thinking about it. He considers whether he should wake his mom or not, but assumes this is going to take even longer, so he decides not to, as he wants to make everything easier and less stressful for Jungkook and that seems to be for them to leave as soon as possible.

The car is already on the street when he reaches the door with a coat, his wallet, phone and keys. He brings an extra coat that he throws over Jungkook’s shoulders before he locks up the house and they walk into the car.

During the ride, Jimin manages to get some info from Jungkook, continuously trying to calm him down.

Apparently, his grandma passed out at home and she lives alone with no neighbours, the only person in the house being the lady who sleeps there to take care of her. She found her unconscious on the kitchen and called an ambulance, although she has no idea for how long she was there when she found her. The hospital called Jungkook’s mom, but she’s couldn’t go, so she called him, which led to where they are now. Jungkook kept apologizing for disrupting his night and saying that he just couldn’t go alone. Jimin hugs him and kisses his temple until he’s not sobbing anymore, saying that it’s okay, he wasn’t even asleep anyway.

He breathes with a little more ease, knowing it isn’t the worst scenario he pictured. Jungkook scared the hell out of him.

“I can’t lose her, Jimin, I really can’t.” he keeps on repeating through tears.

Jimin interlaces their fingers, and tucks a strand from hair behind the boy’s ear. “Stop thinking like this, you won’t lose anyone. You don’t even know what’s happened, maybe her pressure just
It can be nothing serious, right? If it was something major, the doctor’s would have already called back to your mother and you’d know, okay? Just... breathe, we’re almost there."

This seems to be of some help and Jungkook closes his eyes and takes a long inhale of air. He calms down a little, albeit the tears never really come to a complete stop.

When they reach the hospital, Jungkook is bursting off the car before Jimin can even pay the driver.

He meets him by the reception, demanding all the information they have.

“Sir, I need you to calm down—"

“Calm down?!” he shrieks, “I simply want to know where the fuck—"

Jimin appeases him with a hand on his back, rubbing smooth circles over it. “Baby, it’s okay, breath.” he turns to smile at the receptionist, “I’m sorry, he’s really nervous. Can you please give me the information you have on Jeon Chanhee? Short old lady, got here unconscious?” he describes, hoping that will make things faster.

Jungkook is restless by his side, rocking on his feet while the woman starts looking for what they requested in the computer. She begins to read in a monotonous voice, “Jeon Chanhee, arrived in state of unconsciousness. That’s all. They’re running some tests, so you have to wait for the doctor to come out.”

“Wait?” Jungkook says and he’s crying again.

Jimin smiles to the woman in gratitude and pulls him away.

“Come on, let’s sit down.”

“How can I wait?” he continues, in protest, but still follows Jimin’s commands, sitting on the chair when he nudges him to.

Jimin crouches in front of him. “Hey, look at me. There’s nothing we can do now but wait for the feedback and the results. We’re here, and that’s what matters, okay? Now I’m going to take some water for you, and you’ll drink it all so you can calm down a little. Okay?”

The boy swallows a sob. “O-okay.”

Jimin goes in search of water and takes the opportunity to splash some on his face and message his mother explaining everything. She'll probably only see it when she wakes up, but he doesn't want to leave her worried.

He comes back and finds Jungkook unmoving, staring at the ground like a statue. Jimin hands him the cup of water and he blinks in confusion for a second before taking it.

He sits by his side and caresses his hair while he watches him gulp the liquid down with some effort.

They stay in the waiting room for what it seems like an hour. Jungkook has his head rested on Jimin's shoulder while his arm is behind the younger's neck, bent so he can reach his hair and continue to run his fingers through it soothingly.

The doctor appears when they're both almost falling asleep.
"Mrs. Jeon Chanhee's family?"

Jungkook snaps awake in a second, jumping from his seat with no warning and startling Jimin.

He rubs his eyes, still in a half-asleep state and searches for Jungkook and the doctor's figure to focus on what they're saying.

He catches it mid-phrase, "...fine, we ran all the tests and none gave us any result to worry. The fainting may have occurred for something triggering for her, as we only computed a drop of pressure in her blood."

"Are you sure you found nothing? Her heart is fine too?"

The doctor nods and Jimin can practically see Jungkook release a relieved breath. "Her heart is good."

"Can I see her?"

"Well, yes. She's waiting for you, actually. We'll keep her here for the night just to run some more basic tests and keep her on IV for a little longer."

"Okay." Jungkook, then, turns to look back at him, "I'll be right back?"

Jimin smiles, motioning for him to go. "It's okay, I'll be waiting."

He's relieved too. For Chanhee to faint in her age could never be a good sign, but thank god it's nothing serious.

Jimin waits for Jungkook to come out while distracting himself with his phone so he won't fall asleep again. The boy comes out after a little more than twenty minutes, a much more healthy expression on his previous pale face, despite the bags beneath his eyes. He slumps next to Jimin with a little smile.

"She's fine. Apparently, grandpa was planning a surprise for her the day he died and she found out the ring and the necklace hidden in the kitchen just now." Jimin nods, biting the inner part of his lip. This is sad. "It's good that's only this, y'know." he releases a burdened breath, "I was so worried." Jimin stares at his profile, the boy's hand coming up to rub his own face up and down, "She told me to go home and rest, but—" he seems to hesitate, "I don't know if I can... uh..." he pauses then what he is saying to look at Jimin, "I know you already did too much for me, but would you mind to go home with me today? I just can't bear the thought of being alone in that house. My parents are in Daegu."

Oh. So that's why they didn't come. Jimin smiles and takes his hand in his, bringing it close to his lips so he can kiss his knuckles. "I'll go wherever you go."

Jungkook smiles too, features relaxing. "You're incredible." he squeezes Jimin's hand on his, "Thank you for coming with me. I don't know what I'd have done without you here."

"It's okay. You can count with me for anything, you know that, right? It's you and me."

The smile Jungkook gives him this time is paired with adorable rosy cheeks. "It's you and me." he repeats fondly.

They ride the cab all the way to Jungkook's house and when they arrive the clock is nearing 5 in the morning. Jimin is exhausted and so is Jungkook, so they don't even mind getting out of their
clothes or taking a shower. They fall like rocks on the younger's bed, Jimin coming close to hug Jungkook's waist and rest his forehead on his neck a minute before everything blacks out.

Jimin wakes up on the wrong side of the bed.
First, he fights with Jihyun in the morning because of a fucking toothbrush.
And when he arrives at school, he’s greeted by the worst grade he’s ever got in physics, even though he studied crazy hard for that test.
Yesterday at night, he woke up to get a cup of water and saw his mom sitting on her bed with a mountain of papers all around her and a calculator in hands, features contorted in extreme distress.
He couldn’t quite fall asleep for the next two hours.
So, perhaps, that’s why his failure hits harder on his gut today. Perhaps that’s why he’s feeling his irritation growing by the second, being immersed in an environment full of rich kids complaining about these stupid, futile problems.
His mind is going a mile per hour, and he’s wondering if he should stop going to the studio and use the extra money his father is giving him to help her instead.
When the lunch break arrives, his mood hasn’t lifted much further.
Even hearing his friends talk is getting him annoyed, so he focus on eating his food and not interacting much.
Jungkook seems to realize something’s off, because he places a hand on Jimin’s back and murmurs on his ear,
“Hey, you okay?”
He nods and pretends to keep on listening to whatever Taehyung is saying in front of him, apparently in a very much heated energy.
Everyone is listening to him tell his story and Jimin’s been sitting there for ten minutes and he doesn’t even know what it is about.
“So on top of that, I told them I needed fucking peace to study this break because our exam for the exchange is coming up and you know what they fucking planned? A fucking trip to Europe! Can you believe this shit?” Jimin chuckles in his place, shaking his head and looking down at his food. Unbelievable. “And to make it all worse, Nayeon got all my papers that I was using to make annotations, and tossed it in the fucking trash last night, without talking to me beforehand. God, I fucking hate that house.”
Jimin scoffs. He can’t help it.
“Gee, it must be so difficult being you.” he lets out, before he can stop himself and everyone turns to look at him in mild shock.

Taehyung is the most startled one, though, staring at him with a frown and a hanging mouth. “What?”

Jimin doesn’t know where he takes the courage from, but he goes on. He just fucking had it with all this privileged complaints over and over, over and over. “I mean, a trip for Europe in the middle of the year? Tsk, man, I’m so sorry, this must suck. And, like? Having a maid to clean after all your fucking mess? Can’t find it in me how much I feel sorry that you have to be going through this.”

The whole table is silent. Heeyeon and Junghwa are sharing a worried look while all of Jungkook’s friends seem to be holding their laughs. So damn predictable. He holds the urge to roll his eyes. He can’t see Jungkook’s reaction, because he’s sitting right beside him, but he suspects he has his mouth hanging as well.

“What’s your fucking problem?” Taehyung snaps, angry, “You been sitting there mopping like a child and ignoring all of us just so when someone complains about their problems you get to belittle it and act all entitled?”

He lets out a chuckle of disbelief. “I’m acting entitled? Do you even hear yourself? Like, at all?”

“Yeah? So, now because my parents are rich all of a sudden I have to love my life? I’m sorry if my family is not as perfect as yours, guess it’d take too much effort for you to take your head out of your ass to realize that.”

It’s Jimin’s turn to let his mouth hang. He can’t believe he’s saying that. He can’t believe he’s saying that after walking right beside Jimin through every fucking struggle he had when his family was concerned. How is his family perfect? A broken marriage, two fucked up kids, a woman carrying the weight of three lives on her back all by herself, and his family is perfect?

“Are you actually saying that?” he asks to make sure he heard it right.

Taehyung raises an eyebrow in defiance.

“Hey, hyung, calm down. You’re being too much.” it takes a moment of complete shock for Jimin to realize that’s Jungkook’s voice next to him. And he’d expect for him to be saying this to Taehyung, defending him — after all, he’s not in the fucking wrong and he is his boyfriend. But shocking news, those words are solely directed at Jimin, he realizes when he turns to face him and he’s completely turned to him.

“Are you serious right now? Are you really going to defend him in this bullshit he just said?”

Jungkook opens his mouth, but no sound comes out at first — clearly feeling trapped between the two of them. “I’m not defending anyone, I just think there’s no reason for you to be acting like this out of the blue.” he tries. What it really means, I’m not defending anyone, I just think you’re wrong.

Jimin shakes his head, looking around and realizing that by the looks on his friends’ faces, none of them think he’s in the right. He laughs. Of course they doesn’t. How stupid of him to even expect such a thing.

He looks back at Taehyung, who’s still going, apparently,

“What? Still feeling too selfish to realize how great your life is?”
That’s it.

He laughs, heart threatening to beat out of his chest, and gets up, fuming. He pushes his tray of food towards him, which startles everyone.

“Enjoy your food. Hope you don’t choke when it goes down that fake ass tongue of yours.”

He walks away and he’s so hurt that he doesn’t even look back, just marches towards the nearest bathroom he can find to take a deep breath.

Jungkook seems to have other plans, though, because he catches up to Jimin and stops him by holding his arm before he can make it.

He turns him around and Jimin honestly can’t even look at his face right now. He crosses his arms, taking a step back. “What do you want?”

“Where did that came from? Everyone was talking normally and you just snapped like that.”

“Why are you even here? Already tired of sucking up to Taehyung’s ass and standing by him when I was right there?”

Once again, Jimin finds him with no words to say.

Of course. Jungkook can’t help his choice when he’s faced between him and Taehyung. He knew it all along, but he still decided to play a fool.

“You know what, Jungkook? Don’t bother. Just leave me alone.”

He turns on his heels and walks away.

The worst part of it all, is that Jungkook really does not bother, in the end.

He lets Jimin go without even considering to chase him. Just like that. What a surprise.

Perhaps being called selfish by Taehyung was what stunged the most.

After all they went through, after all the things Jimin did for him, foreseeing his own well-being to prioritize his needs.

It’s just so fucking unbelievable.

Jimin has been postponing calling him out on that for the longest time ever, hoping that some sense would be lit in his mind with no effort needed, but today has just been the final drop. Complaining about this fucking maid for doing her job? It’s not her fault he’s messy as fuck. And if it’s to get to the bottom of it, why does he even have a maid, to begin with? What, are they in 1920? Jimin can’t remember a time he went to Taehyung’s house and the woman wasn’t there, like a slave. Doesn’t she get a life?

God, he’s so pissed.
He can’t believe Taehyung said all those things about him.

What great life he has?

He’s constantly spiralling down towards his depression, losing uncountable battles for his anxiety. He’s gay in a fucking conservative country, for fuck’s sake. His father is almost never around, his relationship with his brother is just now tethering towards something at least decent, and he wants to talk about a perfect family? So what, he got lucky with his mother and that was that.

Everything he said is just so unfair.

For some reason, his feet don’t carry him home when he gets out of the school at 5 pm.

Thanks to some heavenly forces, Jimin doesn’t have afternoon classes with any of his friends that day, so he doesn’t have to deal with any of their bullshits. He turns his phone off and just shuts his mind off wondering if Jungkook has at least texted him.

He doesn’t want to know.

He doesn’t want to know.

The wind on his cheeks almost feels too soothing for it to not be ironic. He’s angry, he wants it to be harsh, he wants it to hurt.

The sun is setting and somehow, he ends up at the beach.

His chest is weighing, his ribs feel too tight and he honestly just wants to unleash somewhere he can’t be found.

So he makes the same path he did some days ago, for completely different reasons and it’s just bittersweet.

He was climbing those same rocks with Taehyung laughing beneath him on the sand at how his small hands kept slipping.

It’s strange the way life works.

This very same thought lingers when his feet touch solid ground and the first thing he sees is the expanse of Taehyung’s back right in front of him, just a few feet from distance. He wants to cry, because he should’ve seen this coming, but he didn’t and still followed his guts like an idiot.

His first instinct is to get away from there as soon as possible, but when all the sound Jimin has made makes Taehyung turn around and look at him, there’s no breath left in his lungs.

Because he’s right there, out of all odds, he’s there and Jimin feels choked up just staring at the scene.

His eyes trail from one to another and finally settle on Taehyung.

He has never felt so betrayed.

Jungkook is the one to take the first step towards him. “Jimin, look—”

But Jimin is not looking at him. Can’t.

“Really?” his voice barely makes it. His eyes are fixed on Taehyung, glassy, blurred.
His best friend stands there — if he can even still call him that —, speechless, paralyzed.

Jimin lets out a humorless laugh, rubbing his eyes. “So I guess I’m selfish because I didn’t share Jungkook enough with you in the end, right?” he shakes his head. He can’t believe this. It’s like every single insecurity inside him gaining form and snickering at his stupidity. “Glad to know I’ve always meant so little to you.”

Taehyung shakes his head, then, slipping out of his stupor and reaching out to him, arm trailing in the air when Jimin steps back. “No, Jimin-ah, I—”

“Stop. I don’t wanna know, I don’t wanna listen.” his head is pounding, “Guess I was really right in the end, huh?” he says this while looking deep in Taehyung’s eyes and when he sees his features dampen and his lips curl he knows he gets it.

“No, Jimin, please, that’s not it at all, listen—”

“No, it’s okay. You did call me selfish, so I’m not gonna stand in between. Have fun.”

He gives them his back, ready to run out of there, far, far away, but there’s a hand stopping him and he closes his eyes, because he knows that touch.

“Jimin…” he knows that voice. And he cries, because he can’t believe he’s here. From all places, he can’t believe he’s here.

He looks at him with tears pooling in his eyes and a single one slips by the corner when he opens his mouth to say, choked up, “It’s alright.” his voice sounds like shattered glass, barely above a whisper, “There’s no need to stick with your second best anymore. Now you get to really choose.”

Jungkook frowns, and it’s in that moment of confusion Jimin uses to get away.

His lungs are combusting and everything just terribly burns. But Jungkook’s touch disappearing from his arm is ice cold.

Chapter End Notes

hyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy I KNOW but hey on the bright side did you see i added another chapter to this? can't promise its the last time im gonna do that bc i always manage to calculate wrong how much i actually need to write but at least we get to suffer a little more together

twitter
here i am five months later.................. well hello
first of all, i just wanted to reassure anyone reading this fic and keeping tabs on it that this entire story is planned out from beginning to end since 2017 and in no way i plan on abandoning it despite my months long updates!! i wish i had more time to work on this as it is a very important fic to me but sadly life as a uni student is a pain in the ass and the only time i have to focus on this is during my breaks so that's why i normally update by the end and the half of the year!!
with that being said, i wanted to warn that this chapter has been split (ha ha) since there was too much to happen and i didnt want to rush or tame the development of the characters simply by a word limit i set in my own head so i split it to be more comfortable for you guys to read and the update to come sooner (i mean a chapter 40k words long is out of the question................i guess.............)
also there's another things to be considered before you get into this!!
as this is all planned out, everything in this fic happens for a reason that will make much more sense when we get to the end of it. i'd like for everyone to understand that jimin's mindset is something he has developed and evolved his entire life throughout different experiences and it's not going to go away from day to night. on the other hand, please note that everything he thinks and feels makes sense in his own head and is nowhere near baseless. insecure people are usually portrayed as crazy with no emotional restraint or tact and in no way i want to perpetuate this stereotype and rather give visibility to people who feel like jimin does and show how sometimes we are so deep into our own heads that we miss whats actually going on around us (as it has happened many times in this story and not only jimin-jungkook related but with everyone around jimin). i also wanted to show how our insecure mindset can be externalized in a toxic way for our relationships as well and this will be worked on as the story progresses, don't worry! well, all in all, i guess this is it, i'm sorry for writing this long ass note lmao i usually don't like to explain things here because i feel like once i do its because im lacking in showing it through the fic only, but i really wanted to make this clear so it wont raise any misunderstandings since the fic is not finished yet and you can assume im going it towards one way when i'm actually going the exact opposite.
lastly, thank you all so much for reading and supporting me!! seriously, going back on your comments and reading it all over again is the one thing that keeps me pushing through with this as sometimes it gets extremely tiring because its so long and detailed lmao i hope its not tiring for you, though!! thank you for your patience, i truly do love you!!
ookay enough with the talking lets get it

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Make it taste like love.
The overbearing beats vibrates inside Jimin's skull and swallows the sound of his harsh breaths pushing their way out of his lungs in violent outbursts. He wipes the sweat off his forehead with the back of his hand and cracks his neck.

"Jimin, you're going to exert yourself." Hoseok.

He ignores it.

He's been trying to get a couple of steps right for the following three hours and he's still messing up his fucking shoulders every time.

Jin carefully taught him that and patiently repeated the move until it was ingrained in his memory. He doesn't understand why he keeps on failing.

He does a mental countdown, before the beat drops and he starts again. He's watching himself through the mirror, closely focused on the swing of his shoulders, insides thrumming in anticipation for the godforsaken part to come so he can nail it this time. It's a second after the bass boosts and Jimin's shoulders roll perfectly. He's ecstatic — he did it —, except that on the next step he's tripping on his own feet and landing with everything on the ground, a sharp pain inflicted on his right hip with no mercy whatsoever. He groans, more out of frustration than anything else and sits up.

"Okay, that's it." Hoseok is stopping the music, but Jimin doesn't really process it.

He brings his knees up and hides his face on the hole in between his connected arms, wishing he could sink into it and disappear.

His hip hurts and his eyes sting and his— his chest—

It takes less than a heartbeat for his throat to close — he's choking on a sob before he knows it.

Stupid, stupid, stupid. So fucking useless.

His hands roam deep into his hair and he grabs at the roots, doing his best in keeping the sobs at bay, but the tears won't follow his commands.

"Hey…" Hoseok is by his side in no time, a soothing hand to his back, "Hey, come on now, Jimin-ah. Does it hurt this bad? Hyung can take you to the doctor if you want to."

He shakes his head, but words won't come up his throat. He can't speak.

"What's wrong, huh? You're doing just fine, don't push yourself too hard." He rubs his hands on the low of Jimin's spine and somehow that's worse.

He raises his head just enough to hide them on the crook of Hoseok's neck.

"I-I'm sorry—" he babbles out, "Jin-hyung w-will be disappointed…"

"Shhh…" Hoseok cards his fingers through his hair, fingers running down to cup his cheek, "Don't
say that, you're progressing so fast. We're so proud of you."

Jimin can't believe them.

"B-but I'm a mess and I keep taking up your time for n-no reason, and just—" he hiccups, "You're so good to me and a-all I d-do is repay by failing all the time—"

This wasn't the initial reason why he was crying, but now it is and everything is just a fucking twirl of emotions inside him.

"Okay, get up." Hoseok suddenly rolls on his knees to be in front of him and help him on his feet. He keeps his fingers secured with Jimin's. "Look at me, okay?" Jimin represses a sob by shutting his lips in a tight line, nodding with a frown, "You're our friend. We like you and this isn't you taking up our time, it's just us spending some time together. Okay?" Jimin resumes to nod once again, because the tears are still rolling down his face and he's so embarrassed, but Hoseok doesn't seem satisfied. He nudges Jimin forward a bit, as if to shake him conscious, "Tell me that it's okay."

Jimin pops his lips and stares deep into Hoseok's eyes, trying to focus on something that it's not the way it feels like his chest is being torn apart. He breathes through his nose, and exhales irregular pants through his moistened lips. "O-okay."

Hoseok smiles fondly at him, dimples digging in his cheeks. It's almost like a remedy — Jimin starts to ease out. The older ruffles his hair a little, pushing it away from his sticky forehead. "Good. Come on, now. We need a little distraction. Let's hang out in hyung's house."

"Do you mean Jin-hyung?" he asks wetly, the tears having come to a stop, but every duct in his body still clogged up. He sniffs.

"Of course it's Jin-hyung, who else? Let's go, grab your stuff. We can mercilessly eat all his food, he's rich."

Jimin manages to laugh a little, bringing the back of his hand to rub his nose, wiping some of the snot off it.

They grab their bags, and Hoseok walks out of the academy with Jimin snuggled up to his side, protective arm around his shoulders and he feels relieved.

It's been two days and Hoseok has been the most stable source of strength Jimin has allowed himself to rely on — even if Hoseok himself is not aware of it.

His phone is full to the brink with a variation of desperate messages in degree, but he turned it silent and changed their contacts' name. (Not that Taehyung has been an avid one to message him.) Either way, he doesn't care. He'd prefer if they didn't text at all.

The last set of texts has probably been the reason why Jimin broke down so bad. He got them this morning. He was holding up pretty fine until them.


dont text 1 — 8:23 am

its the second day you dont come to school where the fuck are you

if this is payback for that time i went missing fine i will take it
but if this is your way of breaking up with me i refuse
do you hear that
i refuse

dont text 1 — 9:10 am
come on jimin
i went to your house and youre not there either
i miss you baby
talk to me
please

After this he stopped reading the messages. He wasn't brave enough to block the number, but every time his phone buzzed with a new ping, he'd just swipe the notification out of his lockscreen and that was it.

But it was one thing ignoring his texts and a whole other deal fighting against his own thoughts inside his head.

When they arrive with no warning whatsoever at Jin’s apartment, they find him only on his boxers and an apron, which instantly makes them burst out in laugher.

“Nice ass, hyung.” Hoseok says, delivering two light pats on his butt on the way.

Jin resumes to only sighing, as if he’s long used to it. “What do you annoying brats want?” he asks, heading for the kitchen and Jimin is just a little bit amazed by how pretty his apartment is. It’s quite modern.

“You have a nice house, hyung.” he comments, sitting on one of the stools by the counter.

“Thanks, Jiminie.” he answers, giving him a smile from above his shoulder as he comes back to whatever he’s cooking by the oven.

“We came to eat your food.” Hoseok declares, throwing himself on the couch as if it’s his own house, “And hang out.”

It’s no time until Hoseok is using his phone to blast Sistar’s “Touch my body” so he can dance ridiculously around the house to it. Jimin is doubling over in laugh without even realizing and suddenly he’s joining him to SNSD’s “The boys”, both jumping on Jin’s couch and bonding over how both of them know the entire choreography — while the older films all of it with his phone.

They fall into a comfortable pace of laugh and sometimes casual conversation as they dance around, eat, and eventually watch some movies. Jimin forgets everything about the world outside, and for today, it is enough.
Eunbi got a place for herself and that has been Jimin's hideout for the last couple days. She works for the most part of the day, so he usually stays with Jin and Hoseok if they're free, until it's time for her to get home. If they're not, which only happened once, he gets under the covers and drowns himself in self-pity.

To be honest, the whole situation makes him feel humiliated, most of all.

He wonders if it's possible for Taehyung to rediscover his own sexuality. Maybe he's bi? He wouldn't be surprised if Jungkook flourished that.

God, he's so stupid.

His mom is talking about this new teacher that got into the school she works, and how he's funny and smart and Jimin is only half listening, her voice blurring every once in a while through the speaker glued to his ear.

"Hey, by the way, are you and Jungkook okay?"

His attention snaps at that.

"What? Why?"

"He came here yesterday, looking for you. Did you ignore him at school? He seemed really stressed out." he bites his lips, conscious.

He asked her if he could stay at Eunbi's for a little while to get to know her new place, but he didn't mention he'd skip school for two days straight.

"Uh… I, actually didn't go to school yesterday."

"What? And what about thursday?" his silence is enough of an answer. "Jimin…"

"Mom, I'm gonna catch up, it's no big deal."

"You know that's not what I'm worried about, right? I know you will catch up."

He sighs, ruffling his hair. "Listen, I don't wanna talk about this now. Or like, at all." It feels like he sinks on the couch, the weight of the subject pushing him down.

"Okay." she easily complies and he's so grateful he exhales a shaky breath, "But you're coming home tomorrow, right? I'm not worried you'll fall back, but as a mother I'm not letting you skip any more classes than that."

He laughs lowly. "Yeah, I'm going home."

"Good. I miss you."
Jimin smiles. "I miss you too."

"Okay, enough with the sap, I need to hang up now, but call me later."

"I will. And mom?"

"Huh?"

"Tell your friend teacher to take good care of you."

He snickers when she scoffs. "Oh, shut up. I'm hanging up now!"

"Bye. Love you."

"Love you, baby."

Jimin is not expecting another breakdown when it comes. But he guesses, every downfall feels like this — treacherous and silent. Eunbi has gotten home for a couple hours now, and after they ate the takeout pizza she brought, they resumed to watch the new tv show she has been obsessed about. It's fairly good, and he was having a decent amount of fun, laughing even, when out of the fucking blue, he just started crying during a funny scene.

His sister was just as startled as himself, staring at him with wide eyes and a gaping mouth.

"What, what, why?" she scoots closer to him in a second, "What happened, what's sad about it?"

Jimin covers his eyes with a hand and cries harder. "Nothing." he breaks out, voice as thin as glass. And it shatters.

"So, what…?" her hand is on his back, in a failed attempt of easing the distress out of him through soft caresses.

Jimin shakes his head.

Fuck.

"I miss them, noona."

His voice sounds wet and it hurts how true that sentence is. Jimin misses them so much.

There's nothing much his sister can say — he knows —, but her silence still feels crushing, suffocating. He feels even more like a burden and tries to stop crying, holding it all in, which is not of much help either.

"Hey," her tone is careful, "Let it out. It's okay." rubbing his back up and down, it's like his body was waiting for the permission to release.

He curls on himself, crying, and it's ugly, but he can't help it. He's so tired of feeling like this.
"What should I do, noona?" he pleads in a breath-like whisper, "What should I do?"

"I don't know, love. You didn't tell me what happened. Did you guys... break up?"

He strangles a sob at that, curling further into himself, hoping to disappear. She seems to assume they did, because suddenly she's enveloping his small figure on a hug.

"Oh, Jiminnie…"

"I just feel so stupid." he manages to say through the river of tears rolling down his eyes. "Why can't I ever be enough?"

"What are you talking about? You're so much more than enough, stop saying nonsense."

He's shaking his head, restless. "'M not. He likes Taehyung, noona"

It's instant, the way her body goes rigid and her hand stalls on the middle of his back. "What? Did he break up with you because of that?"

"No." Jimin rubs his nose with the back of his hand, "I did."

"He told you he likes Taehyung?"

Jimin squeezes his eyes shut. "No, they were just there!" his voice is bordering a strangled noise, he knows it — he hears it —, but there's nothing he can do to stop the collapsing state of his heart. "They were just there... How could they do this to me? Taehyung too! He's one of the people I love most in the world, why would he treat me like that, noona?" Jimin turns to look at her and by her expression he knows he must look desperate, pitiful. He's whining and crying, there's not really something else he can look like right now. "What if he likes Jungkook too? I don't know what to do, I really don't."

"Baby, come on." Eunbi caresses have restarted and he didn't even notice it. She brings her other hand to brush the fringe out of his eyes. "Breath, okay? I'm not really following."

Jimin closes his eyes and does as she told him, inhaling a big amount of breath so he can explain properly.

"T-Taehyung and I fought, because he was being stupid and to begin with, Jungkook stood by his side in front of everyone and made me look like a complete idiot when I was clearly on the right!"

"What did you guys fight about?"

"Taehyung was being a bitch because he's rich and I was just done. I may have came off too strong, but still."

"Okay..." she nods, eyes zoning out as if she's trying to connect the pieces, "And then what?"

The younger frowns, biting his lower lip hard to cage the tears in. His eyes burn. "I-I didn't want t-to go home so I went to a place on the beach me and Taehyung call o-our place. It's—" he starts, but then corrects himself bitterly, "It used to be our little hideout from the world, because when I arrived he was already there w-with Jungkook."

"Oh, baby..." she sighs, empathetic. Jimin can't stop feeling like he is the most stupid boy in the world.

"I know."
"I mean… Did you let them explain?"

"What is there to explain, Eunbi-yah?!" he pleads, slipping off the formal speech abruptly. "Sorry. I just— Jungkook didn't even follow me, y'know? Neither did Taehyung. If there was something reasonable to explain out of it they would have, right?"

The look on his sister's face tells him that he's right. The drop on her shoulders also tells him she stopped trying.

"I'm sorry." she says in a small voice and he laughs.

He didn't want to tell anyone about this, because that's what he was scared of. A tiny part of him was considering (hoping) he could be too deep in his own head. But now — Eunbi just agreed with him, for god's sake.

Jimin looks away, barely holding the tears at bay.

"Maybe it was always supposed to be like that. Of course he'd like Taehyung. God." he shakes his head, laughing, "One time, when we were at a party last year, me and Taehyung were dancing and all, having fun. I was trying to establish eye contact with this guy I thought was cute, and I was getting a lot of mixed signals but I thought he wanted it too, because he was staring too much. And so he approached us and my heart was beating so fast, but then he went to Taehyung instead, not me. That day I felt so bad, noona." his voice breaks by the edge, "I don't know why my mind has this urge of always comparing me with him, but that just made it worse. I was so humiliated. And now this — this is like that very same feeling amplified by ten folds. I feel like shit. At least, back then, the guy was a no one and Taehyung rejected him. But now it's Jungkook and I get a feeling Taehyung might like him back."

Eunbi doesn't seem too convinced.

"Isn't he straight?"

Jimin scoffs.

"Everyone is straight until they are not."

She tilts her head in thought. "Well, okay. I get that, but— I'm not saying you're crazy and that this doesn't make any sense, because I gotta be honest with you — it does, but… You have to be sure, y'know, baby? You can't just come up with everything inside your head and believe it to be real without talking with anyone else about it to confirm."

He frowns his lips, looking down. "Well, I'm talking to you." he shoots back, meekly.

"You know whom I mean."

Jimin falls silent. He does.

"Have they not tried reaching out to you?"

He cleans the thin path of tears on his cheeks with his palms. They have subdued by now, but he still feels his body awfully heavy.

"Yeah." the answer is weak.

"And you've been ignoring them ever since?" Jimin nods and Eunbi laughs. "Of course." he feels a
little embarrassed, so he looks up, defensive.

"What else did you expect me to do?"

"Nothing, I'm not judging. But I'm thinking maybe now it's the time to give in a little." her hand slides down his arms and she squeezes his wrist in reassurance. "If you want to, I can do it with you."

Jimin shakes his head. He doesn't even know if he really wants to do it. "No, it's okay... I, um, I think I'm gonna hit the shower or something. I'm really tired."

She nods, a small smile on her lips. "Okay. Call me if you need me, right? I'm here."

Jimin reciprocates the smile, although a bit forced. "I know, noona. Thank you."

He sighs and somehow finds the strength to get up and do what he needs. The shower is warm, but Jimin feels it burning, so he turns the temperature cold and when he gets out of it, he's shaking from head to toe. He can't take what Eunbi said out of his mind, so he goes to sleep with multiple scenarios of what could happen if he answered any of the texts. He doesn't, but the thought has him rolling on the bed for an hour or too, before he finally drifts off to slumber.

The next morning, Eunbi drops him off at his house and his mom nearly crushes him in a hug as if she hasn't seen him in two years. His heart is at ease for that short ten seconds or so, and he laughs easily, hugging her back.

As it's super early, she cooks breakfast for the two of them — Jihyun is still asleep. They eat while she talks about that professor again and he watches with a fond smile.

It's just after she says she's going to the market for groceries that Jimin is flooded by the urge to do something and before he knows it, he's sending a simple and uncharacteristic hi to Jungkook.

He immediately throws his phone away, somewhere he can't see, and rushes to Jihyun's room.

He's the lump curled beneath the sheets, so Jimin climbs the bed and gets under the blanket with him, hugging his waist and burying his face between his shoulders' blades in shame.

The younger stirs off sleep and turns his body slightly around to look at who's disrupting him.

"What are you doing?" he asks with a hoarse voice.

Jimin doesn't pull back from where he's hiding. "I need love." he answers in a bit of a whiny tone and Jihyun huffs.

"Is it Jungkook?"

Jimin can already feel his eyes burning so he inhales a deep breath. His heart is in a havoc. He wonders if he answered him already. "Taehyung too."

The room falls silent and it makes Jimin wonder if Jihyun is shocked or just asleep. But then the younger turns around again and places his arm on top of the one Jimin has around his waist, giving in to the cuddle.

He exhales a relieved breath, closing his eyes and focusing on the comforting warmth rather than the eating cold seeping in between his ribs.

They fall asleep and wake up when the clock is nearing midday, with their mom calling them for
It takes a while for consciousness to completely take over his senses, and when it does, he's already at the table, munching a chunk of food and choking when he remembers what he did before falling asleep.

The next moments are followed by him nearly swallowing all his food in the span of two minutes, before he's running to the couch to find where he tossed his phone.

It's lying with the screen flat down on their loveseat and Jimin breathes in deep before taking it in hands.

There's a single message and he feels a bit disappointed by it, but his heart is still pulsing in his throat nevertheless.


dont text 1 — 8:23 am
can i call you?

Jimin swallows in dry.

you — 12:34 pm
no

He doesn't even have the time to fully prepare for the rest of the conversation, as Jungkook quickly sends back,


dont text 1 — 12:35 pm
do you want to talk?

He bites his lower lip, considering.

you — 12:35 pm
idk

dont text 1 — 12:35 pm
where are you?
you — 12:35 pm
home

dont text 1 — 12:35 pm
are you lying? i looked for you in your house and you weren't there

you — 12:36 pm
no

dont text 1 — 12:36 pm
where were you then?

Jimin is starting to get irritated. What's up with all the interrogation? He should be the one giving him answers, not questions.

you — 12:36 pm
can you just say whatever you wanted to say?

dont text 1 — 12:37 pm
i'm just worried

He rolls his eyes. Well, now he's worried. Jimin gnaws at his bottom lip and feels petty enough.

you — 12:37 pm
i was at a friends

He knows it's childish and that he'll probably regret saying this later, but it's not technically a lie. He did spend most of the last days with Hoseok and only went to Eunbi's at night. Besides, he's just desperately trying to grab at any thread of reassurance, hoping to get a reaction out of Jungkook.
He asks abruptly and Jimin's eyes swell with tears, on the brink of flooding. His heart seems caged, tied down, pulsating against chains, the icy metal sinking on the heat of his despair.

why were you there jungkook?

at the beach?
i always go there
i found that place when my parents bought a house there
Jimin blinks, a tear slipping from how much they accumulated in his eyes as he does so, but it doesn't mean anything. His mouth is gaping, trying to process what he just read.

you — 12:39 pm
what?

dont text 1 — 12:39 pm
im serious
i always go there when im stressed
me and taehyung just happened to go to the same place at the same time
when you arrived he was trying to understand what i was doing there

He takes a moment. His heart seems to be going through a strange lull after the storm that took him unprotected. As if it's floating in numbness.

you — 12:40 pm
oh

dont text 1 — 12:40 pm
can i go see you now? i'm dying to see you

Jimin inhales a deep breath. Scratch the calmness, his heart is thrown in an overdrive of multiple feelings. Anxiety, regret, anger, relief.

you — 12:40 pm
im still mad at you

He's not lying. Jungkook still stood by Taehyung when he was treating him that way and it hurt like a bitch.
you can be
i'm going to apologize
i just need to see you
i have to give my heart something
please
something inside me has to be sure we're not broken up

The heat that flourishes on the apple of his cheeks makes him get at least three different typos while writing "okay" to send him. Jungkook immediately goes offline at his permission and Jimin panics.

*Is he on his way right now? Did he mean see me right this moment?*

He gets up of the couch and goes to his room to grab something to wear in a frenzy. He looks like trash and he didn't even shower yet. What is he expecting? For Jimin to throw his arms around him and say that he loves him when he arrives? Because he's definitely not doing that. What if Jungkook gets there and Jimin is still irrevocably mad at him? What are they going to do, then? Sit still in silence beside each other?

He showers in five minutes, getting the tips of his hair strands wet in the process, and walking out of the bathroom with a little bit of soap on his chin — that he wipes with the towel wrapped around his shoulders.

Although having showered (which is basic hygiene, by the way, not because he nearly has a stroke every time Jungkook compliments his smell), he absolutely *refuses* to dress up for him and so he picks up a random pair of mustard sweats and a white tshirt.

The living room is where he finds his comfort, hugging a pillow and focusing on the interior design's show going on discovery home&health.

"Is Jungkook coming over?" the question comes from the younger version of himself. Jimin looks over at Jihyun's figure by the hallway. He's looking good.

"Where are you going?" he dribbles the question.

"Mom and I are going on a date."

Jimin frowns, expression twisted in deep offense for that kind of segregation. "What! And why am I not included?!"

"Because Jungkook is coming over." he answers with casualty, dressing his shoes. Jimin immediately shuts up. Is he that obvious?

"No, he's not." he says a bit too weakly, and just then his mom appears from her bedroom's door — she's wearing a floral dress that makes her waist look really pretty.

"If he's not, then this is punishment for abandoning us for so many days." she says simply, "Let's go, Jihyunie?"
The younger takes her arm and they start to walk to the door, attached by the hip.

Jimin’s frown deepens and he crosses his arms over his chest. "Have fun, traitors." he mumbles and they simply laugh it off before disappearing behind the main door.

And then he's all alone.

He knows it's selfish, but he wishes they didn't go out at all. Now if Jungkook really gets there, they'll be all alone and he won't know what to do about it.

Despite his rooted anxiety, Jimin waits for an hour. And then another forty five minutes.

If he was scared feeling bad about Jungkook coming over, he forgot to consider what he'd feel like if he didn't come at all.

Because now he's angry and hurt while watching innocent people bake a giant cake, and he's wishing they were doing it in front of him just so he could tear it all down.

Trapped in his own thoughts and feelings, he only snaps out of it when his phone vibrates next to him. It's embarrassing how fast he reaches out to it, but at least no one is there to witness it.


dont text 1 — 2:27 pm

i'm outside

open up

Jimin's stomach drops to his feet. His throat closes and he suddenly feels like throwing up, but he inhales a big breath and counts till three.

His feet guides him without his mind's permission, but when he realizes it, his hand is already turning the knob and his heart is threatening to make him faint.

He doesn't know why he's so nervous, but when he opens the door he understands it.

Jungkook is on the other side — of course he is —, hands behind his back and eyes cast down, gnawing on his bottom lip. His hair is falling over his eyes and Jimin wonders if it's possible for him to have become prettier in the span of three days. His heart is beating like he's seeing him for the first time. He hates it.

But even before he can process anything or think of something to break the silence, there's a movement by Jungkook's feet that startles him. He looks down — to where the younger has been looking the entire time, and every existing word are extinguished from his brain.

He tilts his head to the side, trying to understand why, when and how, when suddenly there's a bark and Jimin blinks.

It's a puppy.

There's a tiny, brown coloured puppy by Jungkook's feet. It's looking up at him with its tongue hanging out as it happily pants with the mouth open.
Jimin's frown seems carved on his forehead by now. "Wh..at…?"

Jungkook chuckles a little and urges him down, pointing with his chin. "Take a look at his leash."

He finds the request odd, but kneels down anyway, heart already melting when the puppy gets on its two paws to welcome him. "Hey there little..." he takes the silver pendant hanging from his collar and reads, "...wow...?"

He stops for a moment of confusion before it hits him, completely unexpected.

"Get a puppy. Name it wow so when I call him it seems like I'm barking." He still remembers the way Jungkook laughed, so loud and honest, head thrown back. "That’s golden. Please get a puppy as soon as possible, I can't wait to see you walking down with him at the street, people thinking you’re barking when you call his name." His voice sounded so amused. Jimin's chest tightens at the memories of the trip. "Shout out to your mind."

He looks up at the boy, who's anxiously playing with his fingers, brows furrowed in expectation. Jimin's mouth is partially hanging, the blood running on his veins pumping his heart louder and louder, the beats echoing inside his ears. "I..." he starts. The puppy licks the back of his hand so he looks down to pat his head. "I can't believe you did that." he finds it is easier to speak without looking at him.

But it's Jungkook they're talking about, the person who always manages to make everything ten thousand times harder for him. So that's probably why he crouches down on his knees to get on Jimin's level, his face so close that Jimin has to lean back a bit. He swallows.

"That's my apology, so if you refuse to accept it, that makes you a really really awful person."

Jimin can't even comment on it. He's too dumbstruck. "Where did you even get...him, her?"

"It's a he. And I adopted it from a place near grandma's house."

Jimin makes a sound with his mouth, proceeding to play with the puppy's flapping ears so he doesn't have to look into Jungkook's eyes.

"So? Are you accepting it?"

Jimin sighs. It's not like he doesn't want a puppy. He has always wanted one. Everything is just awkward. He feels so out of place.

"Do I have a choice?"

"Not really."

He takes Wow on his lap and gets up. "Come in."

He hears when Jungkook closes the door, his stomach swooping with it. They're all alone and Jimin has never been more nervous.

He sits down on the couch and puts Wow right beside him so Jungkook can't get too close.

He notices it straight away.

"Are you using him as a protection measure?" he questions, sitting on the space that's left of the couch.
"Yes."

Jungkook chuckles, shaking his head. Jimin frowns. He knows Jungkook explained himself through texts and even got another wish on his list marked, but he doesn't know what to feel. Everything is a mess inside of him and Jungkook is just there looking flawless and laughing effortlessly. It's infuriating.

"Why are you apologizing if you said everything was just a coincidence?" he asks and the younger's expression become a little more serious.

"For getting in between yours and Taehyung's argument. That was really not my place to say anything."

Jimin bites the inside of his lip. He doesn't want to be an ass and complement that it really wasn't, even more if he was not going to stay by his side, but he keeps quiet. He knows he might have been wrong about many things in this fight of theirs, but this he wasn't.

"It really wasn't." It's all he says.

"I'm really sorry." Jimin simply nods. He can't look into his eyes. "Do you accept it?"

It's not like he can say no.

"Yeah."

"Why don't you look at me?" he urges out of nowhere and Jimin gulps, raising his eyes from where Wow was licking his leg. "There..." Jungkook smiles easily, reaching a hand to caress Jimin's cheek with his index. He doesn't even want to address the fucking riot inside of him.

"I'm sorry too." Jimin decides to speak up before the courage slips from his grasp, "For assuming shit. I'm just kind of fucked up."

"You're not fucked up... Don't say that." Jungkook pleads with a frown as if he's personally offended by the remark.

"It's okay, I know I am. Sorry that I let it get to you... and Tae." he completes, hurting from remembering everything that went down. He desperately needs to talk to him, too.

Jungkook's finger is still caressing his skin. He doesn't know if the act eases him or tenses him up more.

"Where were you?"

Jimin looks down, breath hitching as he watches Wow get up on his feet and jump of the couch to chase some nonexistent movement he spotted on the kitchen. Great.

"Uh... I, um, I stayed at Eunbi's."

Jungkook hums, slowly scooting closer. "Mhm... And who were those friends you mentioned? Were you trying to make me jealous?"

Jimin gulps, spectator of the distance between their bodies growing shorter. Jungkook's voice is increasingly dropping to a lower tone and that's never good for his self preservation.

"No." he lies, "Eunbi worked all day so I spent most of my mornings and afternoons with Hobi-hyung. And Jin-hyung, too, sometimes."
"Do they know you're taken?"

He flushes.

"Stop it. You know they do."

"What? I really did get jealous." Jimin inhales a breath, hoping it looks natural when his heart is setting everything inside of him on fire. " Didn't you miss me? I couldn't stop thinking about you." he mumbles and he's so close now, Jimin's chin in between his thumb and index, eyes casted on his lips as if that's the only thing he sees. "It killed me to stay away from you, not knowing a single thing that was happening." He raises his gaze to stare deep into Jimin's orbs. It's unsettling. "Didn't you feel the same?"

He feels so powerless before this display of bare honesty Jungkook showers him with. It's infuriating the way he's so fluent with the way he puts his feelings into words while Jimin is barely managing to keep up with the urge to swallow him up right now.

"I was kind of mad, so…"

"Didn't you miss me the slightest?" he whispers, breath tickling the curve of Jimin's lips. He stays quiet, so Jungkook kisses the corner of his lips, instantly getting his eyes to flutter closed, "You're such a liar."

Jimin releases a breath, feeling his warmth close to him. He keeps his eyes closed — it's like it maintains a distance between his heart and his mind in revolt. It makes it easier to confess.

"Sometimes it hurts so much to be in love with you."

Jungkook's fingers brushes his fringe back, running down the back of his head and resting on his nape, playing with his strands, easing the distress out of him.

He places a kiss on his forehead that steals beats right off his chest. "I don't want it to hurt…"

Jimin releases a shaky breath. "Me neither."

"Then let me make it not hurt." he asks, kissing under his lashes. As if he could ever say no to him.

Jimin sucks in a deep breath, fixing his posture so he's hovering over the younger and locking his fingers on the back of his neck to bring him closer until their lips are crashing.

It feels so much like coming back home that Jimin can't help but moan, even more with the way Jungkook grabs his waist with urgency and keens under his breath.

They kiss intensely, exactly like lovers that long for, and Jimin nearly chokes on everything swirling inside of him. He lets Jungkook's touches heal him, map every scratch and scar with his scorching fingers, soft palms.

He doesn't know when he climbs on his lap, or when Jungkook is grabbing his thighs so tightly to pull him closer that he gets breathless. But he knows it's when Jungkook strokes his cheek with his thumb that he pulls back and buries his face on his neck, wrapping his arms around his shoulder in such a desperate hold that definitely translates the way he's scared of losing him.

"I'm so sorry." Jimin murmurs against his skin. He's feeling so bad. "I should've let you explain before I snapped."
"Shh..." Jungkook runs his hands up and down his back, kissing the dip of his shoulder. "I've got my fair share of fault too, right? It's not like you didn't keep up with worse from me."

Jimin stays quiet. He's not wrong, but still.

"Let's just let this go, okay? I don't want this to keep upsetting you." Jungkook declares, pulling him down so they can lay on the couch and cuddle in peace.

"I truly don't deserve you." Jimin confesses in a whisper.

"Why do you keep saying nonsense, huh?" the younger squeezes his sides to light up the atmosphere.

"It's not nonsense. You're so great." Jimin chuckles, then, pulling back from his neck to look around for Wow. "I can't believe you got me a puppy." he smiles.

"That was pure emotional blackmail." Jungkook says, making Jimin laugh with sincerity.

It's like a weight being pulled out of his chest.

"But... Um." the boy calls out, and he seems a bit more cautious, scratching the back of his head. "Are we ever gonna address what you last said to me that day?"

Jimin's face blanks. He licks his lips and returns to his previous position, with his face hidden against Jungkook's neck.

That's the last thing he wants to talk about.

"Not really." he mumbles weakly and there's some tense moments of silence before Jungkook sighs resignedly and tightens his arms around his body.

He nuzzles his face against Jimin's hair until his lips are brushing his ear and says,

"Okay. But just know that you were never second best."

The way there's a clear twitch in his chest makes his throat close, but he tries not to display any kind of reaction — simply hugs Jungkook closer and releases a breath of relief. There's nothing left to be said.

○

The source of his anxiety has become his past source of never ending comfort.

Not speaking to Taehyung feels like having a knife buried deep in his gut that doesn't hurt, but threatens to twist every time he sees him, as if it's waiting for the right moment to make him bleed.

It's terrifying.

Not talking to Jungkook felt like ripping a bandage too soon and watching the bruise come back to life. But not talking to Taehyung feels like getting hurt for the first time.
He feels like crying every time they pass by and the boy straightforward ignores him, as if he's nothing, dust into thin air.

They're four days into seeing each other again at school, but Jimin simply doesn't have the courage to approach him. It's not like he didn't try, but Taehyung has been being so difficult. And it's not as if he's wrong — Jimin knows, but fuck. It's even worse that Jungkook is by Jimin's side every time possible at school so he won't feel miserable and lonely.

He could see the exact moment it hurt Taehyung, when he spotted them together. He wanted to get up and run to talk to him straight away, but he got frozen in place. He was just so humiliated. It was less with Jungkook, because the younger didn't understand the whole picture, but Taehyung did and he watched Jimin overreact like a lunatic and doubt his trust after years of friendship. How could he put Jungkook first when Taehyung went through literally his whole life with him? He's such a terrible person and even worse friend. He's always wronging with the people that care about him the most.

"What's wrong?" Hobi asks after Jimin has spaced out for the last ten minutes when he had promised to carefully watch his routine and give him his opinion.

"Sorry, hyung. My mind is just somewhere else."

"Well, earth calling. What's the matter? You got back with your boyfriend, right?"

"It's not him." Jimin sighs, shoulders slumping, "I talked to you about Tae, right?"

"It's the guy that was with you in that party, right? We saw you two dancing." Jin comments from the corner of the room where he's getting ready. He has just arrived.

"Yeah. He's not talking with me."

"Why?"

"Because I'm an asshole."

"Well, of that we been knew." Jin says.

"Hey!"

"What?" he shrugs his shoulders in defense, "You stole all my snacks the last time you went home!"

Jimin chuckles. "You deserved."

"Ass-hole."

Hoseok pops the cap of a water bottle and chugs it down before he asks, "But what did you do to him?"

"I didn't trust him."

"Well." he licks his wet lips in thought, "Just say you're sorry?"

"He won't talk to me, hyung."

"Set a trap, then."
"Like what?"

"He talks to your boyfriend, right? Ask Jungkook to send him a message saying he needs to see him and then you go instead."

"He'll punch me."

"Well, you'd rather have a black eye or your best friend back?" Jin smartly questions.

Jimin sighs, falling with his back down on the ground. "I hate when you guys are right."

"Well, boo-hoo. Up in five and back to our routine, baby. I wanna see those muscles stretching."

Hoseok prompts, clapping his hands to urge him up. Jimin huffs, but obediently does as he's told.

○

Contrary to what Hobi suggested, though, Jimin approaches Taehyung in broad daylight, by himself. He decides he owns him at least that much. Different from all the other half assed attempts of trying to talk to him, this time around Jimin is resolute. He's not backing down, it doesn't matter what Taehyung does or says.

But like the little box of surprises that the boy is, the moment he sees Jimin he simply stops, and waits.

"I— We— Uh, I need to talk to you."

And with a blank face, he simply answers, "Okay."

Jimin has to blink once, then twice, until he it dawns on him that he agreed.

"Okay? Ah, o-okay." he stammers and blushes, embarrassed for being so nervous, "Can we, uh, sit somewhere else?"

They find a quiet courtyard, where the students barely go to and Jimin would rather sit on the grass but Taehyung heads for one of the concrete tables instead.

He sighs — breath shaky, watching his best friend observe the movement of the leafs on the ground with unreadable eyes.

"I'm sorry, Tae." Jimin says the only thing he could possibly say, "I'm so stupid." he is gulping and Taehyung's eyes don't even waver, "I know I should've listened to you. Or even Jungkook. But I was just so hurt and everything was a mess? I know what you're thinking... It makes no sense for me to have doubted you. Especially you. You're my best friend in the whole world since forever and I know you'd do nothing like that to me— I know, but. Sometimes I just feel like I'm so paranoid, y'know? My mind has this way of telling me things, and—" Jimin searches for something, anything, but Taehyung is still not looking at him and honestly he feels like he might choke on his words, "Fuck, Tae, I'm really so sorry. I'm sorry that I got back talking to Jungkook first too. I know you were hurt, but I wasn't the one to approach him. He came to apologize to me and explained everything that happened and I just— felt so so so so incredibly stupid. I was so
embarrassed and humiliated, I didn't know how to talk to you."

He waits, trying to get a panoramic view of everything he just said and wondering if there's something else he could add when Taehyung abruptly sighs, sprawling his palms over the table and stretching his back. He's finally staring at him.

"Are you done?" he coldly questions and Jimin can clearly see, the hurt still vivid inside his eyes.

His shoulders slump, as he knows what's to come. "Yes."

"Great. Thank you. But I think I need some time away from you for now."

Jimin gulps and his nose burns, but there's nothing he can do so he blinks rapidly to get rid of the unwelcome tears and nods.

"Sure. Sorry." he voices out in a fragile tone, gaze falling to his feet.

It takes a moment longer than he expected, but Taehyung still gets up and leaves him by himself, mulling on his own choices and regrets.

○

People needs time to heal, Jimin learns.

And, also, words mean nothing in real apologies. Apologizing is simply a way to make the guilty feel better about themselves, it does nothing to soothe the bruise of the hurt ones.

So he steps back, as Taehyung asked him to, he gives him space, but keeps on watching closely. And when he feels the tiniest bit of opening, he latches on it, doesn't let the chance slip away. He starts little by little — showing that he cares. Taking care of him from afar even when Taehyung doesn't acknowledge he is doing so. Jimin calls him in the mornings and hangs up when he picks up, as he knows his tendency to always be late and skip his alarms. Taehyung doesn't tell him to stop, so he keeps on doing it until one day, the boy grumbles an "I'm awake", before hanging up. Jimin counts it as advance.

Small, but there.

Little by little, between tight lipped smiles and subtle gestures they get closer again, until finally, one afternoon, when Jimin is waiting in line at the cafeteria to grab a snack to keep him awake while he reviews his biology notes, he feels a pair of long arms enveloping around his waist.

At first, he thinks it's Jungkook, sneaking out of his class to give him a motivation kiss in his study session, but the smell doesn't belong to his boyfriend. And when Jimin turns his face around, his heart skips a beat at the sight of his best friend, eyeing the menu casually as if nothing ever happened between them.

"What are you ordering?" he asks with lips curled downwards in thought.

Jimin looks down, biting back a smile and feeling his chest bloom with warmth. He looks back to the menu on the screens over the counter. "Mhm… A strawberry smoothie. Perhaps a milkshake. What about you?"
"I don't know yet. Pick for me." Taehyung decides instead, settling his chin over Jimin's shoulder.

He purses his lips and chooses a smoothie for the both of them. They're waiting for their orders, Taehyung still tightly wrapped around Jimin, when he hears his deep voice close to his ear,

"Jimin-ah. I'm sorry too."

It's simple, yet there's so much sincerity in the way he speaks, that Jimin can only release a deep breath — trapped inside his lungs for so so long —, resting his arms on top of the ones around his waist.

"It's okay. Let's move on from that."

"Ung." Taehyung agrees with a simple hum, and he, too, sighs relieved, "Let's not fight anymore. I hate it."

Jimin smiles, leaning back on his chest, the back of his head falling on his shoulders. "Yeah. I hate it too."

It takes a lot of self hatred and sadomasochist tendencies for one to choose to graduate chemistry in university, in Jimin’s opinion.

He stares at the structural formula down on his paper and it stares right back into his knowledge-less soul. In the end, he just sighs frustratedly and lets his head hit the table. He is not taking any engineering course that requires chemistry classes. No, not in this lifetime, no.

“What’s wrong, babe?” his mom passes him by, ruffling his hair.

He groans out loud. “It’s difficult the life of a young man that’s both dumb and gay.”

The woman laughs out loud and that gets him to raise his head and look at her, who’s now by the kitchen, fetching herself a glass of water.

Jimin frowns from the dinner table by the living room. “Where are you going all dressed up?”

He watches her cheeks taint in red even by distance, squinting his eyes when she starts to stammer. “A-am I too dressed up? This was supposed to look completely normal and casual, is it too much? Should I change?”

"Kwon Seoyeon-ssi,” he spells suspiciously, “Are you going on a date?”

“Well, I—I wouldn’t put it like that.”

Jimin’s clasps both hands together in a clap that resonates through the entire living room, coupled with an overjoyed smile. “You are…” he melts like a proud parent, “Oh my god, is it that hot teacher you were talking about?”

“Jimin!” she gasps, “I never once used the word hot to describe him!” she flushes and Jimin laughs
getting up from his chair to sit on the counter.

“Oh, please. I know you don’t have low standards, you’re so picky.”

“You’re right.” she agrees easily.

“So, he’s hot.”

His mom narrows her eyes at him and throws the rest of her water in the sink. “He’s… nice.”

“Nice.” Jimin echoes.

“Nice.”

“Okay. I hope his niceness can satisfy you on your date.”

She scoffs. “I told you it’s not a date!”

“Uh-huh.”

“He asked me to get a coffee so we can discuss over a school project coming up.”

Jimin stares deeply in her eyes with a mocking expression and repeats. “Uh-huh.”

She rolls her eyes, but gets no chance to answer, because her phone starts to blare loudly inside her pocket.

“Ah, hello?”

The speaker is loud and the house silent so Jimin can clearly hear the male’s voice on the other end of the line.

“Hello, Seoyeon.” it echoes and he doesn’t miss the lack of honorifics, “Are you ready for our date?”

Jimin a-ha’s her out loud with a pleased smile and snapping finger guns, making his mother glare at him.

“Oh, date?” she stammers, “Uh, I, sure.” putting a strand of her hair behind her ear, she blushes and places her hand on her waist as she doesn’t seem to know what to do with it. It's endearing to watch.

“Great, because I’m outside.”

Both hers and Jimin’s eyes bulge out and they simultaneously stare at each other with their shocked expression. His jaw falls open while she squeaks out, “Outside? Of my house? Did you come pick me up?”

Jimin instantly jumps off the counter and runs to the window to take a peek and his mother follows close behind him.

He pulls the curtain just by an inch and laughs when the man still notices it, surprised at first, but then waving at them.

“Yes, I did. Hello– Is this Jimin or Jihyun?”
“Ah, it’s Jimin.” she flusteredly says as she shushes him away from the window, “Don’t mind him, he’s nosy.”

“It’s okay. But, uh, can you please open the door?”

If possible, his mom gets even redder on the cheeks making Jimin press his palm against his lips so he doesn’t laugh out loud.

“Of course!” she squeaks once again. “I, sorry. I’m coming.”

“You’re a total mess.” Jimin says when she rushes to the door fixing her hair.

“Not a word!” she menaces, so Jimin falls back on the couch and pretends not to pay attention to the door while holding back a smirk.

He hears the sound of it opening and apparently Wow hears it too because he comes running straight from Jimin's room to bark at the intruder. Jimin gets up and takes him to the couch with him to calm him down so his mother doesn't have to do with it.

“Ah, hi there, Chanwoo-ssi.” she says, after the initial disruption.

“Oh my, you look stunning.”

Jimin nods as he caresses Wow's fur, approving his choice of words. Bonus points.

“Oh. Thank you. This is, uh, this is Jimin.” she introduces and he turns his head at the mention of his name. "And Wowie, our baby."

Both adults are looking at him with a smile — her, a nervous one, and his, a welcoming one. Jimin mimics the man’s.

“Hi, Jimin. Nice to meet you.” he says with a wave. "Hi, Wowie." the dog gets up on all fours at the mention of his name, alert, watching the door with his head tilted to the side as he always does whenever he's confused or curious.

Jimin waves back. “Hi, hyungnim. Please, take care of her today.”

“Don’t worry, I will bring her back without a scratch.”

“I’m counting on you for that.”

He nods and then, their attention are entirely on each other again.

“Let’s go?”

Jimin watches his mom smile shyly and take her purse on the hanger. “Of course. I’m going, babe. If anything comes up, call me.”

“Yeah, yeah. Have a nice date you two.” he teases and his mom takes the chance to glare at him one last time too while she’s closing the door.

He shakes his head, laughing and turns his face around, slumping on the couch.

Now that the house is all to himself — considering Jihyun is going through the never leaving my bedroom teenager phase — studying chemistry has become even less appealing. He bites his lips, staring at his phone on the table and takes it in hands after almost no thought. Wow lays down on
his stomach, staring deep inside of him with judging eyes. Jimin narrows his own eyes at him.

"Oh, shut up."

you — 3:47 pm
im alone at home..

The answer is immediate.

baby — 3:47 pm
what are you implying

Jimin bites back a smile.

you — 3:47 pm
come over

baby — 3:47 pm
omw

He throws his head back, laughing out loud, and shakes his head.

you — 3:48 pm
horny ass

He doesn’t get an answer, but he does get a knock on his front door forty minutes later and an eager Jungkook kissing him against the wall as soon as he lets him in. It refreshes all the butterflies inside his belly, even a month later after they’ve been officially dating. They messily stumble into his bedroom, laughing into each other’s neck at their bad attempt to not make any noise and disrupt Jihyun. Once inside, shirts are pulled, pants are discarded and sooner than expected Jungkook is on his knees. Jimin’s heart threatens to stop, even more since it has such a long time since either of them blew each other. Jungkook takes him to heaven, works him wet and slow, just until he increases his pace and Jimin’s silent groans choke his throat and he has to press a pillow against his
face to let them out muffled. His legs feel like jelly after his orgasm hits him, but Jungkook keeps on kissing him, insatiable, so Jimin jerks him off and tries teasing his hole with his other hand, just to see how Jungkook would react. The whiny plea that falls from his lips is completely unexpected and it makes Jimin’s stomach coil with untamed desire. He doesn’t have the courage to push it in as much as Jungkook doesn’t seem to be bold enough yet to ask him for it, so they leave it at that — but he saves the thought Jungkook can break out like that for later. They keep fooling around lazily in between trivial conversations and lovingly kisses until their growling stomachs gets them ordering fried chicken to eat while they watch a movie of Jimin’s choice this time. It’s not until nearly eight o’clock that his mom arrives, and Jungkook has long fallen asleep on his shoulder in the middle of the movie, Wow peacefully lying by their feet.

Jimin eyes her with a knowing smirk and she fixes him with the same stare.

“I don’t ask any questions if you don’t either.” she prompts, making him chuckle by himself while she makes her way to her bedroom, giddy and with flushed skin.

It’s the last week of school before the mid-year break and, as usual, it is exam week, so everyone is stressed out of their minds.

The three of them have fallen back in touch, so they're continuously going to study together in Taehyung's house and Jimin tries not to feel pressured that he sucks both at Physics and Chemistry while Jungkook and Taehyung seem to effortlessly nail it. He reassures himself — he's better at math and geography, they're always asking for his help. He's good at other things too, it's fine.

Things are flowing rather smoothly for the next couple days — Jimin supposes he did pretty great at all four tests he took, so he's studying extra time to do well in the remaining ones too.

Strangely enough, though, his and Jungkook's first jealousy crisis arrives, and it doesn't come off him.

It's a regular afternoon that Jungkook has classes and Jimin studies on the library with Taehyung — except that Taehyung has scurried off to chase after a crush he refuses to reveal who is, leaving Jimin by himself.

He has no problem with it, to be honest, but after he's sitting there for a couple hours after lunch, someone shows up to make him company.

He raises his head and his brows shoot up, surprised at the sight of Jinyoung.

"Hey, Jimin-ah."

"Hi…?" he greets suspiciously. He's not sure if he trusts him anymore after Jungkook told him the things that were being said about him. Even though, he knows it's probably wrong to assume. He never directly did anything wrong to him.

"Is it a bad time? Am I bothering you?"
Jimin tilts his head. "Not really? What do you want?"

Jinyoung, looks away, kind of sheepish, scratching his cheek. "Uh, you don't seem good? I can come back some other time."

Jimin silently pats himself on the back for looking intimidating.

"It's okay." he says nevertheless, "I'm good."

"I'm sorry, this is really awkward. It's just that I'm sitting there with my friends and Yeeun-noona won't stop bugging me to come ask if I can give her your number?"

Jimin raises an eyebrow.

"Does she not know…?"

The boy seems offended by the question.

"Of course not! I wouldn't tell her about it without your consent."

Jimin must be looking at him with an interrogation mark on his face, because Jinyoung starts blushing as if he said something wrong.

"What is it?"

"Jinyoung. I'm literally dating Jungkook. Openly. For over a month. I'm out."

Realization seems to fall upon him, because his eyes widen and he straightens his posture. "Oh. Oh my god, I… I, um, didn't know. Congrats."

"Thanks."

The other boy nods, gnawing at his bottom lip, but he doesn't make a move to leave the table so Jimin feels awkward.

"Do you… need something else?"

He seems to be pondering the question, staring at Jimin as if questioning himself if it's worthy to say whatever he has in mind.

"Why… him, though?"

He frowns, trying not to feel offended on Jungkook's behalf. "What do you mean?"

"Like… You never wanted to settle. So why all of a sudden…?"

Jimin sighs. "I've always wanted to settle, though? I guess you just didn't know me all that well." he tries to not be too harsh with his words. Really, he's just being honest. Also, because he got points with Jimin for assuming he wasn't out and coming to him first to ask if it was okay to tell the girl.

"Yeah, but I just think it's funny that from everyone else… him?"

"What do you mean him?" Jimin presses pointedly, annoyance starting to grow inside of him. If he's about to badmouth Jungkook right to his face, he better watch his next words.
"He doesn't... I mean, you two... I don't think you really match."

Jimin stares at him for a moment, completely taken aback by his blunt words.

Scoffing, then, he shakes his head. That's so fucking rude.

"Who do I match with, then? You?" 'Who does Jungkook match with?' — he doesn't say.

Jinyoung goes beet red in an instant, mouth gaping and dry. "I-I never said that! It's not like— I'm really not hang up on this, it's just a comment."

"Well, thank you for your non required opinion, I'll make sure to not take it into consideration. Next, please." he pretends to be calling the next in line, so Jinyoung huffs.

"Jimin."

"What?" he snaps harshly, face clearly not open for conversation.

"I'm sorry," he places a hand on top of Jimin's, to which he arches an eyebrow defiantly. "I didn't mean it like that, I'm—"

He retreats his hand. "I understand what you said just fine. Now, if you could go, I'm trying to study."

"But—"

Jimin turns on the chair, blocking any kind of further interaction, as he focuses solely on the book in front of him. He watches by the peripheral as Jinyoung sighs and starts to get up.

"Okay. I'm sorry I upset you."

Jimin ignores him, so he just resumes to getting up in silence and leaving the table.

He releases an annoyed breath and starts tapping his pencil on the white page of his notebook. 'I don't think you two match.' Honestly, how dare him say that? It's not his place, Jimin didn't even ask for his opinion.

Sooner than he expected though, there's a body leaning against the table beside him, so he looks up ready to kick Jinyoung out again, but is surprised to find Jungkook's figure instead, arms crossed in front of his chest and forehead twisted in a frown, looking down at him.

"What the fuck are you doing?"

He is taken aback by his posture, so he gets defensive right away. "Excuse me? Studying, as you can probably see?"

"Don't play dumb with me now, Jimin, I saw Jinyoung leaving the table just now."

Jimin continues to stare at him unfazed. "And? Why are you speaking to me like that? And that's fucking hyung to you."

His harsh tone seems to put some sense into Jungkook, as he looks around, self conscious and lowers his tone, purposefully pulling the chair Jinyoung didn't use to sit down. Jimin rolls his eyes.

"I'm just asking a question."
"No, you're demanding an answer and that's not how you speak to your boyfriend."

"How do you expect me to speak?" he hisses, but doesn't raise his voice. Jimin releases a breath, turning his torso to him and crossing his arms as well. "After my friend comes up to me and goes 'hey, isn't that your boyfriend flirting with the dude he used to bang?'"

Jimin fumes. He doesn't even acknowledge how any of Jungkook's friends know about him and Jinyoung. He's so fucking pissed. He can't understand why Jungkook is pulling this shit right now in front of everyone, while Jinyoung must be watching everything in absolute bliss about how much he's right that they're no match.

He licks his dry lips and fixes Jungkook in what he hopes is a deadly glare, because he really feels like killing him right now.

"Do you see the weight of what you're implying?" he questions, oddly calm for someone who's burning with anger inside, "What, do you think I'm just here flirting with him in public because I simply can't keep it in my pants just like you and whoever the fuck was that gossiped about me since the beginning?" Jungkook's face falls and he seems to instantly regret what he said.

Jimin scoffs and starts to pack his stuff. He's had enough of this fucking school for today. Jungkook grabs his wrist, trying to stop him. "Babe, no. That's not what I—"

"Oh, now I'm babe?" Jimin bitterly laughs, pulling his arm back from his hold, "Leave it."

"No, stop, let's talk—"

"If this is your idea of talk, then no, thanks, I'll pass." he shoves all his books and notes messily inside his backpack, hooking it over one shoulder as he gets up. Jungkook follows him suit as he stomps out of the library, all eyes on them.

Jimin scoffs, cheeks aflame from the public humiliation. He's sure that's all the school is going to talk about for the following days. He absolutely hates those privileged fucks — they'll gossip and badmouth anyone for anything, just to keep their boring lives a little more interesting.

"Jimin, please." Jungkook grabs his wrist one more time, turning him around when they're already in the hallway — that it's even more packed than the library. Jimin swears he's about to punch Jungkook anytime now if he proceeds to make a scene in public.

"I won't talk to you here and if you continue to insist I'll consider not talking with you at all the rest of the week." he deadpans before the younger has the chance to say something else.

Jungkook seems to feel the weight of his words, because he takes a step back, hand falling from Jimin's wrist and coming in front of his body instead — as if Jimin is a wild animal in need to be appeased. It only makes him more irritated, so he holds back the urge to roll his eyes and simply releases an annoyed sigh, crossing his arms again.

"Okay. Okay, I get it. But let's go somewhere more private, then? Please?"

Jimin ponders. He's pissed right now, but he'll get nothing besides anxiety if he leaves without them having resolved this.

"Fine." he begrudgingly relents, turning on his heels to head to the courtyard that it's a little more secluded than the patio where most students hang out.
Jungkook follows him from a safe distance, which is good, at least. Jimin doesn't want his touch right now.

His assumptions end up to be right when they turn a corner and find the courtyard to be completely empty, if not by a single boy from the first year sitting in a far away table, studying.

Jimin drops his bag on the bench and chooses to sit on the table, leaning back on his hands, shoulders tense as he fixes his eyes somewhere that's not Jungkook's face.

The younger doesn't pull back, though. He sits right next to Jimin, hands intertwined in front of him and elbows resting on his knees as he leans forward to look at his boyfriend's face.

"Hey… Come on, now." Jungkook bumps his knees on his lightly, just to get his attention.

Jimin bores his eyes on him, but remains silent, face hard as a stone.

Jungkook purses his lips towards the corner of his mouth, as if he's weighing his next words.

"I'm sorry for lashing out."

"That was ridiculous." Jimin deadpans, without waiting a beat. "You know that, right?"

Jungkook snorts, looking away. It's clear he doesn't think so. "I'm still mad, I'm not apologizing for anything else."

"Great. You're mad because I was being a decent human being and answering questions when asked."

"He fucking held your hand? What, was he asking you to marry him?" Jungkook looks back at him again. Jimin studies the expression on his face carefully. He doesn't think he has ever seen Jungkook this irritated before. His brows are contorted into a frown and his eyes seem to narrow, different from the usual wide shiny orbs, they look sharp. "Stop diminishing what I'm feeling."

"I'll keep diminishing it if you use it as an excuse to treat me like garbage."

Jungkook's frown deepens and he pulls back, posture straighter to look deep into Jimin's eyes. "Don't say that." he seems really offended, kind of defensive rather than annoyed now, "I'll never treat you like that."

"Well, you just basically yelled at me in front of everyone, how do you classify that?"

The younger lowers his eyes. "I already said I was sorry for that." he nearly pouts, making Jimin sigh.

Now he understands how an apology does nothing to ease the things inside people after the damage is done. He's still annoyed, it doesn't matter what Jungkook says.

"If you had came to me like a normal person, you'd know that I pulled back the moment he grabbed my hand and told him to leave." Jimin explains, voice far from the sweet tone he usually uses with him.

Jungkook takes a moment to let the information sink in, nipping his bottom lip.

"What did he want?" he questions, at last.

"To ask my number for a friend of his."
He scoffs, face going back to his previous irritated state after it had softened at Jimin's words. "What?! Does he not know we're dating?"

It's a rhetorical question but he answers it either way.

"Apparently not."

"And what did you say?"

"Exactly what you said. That we're dating."

"Mhm." he releases a snort, shaking his head. Jimin nearly laughs humorlessly. He's impossible, he really isn't going to address how much of an asshole he was even after realizing he was wrong, "And how did he end up holding your hand?"

"He wasn't much pleased by the news. Apparently in his head, we're not a match."

At least, with the feeling Jungkook seems to be going through now he can relate.

"And who the fuck matches, then? He and you?" Jimin doesn't answer that, so Jungkook takes the hint, cheeks growing so red that it spreads to his ears and down his neck, "I want to fucking kill him."

"What are you talking about, don't say stupid shit." Jimin lightly slaps his arm, getting Jungkook to pout.

"You have no idea how much I hate him." he says under his breath and Jimin gives up on his posture to comfort the younger. He rubs his hands on his back, running higher until he's massaging his tense neck.

"Come on. Don't be like that..."

Jungkook looks at him with a whole different kind of troubled expression. "What other way can I be? He was all over you when we met here again. It drove me fucking crazy."

Jimin flushes, dots of pink all over his cheeks and nose, in sync with the butterflies fluttering inside his chest. To know Jungkook still cared enough to be jealous of him back then, when Jimin thought he couldn't have given a bigger shit to him.

"I'm here now, ain't I?" he mutters softly, emphasizing with the things he's feeling.

Honestly, Jimin thinks he'd be mad too, if he ever witnessed someone talking closely to Jungkook like that, and holding his hand on top of it all. And, okay, his reaction was trash but at least he had some reaction instead of bottling it all up like Jimin does. He feels kind of envious of his facility to express himself and talk things out.

Jungkook looks back at him and all previous irritation has disappeared from his face. He releases a sigh and marvels at Jimin's touch, leaning forward to wrap his arms around his waist and rest his head on the curve of his shoulder.

"You're right." he says, holding Jimin tighter in his arms, "I'm so sorry for being stupid. Next time, I promise I'll control better what I feel."

Jimin sighs, caressing the back of his head. "Okay. I'm sorry for making little of your feelings too. I didn't think little of them, I was just mad."
Jungkook nods, and takes a moment longer to answer. "Are you still mad now?" he asks cautiously.

Jimin twirls his fingers on his strands, turning his head to kiss his cheek. "I'm not."

"Good. You're scary when you're mad."

Jimin chuckles, so Jungkook pulls back slightly to be able to look at him without taking his head off his shoulder.

He looks cute like this, Jimin thinks, and his heart nearly swoons after they stare at each other for a little too long and Jungkook puckers his lips, asking for a kiss.

He smiles, and gladly gives it to him, bringing his hand to hold him by the cheek and press short little kisses on top of his mouth.

Jungkook seems satisfied, because he nuzzles back to Jimin's neck, sighing pleased.

After they're in that position for awhile, Jungkook speaks up and it's clear he's pouting by the way his voice sounds.

"At least now he knows you have a boyfriend."

Jimin throws his head back, laughing out loud, and then takes the younger's face in his hands, squeezing his cheeks and kissing him some more.

"Aish. My jealous baby."

"It's not funny, I felt really bad."

"I don't think it's funny, you're just cute right now." Jimin explains with an eye smile that resembles half moons. Jungkook flushes.

"I kind of want to shove us all over his face right now. I'm so mad he said we're no match."

Jimin makes a knowing face. "I know." he pinches Jungkook's nose, "And by seeing we fight right after he said that he must have thought he was so right, huh? Thanks to whom?"

Jungkook pouts, looking down. "I didn't know..." he huffs, sitting straight and ruffling his own hair, "Aish, I really do hate him."

"Stop it, it's okay now." Jimin pulls him back to him, leaning on his side and sliding his hand on his to intertwine their fingers. "Just make sure to hug me tight and pamper me with lots of kisses whenever we're next to him." Jimin suggests, a sly smile tugging the corner of his lips.

Jungkook moves his head to look down at him with a mischievous glint in his irises. "Oh, that won't be a problem." he assures before attacking Jimin, pushing him down on the table and tickling all over his belly while placing a thousand tiny pecks over his face and neck that tickle just as much as his unrelenting fingers.

Jimin cackles loudly, head thrown back and hands trying to push Jungkook away. "Stop!" he laughs harder when Jungkook keeps on tickling his waist and then under his armpits, kissing all over his cheeks simultaneously.

His skin probably has every inch reddening, features scrunched and shoulders hunched over so they protect his neck. Jungkook suddenly stops, so Jimin slowly peaks from his closed eyes before
deciding if it's safe to completely open them.

His boyfriend is hovering over him, one of the prettiest smiles Jimin has ever seen on his face. His heart skips a beat at the sight, and he unconsciously curls his hands that are placed on his shoulders — keeping him a safe distance. He's looking at Jimin funny, so he purses his lips and raises his chin. Jungkook's eyes drift down to his mouth and his smile seems to stretch wider. He leans down and takes Jimin's lips in a soft kiss, parting his mouth to nibble at the fat of his bottom lip once, before pulling back. Jimin wraps his arms around his shoulders and brings him down for a hug. It's not the most comfortable position over the concrete table, but they manage it.

He kisses his neck, before murmuring against his skin. "I like you so much."

He feels the way Jungkook's heart knocks against his chest, and in response, Jimin is completely swarmed by a huge wave of pure warmth that spreads through his entire body. It lights up all the sparkles in the pit of his gut, knowing everything he feels is reciprocated and valid.

Jungkook kisses his neck as well, taking a deep breath and inhaling Jimin's smell. A havoc always unravels inside his chest whenever he does that.

"I love that you're my boyfriend and not someone else's." he confesses and Jimin almost chokes upon hearing the word love before Jungkook finished his sentence.

It's good that the younger's face is buried on his neck, so he can't see how pink Jimin has suddenly become. Sighing, he allows himself to smile softly. "Me too, baby. Me too."


It feels completely different to watch someone be in love rather than being the one harboring the feelings.

Jimin hugs the pillow against his chest tighter, watching his brother move around the bedroom in a hush. He's laying on the bed, being of absolutely no help whatsoever — he's just there for the fun of watching Jihyun stress over the outfit for his date.

It's endearing, to be honest. Jimin feels so content, watching his brother blush and pout over the most trivial things — things Jimin never thought he'd witness with his own eyes.

"You're fine, just go with the neutral." he finally gives some kind of useful advice, but that seems to be of actually no help at all, as upon hearing the words Jihyun simply groans and throws his body besides Jimin's on the bed.

Jimin is lying on his stomach so he looks back to the younger who has an arm draped over his eyes dramatically.
"She's so smart." he whines.

"And what in the world does this have to do with the outfit you're going to wear?"

"Everything! She's smart, and funny and she kicks better than me," (they attend the same judo class Jihyun recently started, that's how they met) "I can't be boring on top of it all, there's no way I can compete with that!"

"Well, to be fair, girls normally are smarter than boys anyway, so don't take it personal."

Jihyun groans once again, not appeased by any of Jimin's words, so Jimin sits up and rubs his palm over his arm.

"Hey, take it easy. It's clear she's into you, too. Wasn't she the one to ask you out? What are you even worrying about?"

"Exactly! How much more of a pussy can I be?"

"Yah!" Jimin calls out right away, "Don't say that, it's sexist." Jihyun fixes him with a stare, "I mean it. Can't a girl ask you out?"

"Of course she can. She did. But I just feel so stupid for it. When I said 'yeah, sure' I was blushing. And stuttering! Can you believe that? What must she think of me?"

"That you're super cute. If she asked you out, I'm sure she doesn't think you're less of a man because of it, trust me."

Jihyun pouts, so Jimin laughs. Eunbi would be proud of him right now — he gives himself imaginary pats on the back.

It's in that moment that there's a knock on the door and their mother peaks inside, getting just her head in.

"Are you ready? I need to go to work in thirty, so if you take any longer than the past two hours since you started getting ready, I won't be able to drive you." Jihyun groans louder and steals the pillow Jimin was hugging to press it against his face. Seoyeon frowns while Jimin chuckles beside the suffering teenager. "What's wrong?"

"He's going through an existential crisis." Jimin explains.

"Mom, I don't know have anything to wear." Jihyun takes the pillow out of his face and whines the exact way he used to do when he was younger.

Jimin thinks this girl must be really special, as she's bringing out all the antics from Jihyun Jimin swore he'd never witness again.

"Oh, please." their mother completely barges into the room, heading straight for the wardrobe, "I don't milk all my salary in pretty clothes for you guys for you to tell me you don't have anything to wear." she mumbles, quickly examining each shirt on the hangers and then pulling a black button up and crouching down to take a pair of light blue jeans, throwing the pair over him. "Here, change into this, put some perfume on and let's go." she rushes him, looking at Jimin afterwards, "And you! Go wash the dishes and make sure he folds the bar of those pants!"

Jimin jokingly salutes. "Yes, ma'am."
She rolls her eyes with a tiny smile and gets out of the room, hurrying somewhere else, probably to fix her hair (that to be fair, looks like it was attacked by a mild hurricane, but of course Jimin would never point that out loud — he cherishes his life).

"How did she do that?" Jihyun gapes, holding both clothes in front of his body, checking his reflection on the mirror. "She made it look so easy."

"Yeah, yeah, she's amazing, now go change so we can have time to fix that hair of yours!"

Jihyun turns back to him, wide eyes in bewilderment. "What's wrong with my hair?!"

Jimin rolls his eyes, throwing a pillow on his face. "Just go!"

Mid-year break is a blessing call for his sleeping pattern. A lot of things happen in that span of three weeks, but none of them related to Jimin's life. As the exam for the exchange program is right around the corner, Jimin decides to give his all in his studies during this free time. In lieu of going out with his friends — and even Jungkook — he stays home reading all about russian revolution and all of its impact around the world. (Jimin kind of enjoys history and political geography so it's better than when he was to do his physics list of over 40 questions.)

Besides his boring ass life, everyone around him seems to be doing just fine. Taehyung has flown his ass to Europe as he said he would, after much whining and resistance. Jihyun has gone in at least another four dates, despite his insistence in affirming that no, we're not dating while furiously blushing. He always aims a pillow at Jimin's face whenever he asks him about their first kiss. Unlike their mother, that happily announces the beginning of her relationship with Chanwoo not even a month later after their first date. Jimin is drowned in happiness after the news, even more by witnessing his mother's genuine smiles and glint inside her eyes whenever she talks about him. Eunbi decides to go on a backpacking trip through Latin America out of fucking nowhere and leaves the day after Jimin's break begins. She continuously calls him through video calls on instagram to update him about everything, so he can't say he misses her that much. Hoseok, on the other hand, can't help but sulk all day, whining about how much he misses her — information that Jimin obviously grants Eunbi with, just to watch her blush and change topics in the speed of light.

Despite his incessant study sessions, Jimin can't help but keep on attending his dance practice days with Seokjin and Hoseok. Reason why, one day after a particularly draining routine at the academy, bath taken and comfortably laid down on his bed as he scrolls through his instagram feed, Jimin gets an unexpected visit.

Jungkook tiptoes his way inside his room with a backpack to his shoulder and a finger to his lips, motioning for his very much confused boyfriend to keep quiet as he carefully closes his bedroom door.

“What are you doing?” Jimin whispers and feels stupid for it. Who are they hiding from?

“Your mom doesn’t know I’m here.” Jungkook explains quietly while he sets his backpack next to his wardrobe.
“What?! Why the hell not?”

The younger gifts him with a pout as he walks over. “She’ll make me sleep on the ground if she does.”

Jimin lets his mouth hang as he laughs in utter disbelief. “I can’t believe you.” he shakes his head, watching his boyfriend climb over him on the bed. “You broke into my house. How did you even get i—”

There’s a squeal of surprise stolen out of him when Jungkook takes him off guard and crashes their lips together, a hand curling on the back of his neck to pull him closer. Jimin’s eyes widen when he feels Jungkook’s mouth slide across his so his tongue can lick inside, heart kicking against his chest. He didn’t expect a full, real kiss so soon. He makes another pathetic sound when Jungkook properly sets himself on his lap, legs around his hips and his other hand running up Jimin’s chest just to grab at the roots of his hair to tug it backwards.

Jimin gasps, fingers curling around Jungkook’s shirt as if it can ground him from the whiplash. He’s not slow to reciprocate, but he feels rather kissed than actually kissing, no substantial control of the situation, feeling the way his lips move accordingly to Jungkook’s desire.

“Baby—” he calls, but Jungkook swallows the words, tilting his head to the side so he can deepen the kiss, nose buried on Jimin's cheek.

Jimin can do nothing but roll as he wishes. Not that it is any kind of penance.

Although, when the intense makeout session leaves him out of breath, belly shrinking thanks to the deep inhale he has to take to latch on some kind of stability, Jungkook takes the hint and skims his lips towards his jaw, nipping lightly at it.

"Missed you so bad." he grunts, a whiny pitch overlaying his rough voice.

Jimin's eyes are closed, therefore his other senses are haywire. Jungkook's lips sucking the skin of his neck makes his stomach twist.

"You'd rather see your dance friends than see me." Jungkook complains, pulling a breathy laugh out of Jimin's throat.

"I don't." he denies, but he knows he's been neglecting everything these past couple days in order to keep on going to practices without it affecting his studies.

"You do." lips hovering his collarbones and fingertips grazing down his arms, Jungkook takes his wrists away from where Jimin's hands are clutching his shirt and presses them on top of his head. Jimin's heart instantly takes a leap and his breath hitchs, color blossoming on his cheeks. "Don't lie to me," the intensity of the stare Jungkook gives him is heartshaking. "What should I do with you, huh? I want some compensation for this neglection."

The corner of Jimin's lips curl into a smirk. "Do you?"

Jungkook leans down, breath tickling his nose. "Yes."

Jimin tilts his chin up, hoping for his lips to brush against Jungkook's when he says, "Then, take it. Do whatever you want with me."

And he gets the exact reaction he wanted. Jungkook hisses, leaving one hand to hold down both his wrists as another runs down his chest to squeeze his waist underneath his shirt. "Don't say that." he
groans, closing his eyes.

Jimin chuckles. "Why not?" he taunts, raising his hips so it meets Jungkook's.

The movement gets them both to look down and it's almost disheartening, how hard they are already. Jimin groans, facade slipping.

Jungkook drops his head to his shoulder. "Fuck, I hate you."

He finds it in him to laugh lowly. "And why is that?"

"Because you promised your mother you'd wait until my birthday." he says, releasing the older's arms.

He clicks his tongue. He's feeling especially daring tonight, self esteem boosted that Jungkook missed him so bad he just had the unstoppable urge to come and see him. "Well… You didn't promise anything."

Jungkook shakes his head, laugh spilling from him in disbelief. "I hate you so much."

Jimin smiles, chest fluttering.

"What? Are you losing your touch already? You had quite more of an attitude when we first met." Jimin challenges, lips parting when he feels Jungkook licking down his collarbone.

"So fucking much." the younger groans, roughly attaching his lips on his neck, sucking hard on the bulging muscle. "You little shit."

Jimin inhales a deep breath, hands instinctively going for Jungkook's ass. "Ah, fuck— Baby—"

Jungkook chuckles, rolling his hips down on his erection. "I'm baby? Love that…" he mumbles, nipping Jimin's skin, lips brushing across his chin just to hover over his parted mouth.

Jimin stares at him through half lids, hands running higher over his back to squeeze his waist. His eyes are zeroed on the way Jungkook catches his bottom lip in a bite to subdue the smirk stretching over his lips. His heart tugs at the sight.

Before he can even question what the hell is he looking at Jungkook drops with his body on top of him pulling Jimin's bottom lip between his teeth and abusing the bare skin of his stomach with his nails.

"You're so hot it's unreal." he confesses as if he's just had an epiphany about it and Jimin melts right against the mattress. "Sometimes I forget how much you drive me fucking insane."

Jimin's cock twitches and he's so deprived of touch, so turned on in that moment, that he can't even care enough to be embarrassed. He just moans shamelessly, trying to rub his erection against Jungkook's, not with much success. Of course the younger would be a piece of shit about it and pin his hips down when he realizes Jimin is getting desperate, a sly smile on the corner of his lips that only fuels Jimin's want to absolutely devour him.

Jungkook sits back on Jimin's thighs just enough to tug the older's shirt up until he's discarding it from off his shoulders, palm immediately coming to touch the heat of skin the piece of clothing was hiding. He smirks upon the sight of Jimin's belly sinking, lips parted to inhale a crazy amount of air when Jungkook slides his fingers up to graze against one of his nipples.
"Do whatever I want, you say?" he taunts, leaning down to scratch one of the aureoles with his teeth. Jimin shudders, a goosebump-inducing tingle that runs down his spine. "I might fucking ruin you, love."

The way he says love laced with so much obscenity gets Jimin thinking he might lose his mind.

He moans, then, back arching and hands clenching Jungkook's shoulders tight.

"Yes, please…" he whines, attempting to roll his hips over the other's hard cock.

"I thought you promised to wait…" Jungkook teases, knowing he's got the upper hand when he leans down to take a nipple, hardened already, into his mouth. Jimin gasps, bringing a hand to tug at the roots of Jungkook's hair. He mumbles an incoherent answer back, to which he chuckles. "I'll make you wait, though. Even if you don't want to." he says, looking up at him — a string of spit connecting his bottom lip and the tip of Jimin's nipple. He groans at the sight. "I'll make you want my cock so bad you will come crying by yourself just at the thought of it."

Jimin shakes his head, refusing the other's words, but when Jungkook slides his hands into his boxers and tugs at his leaking cock all he sees is white bubbly pleasure building up from deep within him.

"Jungkookie…" he pleads, and forgets what for when Jungkook couples the movement of his hand with the swirl of his tongue over his nipple, "Ah—"

"What is it, baby?" he whispers against the mess of saliva he's just made over his pecs, lips brushing over the glistening nipple, so hardened already, making Jimin shiver. "What do you want?" he asks lowly, and purposefully focuses his movements on the head of his cock only.

Jimin sinks his nails on the back of Jungkook's head. "You're such an asshole."

The boy chuckles darkly.

"Sometimes I forget how much I like making you desperate for me…" he taunts, kissing up his jawline, hands regaining his rhythm and stroking Jimin's entire length.

Jungkook's hands are large with long fingers that know exactly how tight to hold and make him see stars. So when he slides that sinful hand of his down Jimin's balls and towards his perineum, everything blanks.

Jimin gasps when Jungkook rubs the pad of his index over it, clenching embarrassingly over nothing and getting the other's laugh in return. It's immediate the way his legs open for it, and he can't even bring himself to complain when Jungkook starts circling his hole teasingly.

"I was about to ask if this was okay, but it clearly is…" he teases, breath warm against his ear, "You're so hungry for it…" he presses his heavy erection against Jimin's stomach and he squeezes his eyes shut, mind unable to keep away the obscene thoughts of how good Jungkook would probably fill him up. "Should I make you come just from my fingers?" he questions, releasing his cock.

Jimin's mind runs miles an hour with different kinds of desperation, even more when Jungkook licks the shell of his ear and sucks a harsh hickey down his neck while pressing the tip of his finger inside.

He keens, embarrassingly pushing his ass against it and making the younger laugh. "Would you like that?" Jimin's stomach coils with the amount of lust he hears dripping from Jungkook's voice.
He stares at him through hazed eyes and his bottom lip caught between his teeth, then nods.

"Yeah."

"Yeah?" he repeats, looking deep into his eyes before leaning down to steal a kiss from his lips. "I'm gonna fuck you so good with them. You'll have to keep really quiet so no one can hear us."

Jimin sucks in a breath. Everything is so hot, it feels like there's flames licking up the curve of his spine.

"Do you have lube?" Jungkook asks, while trailing a path of kisses down his jaw that flutters his skin. And Jimin doesn't want him to stop, so he blindly reaches out to his nightstand, opening the drawer and pulling out the lube from inside.

Jungkook motions to sit back to coat his fingers in the liquid, but Jimin holds him by the back of his head, pressing his mouth against his neck. "No, don't stop."

It seems like a new kind of hunger borns out of Jimin's words, because the next hiccups Jungkook marks him with leaves him gasping loud. The boy takes the lube from Jimin's hand and squeezes it over his fingers without even looking, some of it falling on top of Jimin's stomach but he couldn't care less. If anything, the cold liquid awakens goosebumps over his arms and gets him shivering with anticipation.

Jungkook presses the tip of his finger over his hole when his mouth has latched at one of his nipples again, and Jimin honestly sees white when he starts to push it inside of him. He curls his hands over the sheet, his loud breaths echoing against the four walls when Jungkook pushes and pushes, sucks harder and everything is a fucking mess.

Not that he has never fingered himself — because he has and a lot —, but the feeling of Jungkook's finger just strikes differently. He doesn't know what it is exactly — maybe that it reaches deeper or just the fact that it's Jungkook's finger, for god's sake. All that he knows is that with each inch Jungkook fills he gasps, belly twisting, until his knuckles hit his asscheeks and his cock fucking twitches.

"Fuck—" it doesn't come from his mouth, but rather Jungkook's. He's staring at him as if he could just push down his pants and take him right there. Jimin kind of wants him to. "Fuck, I could eat you alive right now." he says, forehead in a frown as he watches Jimin's dick leak over his stomach.

He's incapable of forming words, so he simply resumes to tighten his hold around Jungkook's strands and moan. The younger is waiting for a signal that he can go on and Jimin doesn't want to wait. The intrusion burns, but it burns so good that he might go crazy if he doesn't start moving. That's why he rolls his hips over his finger, making Jungkook gasp at the sudden movement, jaw slacking as he looks down to watch.

"Are you gonna fuck yourself back on my finger?" he asks, eager-shining eyes.

"Nnnng... Jungkookie— Stop teasing, just move already."

Jungkook chuckles. "No... You look so good like this... Do it yourself if you want it so bad."

Jimin whines, arching his back and scratching the younger's nape for good measure. "Ah, fuck you..." he lets out in a keen, and pushes back down on Jungkook's finger but just barely — his proud still locking him in place.
Jungkook is not having it. He comes up to request against Jimin's ear, hot breathing curling around his lobe, "No… Fuck you. Right now. Come on, baby, I know you can do it. You're already clenching around my finger, let me see how good you work that ass."

Jimin squeezes his eyes shut, high off the praises and gives in.

He begins rolling his hips in circular motions, Jungkook's finger remaining buried deep inside of him but now deliciously rubbing at his walls. Though, when the heat turns simply not enough, he starts rolling up and down, gasping lightly when Jungkook chuckles and sucks one of his nipples.

"No— ah—"

Jungkook rests his chin over his chest to take a look at his face — Jimin doesn't acknowledge it, however, as his eyes are a thin, squeezed line. "No what?" he whispers.

"No sucking. Too sensitive." he heaves a particular broken moan when Jungkook bends his finger inside him, "Mom's gonna hear."

Jungkook tilts his head to the side, easy smirk on the lips. "No sucking? What about licking?" he says a beat before he rolls his tongue down over the younger' hardened nipple.

Jimin clutches at the sheets under Jungkook's debauched and equally delighted stare.

"You asshole." Jimin heaves. He laughs.

"If you don't want her to hear, then be quiet."

"You know I can't— oh, oh, oh, Jungkook—" he, then, brings his hands to his mouth to contain his obscene sounds.

"What is it?" he asks in mockery-innocence, as if he didn't just insert another finger inside Jimin's tight heat, watching the older's stomach sink. He raises up on his knees and crawls down his body to bite over his hipbone, "What's wrong, love?"

"Fuck…" his lips tremble and Jungkook's chest swells with pride that he gets to make Jimin feel like this, "That feels so good, Kook-ah…"

"It does?"

"Yes… Mhm…." Jimin bites his lips, forehead contorted, "Like it so bad."

"Yeah?" Jungkook places one last kiss over his stomach and pulls his fingers out, to which Jimin immediately whines.

"What, why—"

He doesn't let him finish. Tapping his thigh, he urges, "Turn around."

Jimin's eyes go mildly wide. "What?"

"Turn around." Jungkook demands in a sultrier tone, "Wanna see your ass. Need it."

And without much debating, Jimin lies on his stomach, a shiver running down his spine when Jungkook touches his lower back, pressing it down and making him arch.

"Ah, yes." Jungkook groans, palming himself through his pants, "Higher, love. On your knees,
please.”

Jimin blushes, both at the request and the petname. He has never been on his knees before, and it makes him feel so exposed that he groans with embarrassment. But it's not a bad feeling. His skin just burns hotter and every touch, every sound, seems amplified by ten folds.

"I can't believe my boyfriend has an ass like that." Jungkook muses and he has not even touched him yet.

Jimin buries his face on his pillow, thinking he could bury himself alive, his cheeks literally scalding. He wants to turn around and ask Jungkook to stop staring, when he feels it.

It gets his whole body trembling, the wet stripe running over his exposed hole. Jimin jerks away in instinct, burying his face deeper on his pillow at the realization Jungkook has just used his tongue to lick his hole.

Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck.

His dick twitches, his stomach coils and he continues moaning brokenly at the ghost sensation of Jungkook's tongue gliding over him. Pleasure is shooting up his spine — even as the younger laughs and grabs both his cheeks, squeezing hard and pulling them apart, completely exposing Jimin's rim to the cold air.

"Where do you think you're going, pulling away from me…” Jungkook draws out, a hoarse voice that gets Jimin wanting to rip himself apart. "Did that feel good, baby? You moaned so brokenly. So pretty…”

Jimin shakes his head — doesn't know why he tries to deny it. He just doesn't want to get Jungkook's ego boosted too much, or seem too desperate, but he guesses it's probably no use in his actual state.

Although, it does seem to rile Jungkook up further.

"Oh? Was it not good?” Jimin swallows, sheets crumpled between his fingers. “Can I do it just for myself, then?” he asks, tone dripping with sarcasm as he knows Jimin is lying, “Just one more time? It felt so good to me…” he murmurs, lips brushing the curve of Jimin's ass as he speaks. He parts them to leave a bite over the unblemished skin. Watches as it blooms red, his mark on him.

The air is short in Jimin's lungs, but he nods anyway and tries to prepare himself for the meltdown.

But nothing could possibly brace him for the pleasure Jungkook can unfold from him just with the willpower of his tongue.

His jaw drops in a silent plea when Jungkook uses just the tip to delineate his rim, goosebumps rising from the end of his spine until the hairline of his nape. He wets his lips and presses them in a thin line when Jungkook runs his tongue down, still with just the tip, to the end of his balls and then back up to the beginning of the slot of his ass, sliding it against his hole without lingering. Jimin assumes he's planning to make him beg just for the sake of it — and he's more than willing to do so —, when Jungkook pushes his asscheeks wider apart and licks his entrance with the flat of his tongue a couple times before he closes his mouth around his rim and downright sucks on it.

"Oh— fuck, shit, fuck— Ah... Jungkookie… Jungkookie, Jungkookie, this… Nnng, fuck—”

Jimin is falling apart, he knows he is. His stomach is coiling non-stop, building what he knows is
to be a mindblowing orgasm already, and his sounds—fuck, he can't control them. With every flick of Jungkook's tongue he gasps louder, moans a little more brokenly, tone rises higher, more desperate, eager. He's making a mess of himself, probably wouldn't even need lube to jerk himself off from how much he has wetted his cock just by the power of Jungkook's mouth.

When a sob happens to choke him, Jungkook buries his nose deeper on the slot of his ass and Jimin feels like he's going to faint. His chest is too tight, the air too little and the pleasure too fucking good for him to take.

Fuck, at this rate the whole neighborhood might be hearing him and he doesn't even care.

"Baby," he begs and the fact that Jungkook laughs against him, his hot breath all over him, makes Jimin want him even more, "baby, baby…"

He feels too high on this. His heart rate is exploding inside his ears and he can physically feel the blood pumping inside his dick.

His mouth hangs open, probably drooling and when Jungkook just stops he whines so loud it hurts his throat.

"No… No, no, why did you stop…" he cries in despair, pushing his ass back, presumably against Jungkook's mouth but the younger just keeps him in place, delighted by the sight in front of him.

"I think I'm pretty satisfied already."

Jemin huffs. "But I'm not." he reaches back to spread his own ass and expose himself further, mindless of how wrecked he must look right now, "Keep sucking it, baby, feels so good." he begs, nearly cries for it, face falling against the pillow once again.

Jungkook covers Jimin's hands with his large ones. "Yeah? Feel so good?" he asks, trailing one finger towards Jimin's entrance. He clenches around nothing, before Jungkook even gets to do anything. He must be loving this, the little shit. When he eases it inside of him, Jimin whimpers, feeling a whole new batch of precome shoot out of him. He's so wet, fuck, fuck. Everything is so hot. If Jungkook keeps this up he'll end up coming untouched.

The slide is easy, and Jimin's moans fill the whole room in pure obscenity.

"Fuck…" Jungkook groans, placing a kiss over one of his asscheeks, leaning down to kiss his inner thigh, "Can't wait to fuck you if that's how you're gonna sound everytime I move my cock inside of you." Jimin squeezes his eyes, heaving. He can't wait, either. He bets it's going to feel so good. "God sure did take his sweet time on you." he whispers just above the arch of his back, dropping a kiss there too. Jungkook redirects his attention towards his ass and couples his finger with his tongue. Jimin chokes. "You're perfect." he whispers.

And that's when Jimin's knees give up, but Jungkook follows him like he's starving for it, tight fingers spreading Jimin's ass so wide he's sure to leave the imprint on his skin.

The older, on the other hand, feels in heaven. The newfound friction of the mattress with his cock sends him in a different kind of overdrive when coupled with the relentless movements of Jungkook's finger rubbing his walls and his tongue easing him open. When he sticks in a second finger and sits on his heels to fuck Jimin in an unhuman pace with it, he buries his face on the junction of his arm and cries.

Jungkook beams of finding Jimin's prostate, letting out a pleased laugh when Jimin throws his head back and arches his spine with a choked, dry sob.
"Fuck, I really am gonna ruin you in a couple months." he marvels, licking his lips and watching with amazement the way Jimin pushes back against his fingers, chasing his orgasm in an unsteady and messy rhythm.

"Baby..." his voice trembles and Jungkook honestly can't believe he's crying out of pleasure. He can't believe he held himself back from having this for so long. Taking it slow sometimes can be a bitch. Jungkook feels like he has been locked out of fucking paradise.

"Yeah?" he nudges at Jimin's lack of proceeding words, "What is it, love?" he asks, a hand on his waist pressing him down on the mattress while the other reaches an ungodly rhythm in and out of him, the sounds too dirty for his good health. "Gonna be an angel and cum for me?"

Jimin sobs once again. "No— I, hah fuck—" he whines high-pitchedly, pressing his hips down and clenching his hole tight. He can't last long like this. "Don't wanna cum just by that, baby, please—Want your cock, please, please. Please, fuck me, ah—"

Jungkook sees stars, his vision blurs for a second. He hisses loudly, inhales the biggest amount of air his lungs can take and works a whole lot of willpower not to come in his pants simply by the way Jimin's voice sounds desperate just for him.

Instead, he takes out his fingers and watches as Jimin cries, both at disappointment and excitement. But, no, Jungkook is a stubborn guy. If Jimin thinks he can't make him come without his cock, then he's about to give him the best fucking orgasm of his life just with his tongue.

He curls his fingers around his hips and hoists him up again, ass in the air by his knees, rosy cheeks pressed against the pillow, exactly how he wants him. He's staring at Jungkook from the corner of his eyes, lashes nearly closing and lips parted, shining with spit. A fucking vision.

He caresses the dip of Jimin's back with open hands, sliding it to his front until he reaches his ribs and aims for his nipples. Jimin finally lets his eyes fall closed before Jungkook catches the way he rolls them to the back of his head, mouth exhaling a pleased sigh when Jungkook starts to play with both his perked nipples at the same time. He's so sensitive that his thighs tremble when he squeezes them between his fingers.

"You want my cock, you say... Keep begging, hyung. Tonight I'll show you just how good I can make you feel even without it."

He leans down and latches his mouth over Jimin's rim again, licking and sucking before he forces his way inside of him.

"Ah, fuck—" Jimin whines and Jungkook chuckles, bringing his palms to massage his asscheeks as he begins to fuck him in and out with his tongue.

Jimin swallows in dry, eyes rolling off in pleasure, losing himself to it as he moves his hips and shakes with the building high. He parts his mouth and curls his toes when Jungkook uses his fingers again, but this time the feeling of his tongue with it does the trick.

His breath catches on a sob when Jungkook, with his fingers buried knuckle deep inside of him, shakes them against his prostate and his tongue licks around his rim.

"Oh my— god, I'm gonna—"

He doesn't get to finish his sentence, his orgasm striking him before he even had the chance to. His cock shoots out white, sticky liquid from the head while he moans obscenely. Jimin falls limp, lifeless, over his own cum, breathing hard, electric shocks running throughout his entire body. He
feels heated all over, his stomach still lightly coiling from how hard this one hit.

He only realizes Jungkook is peppering him with kisses when he reaches his shoulder blades. Jimin turns around, breath catching in his throat at the sight of the younger after receiving probably the best fucking rimjob of his life. There's no way Jungkook can live up to this.

He hovers over Jimin with a pleased smile, both arms holding him up beside his head. "Hi." he smiles wider at the sight of Jimin's fucked up state.

He laughs breathlessly. "Hi..."

"Was this the best orgasm of your life until now?"

Jimin can't even lie to him. "Yeah."

"Really? My dick is pressured." he teases, a playful glint in his irises.

"What about your ass? I want a taste of that, too."

Jungkook quirks an eyebrow, before lying down on top of Jimin completely. "Yeah?" he asks, looking deep into his eyes, so much closer like this, "I'll give you anything you want."

Jimin tilts his head to the side, a cocky smirk. "Really? Then take off these pants. I want you to come in my mouth."

He carefully watches Jungkook's expression change, morph from endeared to absolutely dangerous. "You're a fucking sin." he tells Jimin through a breath of air, before sitting on his thighs and unbuckling the belt from his jeans immediately, fingers clumsily getting in the way. It's cute to watch, his eagerness.

But when he grips Jimin's hips and spins them around, making him be the one straddling him, there's nothing even remotely cute about that. Jimin bites down on his bottom lip, a palm over his chest levelling him on top of the younger as he runs him up and down with his eyes.

"I can't believe you're all mine." he allows himself to say it out loud, even though the most insecure part of him tells him not to let Jungkook know about this, about how he wants him all for himself, doesn't want him looking at anyone else. He curls his fingers into a fist when he trails his gaze down his v line, clean and cut. Jimin sucks in a breath. "Fuck." He's gonna give him the best fucking blowjob of his life.

Jungkook is oddly silent while watching him. He breathes through his mouth when Jimin goes down his legs, open hands caressing his chest before hooking his fingers on the waistband of his jeans. He establishes the eye contact, which makes Jungkook reach out to him, a hand cupping his jaw and caressing his cheek.

He seems like he wants to say something, but gets troubled in the process so Jimin closes his eyes and turns his face around to place a kiss on his palm before pulling his pants down.

Jimin has given Jungkook plenty of blowjobs already. As jerking and sucking each other off had been the farthest they had gone until now, they made sure to use this kind of relief as much as their hormones needed them to — a heads up, it needed a lot. But, although he had taken and tasted that cock as much as he liked in the last couple weeks, it doesn't mean his mouth doesn't immediately water at the sight of it. It doesn't mean his dick won't start hardening again when that angry looking, pretty pink head enters his field of vision — leaking, desperately waiting for some kind of attention.
Jimin's heartbeats go off inside his chest and before he even guards himself, he grabs a the base and brings it towards his mouth so he can lick it.

Jungkook releases a shuddery breath, throwing his head back at the sensation. His hand slides from Jimin's jaw to thread his fingers on his hair.

He licks the head a couple more times before he finally closes his lips around it and sucks. Unlike past times, Jimin takes his sweet, sweet time.

He knows Jungkook likes it messy, so he works extra hard in wetting him with his spit, sucking slowly just the tip as drool escapes from the corner of his lips.

"Ah, fuck, hyung...nnng..." Jungkook whines out loud, squeezing his legs together when Jimin pulls back to collect his precome, but rolling his tongue around the head only.

He chuckles, licking his lips off the mess as if it'd be of any help. He looks up to marvel at the state he's left Jungkook in, and feels absolute proud in finding his large chest flushed and heaving, while his neck is completely exposed with the way his muscles bulge as his head keeps thrown back. Jimin wants to see his face, so he speaks,

"Sensitive much?"

Jungkook looks down with an expression he hasn't quite seen before. He looks absolutely starving, brows furrowed and lips caught in a bite as he tries to hold himself back from bucking his hips against Jimin's mouth.

"Come on, now..." he begs, grip tightening over Jimin's hair, "Suck my cock, hyung."

Jimin smiles with an inquisitive glint in his orbs. He tilts his head to the side innocently while guiding Jungkook's cock towards his mouth to drag the tip against his lips, coating the plush flesh in Jungkook's precome. The younger shakes his head watching him, as if he can't believe what he's seeing. "You're a menace."

It's with that statement that he settles in giving his boyfriend what he wants, holding both his hips down while he slowly sinks on his dick. Jungkook gasps and shrinks his stomach, a hand curling tighter over Jimin's strands while the other holds on the sheets for dear life.

It doesn't matter how many times Jimin ends up in this position, there's no getting used to the fact Jungkook is huge. Jimin can only take him by a half before he starts slowly moving his head up and down to ease his throat into it. Jungkook keeps making some choked up sounds that only seem to boost Jimin's ego higher, motivating him to go deeper, work harder. And that's what he does, he keeps on going down his mouth feels so full that he can't breath. Jungkook brings a delicate hand to brush his fringe out of his eyes and looks at him, which makes Jimin's entire skin prickle with heat. He makes sure to come up sucking his length and putting extra attention on the head while maintaining their eyes locked.

Jungkook moans loudly and throws his head back, unable to keep on looking for any longer. He goes back to sucking him in the teasing pace he has settled and it's when Jungkook's dick starts twitching in his mouth alongside with every whimper he lets out that Jimin feels himself quickly hardening again. He moans and the vibrations seem to do something for Jungkook, because he uses his hand on Jimin's hair to slightly push him deeper, to which he hums pleasingly.

"Ah, hyu—ng—" he chokes mid-word, his hips making small movements against Jimin's mouth. It's so cute that he's trying to hold himself back, but can't help to try and chase for his orgasm
despite not wanting to force a pace over Jimin's. "Faster, please." he nearly cries and Jimin feels like laughing, too high of his sense of power over him.

He pulls away to take a breath and marvels at the way Jungkook opens his legs wider, exposing himself further, hard cock displayed to its full extent.

Jimin licks his lips, biting on his bottom lip. Jungkook is staring down at him through half lidded eyes, expecting his next move.

"You want faster?" he questions, a hand sliding over his shaft. Jungkook nods eagerly, so Jimin leans down with his tongue out to lick his length from the bottom up before enveloping him in his warmth once again. But this time around he holds tight on Jungkook's hip, pressing him down on the mattress as he takes a new pace, bobbing his head up and down so fast that Jungkook can't even brace himself for it.

He takes his hand off his hair and starts mumbling incoherent sentences. Jimin looks up, feeling his own stomach tight with pleasure, and is hit with a whole different kind of overdrive when he sees Jungkook teasing his own nipples, mouth falling open with his face scrunched up in bliss. A guttural groan crawls up Jimin's throat that makes Jungkook sob. He starts bucking his hips up with stuttering thrusts and Jimin knows he is close.

"Ah, so good..." he cries prettily, "So good, hyung, so fucking good... It's so hot, you're so hot, just wanna— Fuck, I—"

He's panting and Jimin is nearly desperate watching him, so he stops resisting and reaches down to tug at his own cock, eyes fixed on the way Jungkook's fingers tease his perked up nubs and his chest falls up and down.

"Jimin. Jimin, Jimin, Jimin. Jimin, I'm gonna come, fuck—"

It's when Jungkook doesn't seem to be able to take it anymore that he grabs a pillow and presses it against his face, moaning long and brokenly. His come shoots up Jimin's mouth and it's probably the combination of the hot liquid hitting down his throat with the way Jungkook pushes his hips up his mouth and then keeps on rolling them in small, sensitive movements, that does it for Jimin. His heart seems to explode inside his chest when he comes again. He shakes, his whole body shakes, and he pulls away from Jungkook's dick to bury his face on his stomach and ride off his orgasm, small whines muffled against the younger's skin by how sensitive he has become.

The room is filled with their loud breaths and Jimin's mind is completely clouded by the unbelievable wave of pleasure he just felt. Fuck, he never thought he could feel this good. His muscles are trembling with the aftershocks of it and they didn't even go all the way. Oh, god. Oh my fucking god.

He exhales another shaky breath when he feels Jungkook's hand coming to his hair to caress the strands, sticky with sweat. He didn't even realize how hot the temperature had suddenly risen.

"Did you just come again?" Jungkook asks with a hoarse, deep voice that elicits a shiver down his spine.

He curls on himself, embarrassed. "Yeah?"

Jungkook laughs in disbelief, pulling him up to his chest. "Did you get yourself off by sucking my cock? That's so sexy."

Jimin blushes and refuses to look at his face, despite the intense stare boring into him. "Shut up."
"What?" Jungkook cups his jaw with a hand and makes him look at him, "That was fucking incredible."

He gives him a coy smile. "Mhm." he agrees, at last, "I like it when you're vocal."

"Yeah?" Jungkook pecks his lips. "Me too."

"Nice. Now we just have to live the rest of our lives inside this room because there's no way I'm putting my feet out there and looking my family in the face, like, ever."

The younger laughs out loud, squeezing his eyes shut and throwing his head back. Jimin stares at him unamusedly.

"Am I a joke to you? I'm serious."

Jungkook shakes his head with that shit-eating grin of his, curling an arm around Jimin's waist. "Your mom is not home."

His jaw drops. "What? And why the hell did you tell me she was? Do you know the torture I went through?"

Jungkook smirks, squeezing his waist and quirking a brow. "Oh, I know just fine. That was the whole plan, love."

"I hate you so much. And where the hell is she?"

"On her own date. She has a boyfriend now, y'know?"

"You tell me, Sherlock."

"And anyway, Jihyun made sure to tell me he was unreachable since he'd be with his headphones playing very loud music the entire time, so you're safe."

Jimin is glaring at him with narrowed eyes. "And here I was trying my damndest best to keep it low."

Jungkook snickers. "Fuck, that was you keeping it low? Might just have to take you to an isolated island to hear how you sound with no restraints whatsoever."

Jimin rolls his eyes. "Don't be a pervert."

He laughs, sliding a hand down his ass and squeezing it. "Having a boyfriend that owns a body like yours? Baby, you're asking for a bit too much."

Jimin doesn't even try to pretend the praise doesn't make him swell. He smiles and holds Jungkook by the chin so he can tug at the boy's bottom lip. "We need a shower." he tells him.

Jungkook wears a suggestive smile. "Together?"

Jimin shakes his head, eyes squeezing shut with his smile. He slaps his shoulder. "Stop!"

"Fine, fine. I'm just saying we could be a little conscious and save water for our future generation, but you do you." he shrugs.

Jimin detaches himself from him to fall with his back on the mattress and groan with a held back laugh. "Oh my god, you're so annoying!" he says, looking up at the ceiling. Jungkook momentarily
fills his sight to lean down and peck his lips.

"Okay, okay, I'm going!" he relents, jumping off the bed. Jimin raises on his elbows to watch him dressing his clothes and then reaching for his backpack to take a new pair of clean ones. For some reason, Jimin's chest floods with warmth. Since his mother is not home and doesn't know Jungkook is here anyway, they're really going to sleep on the same bed.

He hides his smile by hugging a pillow.

"Hurry up and come cuddle me."

"You have to take a shower too, y'know."

"I'll just use my mom's bathroom." he purses his lips. Coming to think about it, they really haven't seen each other in awhile. "I just wanna lay down with you."

Jungkook stops where he is to look at Jimin, sporting a knowing smile. "Did you miss me?"

He nods. "Yeah."

"Okay, good. Because I'm about to spend the whole night kissing you to make up for the lost time."

Jimin giggles easily. "No complaints, sir." he says, stretching his naked body on the bed.

Jungkook's focus momentarily drift before he shakes his head and turns around to leave. Jimin giggles some more and finally lets go of the sudden laziness to get up, changing his sheets and putting the dirty ones in the washing machine before his mother has the chance to. When everything is settled, he goes into his mom's room to use her bathroom and take his own shower.

By the time he's finished, Jungkook is already laying on his bed, an arm behind his head while he looks into his phone. He's wearing his pair of grey sweatpants and white tshirt that nearly gets Jimin fainting every time he sees him. His hair is also wet so all in all, everything adds to the butterflies in his chest.

He bites his lips to hold his smile, but can't contain his sigh. Jungkook looks at him, then, phone forgotten over his chest with a small smile tugging the corner of his lips.

"You're a fucking sight." he tells Jimin while he crawls up to curl around him and lay his head on his chest.

"You're one to talk."

"Yeah, we're the hot ass couple, what about it?" Jimin chuckles and Jungkook follows, before falling silent. He's drawing random patterns over Jimin's bicep, and sensing something is on his mind, Jimin rests his chin on his chest to look at him.

"What's wrong?"

"What? Uh, nothing. So, hey, my mom is throwing a family lunch tomorrow and we were wondering if you wanted to go."

Jimin is left a little shocked. "Do you mean your whole family?"

"It's just us, grandma and some aunts and uncles. My cousins too, obviously."
"Oh."

"It's alright if you don't want to," Jungkook is quick to add at Jimin's reaction.

"No, no, that's not it. It's just... I mean, do they know?"

The younger pops his lips.

"Well, no, but they will find out tomorrow. I mean, if you go, obviously."

Jimin is honestly not the most comfortable around Jungkook's house or family yet — of course, except for Chanhee. It's not that they're not nice to him, they're just a little distant, as if they don't know how to approach neither him or Jungkook. And Jungkook's house, also... It's too out of his reality, it doesn't make him feel at home, so that's why most times he prefers for them to hang out in his own house. But now, coming to think about it, Jungkook must be misunderstanding his actions, as if Jimin doesn't want to get close to his family or something. So that's why he smiles at him, despite fearing the rejection or prejudice of his other family members.

"Of course I'll go, baby."

And it's endearing, the way Jungkook releases a relieved breath, as if he had been holding it in for a while. "Really? Okay. Mom's gonna be happy. Sometimes she fears you don't like them. I think she's a little jealous of your mom, to be honest."

Jimin laughs. "Well, my mom is pretty hard to beat. But you can assure her I like her. We can set up a lunch for them to meet, if you want to."

Jungkook raises his eyebrows as if he just had this amazing idea. "Actually, why don't we just call her for tomorrow? Chanwoo-hyungnim could come too, and Jihyun and his girlfriend! We'll make a real family lunch!"

Jimin thinks his heart nearly stops at the way Jungkook is suddenly so excited while talking about their families mingling. Fuck, he might fall in love all over again.

"That would be amazing, Jungkook-ah..." he says, melting against his chest.

"Right?! I can't wait for your mom to arrive, so I can talk to her!" Jimin is about to ask him what happened to not letting her know he's here so they can sleep at the same bed, but Jungkook suddenly jumps, knocking him to the side. "Oh! Wait here, I'm gonna go talk with Jihyun."

Nothing can stop his excitement, so Jimin settles in simply sighing and watching him run down the hallway to his brother's bedroom.

"Jungkook-ah, don't say the word girlfriend!" he warns right before his boyfriend's laugh rings throughout the entire house, probably at the sight of Jihyun turning beet red as he much likely ignored Jimin's advice just for the sake of teasing the youngest.

He shakes his head and sinks on his mattress, hugging the pillow Jungkook was leaning on to his chest and drowning his senses in his intoxicating smell.
The break ends faster than it's needed. Jimin honestly feels exhausted for studying so hard and he just wants an actual, real break, but the exchange exam is in the end of september so he can't slow down now.

Jihyun finally starts officially dating Heejin, which he announces to the entire family proudly. He has changed a lot, slowly became more open and Jimin is so proud of him for that. That's why it's worse when he has to bite down the jealousy that closes around his throat when he says it over the dinner table to their father.

"Yah, Jihyunie!" the old man excitedly exclaims. Eunbi doesn't live there anymore so she doesn't attend every single dinner, just like this one. He feels oddly lonely. "I'm so happy for you! Set a date for us to meet her, alright? Dad wants to support you!"

Jimin bites the inside of his lip and stares down at his plate, looking up abruptly when their father addresses him.

"What about you, huh, Jimin-ah? When will you bring a pretty girl for dad to dot onto, too?"

He forces a smile and tries not to look at how Jihyun's expression slowly falters a bit in empathy. Thankfully, he doesn't say anything.

"I'm focusing on my studies, dad." is what he chooses to say, instead, so the man quickly lets it go.

"Ah, right, my prodigy, going to fly off to Japan soon! Alright, alright. Those are my golden boys."

Jimin smiles and finishes his dinner, but the conversation still lingers in his mind even days after.

On another note, it seems like his relationship with Jungkook unraveled a love shot atmosphere, because suddenly everyone seems to be head over heels.

Jimin can't say he's not expecting it when Taehyung approaches him with a coy smile and red cheeks. He is gushing with his mother about her latest date with Chanwoo and also about how much effort Jungkook's family is making to include them in their lives, having invited them for a dinner this time around. Seoyeon is worrying about how the next invitation has to come from them, and wondering what they're going to think of their house and neighbourhood, when there's an urgent knock on the front door.

"I need to talk to you." is the first thing Taehyung blurts out when Jimin opens it. He doesn't even let him respond, just barges in, yells a loud greeting to Jimin's mother, and drags his best friend towards his room.

Jimin closes the door and sits on his bed, watching as Taehyung nervously paces around the bedroom.

He's waiting for him to talk about his middle school crush that he has been trying to get over for ages and that he hooked up with in that godforsaken party. What he isn't expecting, however, is—

"I kissed a guy."

Jimin's eyes widen and there's a deadly silent that hangs in the room as they stare at each other.
Taehyung is chewing the flesh of his bottom lip with an uneasy stare and Jimin has no fucking clue what to say. Or feel.

He looks down at his hands, doesn't know why his heart starts beating so fast.

"U-um." he coughs out, and forces a breath down his lungs, looking up. *Stop thinking nonsense, look how uneasy he seems. He's your best friend, there's no opening for unwelcome thoughts right now.* "Wow, um. How... Who?"

Taehyung seems caught off guard by that. His eyes widen a little and he quickly looks away. "I can't tell you."

Jimin frowns. "What? Why not?"

"Jiminnie, please." he exhales exasperatedly, "I'm confused already as it is. I just need your help."

Jimin wants to argue that he simply wants to know who it is, doesn't know why it sits so wrong with him, but he forces a breath down his lungs. This is Taehyung they're talking about.

"Come here." he motions for him to come closer, and so he does, like a kicked puppy, tucking himself under Jimin's arms. He sighs, running a hand through his hair. "What's the problem?"

"I don't know...? I mean, I thought I was straight..."

"Well... That's just how it goes, sometimes."

"But what if it was a heat of the moment kind of thing?"

"Well, would you do it again?" Jimin asks cautiously, hoping Taehyung can't feel the way his heartbeat is off, "I mean, are you attracted to him?"

"I, uh, I don't know. And maybe."

*Oh.*

Jimin gulps. "Why can't you tell me who it is?"

The boy sighs.

"I just don't want to have this conversation right now."

*What conversation?*

"Is it someone I know?"

"Jimin-ah." he reprimands, pulling back to look in his eyes.

Jimin inhales a deep breath, attempting to ease his quivering chest.

"Sorry."

They stare at each other for a tense moment — Jimin is trying to read Taehyung's expression but ends up empty handed. The younger finally sighs, looking away.

"How did you even know?"

"That I liked guys?"
"Yeah."

"Well. How do you know you like girls?"

"It's different."

"Why?"

"That was always a given. I've never put too much thought into it. But now I just... I keep wondering if I'm not just too deep into my own head. Trying to seek attention or something."

Jimin looks at him and his chest clenches. And despite his unfolding insecurities, he doesn't want his best friend guilt tripping himself, so he takes his hands in his.

"Y'know, it doesn't really matter in the end."

Taehyung stares at him as if he has just grown a third head. "How the hell does it not?"

He weighs his own words in his head for a moment. "I mean. You're so much more than your sexuality. It's not like you depend on it to define you. And in the end of the day, it's just a label. Some people might find out they're not straight and come out as gay or lesbian and then rediscover themselves as bisexuals or pansexuals or whatever." he sighs, "What I'm trying to say is, don't think too hard over it. In the end of the day, these labels are only useful for straight people to feel comfortable around us knowing in which box of stereotypes they should put us in, y'know? The only thing that matters is knowing whether you're straight or not, I guess. I mean you should know for you not to be associated with them." he jokes at the end to lighten up the mood, "Not judging if you are, though. But just saying I'd rather have a lgbt+ best friend than a straight one."

Taehyung does laugh and erases the concerned expression on his face, to which Jimin is grateful. He wraps his arms around Jimin again and nuzzles against his chest.

"Thank you, Jimin-ah. I wish I could be more like you, sometimes."

And Jimin laughs. Because after years of comparing himself with Taehyung, who would believe he'd have to hear this?

"What do you mean?"

"Just this. Hey, can we watch something? Let's go to the movies, I'm paying."

Jimin chews on the corner of his lips. He desperately needs to see Jungkook to ease his trembling heart, but he guesses that can wait.

He kisses the top of Taehyung's head, closing his eyes in hopes of erasing his nonsensical worries. "Of course. Buy me those nachos we got the last time and I let you pick the movie."

The younger chuckles. "Deal."
Turns out he can't confront Jungkook for at least two weeks after Taehyung has dropped the bomb on him. And by can't, it actually reads, didn't have the balls to do so yet. But the thing is, this has been eating him inside, like anything that picks on his insecurities. Jimin doesn't mean to be paranoid, he really doesn't. But he's running out of options.

He has had an extensive monologue with himself in his head, over and over again, listing guys Taehyung could have hooked up with and reasons why he couldn't possibly tell Jimin. He came up with a pretty decent list of mutuals men between them but no reason was good enough for Taehyung to hide their identity from him. What was he scared of? Jimin's judgment? No, Taehyung wasn't this kind of person. But again, he wasn't the kind of person to go around kissing his best friend's boyfriend either. And Jimin doesn't want to commit the same mistake of snapping and making him and Jungkook uncomfortable with his insecurities once again.

But at the same time, he just needs to know. Although it isn't like he can just come up to the two of them and inquire, 'Hey, have you hooked up?'.

He tries analyzing their actions towards each other the last couple weeks and it doesn't give him anything suspicious. It almost eases Jimin's worries completely, because he guesses that either they're amazingly good actors or nothing has actually happened between them.

He's in the process of convincing himself that he's just crazy and should probably look for a psychologist, but he needs to be sure sure. Or else, this will eat him alive and he'll never be able to sleep peacefully again.

So he decides to be brave and approach it one day when he's hanging out in Jungkook's house. There's just the two of them, so Jungkook is the one cooking dinner while Jimin watches him from his seat over the counter.

Jungkook has been talking nonstop since Jimin arrived, now on the topic of how Jaehyun is falling for a guy. The entire time Jimin can only think about how this is his chance. He releases a shuddery breath and prepares himself to say it as soon as Jungkook ends his next sentence.

"I guess you ended up really being his gay awakening, huh." he says and laughs.

It only clicks in his mind what his boyfriend has said after he's already spilling, "Hey, that's funny." he attempts a casual approach, forcing a laugh out of his throat.

In reality, he feels sick. His fingers are numb and it's like he might throw up at any moment.

Jungkook looks at him from over his shoulder with a frown. "What's funny?"

Jimin breathes deeply, focusing hard on each and every reaction of him. He can't miss a thing.

Gulping, he opens his mouth to say it, but nothing comes out. He can't miss the timing, but his hands are already sweating and his throat is closing up, anxiety clawing its way through his cracks.

Fuck.

Come on, you can do it.

"I mean," he starts, hoping to god his voice doesn't shake much. Jungkook leans down to smell the sauce he's making, and oblivious to his boyfriend's turmoil, takes the wooden spoon from the pan
to his mouth. "Taehyung also hooked up with a guy recently."

Jimin holds his breath and he wishes he could just disappear when he sees Jungkook's back tensing, his arm stopping midway his mouth. He bites his bottom lip so hard it nearly splits and wishes his eyes didn't sting, but they do. Jungkook didn't even say anything and he already feels his heart breaking. Because he knows Jungkook and this reaction he's having right now is just—

"Oh." it's like Jimin can hear him gulping and he's so frustrated that he won't turn around so he can see his face that he sinks his nails into his palms. Jungkook continues to take the spoon to his mouth and tastes the sauce, plunging the place in silence. "Mhm..." he hums, taking a little bit more of sauce and walking towards him.

He feels exasperated, watching him swiftly change subjects as soon as Jimin mentions it. His face is neutral and there's nothing Jimin can pick on exactly, but somehow he just knows something is wrong.

He opens his mouth when he offers him the sauce, nevertheless, because there's nothing else he can do. It doesn't actually taste like anything for his numb senses, but he still nods when Jungkook questions if it's good.

Jimin can't believe he's just going to let the matter go after he's put so much effort to bring it to light, in the first place, watching Jungkook walk back to his place by the stove and continue to stir the sauce.

That's why he presses, more nervous than before — if Jungkook picks up on it he doesn't say a word.

"Isn't it weird?"

"What is?"

"Taehyung."

"Oh. Um, I don't know, hyung."

Why is he being suddenly so evasive when a moment ago he wouldn't shut up, doing all the talk between them? Jimin wants to scream.

"Did he tell you or did I just become an asshole and out him unintentionally?" he teases to see if he can get a reaction out of him, but the younger seems to get even more restless.

Turning off the fire, he starts setting the plates, not even sparing him a single glance.

"You're not an asshole." is all he responds, not a sign of laugher in his tone.

Jimin releases another shaky breath, his nerves finally getting the best of him.

"So you knew?"

"Uh, no."

A lie. Jimin can see right through him.

"Why are you being weird about this?" he mildly snaps and Jungkook won't even look at him, as if he can't bear to see Jimin's eyes right now.
"I'm not being weird!" he rebuts defensively.

"You are!" Jimin presses and hates the way his voice shakes, but perhaps that's the only reason why Jungkook looks up, alarmed. And the expression on his face must really not be good, by the way Jungkook immediately settles himself between Jimin's legs and takes his face on his hands.

"Hey." he says softly and it shouldn't increase his urge to cry, but it does. "What's wrong?"

He wishes Jungkook could see right through him and erase every bad thought from the back of his mind without him having to put it into words. He can't say it.

"Nothing's wrong." he nearly whispers and it's such a contrast from the loud tone he just used to demand an answer from him. He feels so vulnerable like this.

"Something clearly is..." his fingers caress his cheeks and Jimin suddenly feels like an awful boyfriend. Here Jungkook is, caring for him, cooking him dinner and being nothing but good while he is just sitting there being an useless piece of shit and doubting his trust. No wonder he hasn't said i love you to him yet. "Tell me what's the matter, baby." he asks, bringing his face down to kiss his forehead and Jimin just can't do this again. He can't put Jungkook and Taehyung through his bullshit again.

He doesn't trust his voice to reassure Jungkook so he curls his hands around his nape and kisses him.

It only adds to his sense of desperation, Jungkook's lips on him, imagining them on Taehyung's mouth instead. He squeezes his eyes and sinks his nails on the boy's nape, urging the thoughts to go away. A tear slides down the corner of his eye and he can't afford Jungkook to see it, can't afford him to make questions, so he kisses him harder so he won't pull away.

And it's so fucking awful — kissing Jungkook has never felt this difficult before but he pushes through it, relieved that at least the boy doesn't seem to sense anything out of the ordinary. He can't say if this hurts more bad than good, the fact he can't tell he's falling apart right when he's holding him.

Jimin pulls away and hides his face on Jungkook's neck — like this he can't catch sight of the streak of tear on his face. "I'm sorry." he murmurs against his skin, rubbing his cheek on his shirt so he can wipe the wet path without being suspicious, "I'm just stressed, I'm sorry." Please, don't go away.

Jungkook is running his open palms up and down Jimin's back. He exhales a breath that sounds like he had been holding it for a while, too. Jimin doesn't know how to read it. "It's alright. Just... You know that you can tell me anything, right?" he asks, lips pressed against Jimin's hair.

And he nods like a liar, because he can't say it out loud.

"You do too, right?" he presses at last, voice as thin as paper glass, ready to burst into shards, "You'd tell me anything, wouldn't you?"

Jungkook hugs him tighter as if he knows exactly what Jimin is talking about.

"Of course."

And it's funny, because Jimin can feel deep inside of him how they're pushing all the buttons wrong, increasingly heading for a crash they might not come out whole, but he chooses to close his eyes and pretend he can't sense the impending disaster hanging over their heads. He chooses to kiss
Jungkook one more time, bask at the feeling of being held before those same loving hands dismantle him piece by piece, leave him with missing hollows that he wouldn't be able to fill even if he knew how to. Because, in the end, he knows he has already given too many parts of himself to trace his way back to the beginning. To trace his way back to himself.

_Give it up one last time._

_Give it up for love._

Chapter End Notes

hopefully see you sooner than you expect! feel free to hit me up on twitter if you want to talk about this with me!!
Some things are better left unsaid. That's what Jimin keeps on convincing himself of when he chooses to let it go rather than to talk about it. To be honest, he's kind of mildly traumatized of what his assumptions led to the last time and he's scared of triggering a similar reaction. So he bottles it all up and pretends he's fine until he's actually fine. No one ever touches the subject again so it's kind of easy to convince himself it was all in his head. He doesn't talk to anyone about it, not even his mother or Eunbi — he doesn't want to seem more troubled than he already is or sound like he is crazy, so he decides that this should die with him.

It's also not hard when Jungkook acts out as the absolute best he could be to him. He feels guilty for ever thinking the boy could have done something like that to him whenever he surges from behind Jimin, hugging his waist tight and peppering his nape in sweet kisses. Taehyung, too, acts as he normally would and never again touches upon the mysterious guy matter, leaving him no other option than letting it go as well.

Jimin still amuses his self deprecating mind, however, and imagines situations that it could have happened between Taehyung and Jungkook, somehow ending it in a mutual agreement between them to not talk about it, looking for Jimin's well being or else. If it ever happened, he wonders who was the one to lean first, but either possibilities hurt the same so he always ends up trying to calm down his heartbeats and to breath in equals spacings to not find himself in a worse state than when he got in.

The only weird behavior Taehyung sets is the way he begins to go out a lot. A lot more than he did with Jimin when he was still single, and the most worrying of all, is that he always goes alone. He never asks neither for Jimin's or Jungkook's company and it always renders Jimin wondering if he's scared of having them in the same environment, where they're drunk and potentially dangerous for bad decisions. He also guesses that whoever was that Taehyung kissed and made him question his sexuality, must not have been a simple fling, because for Jimin, it seems like he's incessantly going out in search of someone to fill in the void that said person left in him. Or maybe to simply forget.

He does ask about this, though, if Taehyung is hooking up with any guys in these parties, to which the boy simply hums uninterestedly, saying he's open to discovering himself out. But Jimin knows him all too well. He knows he's hiding something that he doesn't want to share, some pains that are nagging him for a while now. He doesn't push, however. Knows even if he did, that it would be
partly selfish, because even though he's worried about his best friend, it also would be out of curiosity, to finally find out the things Taehyung is not telling him.

That's why after all the emotional torture he has put himself through, he decides to do absolutely nothing about it. His mom always says that time solves everything, so he's leaning on her knowledge to get his life back on track. Is it a smart decision? Probably not. But he can get the 'I told you so' memo later.

Right now, he's worrying about some more pressing matters.

"I mean, three months is a considerate amount of time, isn't it?" he asks, but it's more a rhetorical question than anything. There's a frustrated edge to his voice that Heeyeon and Junghwa simultaneously laugh at.

They're facetimeing each other. Jimin lays on his bed with his phone propped on his bent legs while staring at the ceiling. He looks down just to glare at the both of them.

"You're so gay it gets me sick in the stomach." Junghwa fakes a gag.

He pouts. "I mean, I'm pretty much ready to say I love you so why isn't he?"

Heeyeon arches a brow. "How do you know that?"

Jimin huffs. "I just do. He had a lot of opportunities."

"So did you?"

"Yeah, but what if I say it and he only says it back because he feels he has to? I'd feel so bad!"

That gets Hani groaning out loud. Jimin is not looking at them anymore but he guesses she's dramatically throwing her head down in the way she always does whenever she's frustrated. "Park Jimin, for the love of god!" he pretends not to flinch at her scolding tone, "Can you hear the voice of consciousness one time in your life? And by that I mean me! Just hear me out, okay?" she urges, as if she's speaking to a child. Jimin's pout grows. "Jeon Jungkook is irrevocably, unconditionally, absolutely… Come on, help me out, Junghwa."

"The dude is head over heels for you, idiot." she says bluntly and Jimin holds back the quirk of his lips at the words.

"I know he is…" he whines, "But does he love me?"

"Ya, Park Jimin-ah!" he looks down begrudgingly to look Heeyeon in the eyes, "Why are you expecting him to do all the work, huh? You're his hyung, you should set the example!"

Jimin's jaw drops in defensiveness. "I'm not letting him do all the work!"

"You are!" Junghwa sides up with Hani, clearly. The womanhood in that circle is obvious. Jimin doesn't ever stand a chance.

"I set plenty examples, okay?"

"Oh, yeah? Who was the one to confess? To give the first kiss? To ask who to be the boyfriend?" Jimin crosses his arms with a frown and scoffs. "Him."

"Do you see my point?" he remains silent, eyes on the ceiling again, feeling heat prickle under his
skin. She's right. Fuck, she's so right, Jimin hates her for it. "Maybe he's just waiting you to take the first step for once. He may think he's being too straightforward and that you're not as into it as he is."

Jimin thinks that's absolutely ridiculous, knowing how much he loves him, probably even before they started dating, and always considered that it was the other way around — he was the one who felt the most out of them, not Jungkook. For him, that was obvious, so the idea that it could be seen differently was a little… reaching?

He doesn't help the way he scoffs again. "He'd never think that. Just look at us…"

"What does it have to look at?" Junghwa questions, confused.

"Isn't it obvious that I'm way more into this than he is?"

The silence he receives in response is nearly deafening. Hani is the one to break it.

"Are you kidding me?"

Jimin snaps his attention back at them. Junghwa wears the same shocked expression Hani is staring at him with.

"I mean, are you serious right now?"

Jimin nods, not understand why they look this shell-shocked.

"Jimin…" Junghwa pinches the bridge of her nose and looks down while closing her eyes, as if this conversation is giving her the headache of the century. "Do you seriously not know how hard to read you are? Sometimes I genuinely can't guess if you're plotting how to kill me or if you're simply spacing out while looking at my face."

He frowns. "What?!"

"Yeah. So if I were you, I'd be a little more emphatic and consider that maybe Jungkook needs more verbal assurance than he lets it show."

"Aish, seriously!" Hani complains, frowning at him, "Why do we have to teach you everything, huh?"

Jimin pouts, looking away. "Not everything, really." he mumbles and ends up sounding like a baby, which at least gets them laughing.

They chat a bit more about the girls' lives this time around, but Jimin is feeling an uneasy kind of restlessness nag inside of him, so he hangs up after a while, claiming he has some studying to do.

What he does, however, is dial Jungkook's number straight away and abuse the skin of his lip the whole time he waits for him to pick up.

"Hey, pink cheeks."

Jimin immediately holds back a smile, the tightness in his chest loosening at the sound of his voice. "Don't say that…"

He can hear the smug smirk on Jungkook's tone. "Why not? It gets you flustered? Ah, how cute…"
Jimin scowls, even though he can't see it. "Stop it."

"Okay, okay. Although it just reinforces the nickname really, because you blush so easily..."

Jimin's whole figure melts against the mattress. He can't give much of an answer with the way his cheeks are burning up, so he sticks to simply humming with a pout on his lips.

"So? What's up?" Jungkook asks and Jimin hears him rearranging himself on the bed — he closes his eyes and he can just picture it, him lying on his stomach, hugging a pillow with his phone pressed to his ear. He sighs.

"I wanted to ask you something..." Jimin says after some moments, biting the inner part of his bottom lip.

"Yeah? What is it?"

He ponders for a second, weighing his words.

"Do you think I'm shit at communicating?"

Jungkook is silent before he breaks out in a small laugh. "Where is this coming from?"

"Just... Something I was talking about with the girls."

"Mhm. Let me see..." he makes a noise with the back of his throat, the way he does when he has something in his mind, "You communicate just fine, I guess. I mean, you have no problems in making friends."

Jimin rolls his eyes at himself for Jungkook not getting what he meant. Yeah, he communicates just fine indeed.

"No, I meant... Do you think I express my feelings well?"

"Oh. Mhm, uh... Yeah, that's kind of a different story."

He snorts, deflating. "How so?" already feeling defeated, he asks.

"Sometimes you can be a little... Ah, how do I say this? Difficult?"

"Difficult? How?"

"You... You don't always speak what's on your mind. And you usually hold yourself back from saying certain things. So I guess this is a little difficult to deal with, sometimes."

*Ouch.* Right where it hurts.

Jimin licks his dry lips. Maybe Junghwa and Hani were right, after all. But his heart races and aches at the possibility of Jungkook not knowing how much Jimin loves him. Especially when he does so much.

"Hyung?" Jungkook calls when Jimin doesn't answer.

"Ah." he gets startled, "Sorry. I was just thinking."

"Thinking about what?" Jungkook questions softly, "Talk to me."
Jimin turns on his stomach and starts to draw random patterns on his sheets to distract his mind and get his thoughts in order. "Just..." he surprises himself with how hard he finds it is to speak what he's thinking, now that he is self conscious about it, so he ends up letting out a frustrated sigh, "You know my feelings, right?" he tries.

"How so?"

Jimin exhales a heavy breath and closes his eyes. His heart is beating really fast against his chest, getting his palms clammy. "You know hyung likes you a lot, right?" he says and finds himself even more frustrated with how that doesn't seem to portray an inch of what he's feeling. "I mean..." In moments like these, Jimin just wants to say it. Let those three words out and make sure Jungkook knows. He's been being consumed by the urge to say it in so many moments already — but somehow always finds himself holding back, thinking it's not the right time. Like right now, Jimin can't just say his first i love you ever to him over the phone. But he just wishes he had told him already, so he could say it with no worries. He has no fucking idea when the right moment is. "I'm so in love with you." he settles for that, "Like, so in love. Super, super, super, absolutely head over heels. You know that, right? I'm feeling uneasy thinking you don't, because I don't express it properly." he worries the flesh of his lips between his teeth, waiting for a response.

He finds his lips stretching in a bashful smile. "Good..." he ends up confessing, "Because mine won't calm down."

"Yeah... Good for whom? Now I have a boner in my heart and it's all your fault."

Jungkook laughs, as if he's a little baffled, and when he speaks, his voice is considerably deeper. That makes Jimin's stomach twist in a funny knot.

"Yah, Jimin-ah... Are you trying to make me come over and kiss you stupid?"

He blushes and swallows loudly. "Not really..." he tells in a small voice, watching his fingers move over the mattress.

"Aish, really... I can never know what to expect with you... What should I do, huh? Now my heart won't calm down."

"Yeah... Good for whom? Now I have a boner in my heart and it's all your fault."

Jungkook laughs, but replaces his tone with fondness, instead of the teasing one he was using. "No, come on now... Tell me what's on your mind. I'll be a good boyfriend and listen."

"It's just you, really." Jimin speaks with his eyes closed, head still down, "I guess I just miss you."

"Even though we've seen each other today?"

Jimin nods, and then answers, "Even though."

"Great, guess you're really my perfect match, because I also miss you. Are you sure I can't come over?"

"No, don't get me too spoiled... I'll stick to just hearing your voice for right now. We'll see each
other tomorrow at school, anyway." he reasons, even though his heart really doesn't like his decision right now. It's clearly screaming for him to just let Jungkook come.

"Ah, so mean, hyung…"

Jimin giggles. His muscles seem to weigh less after this conversation. He feels like floating. "Hey, how well do you think we'd do in a reality show like Are you the one? Be honest."

Jungkook laughs. "Just because I said you're my perfect match?" Jimin hums. "Hummmm, okay. Let me see. I think we'd go to the truth booth and get it at first try."

Jimin raises a brow, amused. "Oh, really?"

"Yeah. Just like we couldn't get off each other at that party, even though we were complete strangers. There was just something that pulled us together. We'd stick like glue."

"Maybe we'd be that couple that they say it's no match even though we know they are, because the show is rigged, but they keep hooking up and making everyone's life difficult because of the prize, and then when they are out of the show, they get together anyway."

Jungkook laughs. "No, I'd rather we be perfect match from the start!"

"Right, that way we wouldn't have to deal with watching ourselves be with other people."

Jungkook whines suddenly. "Okay, let's just change subjects. I have a picture in my mind and I don't like it." he says petulantly but it triggers an image in Jimin's mind that he's not fond of, either. He shakes the face of Taehyung off his mind.

"Yeah, me too." he ends up agreeing with a tone that sounds colder than he intended.

"So, how was your day, mhm?" Jungkook initiates the small talk and Jimin is grateful for it.

They lose themselves in conversation and when they realize the clock is hitting 2am already. Jimin whines, mindful that they have to get up at 6am.

"See, if I had came over that wouldn't have happened. We could be cuddling right now."

"Yeah, cuddling." Jimin pointedly teases.

"Hey, I'm romantic too, okay? I'm not just horny!"

"Yeah, I wasn't talking about you..." he smiles upon the sound of Jungkook's loud laugh, and then him reprimanding himself for making so much noise late at night.

"Naughty."

"You know me."

"But since I can't sleep with you tonight, I should at least get to dream with you, so I'm going to bed."

Jimin shakes his head, a smile permanently carved on his lips. "You're such a sap."

"Mhm-mhm." Jungkook yawns, "But I'm really going now, hyung."

"Alright, baby. Sleep well, okay?" Jimin bites his tongue, wanting so bad to spill the goddamn i
"love you."

"Yes, you too, hyung. Dream of me too, okay?"

"Always."

Jungkook giggles and hangs up after a moment, but Jimin is thrumming with energy and he doesn't even know what from. He lays there on his back, staring at the ceiling and wondering what the hell should he do with Jungkook on his birthday. It's getting closer everyday and he wants to do something nice for him.

He spends the next two hours on his phone searching for possible events they could attend before he finally falls asleep.

August comes to an end with the arrival of fresh winds. The breeze kisses their cheeks as if announcing autumn tiptoeing its way into the season. Jimin feels invigorated and vibrating with excitement for what he has prepared for the first day of September.

Jungkook knows nothing, of course, so he has been nagging Jimin ever since he told him he had a surprise for him. It's cute, really, how he'd hang off Jimin's arm and give him the puppy eyes hoping that would soft Jimin's heart. It does, obviously — Jimin coos and kisses his nose every time he does that —, but it doesn't wobble his resolution in the slightest. He wanted to spend the very first hour of his boyfriend's birthday with him, so he was planning to sleep over at Jungkook's, but he told Jimin that his grandma had the tradition to always take him to the temple the day before so they could pray and thank the gods for the renewal of his life exactly at midnight. He was a little disappointed, but not completely, since he knew and respected that Jungkook's grandma came before anything in his life. Although he did plan to spend the rest of the entire day with him, from morning to night, hoping to make him the happiest he could.

He went to bed early, checking if everything was ready for tomorrow and nearly jumping on his feet from bottled excitement. Procrastinating on his phone until the clock hit midnight, he already had a little text prepared to send Jungkook, even though he probably wouldn't see it right that moment. He didn't want to go too overboard with it, because he had more prepared to say to him in person.

So the message simply went,

**hey loverboy**

*so you're finally 18........ cant believe my baby is growing up like this right in front of my eyes* 

*actually im both happy and sad that this is your first birthday that i get to spend with you because i also wish i could have spent every other one by your side as well.......sigh* 

*is it a bit selfish that im sending this midnight so im the first to wish you a happy birthday? well, i*
don't care. i know grandma probably beat me to it, but thats alright im willing to lose to her only!!

anyway, happy birthday, love

i hope youre prepared for today, im willing to make this the best day that it can be for you

im so excited that i cant sleep

but i'll try to so i can be full energy tomorrow

i wish i could see you right now :(

Jimin really does his best to fall asleep after sending those, as far as: he uses his insomnia playlist to help him, because he really wants the most out of his energy reserved for tomorrow.

He sets his alarm for eight o'clock since he plans on going to pick Jungkook up by ten. Unexpectedly, he's woken up at six in the morning when a pair of tight arms wrap around his waist and pulls him into their chest.

Jimin is dizzy, blinking tiredly and frowning at the strange warmth surrounding him when he inhales deeply and a whole lot of sparkles bloom over his chest. He sighs, wrapping his arms around Jungkook's torso and raising his head so he can bury his face on his neck.

He's still waking up, so he stretches his limbs while hugging his boyfriend, which gets him laughing. Jimin pulls back to look at him, a mild smile on his lips.

"What are you doing here? I'm the one who's supposed to pick you up in your house." he asks, voice hoarse.

"Well, since we didn't get to sleep together like you wanted to I guessed we could at least pretend by waking up side by side."

Jimin's features immediately melt, overcome with fondness. "Wasn't my job to make you fall harder for me today, why is it being the other way around?"

Jungkook squints his eyes, looking up thoughtfully. "I don't know… That bed hair and swollen cheeks really be giving me some heart damage right now."

Jimin laughs, squeezing his waist. "Aish… Happy birthday, Jungkookie."

The boy looks down, raising an eyebrow. "Just this? Where's my birthday kiss?"

"I have morning breath, is this really the kind of first kiss of the day you want to receive on your birthday?"

Jungkook giggles — fucking giggles — and Jimin nearly swoons. "Yes." he responds with those crinkling eyes and front teeth poking out of his lips.

Jimin blinks, faking frustration as he takes a deep breath just to latch his legs arounds the boy's middle and turn them around in the next second. He straddles the younger and begins his attack of multiple kisses all over his face, from his eyes to his chin, holding back his own smile as Jungkook's joyful laugh infects him. Jimin holds him by the jaw and gives him a thousand pecks over his lips until Jungkook wraps his arms around his back and firmly maintains him pressed against him. Jimin sighs, mouth fitting perfectly against Jungkook's, and caresses the fringe out of the younger's eyes, pulling back to take a closer look at his face.
They're both smiling, two idiots in love, and for a moment, that's all that matters.

"Happy birthday, baby." Jimin whispers, eyes never once wobbling in his focus from the glint in the younger's irises. He always thought Jungkook's eyes were a galaxy of their own.

When Jungkook's smile widens, Jimin reciprocates and rests a palm over his cheek, caressing it with his thumb before he leans down and kisses him one more time.

He's overwhelmed by the feeling that strikes his chest. Love.

Love in its most pure and absolute form. And he has to hold himself back so bad to not just spill it right there. It wouldn't be so bad, he thinks — the moment does seem perfect. But he has something else in mind.

Jungkook nibbles on his lip softly and Jimin pulls back again. He sighs, all kinds of butterflies taking over his insides. Because when he looks at Jungkook all he can think is, I love you. I love you, I love you. I love you so much. And Jimin realizes he doesn't completely care if Jungkook is not there yet. He has enough love to last the both of them if they need. And it's with that in mind that he decides with not an ounce of doubt that today is the day.

He slides back to Jungkook's side and curls around him. The younger sighs, closing his eyes with a small smile and then turns around, guiding Jimin's arms around his waist.

He holds Jungkook close, forehead pressed against his back and fingers intertwined over his stomach. He falls asleep faster than he ever did in his life.

Waking up when the alarm goes off turns out to be a difficult task with Jungkook around him. Everytime Jimin tries to get up the boy whines and tugs him closer, pinning him to the bed. Jimin, as whipped as he is, finds everything absolutely endearing and simply laughs along, even though that means they might be late for his plans.

"Jungkookie..." he finally tries when his phone starts ringing for the sixth time, "We should get up."

The younger shakes his head in denial. "No, hyung, it's my birthday."

Jimin giggles at his whiny tone. "I know it is, baby..."

"Then, give me an extra hour, please~" he uses aegyo on Jimin, as if he hadn't already relented from the start. He coos at how cute sleepy Jungkook is and cups his face to kiss his forehead.

"Alright, but I'm going to get up, okay?"

Jungkook huffs, crossing his arms and turning his back to Jimin. He shakes his head, laughing, and sits up. Stretching his arms behind his back, Jimin leans over Jungkook to see if he's pouting, but finds the boy passed out again, parted lips exhaling soft breaths. He smiles and presses a kiss on his arm before going to the bathroom to do his morning routine.

The house is silent and no one seems to have woken up yet. He takes a shower, brushes his teeth and does his daily skin care, not actually rushing because he just set the alarm that early considering he'd have to pick Jungkook up. Now that he's here they can just go directly to where he
planned without any complications.

When Jimin steps out of the bathroom, smelling fresh and clean, Jungkook is still sound asleep on his bed.

He ruffles his hair, jumping on the mattress and hoping the movement would startle him. Which it does, but it only gets Jungkook turning around and hugging his hips, face pressed on the side of his thigh.

Jimin laughs in disbelief of how much of a sleepyhead he is acting.

He slides down on the bed, resting his weight on an elbow and brushing Jungkook's hair back to wake him.

"Hey, sleeping prince..." Jimin calls, scratching his scalp softly. Jungkook hums, but remains with his eyes closed. "Let's get up, birthday boy."

Jungkook doesn't verbally answer, and instead, slips his hand under Jimin's shirt and starts caressing the dip of his waist.

"Oh, so you don't wake up, but you want to use my body, I see..." Jimin says in a teasing tone to which Jungkook chuckles.

He knocks Jimin's elbow to make him lie down and be able to bury his face on his neck. He mumbles something incomprehensible that only gets Jimin laughing.

"What?"

"M' hard..." he repeats, rubbing his morning wood on Jimin's thigh so he can get it.

Jimin swallows, then, flushing a little and squeezing his hold over Jungkook's hair.

"Yah... Do you want us to be late just so I can get you off?"

"Yes." Jungkook says, nibbling his neck, hand trailing further under his shirt. Jimin sucks in a breath. "Do you know what day is it?"

He rolls his eyes. "Yes, sir, it’s your birthd—"

"No..." Jungkook laughs lowly and it sends a shiver straight down Jimin’s spine “I mean, yes, but do you know what that means? I’m eighteen now, hyung...”

Jimin’s heartbeats go off. Of course he knows what it means, he has been thinking about it for the past two weeks. The way their first time was closer by each passing day. He’s nervous in equal amounts of bad and good. He swallows down the lump in his throat and brushes his lips over the curve of Jungkook’s jaw. The younger immediately leans into it, turning his face to meet Jimin’s lips.

“Yeah?” he breathes against Jungkook’s mouth, pressing his thigh over his crotch. The younger whimpers. “I wonder what this edging is about.” he murmurs before taking Jungkook’s lips in his.

He seems to melt and that urges Jimin to hover over him, earning his complete control. He tugs on his hair and Jungkook sinks his nails on his ribs in response, making him hiss. Their lips glide with ease, and their taste mix in the exchange of saliva that gets Jimin pushing further until their bodies are completely pressed.
Jungkook breaks away to hide against his neck when he starts needily rubbing his erection against Jimin’s muscle. Ending his boyfriend’s torture, he slides his hand down until it slips under Jungkook’s sweats so he can jerk him off. He holds him close, pressed against his neck while Jungkook whimpers and breaks down. Jimin does it with a purpose, wants to make him feel so good that he sees stars, wants to give him only the best, always. He keeps on kissing Jungkook’s exposed shoulder and whispering sweet nothings against his skin until his toes are curling and he’s moaning brokenly by the edge of Jimin’s ear, shooting his cum all over his fingers. Jimin moves his wrists until he milks him dry, cleaning his hand on his briefs afterwards and trailing a path of kisses up his neck. He grabs Jungkook’s hips, pulling him closer to him and scooting back to look in his eyes.

“Good?” he asks to the panting boy.

“Mhm.”

Jimin smiles, overwhelmed by the sight of his dusted pink cheeks. He’s so beautiful. He kisses them, brushing his lips down until he can press a kiss on his lips as well. Jungkook smiles, nuzzling against his boyfriend.

“Well, happy birthday to me, I guess.”

Jimin laughs, slapping his shoulder. “Go take a shower already, you lazy ass.”

“You coming with me?”

“I already took a shower.”

Jungkook whines, frowning at him. “Bad boyfriend.”

“Oh, so am I a bad boyfriend after I took such good care of you like this as soon as you wake up?”

Jungkook giggles and Jimin almost drops his act and smiles in return. “Yes. Please, suck me off too to make up for it.”

Jimin pinches his belly. “You’re just greedy.”

“You dating you, how can you blame me?”

He blushes and falls short in words, which seems to amuse Jungkook, whose smirk just grows.

“Hey, hyung. Do I really need to shower?”

Jimin gapes to pretend being disgusted. “Of course, you pig!”

He pouts, huffing. “On a scale from one to ten, how embarrassed of walking with me would you be if I went out without a shower?”

“Ten.”

“Then, we can’t marry like this.”

“Oh…” Jimin wears a sly smirk, “Are we talking marriage now?” he wiggles his eyebrows, watching Jungkook go red.

“I-I mean—” he starts stuttering, tripping over his own words, which only results in Jimin giggling, forehead dropping onto his shoulder.
“I think you should just go shower.”

“Okay.” Jungkook easily agrees this time, making Jimin fall back and laugh harder.

“Shut up!”

“Just go already!”

“You’re so annoying.” the younger grumbles while he gets up and collects his clothes to finally go sanitize himself.

Jimin arranges his backpack before Jungkook comes out of the bathroom so he can go along with the surprise. He rushes around the house, settling everything he has to settle and just getting ready in general. The fact Jungkook takes nearly forty minutes inside the bathroom helps a lot, seeing how Jimin ends up with everything ready while killing time on his phone and waiting for Jungkook to come out in the living room.

His mother wakes up in the meantime and drops a kiss by his forehead, yawning in her pajamas and going to make some breakfast. Wow gets up with her, happily following around with his tail wiggling, hoping to be fed, so Jimin calls his attention, snapping his fingers and tch-tch-tching with his mouth.

He comes running and jumping, barking loudly and rendering Jimin fond giggles. He ends up distractedly playing with him on the ground.

“Ah, so cute, who’s my adorable little baby, huh? Yes, that’s you.” he says, cupping his muzzle and giving it a light peck before pulling back and rubbing his belly. “That’s you, baby, my clumsy big puppy.” he coos in a babyish voice, which only seems to get Wow more excited, tongue hanging out as he basks on Jimin’s attention.

“Are you going to feed him only your undying love or are you actually going to give him some food?” his mother teases. Jimin shows her his tongue.

He does get up in the end and fills Wow’s bowl, resulting in him losing all the puppy’s attention. He sighs, watching him eagerly eat when the bathroom’s door clicks and Jungkook comes out, flooding the living room with his smell. Jimin pretends not to die a little inside. He walks down the corridor and kisses Jimin’s cheek now that he’s clean, before he drops by the kitchen to greet his mother. They engage in easy conversation and Jimin is completely overcome by an unstoppable warmth that takes him unwarned every time he sees Jungkook interacting with his family. He lets them talk for a while before it really starts to get late for them to leave — that’s when Jimin begins to rush Jungkook.

Twenty minutes later they find themselves on the bus, Jungkook unrelentlessly poking Jimin’s ribs to spill where they’re going already. The day is fresh, not so warm that makes them sweat under their jackets, and not so cold that requires a lot more clothing to keep them protected. Jimin holds Jungkook’s hands and rests his head on his shoulder while he listens to the boy’s rants about all the reasons why he should tell him what they’re doing today. He listens to it with no verbal response whatsoever, simply giggling endlessly because that’s how the whipped agenda urges him to act at every possible thing Jungkook does.
The younger finally seems to come to his senses when they drop off at their stop.

“Are we going to the beach?” he asks, baffled, and Jimin holds back his smile and simply hums.

After that, Jungkook seems to get even more chippier, attaching his front to Jimin’s back and walking the entire way with him like this, instead of simply holding hands like a normal couple. Jimin whines and nags halfheartedly the entire time, tells him that it’s difficult to walk like this when in reality his insides seem to be throwing a party of their own, lighting up corners of his body that he never realized had been in the dark before.

He happily exhales a sigh when they reach the beach, detaching his body from Jungkook’s so he can get rid of his shoes and run on the sand, basking at the feeling of the grains getting in between his toes.

Jungkook follows close behind, a smile so bright that it rivals the sun. Jimin waits for him in the middle of the beach, panting from the run and tingling from all the bottled up excitement. When Jungkook finally catches up with him, he raises his eyebrows.

“So?”

“So…” Jimin claps his hands and places his backpack on the ground, kneeling beside it. “We’re having a picnic!” he announces giddly, already pulling everything he packed out of the bag, “Come on, help me out!”

Jungkook shakes his head, hands on his hips and looking ahead at the ocean with a smile that Jimin can’t quite read, before he kneels down next to him and starts to unfold the sheet Jimin hands him.

They arrange everything meticulously — Jungkook’s doing, Jimin just wanted to put everything over the sheet and sit to eat, but Jungkook made sure everything looked nice and neat on one side while leaving the other end of the sheet free from anything so he could comfortably lay down with Jimin.

“Why do you get to lay beside all the food? That’s why I told you to put it in the middle!” Jimin nags, not really mad or anything, but just because.

Jungkook makes a cute face while blinking owlishly at him. “Because that way I get to feed you?” He pushes him by the shoulder, laughing through his nose. “Aish, you really…”

The younger chuckles and wraps his arms around Jimin’s middle, burying his nose on his neck. “So, the beach, huh? We just might have to rename it to kookmin or something.”

Jimin looks back at him, finding amusement in his words. “Kookmin? Why is it not jikook?” “Because I’m bigger than you, so I come first. And because it’s my birthday.” he finalizes so he knows there’s no room for Jimin to argue.

“You’re such an ass.” he grumbles, falling with his back on the ground and consequently pulling Jungkook down with him.

They lay in silence for what it feels like forever, just listening to the sounds of the waves crashing on the shore, the children running around, the birds chirping. Jimin is threading his fingers through Jungkook’s hair. It has become even longer than when he first met him. He absolutely loves it. The way it begins to form a sort of shape, curling on the edges and framing his face in the most beautiful of ways. He runs his index along the boy’s jawline and then over the bridge of his nose.
— before he knows it he’s looking down at him, mapping the path of his finger with his eyes, also.

Jungkook’s lips slowly tugs at the corners, until he finally reciprocates Jimin’s stare.

“What are you looking at?” he whispers. There’s no reason for him to, but it seems like it is what the moment requires — some sort of secrecy that separates them from the outside world.

Jimin takes a deep breath.

“I have something to give you, but I’m kinda nervous.” he confesses in the same tone.

The glow inside Jungkook’s eyes intensify and he bites down on his lip to ground his own smile. “What is it?”

Picking on his own fingers, Jimin breaks the visual contact.

“It’s nothing fancy, really.”

“Hyung…”

“I just…” Jimin closes his eyes, exhaling yet another wobbly breath, “It’s a letter.”

He attempts to calm down but the silence that follows his words only seem to worse all the roaring inside. He peeks from beneath his lashes, catching glance of Jungkook’s tilted face with a frown.

“A letter?” he asks and Jimin completely opens his eyes. He nods. “Where is it?”

The older chews on his bottom lip anxiously. “I’m still considering if I’m going to give it to you or not.”

Jungkook’s jaw drops in protest, brows already furrowed the way Jimin adores so much. “Ah, no, come on, hyung! You cannot just say you wrote me a letter and then not give it to me.”

Jimin knows. He knows it, but he’s also scared. When he wrote that he was overwhelmed by everything inside him. His insecurities, his pressing love, his darkness, his light. He wrote it as a way out, a escape from out of his head, and just a couple days ago decided that he probably should let Jungkook see it.

He sits back up, licking his dry lips and reaching out for his backpack. Jungkook follows him and if anything, he seems just as nervous as Jimin, pushing his hair back and fumbling with his fingers over his lap. Jimin pulls out a neatly folded envelope from a compartment in his bag and presses it to his chest, protective of it.

Jungkook stares at the paper, preaching eyes probably hoping to read through the envelope.

“I’m like, really nervous right now.” Jimin says with a shaky laugh. Jungkook’s eyes tune back to him.

“Why?”

“It’s very personal.”

“I promise I will cherish every second of it.”

Jimin nods, swallowing the lump in his throat. Fuck. He didn’t imagine this would be so hard.
When a sudden spring of courage falls upon him, he hands it to Jungkook slowly. The younger looks deep into his eyes, before taking it.

He releases a last trembling breath, then holds it all back inside his constricting lungs when Jungkook begins to open the envelope.

Oh, fuck. Fuck, fuck, this is it. There’s no backing down now.

He wants to squeeze his eyes shut or look away, cheeks burning up in flames, embarrassment flooding his chest, but he can’t seem to. He wants to catch every reaction Jungkook gives, wants to remember even the tiniest details, read into his expressions what Jimin’s words are unravelling inside him.

Thinking back in my life one year ago, this is definitely not the place I thought I would be. Writing a letter for someone that makes me feel so many things.

Feel.

I’ve always been in constant hunger for this. Feeling. Experiencing. Living. Never would imagine that in the end I would be scared of it. I always believed myself to be the courageous type, y’know. The bold, the never-stopping, the fearless. But with you everything changes. Everything is different and the things I trusted to be so familiar are suddenly complete strangers. Has kissing ever felt this wholesome? Holding hands ever made me feel this complete? Staring into each other’s eyes ever felt this intimate, this raw? I can’t remember, but I don’t think so. And when I look back and see myself wishing so bad to have these things I’m suddenly so scared. So scared because never before I had anything to lose. But now I have you, and the thought of waking up one day with the lack of your existence in my life simply haunts me until I cannot fall asleep again. I’m scared, because you’re so many of my firsts. You’ve taken up so many space in my memories that I fear not remembering how life was before you. And that’s something I don’t know how to judge. I don’t know if that’s good or bad, but I know what I feel. And I feel too much, Jungkookie. So much that sometimes it aches and I can’t take it.

I don’t know if you understand me. But even if you don’t, that’s okay. I just need to let it out.

I’m so thankful. I don’t really believe in destiny and the fact you do is funny, because it makes me want to believe it, too. It makes me want to believe that we’re meant to be, that we’re gonna make it. I’m so thankful that you’re in my life, because you teach me so many things. Things about myself, things about you and things about us. You teach me how to care, you teach me how to miss and even how to hurt. I’m thankful for those times too.

Thank you for hugging me when I smile, and for smiling when I look at you. Thank you for kissing me when I touch you, and touching me when I say your name. Thank you for falling in love with me, and making me fall in love with you too, in a different way every day.

Happy birthday, Jungkookie.

Thank you for being my first love.
There were a lot of reactions Jimin played out him and Jungkook having to this moment. The way the both of them break down in tears the moment Jungkook looks up from the paper and into Jimin’s eyes was, most definitely, not one of them.

Something is gnawing inside of him, pulling at all the possible strings that lead them to this moment and Jimin has to say it.

He sucks whatever amount of air his lungs need to give him the guts to do it and clutches at the sheets under him.

Jungkook is staring so deep into his eyes, as if he is waiting for it, and there’s nowhere Jimin can run.

Not when everything he feels, everything he thinks is,

“Love.” he pours out, unrestrained, “I love you so much.” and he cries, because his heart is beating as if it’s about to rip out of his chest.

Jungkook releases a breath that Jimin doesn’t know if it was supposed to be a laugh or a huff, because in the end it doesn’t matter — it only makes Jungkook cry harder. He scrunches his face and looks down, letter held tight between his fingers. Jimin scoots closer, heart breaking into a million pieces at the sight, and cups the younger’s face.

Jungkook sobs, bringing the back of his hand to the bridge of his nose, tears tainting his pink cheeks.

“Baby…” Jimin urges, a bit desperate, “Don’t cry like that, please.” he attempts begging, but his voice breaks and in the end he cries just the same.

It seems like Jungkook tries to speak something, but the words choke him up so he wraps his arms around Jimin’s waist and cries against his neck. The way his shoulders shake and he whimpers can’t soothe the burn in Jimin’s chest and with every passing moment he can only cry harder. Bringing his hands to card his fingers through Jungkook’s hair, he attaches his lips to the shell of his ear.

“I’m sorry. Please, d-don’t cry. I’m sorry, I love you. I love you, I love you. I should’ve put that in the letter too.”

Jungkook shakes his head and Jimin doesn’t know what he means, doesn’t know what he’s feeling or what he wants to say. So he pulls back to hold Jungkook’s face in his hands and establish the eye contact. He needs to see them, his eyes. They’re glowing, full of shed and unshed tears that only makes Jimin want to kiss him senseless until they disappear. He doesn’t know what he said that triggered this reaction, but he just wants to take it away. He uses both thumbs to wipe the tears that slide down his face, kissing under his lashes afterwards.

Jungkook closes his eyes at the feeling and takes a deep breath.

“Please, don’t cry.” Jimin whispers, lips glued to his skin, “I don’t want you to cry, I want you to be happy.”

The younger boy inhales a breath that shakes his chest, but gets him being able to let it out, weakly, “I’m happy…”

“Then why are you crying?”
More tears come to replace the old ones. “Because you love me.” he says.

“Is that a good or a bad thing?” Jimin asks, having never felt this vulnerable in his own skin.

“Fuck, hyung. I’m so relieved.” he confesses, shaking his head and bringing the heel of his hands to wipe his eyes.

Jimin pulls away, trying to tame his emotions as well, keep them at bay. When Jungkook looks back at him and they lock gazes, he begins to laugh.

“A laugh bubbles up Jimin’s throat in response, and he pushes the younger’s shoulder away, skin aflame. “Shut up!”

Jungkook, then, suddenly leans closer, curling his hand around Jimin’s nape. “You have no idea how long I’ve been waiting for you to say that, do you?” he murmurs and the sight of his wet lashes so close like this makes funny things to Jimin’s chest. “You’re an idiot. I’m about to kiss the fuck out of you right now.” he says, pushing Jimin down until he’s on his back and Jungkook is straddling him. He cups his jawline and his heart absolutely stops, waiting, expecting, yearning.

“Do you know why?” he questions, lips brushing against the seam of Jimin’s, and all he can do is stare, chest heaving, “Because I love you so much that I might go crazy.” he says in a rushed breath, and the only thing Jimin can do before Jungkook takes his lips on his is whimper helplessly, fingers grabbing the back of his shirt in a desperate attempt to pull him closer until there’s not an inch of space between their bodies. Until they can feel their hearts beating in the same energy. “I love you.” Jungkook grunts against his mouth, “Fuck, I love you. I love you, I love you. I love to say this.”

Jimin giggles, happiness so high in his chest that he might implode. He brings his hands up to latch onto Jungkook’s hair and lock him against him. “I love you.” he repeats, mouths still glued to one another. “I’m sorry I made you wait. I was kind of waiting too.”

Jungkook laughs at that. “We’re so stupid.” he says, dropping a kiss to Jimin’s chin.

“We are…”

The younger breathes deeply, before laying down his head on Jimin’s shoulder. “Thank you. Thank you for writing this and letting me read it. I have a feeling you wrote it more for yourself than for me, but I’m so happy you allowed me to know about it. I’ll never take us for granted, hyung.” he reassures comfortably, “Don’t worry about that, okay? You will not wake up one day without me. I’m right here, and I’m not going anywhere.”

The most rational part of his brain knows Jungkook can’t promise something like that. He knows, but his words still allows him to breathe with more ease, still allows his heart to soothe and unwind. He tightens his arms around Jungkook’s shoulder and kisses his hair.

They’re alright.

Dating Jungkook comes along with a lot of pros and cons. But the fact that he’s an absolute piece of shit is probably the biggest of them.
"Jeon Jungkook!" Jimin roars so loud at least three families nearby snap their attention at them.

The culprit, standing some feets from distance, is currently doubling over his stomach and laughing so loud that probably the entire beach hears him.

Jimin sinks his fists down in frustration, splashing water everywhere, including his eyes, which only adds to Jungkook's laughing fit. He huffs, wiping the salty water from his face and getting up.

After they had their lunch and completely extinguished all the food, Jungkook thought it was a good idea to drop Jimin over on the shore, drenching him entirely.

Once he is on his feet, the younger looks up warily, but it's too late. Jimin is already on the run, catching him unwarned and knocking them both down on the sand. He rolls over until he's straddling Jungkook and he can't run away.

"See, how does that cold water feel on your crotch, baby?" he questions and rubs his ass down on him with purpose, until the front of his pants are drenched as well.

"Kinda wonderful, actually." Jungkook answers with a raise of brow that Jimin mimics, proceeding to grab a bunch of humid sand under them and rub it all over Jungkook's clean stomach under his shirt.

"Oh, you asshole!" he gasps, trying to push Jimin's hands away while he laughs.

They enter a strength fight — Jungkook's hold on Jimin's wrists pushing him back while Jimin forces himself down —, when the sea decides to join the fun, bringing a wave to hit them completely off guard and finish the job of drenching the two of them from head to toe.

Jimin immediately sits straight and squeezes his eyes shut, gasping when he feels the water hit his back, but Jungkook has it way worse under him, which is the only reason why he cackles victoriously.

The younger sits up, cheeks bloated from the air holding and a hand on the low of Jimin's back. Jimin giggles, getting rid of the excess of water in his lashes and then taking Jungkook's face in hands to do the same with him, swiping his eyes with his thumbs slowly to make sure he properly wipes it.

“Aish…” he squeezes the younger's cheeks and gives him a quick peck, mindless of their surroundings. Jungkook blushes. “We're a mess, how are we gonna go on with our day, huh?”

The boy opens his eyes, blinking awkwardly until he gets used to the saltiness. “Oh, so there’s more to your plan than simply this, mhm?”

“Of course!” Jimin declares with a pout, “What kind of plain boyfriend do you think I’d be if this was all I got? We have two more places to go!”

Jungkook’s eyes turn comically wide. “Two?! What two?!”

Jimin sports a wide grin, pulling away from him and getting to his feet. “Won’t tell you~” he singsongs, running back to their stuff on the sand.

His feet sink in the grains and the dry sand sticks to his wet feet and ankles which he already hates, even more because he’s completely dressed.

“Yah, Jeon Jungkook, I’m really going to kill you!” he yells from over his shoulder.
Jungkook catches up to him and locks him up in a backhug. “What was that again?” he breathes next to his face, "Hey, tell me where we’re going.”

“Now, they won’t let us in like this.” Jimin lies through his teeth just to hear Jungkook whine, which is exactly what he does.

“Don’t say that, we can go back home and change...”

“Of course not!” Jimin looks from over his shoulder and holds his gaze, “Tell me I’m the best boyfriend in the world.”

It takes less than a heartbeat. “You’re the best boyfriend in the world.” Jungkook says right before dropping a kiss to his nose.

Jimin grins, turning back front. “Ah, that’s right…” he begins to walk, Jungkook still attached to him, “Knowing you I imagined something like this could happen… So I brought us extra clothes.”

Jungkook gasps. “You didn’t.”

“I did. Now kiss me and tell me you love me.”

Jungkook giggles, squeezing his hold on his waist and pressing his lips on the curve of his neck. “I love you.” he says with the most ease in the universe against Jimin’s ear and he thinks he might never get used to the feeling.

This time, Jimin pays them an uber to get to their destination. After they found a restaurant by the beach that allowed them to change in their bathroom, they couldn’t say they were ready and nice, but at least they looked presentable. Jungkook had a lot of sand in his hair, so that was the biggest of their problems, Jimin having to wash it on the sink for him, in between contained laughs and familiar teasing.

Upon arriving at the place they need to be, the younger has his mouth gaping while looking around in confusion and kind of disbelief. “What are all these people doing here?” he asks regarding the line of thousands of people by the sidewalk.

Jimin bites his lip to control his smile and pays the driver before hopping off with his boyfriend in tow.

“It’s a fall festival.” Jimin explains, “Did you hear about it?”

Jungkook frowns, ruffling his hair. “Not really? I’ve been really busy with my studies and well,” he winks, “you.”

Jimin flushes but downplays it by looking to the other side of the street. “Anyway,” he continues, “Lots of artists are playing, so guess one of them.”

“Wait, are we going in?” Jungkook asks, bewildered.

“Of course we are, what did you think we were doing here?”

“Hyung, these tickets must have cost a fortune!”
Jimin dismisses it with a wave of hand. It did, but he doesn’t want Jungkook to worry about that. It’s his gift, after all. He asked his dad to split it in his card in five times, but it was worth it.

“Guess the artist we’re seeing, come on...”

Jungkook looks around, taking in the clothes of the people around him — some are wearing band tshirts so that might give it away.


Jimin cackles, leaning onto Jungkook’s side a little more thanks to it. “No, silly. It’s Linkin Park.”

Jungkook freezes on his spot, eyes so wide Jimin has to ground himself not to burst in laughter again.

“You’re kidding.”

“I’m not.”

“Are they here??”

“Yes.”

“Jimin, oh my god!!!” he lets out, high-pitched squeal but he doesn’t even care. He wraps his arms around the smaller’s waist and picks him up, spinning him around, “Oh my god, oh my god. Are we really seeing them? Oh my god, oh my god. You’re the best boyfriend in the universe.” he corrects his sentence from earlier at the beach which positively renders Jimin throwing his head back, laughing. “The whole galaxy is jealous of me right now for having you.” he pulls back to look into Jimin’s eyes.

“You’re so dramatic...” he grins, cheeks scrunching his eyes in a thin line from how hard he’s smiling.

Seeing Jungkook happy is probably the cure for all the bad in the world.

“It’s because I’m so happy.”

“Really? Then I’m happy too.” Jimin leans forward to peck his forehead before patting his shoulders so he can let him down.

They walk to the end of the line with Jungkook’s never-ending rant of excitement about how he feels like he’s going to pass out. He has been a fan of the band since he was ten, Jimin learned one day when they were talking over the phone while talking about their families. Apparently his father is a huge rock fan and he has influenced Jungkook’s taste in this somehow — the guy is always a bit gloomy to remind that this is probably the only thing in common that they share. He keeps on talking and Jimin simply listens, entranced by every imperfection turned perfect in his eyes on Jungkook’s face. The line moves considerably fast and before they notice they’re inside the venue.

It’s an open field with two mounted stages by the opposite ends. The ground extends in grass and exposed soil, probably from all the people walking around.

Jimin expertly walks Jungkook to the stage where Linkin Park is playing, having previously searched all about it so they wouldn’t be clueless of where to go.
They choose a spot where it's not so crowded with the pit but that's also not so far from the stage so they can have a full view of it — well, Jungkook, in that case, Jimin is interested in getting a full view of his boyfriend only.

The concert has yet not begun, so they enjoy the rest of the final setlist of the previous artist. It's a band with a female singer, angelic voice echoing through the whole field. They're playing a ballad song that everyone vibes with, the voices of the crowd creating a nice choir that makes Jimin swing from side to side. He places his backpack on the ground in between his legs and when he straightens his posture Jungkook wraps his arms around his waist and begins to sway with him. He's immediately hit by a wave of warmth that spreads through his whole body and reddens his cheeks.

Jimin loves when Jungkook doesn't tone down the public display of affection, loves how he doesn't seem to give a single fuck, no matter the ugly stares they occasionally receive. It's so easy to ignore those when Jungkook is this close to him, humming the melody of the song on his ear and just making him feel the most secure person in the world.

After the song ends, the band wrap it up and Jungkook starts to thrum with energy. Jimin thinks it's cute so he catches his phone and decides to record every little movement Jungkook does. He's shy at first with the camera, covering his face and telling Jimin to stop, but he gradually gets used to it, even going as far as posing for it with cute faces. Jimin dies a little inside, but he continues to record him — especially when Linkin Park arrives and Jungkook simply snaps jumping from a place to the other and laughing so loud that he can be heard even on top of all the screaming surrounding them.

Jimin thinks he has never seen Jungkook enjoy himself so much and suddenly all the hard work he put into planning this day is completely rewarded. Jimin smiles so big that he fears his cheeks might split, but he can't take his eyes away from the guy.

Fuck, he's so in love it's crazy. When Jungkook turns around to face him, doing dramatic gestures with his hands and yelling the lyrics from the top of his lungs as if he's performing a concert of his own, Jimin indulges him and he sings back to him just as enthusiastically. They end up in a duet and by the end of the of the song Jungkook grabs his jaw and kisses him, completely unannounced. Jimin gasps, but closes his eyes in immediate response, rising on his tiptoes and wrapping his arms around his neck to kiss him just as intensely. They makeout for a hot minute in front of all those people before Jungkook glues his forehead to Jimin's and stares straight into his eyes.

"I love you." he confesses, making a smile blossom right over Jimin's face.

"I love you." he says it back and that's all that matters.

The next song is a rather slow one so they remain in the same position, staring into each other's eyes and swinging around slowly with their arms around their bodies, protective.

They don't need to say anything else.

"That's easily the best day of my life." Jungkook declares, sitting on the backseat of the taxi next to Jimin on their way back home.

There's not a single inch of space between their bodies, the younger's arm thrown around Jimin's
shoulder, head tilted back with closed eyes, trying to process everything.

Jimin, on the other hand, is giggling down at the medias in his phone. "Look at this, you were so cute." He nudges Jungkook's side for him to look down, so he does, smiling fondly at the recording of Jimin making of him singing like crazy shaking his head up and down so hard he doubled over. The low quality sound of *Numb* fills the silence of the car, directly from Jimin's phone. Jungkook sighs, slightly squeezing his lock around Jimin's neck to get his attention.

When he looks up, Jungkook leans down and presses their mouths together. Jimin smiles in the kiss, so he mimics him and bites down on the boy's bottom lip, using it as a way to deepen the kiss for a brief moment.

"Thank you." he murmurs against Jimin's mouth, "I seriously couldn't have asked for a better birthday than this."

Jimin giggles, flushed from the praise. "Mhm-mhm." he slides his hand to Jungkook's jaw, "Can't wait for what's about to go down when we're alone, right?" he asks lowly, eyes fixed on his lips. Jungkook inhales deeply, pulling Jimin closer.

"Fuck. You're not real."

Jimin laughs, shaking his head and pecking his lips one last time before he returns to the videos in his phone.

Arriving in Jungkook's house ends up being a surprise for the both of them. There's a party waiting for them and they look like a mess. Jimin blushes immediately, ashamed to the core because he's sweaty and just overall dirty but at the sight of his own family and their friends he relaxes a little. Jungkook is so happy that he forgets about this too. He immediately goes to hug his dad and tell him where he was and what he did and Jimin wonders if it's possible to die from loving someone too much. He goes to talk with his mother and brother, updating them about how the surprise was a complete success and yearning a simultaneous high five from the both of them. He also shortly hugs Taehyung and the girls before he sprints to Jungkook's bedroom to take a shower and get changed. He has to take a pair of clothes from Jungkook since he completely used up every single pair he packed on his bag, but he tucks the big shirt on a pair of high waisted pants and everything turns out fine. Jungkook shows up in his room just as he's fixing his hair in front of the all body mirror and takes a minute to cup Jimin's face and kiss him before going into the bathroom to get ready as well.

It seems like a smile is carved on Jimin's face for the rest of the day, because he doesn't wear out of it for even a second. Instead of waiting for Jungkook in his room and assuming this wouldn't be polite of his part, he gets out of his room and goes to socialize with the guests now that he's clean and smelling good. He finds Chanhee sitting by the couch and chats with her the entire time until Jungkook comes out.

The night progresses nice and smoothly — at some point, Jungkook's dad approaches him to thank Jimin for having made Jungkook's day so happy and he feels so full with satisfaction that he thinks nothing could possibly ruin his day.

The cake is served not long after that and despite the fact he's having a good time himself, he still wants to go to one last place with Jungkook.

He waits until the clock hits thirty past ten to lean a little closer to Jungkook and whisper on his ear so only him can listen, "Hey, are you tired?"
They're sitting in a circle with their friends, just chatting about nothing and everything while drinking non-alcoholic beverages, of course. Jungkook is pressed close to Jimin, a warm hand over his thigh. He squeezes it and raises one of his eyebrows at Jimin's question.

"Why? What do you have in mind?"

Jimin holds back his smile. "Want to crash a party?"

Jungkook seems surprised. "We are at a party."

He rolls his eyes. "I mean a _party._"

At that, the younger laughs. "Just you and me?" When Jimin nods, he leans a little closer, nuzzling his nose against the older's, "I like this idea..."

"Yeah? So let's get out of here?"

Jungkook chuckles, interlacing their fingers. "Yeah. Let's get out of here."

Finding a place to get shitfaced and let loose after already being drunk on each other's energy was probably not the most wise decision for their stamina. After two or three shots taken, Jimin and Jungkook are already owning the dance floor, stealing the spotlight for the two of them and them only. All the eyes are on them, but all they can see is each other. When eventually they clash and collide in a heated kiss, Jimin finds himself being pinned against the wall beside the stairs, tugging on his boyfriend's hair for dear life. They kiss until they can't breathe, then laugh for no reason at all until their stomachs hurt. Make friends with strangers and make fun of stupid guys hitting on girls and getting dumped.

On the second floor, where a completely different vibe and music is settled, Jimin finds a pole and that's the end of it — it, being Jungkook's mental sanity.

It takes a total of five minutes before Jungkook is yanking him out of the shining pole and taking him into the nearest bathroom.

"You're a menace." he growls over the curve of Jimin's neck, pressing both palms flat down on the door behind them so he can rub his growing erection on the older's crotch. He whines, "Look what you fucking do to me..."

Jimin coos, slipping both hands under Jungkook's shirt and lightly scratching his stomach until he reaches his nipples and pinches both of them. Jungkook gasps. "My baby is hard..." Jimin muses, squeezing his nubs between his fingers, "What should I do..."

"A-ah, hyung..." his head falls on Jimin's shoulder, hands curling in fists beside his head.

"Should I play with you until you come calling my name?" he whispers, teasing the exposed skin of his shoulder muscle with his teeth.

Jungkook releases a small moan of frustration.

"No?" Jimin taunts, sliding his hands to his back and grabbing his ass in a tight grip. He turns his head to the side, mouth pressing against Jungkook's hair until he gets the hint and raises his head to
look at him, "What do you want, then?" whispering against his lips, he gives it a small lick just to watch Jungkook part them in anticipation and suck in a breath, "Hyung will give you anything."

"I want you…" Jungkook doesn't miss a beat. Jimin's heart has long lost it inside his chest, messing with his frequency.

"How do you want me?" he presses further, every movement of his lips brushing against Jungkook's own and sending a whole lot of butterflies down his stomach. "Say it."

Jungkook heaves, chest rising up and down under Jimin's intense stare. He takes his hands away from the door and brings it to curl around his boyfriend's neck, yearning to pull him closer. "I want you," he pants, hot breath against his mouth, "Inside me. All over me."

To say Jimin is not shocked would be a lie. He widens his eyes, something dark and feral unraveling inside him. He pretends not to be affected by the words but his cheeks are burning up, and the way his breathing unevens is probably enough telling.

"Yeah?" he attempts to continue, either way, keeping the laid back posture even though the high temperature of his body makes him feel like fainting, "Want me to fill you up so good that you can't walk the other day?" Jungkook whimpers, "Want hyung's big cock in you, hitting that sweet spot so many times that you can't help but scream?" Jungkook nods eagerly, intensifying the way he ruts against Jimin's crotch. "Is it the birthday gift you were expecting?"

"Fuck— yeah… Been thinking about it all day…"

"Have you?" Jimin tugs his bottom lip between his teeth. Jungkook opens his mouth so he grabs him by the jaw and keeps him in place to kiss him, giving a single lick inside his mouth before pulling back to appreciate the work of art that is his boyfriend's moist lips with spit, shining under the poor light of the bathroom while his loud breathing echoes around them.

"Kiss me…" Jungkook begs brokenly with a frown, "Kiss me, kiss me—"

And so Jimin does — can never deny him a single thing. He holds his face close and kisses him like that's the only thing holding them alive. There's a desperate edge from both ends, the way their hold is so tight, as if one could slip away any moment.

Jimin pulls away when the chaos inside him becomes a bit too much to handle. He nuzzles against Jungkook's nose, barely inching back and urges, "Let's go home. Let's go home, please."

The younger gulps, nodding breathlessly. "Yeah. Yeah, fuck. Let's go home right now."

Taking Jimin's hand in his, Jungkook guides them outside, leading the way through the crowd of people and out of the club.

For some reason, they find themselves walking back home rather than asking for a ride. It's probably the alcohol's fault, buzzing inside their ears, or their hunger for each other. They can't seem to keep their hands away from their bodies, or their lips distant from their skin. When they realize they have been drunkenly making out in the street while heading home for the past twenty minutes, they break out in a fit of laughter.

"Weren't you going to call a taxi?" Jimin accuses, doubling over.

"Yeah, but then you kissed my neck and I forgot what I was doing!" Jungkook defends himself which only adds to Jimin's cackles. It's infectious, and the fact they're all alone in the nighttime, under the stars on a deserted street, makes Jungkook want to smile so wide that his cheeks hurt.
They stumble into each other throughout the whole walk — the club is not actually far from Jungkook's house, but the fact they keep on laughing for nothing and continuously playing cat and mouse, chasing each other back and forth, earns them a lot of extra minutes to get home.

It's way past two in the morning when they finally step into Jungkook's large hall. They tiptoe inside and press their palms over their mouths so they don't wake anyone up with their uncontrolled and boisterous laughter. The atmosphere is light and bubbly, but it slowly finds its change when they reach the younger's room, a pressing silence falling over them.

The stare they share is intense, but also vulnerable — if they listened close enough they would hear the secrets their hearts spill in that moment.

Jimin is the one to take the approaching footsteps. The moon is shining its light through the large windows, hitting Jungkook's skin in a sort of angelic glow that he yearns to touch. Jimin doesn't think he has ever looked this beautiful.

He walks to him and Jungkook steps backwards before he can even reach him, leading them to the bed and already making Jimin feel choked up with how much he wants him.

He brings a hand to brush the younger's hair back, grabbing at it when he reaches his nape. Jungkook gives in to the touch immediately, head easily being handled by Jimin's grip. It makes him smile with intent right before he takes the last step that keeps them separated and latches his lips around Jungkook's owns. They both sigh into it, inhaling each other's smell a moment prior their head-diving.

They fall on the bed with their lips connected, Jimin sitting by the edge and Jungkook on his lap, pushing the denim jacket the older stole from him (if this doesn't sound familiar) out of his shoulders.

Jimin curls his hands around the black tshirt Jungkook wears, moaning lowly when he remembers just how striking he looks. He pulls back to take a look at him. The difference in height forces Jungkook to tilt his head down, which results in his long hair falling around his face in a sort of entrancing mess. Jimin runs his hand through it.

"I love your hair." he confesses, marvels at the softness of it and gives a light tug just to direct Jungkook's stare at his eyes and not his lips.

He smiles and it triggers the younger's lips as well, quirking up at the sight.

"Why are you smiling?" Jungkook asks.

"Because you're staring."

"Well, is it my fault? Your lips..." he murmurs, gaze straying from Jimin's eyes already as he runs a thumb over the plumpness of his bottom lip, "You have the prettiest lips I've ever seen. I can't believe I'm the one who gets to kiss them."

Jimin puckers his lips to press a small kiss on the tip on Jungkook's finger. "Yes. Only you."

"Only me..." he repeats, leaning forward.

Jimin watches, feels enchanted by the way Jungkook's eyes fall closed and his mouth part for him — before he does the same and meets him in the middle, opening his mouth and welcoming his tongue with a pleased hum.
They kiss slowly, lips gliding without a single ounce of rush, touching each other's face and caressing skin. Jimin's heart seems to swell with every flick of Jungkook's tongue, growing too large for the expanse of his chest.

It's when Jimin slides his hands under his shirt, pulling it up slowly, that Jungkook pushes him down by the shoulders and yanks the shirt out of his head himself. The sight is so sexy that Jimin's throat closes and it's by a beat that he doesn't end up gasping and making a fool out of himself. Jungkook smirks when he lays down on top of him, latching his lips around his jawline and then tracing a path of light hickeys towards his neck.

"You're so good, baby..." Jimin praises, the goosebumps rising on his skin, "Make me feel so good..."

"Yeah?" Jungkook laughs, "Mhm-mhm... Take your shirt off for me."

He follows his commands, hypnotized by the way Jungkook gawks at his chest, running his finger down his developing abs and sighing afterwards.

"Those dance practices really be showing results, huh..." he mumbles, squeezing the dip of Jimin's waist.

He smiles.

"Do you like it?"

"Mhm-mhm. You gotta call me over to watch you dance, some of these days."

Jimin answers distractedly, eyes scanning over Jungkook's naked torso as well. "Just drop by. You can also meet the hyungs, they'll be happy to finally meet you."

"Eyes up here, beautiful." Jungkook teases, then, raising Jimin's face with two fingers on his chin.

He whines begrudgingly, tightening his grip over the younger's hips. "Stop being an ass... Come here."

Jungkook giggles and shakes his head. "No. I'll stay right here." he declares, ass over Jimin's thighs, refusing to scoot forward to sit over his boyfriend's hard cock.

Jimin arches a brow. "Oh, will you?" he defies and Jungkook nods.

Yeah, not on his watch.

He suddenly sits up without warning and turns them around, pressing Jungkook down on the mattress with a victorious grin. "You were saying?"

The younger huffs, but spreads his legs to accommodate Jimin nonetheless. "Flex those strong arms on me again and I might lose the pants." he declares, to which Jimin laughs.

"Oh, don't you worry..." murmuring, he begins to go down on his body, mouthing at the skin, "You'll be losing the pants alright."

Jungkook seems like he wants to rebuke but all the words die in his mouth when Jimin finds his nipple with his mouth.

Back arching from the mattress, he gasps, and it's heaven for Jimin's ears. Jungkook has always been so sensitive, thus it comes as no surprise the way he breaks down so easily. So fast, under
Jimin's ministrations.

He sucks the pink flesh into his mouth and makes sure to release dirty sounds in the process — knows just how much it turns Jungkook on. The younger's cock presses insistently against his stomach and while not taking his lips away from the perked and red-looking nipple, Jimin guides his hands to his navel and zips down the jeans, tugging it past Jungkook's thighs until it's completely off his body. He brings his hands back caressing the newly exposed skin, fingers sliding towards the inner part of his thighs and successfully snatching a needy moan out of the boy's mouth.

"That's right..." he hums pleasingly hovering with his lips over his chest, staring at the mess he's made on him, "Be loud for me, baby."

"Hyung..."

"Mhm?" Jimin answers without looking up, grabbing at the base of Jungkook's balls through the boxers and playing with his neglected nipple with the other hand.

He breaks out in a series of hushed curses, which makes him smile.

"Hyung... Touch— Touch, please..."

Jimin chuckles.

"I am touching you..."

"No..." whining, Jungkook throws his head back, "Not enough, no..."

"Why are you so desperate? Do you want to cum this badly?"

The boy shakes his head, frowning.

"No... I'm desperate, because it's you."

It can't be helped, the fond smile that stretches across Jimin's lips.

"Really?" a nod, "Hey, Jungkook-ah..." Jimin whispers to get his attention, and when he looks down, he brings a hand to caress his face. "You know this is my first time, right?"

The younger huffs. "Why do you think I'm like this? I want to be so good for you..."

Jimin finds himself overwhelmed by the words. He swallows. "Yah... I don't want you to overthink this, mhm?" He uses the bridge of his nose to brush the curve of his jawline, "I want to make you feel so good, too..."

"You do..." Jungkook sighs, dreamily, "Everytime we touch I feel so good... Feels like I'm losing my mind."

Jimin grabs his hips, squeezing it. "Don't just say things like that or I might go crazy." he groans, chest tightening with every passing second.

Their bodies are irradiating so much heat and it does nothing to tame Jimin's desire.

"Good..." Jungkook heaves, "Go fucking crazy, I don't care." he tilts his head down to search for Jimin's lips, "I love you. Do whatever you want with me. Take everything you need, I'll give you all of it." he promises and the pleasure that shoots up his spine from his words alone is maddening.
Jimin frowns, short on breath and there's only one thing in his mind. "Jungkookie..." he gasps when Jungkook kisses him, grips the back of his head and absolutely devours his mouth, swallowing every grieving sound Jimin lets out.

*I love you,* he's hampered from saying, but he believes Jungkook knows it — *feels it,* on the way Jimin tilts his head to kiss him harder.

They kiss for what it feels like hours, slowing down and speeding it up when they feel too thirsty, hands travelling around one another's bodies, exploring and finding pleasure spots they hadn't been aware of yet. To every moan, every whimper, Jimin grows a little harder and it's when he feels the head of his cock drenched in pre-cum that he finally pulls back, breathless.

He doesn't think he can engage in any further foreplay, despite how much he wants to. He might not last long if he keeps this up and he wants to drive Jungkook over the clouds.

Jungkook seems to think the same, though, his hands coming to the hem of his pants and tugging it down.

Jimin smiles, teasingly, "You have to unzip it first." he tells him, doing it in his place.

The boy snorts, "Whatever, just take it off."

As soon as Jimin loses it, Jungkook's hands find its way to his ass and he squeezes it so tightly that Jimin gasps.

"Fuck. Give me a reason to not change my mind and fuck you instead." Jungkook says, chest rising up and down.

Jimin laughs, pulling away to sit on his thighs and then standing on his knees. He drags his underwear down, revealing his thick dick slapping against his stomach and gaining Jungkook's attention immediately.

His lips part and it's a second before he's quickly attaching his hand to his own cock through his briefs, squeezing it and moaning. "Yeah, fuck. Okay, not changing my mind."

Jimin snickers once again, gently prying his hands away from his erection and pining it beside his body. "Do not touch yourself." he warns.

Jungkook seems like he wants to complain, but falls quiet when Jimin sits on the side of the bed to completely discard his underwear and then reaches over to pull his own down. He hisses when his cock springs free and Jimin's mouth waters, heartbeat going off a million miles.

*Fuck, I couldn't take this even if I tried,* he thinks partly relieved that he's not the one bottoming tonight. It's not like he didn't know it before but he's so much more aware right now that they're this close of having sex.

He reaches under Jungkook's bed to take the lube out of a box he keeps hidden, already knowing the ins and outs of his bedroom without having to ask.

Jungkook is focused in every movement Jimin does and it's thrilling to watch the way he parts his legs further upon observing Jimin retrieve the lube, as if he's desperately waiting for it.

"Have you tried this before, baby?" he questions softly while settling himself between his legs.

Jungkook shakes his head, pink on the cheeks.
"No, I wanted it to be you." he says, the certainty in his tone bringing flutters to his stomach.

"Really?" Jimin leans down to kiss the top of his thigh, "Then tell me if hurts, okay? I don't want to hurt you."

Jungkook nods, staring at Jimin placed on his leg through his lashes.

"Hyung will take extra care of it, so you can feel the most pleasure out of it." Jungkook nods again, but Jimin wants him to be sure so he continues, "If you want me to stop just tell me, okay? I won't be mad. Don't keep going if it's not good for you."

The boy snorts a laugh. "Hyung, that's highly unlikely."

Jimin fixes him with a stare. "Jungkook."

"Okay, okay. I'll stop if I don't like it, promise. Now can you just—"

He cuts off his own words upon the feeling of Jimin's tongue licking the length of his dick. He easily wraps his lips around the head and starts sucking, catching Jungkook completely off guard and making him cry out a whimper.

Fuck, he's so sensitive.

Jimin coats his fingers in lube without scooting back, effectively distracting Jungkook with his lips only. He lays down between his legs and pushes one of them up with a hand on the back of his thigh. Jungkook obediently obliges, the position exposing his hole to the cold wind.

Jimin brings his middle finger to it, rubbing it over the wrinkles so Jungkook feels it. Simultaneously, he grabs at the base of his cock for better leverage and sinks down with his mouth on it, wanting Jungkook to focus on the pleasure only. He keeps only on circling the pad of his finger around his hole, getting him used to it and sucking him off to make him see white. He's not so fast that Jungkook will come but also not so slow that he can think about something else.

When Jungkook whines a little more broken than his previous ones and pushes his hips down against Jimin's finger, he applies pressure to his index and slides it past his rim. Jungkook immediately clenches it, foreign to the feeling and Jimin doesn't push further. Instead, he thrusts just the tip on his finger in and out of the younger, hoping the stretch doesn't burn much as he feels Jungkook is obviously tight like a vice. But by the way Jungkook sighs trembling, it doesn't seem like it hurts much. Although, Jimin just starts to push forward when he feels the younger's dick twitch inside his mouth.

When he's finally knuckles deep after some minutes, he pulls back from Jungkook's cock to catch some air, jaws hurting, and to also check up on him.

Jimin looks at his face when he kisses the protruding bone of his hip, wanting to analyze his expression. "You good?" he whispers against his skin.

Jungkook nods, but speaks only some seconds later. "Yeah… Feels weird, but it doesn't hurt."

"Really?" Jimin is happy to hear that. The first finger also never hurt him, but he couldn't expect Jungkook to be the same so he took extra care with him. "That's good… Can I move, then?"

Jungkook swallows, then guides his hands to Jimin's hair to caress it. He finally opens his eyes, looking down at him and smiling.
"Yeah. Yeah, baby, move."

Jimin does as asked, moving his finger in and out of him, slowly, closely watching the twitch in Jungkook's features, searching for any ounce of pain, but the huffs of air he lets out followed by small keens doesn't indicate that he's uncomfortable so Jimin keeps on picking up the pace until Jungkook is moving his hips and chasing it by himself.

Jimin smiles in satisfaction and takes his cock into his mouth to prepare him for the second finger, then.

"A-ah—" Jungkook cries, thighs shaking momentarily when he unexpectedly feels Jimin's mouth on him again, "Fuck, that's good…"

Sliding up his length and dropping a kiss to the head, Jimin asks, poking his tongue out to lick him, "Yeah? Is it good?" the younger nods, a frown of pleasure carved on his forehead.

"So good, hyung, ah…" he slightly arches his spine so Jimin wraps him in his warmth again.

After some more minutes of sucking and thrusting, he starts to ease a second finger inside Jungkook. He doesn't seem to notice it at first, too driven off the pleasure, but when Jimin is a little past the tip of it he stops him with a hand on his head.

"Hyung, wait."

"What is it?" Jimin pulls back, ready to take the fingers away, "Does it hurt? Do you want me to pull it off?"

"No, no, just… Don't move right now. Let me get used to it."

Jimin nods. "Okay." And he stops moving entirely, scared any movement would end up hurting the boy, which earns him a half frustrated laugh.

"Keep on kissing me…" Jungkook asks in a bit of a whiny tone, so Jimin smiles and begins to pepper the whole expanse of his thigh with small kisses, turning them to light hickeys when he reaches the inner part of them.

Jungkook hums pleasantly so Jimin directs his kisses to his cock again, laying hard over his crotch.

"You're so pretty…" he tells the younger, because it's true. Jungkook looks like a work of art right now, toned chest stretching and leading to his flawless face while his thick thighs lay out in full display before Jimin's eyes, his cock big and leaking, all flushed and angry in color while he takes Jimin's fingers up his ass. Fuck him, if Jimin couldn't come just by that sight alone. "So perfect for me, Jungkook-ah…"

That seems to do the trick — Jungkook seems to like it a lot when Jimin calls him that —, making him start to move on his own and signal to Jimin that he can move, too.

And so he does, begins to stretch him with two fingers and nearly chokes at the tightness and heat he finds, moaning quietly against Jungkook's dick. His cock presses against his stomach, trapped between his body and the mattress but Jimin can pay no mind to it right now. Can only focus on Jungkook.

They work on that pace until Jimin is three fingers in with knuckles deep and Jungkook is moaning like he can't wait to be fucked. Jimin can't wait, either, but sucks it up, coming up Jungkook's body
and releasing his dick in order to use his mouth on his nipples.

"Hyung… Hyung, I'm ready…"

Jimin chuckles, "No, you're not…"

"I am, I swear, this…" he squeezes his legs together as if he can't bear the pleasure, "Fuck, I need you…"

Despite the clear pleading, Jimin is wary. "Are you sure?"

"Yes… Mm… I want to feel you so bad, come on—"

The younger hisses when Jimin pulls his fingers out, holding tighter on his shoulders. The atmosphere around them is rather unsettling, bordering on anxiety, full of expectation. Jimin sits back on his heels and starts pumping his own cock with lube, gasping at the feeling of some much needed friction after being neglected for so long. Jungkook seems like he wants to touch or just do something, but he's heavily panting, head barely keeping itself standing straight to watch Jimin.

"Come on, come on, baby, come on…" he chants and his eagerness doesn't fail to build Jimin's own desperation inside himself.

He quickly aligns his body in between Jungkook's thighs, guiding his hard cock towards his hole after having enveloped it with a condom.

It's insane the way he can clearly hear the sound of his heartbeats drumming inside his skull, blood pumping through his veins in an inhuman speed.

"I'm gonna push it in, okay?" he questions softly, lips brushing against the boy's dark strands.

"Okay." Jungkook assures him one last time with a squeeze on his biceps. Jimin sucks in a deep fucking breath and attempts to calm down his trembling hands.

When the head of his cock finally touches the wrinkled skin of Jungkook's entrance the both of them release a gasp in unison.

Jimin leverages his weight on top of Jungkook with two elbows by the side of his head, foreheads glued and uneven breaths mingling.

He starts to push it in and Jungkook immediately sinks his nails on Jimin's waist, a swallowing sound that freezes all his movements.

"What, what's wrong?" he doesn't waste a second to search for any signal of discomfort in Jungkook's face, but he just seems to be intently holding his breath.

"Nothing." he exhales, merely a whisper, "Keep— going."

Jimin wants to argue, but he doesn't truly know what Jungkook is feeling so he bites his tongue and pushes it further.

The pressure around his cock is sickening — the air around him buzzes and his heart seems like it's about to explode in any possible moment. Jimin has to will all his self control to not simply push it all the way, concentrating in taking it as slow as he possibly can.

That's probably why he misses Jungkook's whiny plea and only comes to his senses when the younger is pushing him away by the waist.
"Hyung, pull it out, out—"

Jimin pales, lips going numb and everything seems to stop for a moment. He pulls out so fast he stumbles and falls on top of Jungkook. He's getting up in less than a second, though, worry written all over his face.

"What, what?" he tries pulling Jungkook's arms away that are coming to cover his face, "Did it hurt a lot?"

The boy just nods, gulping.

Jimin is quickly to intertwine their fingers, leaning down to kiss his temples. "Hey, baby, it's okay… It's okay, don't hide from me…" he murmurs, "We can do it some other day or we can switch up if you want to—" but before Jimin is even finished, Jungkook is already shaking his head in denial.

"No, hyung, no, I just—" he chews on his bottom lip before he continues, "I just think we need to prep me more or something."

Jimin fixes him with a condescending tone. "And what did I tell you…"

The boy pouts. "I know, okay… Please, don't get soft…" he whines, bringing a hand to tug at Jimin's cock that has indeed softened considerably — how could it not, when Jungkook had been in pain?

He throws his head back, cackling at the remark.

"Ah, hyung, don't laugh, it'll go softer!" Jungkook complains, fastening the movements of his wrists which only gets Jimin laughing more.

"Stop that!" he urges, pushing Jungkook's hands away. His pout grows so Jimin tsks, taking the lower lip into his mouth in a lovingly bite, "What are you pouting for, huh? You don't have to worry, with you beneath me like this, it'll get hard again in a blink of an eye." he reassures so Jungkook sports a small smile.

They kiss lazily as Jimin begins to open him up again until Jungkook is quickly breaking into breathy moans inside his mouth. As expected, Jimin doesn't find problem in getting hard again, but he solely focuses in Jungkook and in stretching him good. Once he's four fingers deep, Jungkook is shaking from pleasure on his arms, but Jimin keeps going even when he begs for his dick again — props for him, he should be addressed the title of man with biggest self restraint in the world. He fucks him slow and intently, stopping only when he judges it enough for Jungkook to take him without much pain.

Retreating their steps, Jimin begins by changing tactics and kisses Jungkook a lot while simultaneously playing with his hard nipples when he aligns his cock on his rim again. He doesn't verbally warns Jungkook this time, because he guesses that was probably what got him nervous the last time and instead he starts to thrust softly, almost nonexistent movements, just to get him inside Jungkook in a seemingly more natural pace. It seems to work, because once his head is in, Jungkook doesn't scratch him like he did before and rather curls his hands on his hair and kisses him harder. Jimin takes this as a signal to proceed and so he does, carefully.

In all truth, his dick is pulsing so hard he's scared he might unwillingly shoot his cum inside Jungkook before he even gets it in all the way. He has to work on his breathing, but while kissing Jungkook it turns out to be an impossible task, so he breaks them apart when a particular whiny
throat escapes from his throat. He buries his head against the younger's neck and heaves.

"Does it feel good?" Jungkook asks, mouth by the edge of his ear.

"Yeah, fuck—"

"Then tell me how good I feel, hyung."

"Feels so good, baby. So good, fucking amazing. You're so… tight and wam, fuck, fuck—"

Jungkook moans within every word that falls past Jimin's lips, apparently thriving off those praises which allows Jimin to push deeper.

Before any of them realize, Jimin is pressing his balls against Jungkook's ass, making a shaky breath resound in the room, coming out from the both of them.

Jimin speaks up after awhile, "You good?"

"Yeah…" Jungkook breaks out in a hushed swirl of air, nearly choking, "Yeah, fuck. So much better."

"Yeah?"

"Mhm. Please, move, hyung."

It takes a whole lot ounce of self composure, not to break down in that moment. The thrusts Jimin delivers are sloppy at the beginning, not used to the maddening pressure around his cock — but soon, the inner dancer inside of him takes up control and he fucks Jungkook like he's hitting every beat of a slow, sensual song precisely.

It's most fascinating to watch the way Jungkook falls short in words, lips parting to let out obscene sounding moans when Jimin slides all the way, back and forth, back and forth, setting a pace of their own that increases accordingly with their level of desperation. It escalates fairly quickly, in his opinion, but what probably does the trick is when Jimin thrusts in a particular angle that has Jungkook groaning languidly and wrapping his legs and arms around him like a koala, refusing to stay an inch distant.

Jimin does it again, holding him steady with a grip on his ass and Jungkook releases yet another sinful moan. Jimin wonders if he found it and when he thrusts twice more in that exact same angle and Jungkook starts to desperately rut against him, he guesses that he in fact did.

If Jimin thought Jungkook was breaking down before, he had no idea how to describe it now. The boy is clutching on Jimin's hair for dear life, bared of any shame in him and thrusting irregularly and wildly against Jimin's cock, chasing his own orgasm without a single care in the world.

It's beautiful to watch.

Jimin doesn't have to make much by that point — he is going feral too. They both thrust so hard into their own little pleasures that it is surely to leave marks on their bodies after.

Jungkook comes first, nearly screaming but muffling it against Jimin's shoulder. The white cum sticking between their bodies, pressing hotly over their stomach is probably what did it. The older follows not long after, whining so brokenly that he feels Jungkook smiling against his skin while he pets his hair as he comes, hard and strong.
The silence that lingers afterwards is nowhere near unpleasant — rather, it allows them to bask in each other's energies and sink into their mixed warmth.

Jimin doesn't know for how long they stay like that, simply breathing the smell from their skins, but Jungkook is the first one to break the silence.

"Yeah, this sex thing? We'll be doing it a lot."

The older breaks out laughing so loud that his whole body shakes, and he can't help but shake his head too before he leans down and takes Jungkook's lips in a searing kiss that is successful in shutting them up for good.

It turns out, they don't end up doing it a lot, like Jungkook stated.

In reality, they don't do it at all for the next month or so. It just happens that the exchange exam is by the end of the month and so on this turns to be their top priority. Their studying sessions become as intense as ever, be it separated be it in group with Taehyung.

Well, Jimin's top priority is the exchange and also mastering an extremely difficult choreography set for him. It's a solo one, so now he doesn't have Hoseok or Jin's bewitching abilities to distract the eyes from his own mistakes. He doesn't know why he's so fixated on it, but he spends the most of the time he's able to in the studio and often practices late at night in his bedroom. His mother questions him about it one day, and Jimin simply answers it's something he's fixated on. Watching his mistakes gradually turn into precise and correct moves satisfies him in a way he wouldn't be able to convey in words.

One night, he arrives too early in the studio and catches Hoseok and Seokjin in the middle of their lessons with their training teacher, which gets him immediately embarrassed. He bows repeatedly in apologies when all eyes turn to him, but Jin is quick in running to him and place a soothing hand on his back.

"Ah, it's alright, it's alright, don't be like that, you'll hurt your back."

Jimin is already used to using that room regularly with the two of them, so he simply barged in without knocking, so it doesn't matter what Jin says, he's still burning in shame from head to toe.

"I'm really sorry, seriously." he says towards the woman staring at him with an amused demeanor.

"It's alright, you can stop bowing now."

He immediately stands straight, which makes her laugh. "He follows orders easily." she says to the both of her students.

Hoseok pops his lips with a scowl. "Oh, believe me when I say he doesn't, Hyoyeon-saeng."

She laughs and then turns back to Jimin, "You can watch the rest of the class if you want to."

He nods wordlessly and finds a place on the ground to observe them.

"What's your name again?"
"Ah," Jimin quickly gets up to do a full 90 degrees bow, "I'm Park Jimin, seonsaeng-nim, nice to meet you."

"Alright, alright, Park Jimin-ssi. I'm Kim Hyoyeon, it's nice to meet you, too."

After Jimin sits down again, they follow as if he's not there and he tries to absorb any possible knowledge out of everything. The woman seems to be very strict, but at the same time kind, which makes Jimin wish she could teach him too. She's smaller than the three of them in the room, but exudes the strongest energy nonetheless. Both her legs and arms are toned, leaving it explicit her amount of training and experience throughout the years. She also carries herself flawlessly as if every movement is a performance of itself, a dance step with no music on.

To say Jimin is fascinated would be an understatement, but the moment his jaws really drop it's when she decides to show the full routine she's teaching for the boys herself so they can watch and improve their techniques based on it.

He doesn't realize his heart is beating on his throat by the time the song ends. She's amazing, probably the best dancer Jimin has ever seen with his own eyes.

Remaining silent despite his urge to compliment her skills and applaud, he's still noted when the class is finished. The woman is watching Hoseok and Seokjin chug a bottle of water when her attention falls upon him.

"How long do you dance?"

Jimin almost chokes when he realizes he's the one being addressed.

"A-ah— Not long, really… Just a couple months I've been training officially."

"Oh, really?" her interest visibly subdues, eyes dropping to her phone.

Hoseok finishes swallowing his water to join the conversation,

"He's really good, Hyoyeon-saeng. It's the closest of a prodigy I've ever seen."

The woman's brows arch at that. "Is he now?" her focus return to Jimin's figure on the ground, "Wanna show me what you got?"

This time he does choke for good. "M-m-me?" he points to himself as if that'll give it more certainty.

"Yeah, who else? C'mon."

"We've been training a routine, seonsae—"

Hyoyeon cuts Jin off as if she didn't even hear him. Her eyes are glued to Jimin's, offering a challenge and hoping him to take it. "Can you do freestyle?"

His eyes widen a bit.

He can do freestyle, but—

No. There's no buts.

"Yeah."
"Alright. C'mon, then. A true dancer can dance to anything."

Hoseok seems a bit uneasy about that. "Seonsaeng-nim, we've just recently started training, he—"

"Didn't you just call him a prodigy?" she cuts him off too. The atmosphere becomes tense, so she laughs it off a little, "Come on, this is not a test, I just wanna see what he's about. He already said he can do freestyle, so why are you worrying?"

Both men shut up so Hyoyeon nods, satisfied with her words. Jimin has already taken his position in the middle of the room. She eyes him up and down before speaking again.

"Have you ever taken ballet classes? Or any dance classes for that matter?"

Jimin shakes his head in denial. She snorts with the corner of her lips, "Huh. Interesting. Alright. I'm gonna play it."

He nods, heartbeat high in this head. Although when the first beat kicks in he relaxes a little. He knows the song, it's *rude boy* by Rihanna.

Jimin smirks and jumps a little on his feet through the intro to feel the song seep into his veins. He only actively starts dancing three or four seconds before her voice surges and beat fastens. Within his very first steps he catches Hyoyeon's brows quirking slightly and Hoseok and Seokjin holding back their smiles. This boosts his confidence and from there on he decides to focus solely on himself and enjoy the song, just like he's used to do when he's out partying. He has danced this songs thousands of times with Taehyung on their nights out so he almost has an entire choreography in his mind. However, he's caught by surprise, because he initially thought she was just going to play the song until the end of the first chorus, but she keeps it going and Jimin doesn't let it show he's surprised, simply keeps on dancing as if that was what he intended the whole time. From there on, he really does need to improvise but it's not a disaster either.

By the time the song ends, he's standing breathless on the far left corner of the room. For a second or two there's only his loud breathing, but then Hoseok and Seokjin are clapping and whistling so loud it almost gives him a headache. Jimin searches to see their reaction and catches Hyoyeon smiling and nodding, satisfied.

He visibly relaxes, sighing with relief.

"Your posture and form still needs more refinement, but you're good, Park Jimin-ssi. What do you intend to do with this ability?"

He's caught off guard, smile fading considerably as he ponders on the question. "I, um, I don't know? I think it…" he searches for Hoseok's eyes to search for the right answer, but he doesn't seem to have it either, "It's just a hobby for now?"

"A hobby?" She seems shocked, if Jimin knew better, even offended, "You're bypassing that much talent as a hobby?"

Jimin swallows.

"Well, I—"

"Where are you planning to go to college, Jimin-ssi? If I may ask."

"I, um, I'm trying a scholarship in Tokyo University."
"For what?"

"Eng… Engineering." Jimin answers and he has never said that with so much uncertainty in his life.

"Well, that's surely a pity. I wish you all the best, though, it's a very competitive university, I hear. What's your second plan?"

Second plan?

Jimin's eyes widen. There has never been a second plan. Him and Taehyung never considered something going wrong, because they were usually too busy daydreaming about their whole new life there.

He forgets how to speak.

"Ah, sorry, sorry." Hyoyeon quickly dismisses, "That was impolite. Just let me know if you change your mind. I'm training these two to take an exam to transfer to K-Arts, so I wouldn't mind extending the training to you." she smiles warmly but Jimin feels uneasy.

For the next following days, something ugly and anxious tugs in his mind.

What if you don't make it? Then, what?

It's no use that he catches glances of his mom with bills or on the phone trying to negotiate them once in a while. What the hell can he accomplish as a dancer, even if he tried his damn hardest? He didn't even start at a young age.

He needs to focus in his goal. And his goal is to get a full scholarship and provide for himself with a good education so he can provide for his family later. The goal is to go to Japan with Taehyung and Jungkook, and he can't be splitting his attention like that, or else he's gonna fail and he'll have no one to blame but himself. The exam is on the beginning of october and they're nearing the middle of september, so Jimin takes a deep breath and warns Seokjin and Hoseok he'll stop with the dance practices. At least, for now. He's losing the time he could be studying extra hours to spend late nights in the studio and that's just—not right. He needs to focus. He needs to.

And so he does, for the next three weeks he barely even sees sunlight. He picks up on his worst subjects and works on them. He barely even sees Jungkook nor Taehyung apart from when in school — their study sessions are often funny and productive, but Jimin guesses he's better off alone, because they're still a sort of distraction. So he tells them just that and leaves them to study together while he does all his work secluded in the silence of his room.

The days seem to drag, but when it's finally the night before the exam, Jimin's anxiety attacks him unawarned. He spends the whole time he's trying to fall asleep with his heart rate picking up extremely fast while his fingertips and lips are numb, lacking in color and making him want to throw up. By 3am he gives up on feeling ill by himself and searches for his mom in her room. She helps him in a warm shower to wash the cold sweat off his body and gives him medicine, before tucking him in her bed with her. She cuddles him and caresses his hair and scalp softly until he's breathing with ease. Jimin feels like he's five again and before he knows it, he's falling asleep.

He gets nowhere near the amount of sleep needed because barely three hours later he's on his feet again.

The day is a blur. He meets Jungkook and Taehyung by the entrance of the building they're taking the exam and they seem nervous too, but there's some layers of confidence on them that are not
within Jimin. He wants to die at the observation, yet he still smiles at them and joins their antics before the clock hits the hour for the exam to start and he sinks in himself again.

To be honest, he doesn't remember much of the exam as a whole. He can't tell if he answered it badly or not — the only thing rather clear in his mind is the dissertation he had to write in Japanese and that he assumes he did good, because his knowledge in the language is one of his strength points.

He goes home without talking with Jungkook or Taehyung because his mom was quite in a rush when she picked him up. Later, though, the both of them show up in his house for a sleepover and it eases the tension in his chest a little.

Whatever the result is, it's already done, there's nothing he can do about it. He just has to wait.

○

Sending off their curriculum is the last slap on the face Jimin receives considering this matter.

Hyoyeon's words won't leave his mind after it's done and it eats him inside a little more everyday.

The morning of the October 13th hits kind of like a deja vu. Jimin wakes up surrounded in a warmth that wasn't there when he went to sleep. He rumbles and moves annoyed with the sudden increase of heat waking him up on his birthday, when he feels the shower of kisses trailing over his exposed shoulder and arm — all of a sudden, all annoyance is melted away. He smiles and stretches his body sluggishly, blinking a few times to get used to the light before he completely opens his eyes.

Jungkook is by his side, smile on his face, and looking as beautiful as ever. He has been refusing to cut his hair recently and Jimin enjoys it in secret, loves to thread his fingers through his long locks just how he's doing right now.

"Good morning." he rasps out, voice hoarse.

"Good morning, my birthday boy." he pecks his lips. "Happy birthday."

Jimin frowns upon recalling Jungkook's absence last night. "Hey, why didn't you come over yesterday? I was expecting you would..." he whines a little.

"I was arranging the last details of your surprise."

He raises a single eyebrow. "Oh? And what is it?"

Jungkook rolls his eyes. "If I told you it wouldn't be a surprise, duh."

Jimin huffs. "You're no fun, you know how surprises make me."

Jungkook wraps his arms around him and scoots closer. "I promise not to blindfold you today." he quirks an eyebrow as if an afterthought just surged, "Unless you ask me to."

Jimin's stomach coil with build anticipation. They haven't had sex ever since Jungkook's birthday. He wonders if today, they can…

Suddenly, there's a knock on the door, making them startle. Wow wakes up from his bed on the
ground and begins to bark. He often chooses in which room he's going to sleep and recently Jimin has been being picked a lot. He laughs and sits up, ruffling his hair and scrubbing his eyes.

"Yeah?" he asks throughout a yawn. Jungkook has also sat beside him, calling the dog over so he can calm down.

His mom peaks just her head through the door with a big smile before she sneaks her whole body inside. She crushes Jimin's figure in a hug and proceeds to gift him with a thousand million kisses all over his face while he cackles loudly and asks her to stop.

The morning follows peacefully. Jimin learns that his mother and Jungkook kind of sided up with one another because apparently they're celebrating Jimin's birthday at home during lunch until 3 or 4pm, and then Jimin is all Jungkook's. He feels a shiver run down his spine when the younger tells him that, but he composes himself rather well.

His mom has bought a beautiful cake from one of his favorite bakeries and prepares a lot of delicious foods during the rest of the morning, while Jimin, Jungkook and Wow cuddle on the couch watching a comedy show they're both fond of.

When Jihyun wakes up some hours later and sits beside Jimin without a word, Jungkook takes his cue and excuses himself saying he needs to go to the bathroom.

After some minutes, his younger brother drops his head to his shoulder and scoots closer to him. Jimin smiles.

"Happy birthday.".

"Thank you, Jihyunie."

They're silent for a moment before the boy speaks up again.

"Hyung?"

"Mhm?"

A second passes. And two. Five. And then,

"I love you."

Jimin is left shocked for a moment, before he melts on the couch and chuckles, shaking his head. He takes his brother's hands in his and covers it with the other.

"I love you too."

Jungkook passes by them after awhile and dares not to interrupt so he goes to the kitchen to help Seoyeon.

The two brothers stay in significant silence for another couple minutes, before Jihyun pulls back slightly and clears his throat.

"Huh, dad is coming over." he says a bit louder so their mother can hear it too.

Jimin freezes on the spot for a moment.

Although, it's Seoyeon who speaks up,
"What?"

Their father hasn't stepped inside their house ever since they got divorced, except for the Jihyun situation. It's quite baffling.

"I mean," Jihyun starts to elaborate, shifting nervously, "He asked if we were doing anything to celebrate hyung's birthday and I told him we were having a cake and all, but it was nothing grand. So he asked if he could come and I panicked and said yes." he finishes, unsurely, "I'm sorry?"

Seoyeon shakes her head with a sigh, "No, I mean— It's not a problem, just—" she looks from Jimin to Jungkook and they both understand it, "I mean, if you don't want him to know you'll have to be a bit… discreet."

Jimin sinks a bit on the couch. He catches Jungkook's eyes, who's washing the dishes on the kitchen, and they both look disheartened. They never had to pretend they were not together anywhere, so the thought they might have to do it in his birthday is quite—

But also he doesn't have the courage to let his dad know about it, not today. He can't predict his reaction and he doesn't want to hear things that will hurt him in a day where he's supposed to be happy.

He throws his head back, huffing. "Well, I guess we'll just have to endure it for a couple hours." he groans petulantly.

Jihyun says he's sorry again but Jimin dismisses it with a smile, because it's not really his fault, so the boy excuses himself for a bath.

Jungkook is by his side as soon as he finishes his task, arms around him and proceeding to cuddle him for as long as they can.

He attempts at cheering the younger a little, "Hey. Looking at the brightside, Eunbi might come with him and you'll finally get to meet her."

"It's alright, hyung. I just don't want you to be upset."

"I'm not. I mean, yeah, I am, but it'll be fine. Besides I'm going to have you for the rest of the day, so I'll just focus on that."

Jungkook nods with a smile and leans over to kiss his nose. "That's right. Focus on that and I'll promise I'll make it worthy."

They share one last intimate smile before they return their attention to the TV.

The small gathering ends up being more enjoyable than he thought it would. Taehyung was the first to arrive and gifted him with infinite love and then— a fucking iphone. Jimin adamantly refused and kept saying he couldn't accept it, because it was too much money but the boy just kept on dismissing it, saying it was nothing and that he had had a phone with cracked screen for the past year, so he just wanted to help. Jimin gave up when his mom squeezed his shoulder and told him to accept it, after all, Taehyung wanted nothing but the best for him and he had good intentions. Jimin was shy, at first, but relented and even cooed when he saw there was a polaroid of the two of them inside the transparent phone case. Jungkook fake complained about it, but in the end the three of
them were laughing while playing a board game with Jihyun. They really weren't waiting anyone else besides his father and Eunbi so when the bell rang, his heart almost dropped to his feet.

All the anxiety was washed away thanks to his sister. She made easy conversation with everyone and was clearly happy to meet Jungkook, despite being discreet about it as well. His father only made some inquiring questions here and there when arrived, such as 'who are you?,' 'why don't I know you?' and etc. His mother and him also displayed an amicable interaction in general and after they all sang happy birthday to him and cut the cake, his father even offered to wash the dishes. When they were finished, they sat down to give Jimin his presents — Eunbi gave him a new pair of glasses which he was immensely grateful, because he was really in need of new ones, but scoffed in disbelief when he found out a gift voucher inside the box from her tattoo parlor. They exchanged gazes and she placed an index over her lips for him to stay quiet, so he simply shook his head and put it away, mouthing a heartfelt thank you to her. His father, on the other hand, gifted him a pair of dance shoes, which left him just as touched and grateful. He hugged the both of them simultaneously and felt happiness washing over him, even if the day was simply beginning.

Soon enough, it's time for them to go home, and so they leave together — his father offering to drop Jungkook and Taehyung off, but Jungkook immediately came up with the lie that his parents were already on the way to pick him up, as is he had it prepared for a while.

Jimin tries not to laugh and blatantly ignores Taehyung's wink when he walks past the door.

"So, are your parents gonna come pick you up?" Jimin teases, hugging him from behind where he stands picking up the board games from the ground.

He covers Jimin's hands on his belly with one of his. "Yeah, didn't you know? They're coming to pick us up." he says with a bland voice, which startles Jimin. He lets him go in order to circle him and look into his eyes.

"Wait, what? Are you serious?"

Jungkook doesn't look in his eyes, putting the games away in a compartment of the tv stand.

"I mean, not my parents, but my driver is coming to pick us up soon."

"Ohhh, I see. Your driver, mr. rich boy."

Jungkook shushes him away, turning him around by his shoulder and guiding him towards his bedroom. "Oh, shut up, shut up, go get ready."

Jimin rolls his eyes and easily breaks from his grip, spinning on his arms and pulling him close by the shirt.

He drops the tone of his voice when he asks close to his face, eyes on his lips, "Where's my birthday kiss?" Jimin purposely brushes his mouth against Jungkook's just to watch him suck in a breath. "I've been waiting since I woke up."

Jungkook gulps, hands tightening on his shoulders. Before he can answer anything, Jimin's mother calls for him and snaps him out of it.

"Jungkookie, can you help me reach a pot here, please? I want to make some tea, but Jimin's father stored it too high, that fool." she mumbles on her own from the kitchen and Jungkook takes a step back with wide eyes, as if he had been caught doing something he shouldn't. Jimin just watches in amusement as the boy blushes.
"Ah, s-sure! Coming!"

He runs to the kitchen immediately and leaves Jimin laughing by himself. He finally turns around and goes to his room, then, wondering for what occasion he should wear.

Ever since Jungkook used the word *surprise* Jimin's mind has been tirelessly working out in the mission of finding out what it could possibly be. Although, when they left his house, taking a ride to the beach so they could ride a *boat* was surely not on his guessing list.

"Jeon Jungkook, please explain to me, why there's a boat on the shore with a sailman waving at us."

Jungkook sighs beside him. "I should've just blindfolded you like last time."

They spend the entire ride quarreling over where they're going to — well, actually it's mostly Jimin nagging until Jungkook is fed with it and squishes his face between his hands and presses a long, unmoving kiss to shut Jimin up.

He looks at him with a flat stare through it and when he tries to speak up with their mouths still pressed Jungkook starts making obnoxiously loud kissing noises with the back of his throat, which finally cracks Jimin up.

He starts laughing, pulling away from his boyfriend and slapping his chest lightly. "I hate you so much."

"Mhm?" the boy scoots closer, "If I remember well you said you loved me not even last time."

Jimin crosses his arms and looks away from him, in a fake pouting demeanor.

"I lied."

Jungkook boards on his little game, gasping in utmost offense. "How could you?!"

"Well, you didn't come over to cuddle me and also didn't give me my kiss yet, so I had no choice."

Jungkook laughs through his nose, wrapping an arm around Jimin's waist and pulling his body close to him.

"Oh, don't you worry, when we get there, kissing you is not the only thing I'm gonna do." he whispers against his neck.

Jimin wants to ask *there where?*, but he's also yearning for some flirting. He turns around on his hold and hold his collar with one hand. It's not a demanding grip, or pulling, but it's *there*. It's enough to get them both self-conscious and riled up.

"Oh, yeah?" Jimin murmurs, too close into his personal space, "And what are you gonna do?"

Jungkook gifts him a side smirk, "Park Jimin-ssi, Park Jimin-ssi… Don't test me, you have no idea I've been restraining myself to keep my hands off you today."
Jimin tilts his head to the side, both brows raised in a challenge. "Why is that?"

Jungkook tugs him closer. "Do you really think I can stop with a kiss when I get my hands on you?"

His stomach shrinks in anticipation — Jimin physically feels it, and it renders him gasping before he can even realize it.

He has no decent comeback for this one, but gladly while they were lost in the little world of themselves, they arrived in their destination, as the boat comes to a halt and the nice sailman warns them of their arrival.

Jimin immediately looks around, curious eyes searching. It's a small island, and when he looks back, the beach where they came from is nowhere to be seen. The sailman helps them out of the boat which results in them getting their feet wet, because unlike when they were boarding, this beach lacks a dock. Jimin doesn't mind it, though, he takes off his shoes, pulls his pants as much as he can and finds no problem getting out. Jungkook, on the other hand, splashes water everywhere and ends up getting quite wet — in hindsight, giving Jimin quite pleasure and laughter.

"That's karma for throwing me on the water last time!" he accuses and Jungkook glares at him.

"Do you wanna go again?" he menaces and Jimin yells, running away.

He just goes a short distance when he realizes Jungkook is not following him and is in fact bidding goodbye to the sailman. Jimin didn't quite get his name, because he's a foreigner and couldn't speak korean, so he just enthusiastically waves at him from his spot and yells in english,

"Bye bye! Thank you!"

When the man smiles and waves back, Jimin sighs satisfiedly and looks around.

And it's just then that something quite odd dawns on him.

"Jungkookie, where is everyone?"

Jungkook is walking to him while twisting the hem of his shirt to get rid of the excess of water.

"Everyone who?"

Jimin gestures to the surrounding. "I mean… People. Don't they also take boat rides to come here or you just picked a special day of low movement."

"Oh." Acknowledgement seems to fall on his face. He finally shifts his attention from his shirt to Jimin. "There's none. This is my dad's island."

Jimin thinks if he was ever in an animated comic show, his eyes would have really bugged out of his face in that moment.

"Y-your dad's island?"

Worry suddenly seeps in his features. "What? Why, what's wrong? Is it too much? I was worried, I knew this would be—"

Upon his stressing rambling, Jimin is quick in running to him and taking his hands in his. "No, baby, no, no, no. I mean, this is amazing, I guess I just? I don't know, got really surprised?" He stills looks nervous despite his words, so Jimin runs both hands down his face until he's cupping
his jaws, "Besides, we're all by ourselves, right?" he wiggles his brows suggestively, "That opens a lot of interesting possibilities, doesn't it?"

As expected, Jungkook relaxes at that, sliding his hands down to his hips and squeezing it. "Well, I told I'd bring you to a deserted island so I could hear your unrestrained moaning, didn't I?"

Jimin scoffs in disbelief, recalling the words. "You sure did."

"Well," Jungkook smiles, already taking his hand and pulling Jimin with him, "Come on, I'll show you the house."

The house is surely something. Jimin instantly feels shock run through his body — not because it's enormous or anything like that, but— Most of it is made out of translucid glass. Jimin's jaw drops as he stands motionless in front of the house. He guesses there's no problem in that since they're in the middle of nowhere and there's no eyes to see, but— His breath is caught in his throat. He feels excitement bubbling in his veins. Fuck, they're about to have sex with some glass windows surrounding them. Jimin almost wants to jump Jungkook right there.

Speaking of which, "Come on, what are you waiting for?"

Jimin snaps out of it and runs to catch up with him. "This house is really…" Jimin comments and ends up tilting his head in lack of better word.

"What?" he questions with a small smirk in the corner of his lips as if he knows exactly what Jimin is about to say.

"Revealing?"

Jungkook's smile widens but he acts as if he doesn't acknowledge the word, simply humming and taking Jimin's hand again. Once he unlocks the front door, they're presented the huge living room that connects with the kitchen openly, the differentiation coming from the difference of levels, since a single step elevates the kitchen space slightly. The large stair that takes to the second floor is on the far corner of the living room, leaving the middle for the pearly white, fluffy looking sofa that fits perfectly in an opening on the ground, making Jimin instantly want to jump on it. The ground to ceiling glass walls provide full view of the beach and allows the natural lighting to seep in. There's no television, but soon Jimin spots a projector on the ceiling and guesses that somewhere there might have something he can project the images into.

Jungkook points him where the bathroom of the ground floor is, before they head upstairs. The stairs lead them to an equally large corridor with two doors on the right and a single door to the left. Jungkook takes the latter, explaining that the other are other rooms, while this is the master one. And master it is, indeed.

Once again, Jimin finds his jaw dropping. Sometimes he forgets just how rich Jungkook actually is. It's something completely out of his mind, out of his reality. He stares wordlessly at the bedroom. Despite it being huge, perhaps half the size of the living room downstairs, the other half leads to an outside space with — mind you —, a fucking jacuzzi, a couch bigger than the one in his own home and a gourmet area for cooking. The bathroom takes the entirety of the right wall and — mind you again — connects with the jacuzzi outside through an yet another glass wall.

"Jungkookie, this is… Wow."

The younger smiles satisfied, hugging him from behind. "Happy birthday." he whispers against the shell of his ear. Jimin feels the goosebumps trailing down his spine instantly. "I love you."
He sighs in sync with the large hand sliding under his shirt and caressing the skin of his stomach. "I love you…” Jimin answers, a breathy quality to his voice. He drops his head on the younger's shoulder to expose his neck further when he feels his lips brushing against it.

Jungkook takes the opportunity, sucking on the skin slowly, in the exact way he knows that drives Jimin crazy. He reaches back to curl his hand on the younger's hair.

The sun is setting, bleeding an orange glow through the windows that paint the bed and the walls in warm colors — that highlights their cheekbones and the edges of their bodies in its stunning lighting.

Jimin closes his eyes, lightly gasping when Jungkook replaces his fingertips with his nails and begins to pull his tshirt up with the movement of his hands on his stomach.

"Baby…” he mumbles when the boy teases his index around one of Jimin's nipples, but doesn't indulge him, quickly returning his attention to the piece of clothing getting off his body.

"You're so pretty…” Jungkook whispers on his ear, "So beautiful, hyung."

Jimin's breath hitches, and Jungkook takes the moment of vulnerability to finish dragging the shirt up. Although when Jimin raises his arms to help him, instead of discarding the clothing somewhere in the room he twists it around his wrists, restraining his movements.

This time Jimin does gasp and loudly, stomach squeezing in a knot just as tight as the one in the shirt.

"What are you doing?” he heaves, but Jungkook guides to the bed shushing him.

"Shhhh…” a kiss on his cheek, "You're not moving a muscle today." he says in a voice so deep that makes Jimin shiver, "I'm doing all the work. Gonna make you feel so good, hyung."

His breathing pattern worsens. "Yeah? Gonna be good for me?"

"Mhm-mhm." Jungkook agrees, placing Jimin on the bed softly, arms above his head, and crawling on top of him. "Gonna make you completely forget what it feels like to be touched by someone else if not me,” he murmurs confidently and Jimin almost wants to rip his hair off.

He wants to open his mouth and ask 'What the hell are you waiting for?', but the moment he's about to, Jungkook's mouth finds it spot over his nipple and all possible words escape his mouth.

The boy works his way slowly, using his mouth teasingly, sucking Jimin's skin in places he didn't think being possible finding pleasure at, marking his ribs with purple bruises, his collarbones in love bites and his neck with searing kisses.

Just when Jimin thought there was no air left in his lungs, Jungkook grabbed him by the jaw and kissed him so hard that his vision blurred. His belly sinks and when he tries to bring his hands down to find ground in Jungkook's body, he roughly pins it against the mattress again.

"What did I say?” he growls over Jimin's lips, hot breath intoxicating.

"Jungkookie…” Jimin pleads, but it's no use.

"What did I say?” Jungkook repeats lower, tugging Jimin's bottom lip with his teeth.

"Sorry…”
The boy hums, pleased, and licks over Jimin's lips. "That's right. Now be an angel and let me take care of you."

It's those words that strike deep in his gut. Jimin can do nothing but watch him. Even when he sits on his thighs and pulls his shirt over his head, baring that godforsaken chest — Jimin can't lay a finger on him. By this time, his cock already begs for touch, but Jeon Jungkook is a little shit. So, of course he's gonna slide forward to plant his ass against the bulge just so he can rolls his hips over it a couple times, lean down and ask against his cheek, "Do you miss me?"

Jimin groans, throwing his head back. Fuck, he does. He lost count of how many wet dreams he had from that fucking night, how many times he made a mess of himself remembering Jungkook's tight heat surrounding him.

"Yes." he pants, pink dusted cheeks.

"Wanna feel me again? Or wanna find out how I feel in you?"

Jimin sucks in yet another breath.

"Jungkook-ah…” he warns, voice hoarse.

"Mhm? Answer me…” he asks, oddly pliant, scattering kisses over Jimin's jaw, "Want me to play with your ass so good that you'll shake throughout your entire orgasm?” Jimin sinks his nails on his palms, "Wanna feel me all over you, fucking you until you can't take another fucking inch?” he gasps, parting his legs so Jungkook can settle between them, their erections pressing together through their jeans. "Mhm? How would you like that? Tell me… Use your words."

"A lot… Would like it a lot, Jungkookie, fuck—" he gives in, rolling his hips in small movements, trying to chase the friction against Jungkook's cock.

"Yeah? Fuck, hyung, I'm about to ruin you… You know that, right? Been waiting so long, so fucking long…” he whines, sucking a spot under Jimin's jawline before finding his lips again.

Jimin welcomes him, parting them and meeting his tongue halfway, hot and wet. Jungkook is sucking on it not long after, allowing Jimin to rolls their hips together for a while longer, before he's sliding down his mouth to his chin, and then his collarbones, until he's reaching his nipple again, hand on the button of his pants, working it off his legs. When Jimin is completely free of the heavy jeans, Jungkook pulls out the boxers too, springing his boyfriend's thick, large cock against his v line.

Jimin watches Jungkook's gaze attentively, can see the hunger settle in his eyes and the way he licks his lips at the sight of it.

"Get up.” he suddenly says, and Jimin has entered such a dazed state of mind that he questions if he heard it right.

"What?"

Jungkook pulls him into a sitting position by the waist, before he helps Jimin on his feet.

"What's wrong?” the older asks, confused, being guided towards the glass walls when it hits him. He releases a breath.

"Nothing is wrong. Just wanna be on my knees for you."
Jimin moans in a small voice at that, twisting his wrists on the hold of his shirt, wanting to break free.

"You can't possibly be on your knees for me and expect me not to get my hands on your hair." he complains, not faking his annoyance.

Jungkook chuckles, brushing his lips over Jimin and suddenly turning him around and pressing him against the glass. "Don't worry." whispering against his neck, he drops a kiss to his shoulder, "You won't be able even if you want to." he promises and Jimin squeezes his eyes shut, mind running haywire with all the obscene thoughts inside it.

He folds his arms in a half to support him and rests his forehead on his wrists, muscles slightly shaking with anticipation of what's to come.

He hears it clearly when Jungkook's knees hit the ground, and curses under his breath when his hands spread over his asscheks, pulling it apart and exposing his asshole to the cold air of the bedroom.

The sun setting on the horizon, warms Jimin's already heated skin even more and makes him feel like he's actually burning up from head to toe.

The moment Jungkook's tongue touches him he knows he's doomed. There's no way his legs can hold him through this. The younger starts off slow and sweet just like anything he has been doing to Jimin ever since they stepped into the room and it only worsens his desperate state of mind.

His heavy breathing fogs the glass and suffocates him, so he turns his face to the side in search of fresh air and ends releasing his moans for Jungkook to hear. That seems to spike him up, because he tightens his hold around his ass and sucks his rim harder.

"F-fuck—" he cries, scorching white pleasure bubbling all over him. Jungkook's tongue feels like heaven. "You love this, don't you?" Jimin remarks, biting on his lower lip to stabilize his breathing, "Eating me out, you fucking love it."

Jungkook hums in agreement and pulls back to give a long, wet lick to his hole. Jimin shakes.

"Fuck, I love it too, baby." he can't seem to find the off button now that he started talking, "Love your tongue on me, feels so damn— good, fuck—"

The lack of oxygen cuts him off and Jungkook chuckles, the little shit.

He sucks him until Jimin is clenching around nothing and then proceeds to ease him open with his tongue and that's when Jimin really feels like he's breaking down. There's sweat running down his spine and his legs threaten to give up for a second, wobbling his balance.

"Oooh, fuck, Jungkookie... Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck—"

He squeezes his rim around the tip of Jungkook's tongue and feels an immense wave of pleasure lick him up from the bottom of his spine until the strand of his hair.

Maybe doing this while on his feet and tied up wasn't the smartest of the ideas. Jimin already feels his stamina running off.

"Jungkookie, I can't stand up like this for much longer." he warns him in a whiny pitch, but Jungkook doesn't seem to take him seriously.
"Oh, but you will…" he enunciates, marking each and every word of his.

Jimin shakes his head. "I can't, I—"

But he finds himself stripped out of his words once again when Jungkook starts to slide a finger inside of him.

They've been there before, so the touch shouldn't be as all-consuming as it is, but Jimin can't help it — he missed this too much.

He bites the muscle of his arm to keep quiet when Jungkook reaches inside him until the base of his finger hits the slot of his ass. He doesn't have to ask for it, it's like Jungkook already knows the ins and outs of his body, knows when to make him beg and knows when to give him what he wants. And today Jimin just fucking wants all of him, non-stop.

He's being pushed against the window with every thrust Jungkook delivers and it's fucking up his brain. Not long after, when there's a second finger being eased inside of him, Jimin's moans have already broken their restraint, falling past his lips with not an ounce of shame in them.

"Ah, fuck me, jesus, Jungkook-ah…" he babbles without much filter. Jungkook's fingers rub so fast against his walls that it burns him from the inside out and they reach so deep that he can't— He can't— "Jungkookie, fuck, please, I—"

His legs shake once again and this time Jungkook wraps a hand around his thigh to keep him balanced and begins to scatters small hickeys around his asscheeks.

It's when Jungkook fucks him with three fingers and couples it with his tongue that Jimin deliberately starts to sob, so high off the pleasure that he doesn't mind the shameful sounds coming out of him.

"I'm gonna— nngg fucking come all over… Ah, fuck… All over me if you c— continue like this, Jeon Jungkook—!"

He nearly screams by the end because Jungkook bends his three fingers inside of Jimin and finds it, his fucking prostate, fully sensitive, swollen and he makes complete use of it, making sure his fingers massage it every time they touch it.

Jimin's knees bend and once again he finds his forehead pressed against the glass, fogging it with his uneven and harsh breaths.

His eyes are rolling up to the back of his head, hips stuttering against Jungkook's hands because he seems to have lost all self-control of his body, chasing his orgasm like his life depends on it.

Jimin can faintly hear the sound of Jungkook groaning beneath him and it makes him want to burst into flames, the fact that he's enjoying this as much as him. He wishes he could see him, but the position is not the best for that so he settles in closing his eyes and imagining his face.

Once Jungkook decides to couple his tongue with his fingers just like he did last time, Jimin declares it's over for him. The only thought in his mind is swallowing up Jungkook's fucking big dick with his ass until he's on the brink of tears.

"Baby, give me— more, give me more—" Jimin pleads, and surprisingly, Jungkook pulls back, his lips making a soft pop, before he gets up and wraps his arms around Jimin's middle, grabbing his pulsing dick in hands and making him break in another series of moans. He shudders, writhing his arms on the hold around his wrists.
"Take it off—" Jimin chokes off the pleasure, throwing his head against his shoulder, "Take it off, please."

And so Jungkook does, pulls the knot until it's undone and Jimin's arms are free while pressing hot kisses to his neck.

Jimin immediately turns around on the hold and hugs Jungkook's neck, pulling him so close that his body ends up against the glass again. He kisses his mouth like he's starving for it, head tilting from side to side as he sucks and bites Jungkook's lips until they're swelling red.

Jungkook breaks the kiss off, so he can ask against his mouth, "What do you want?"

Jimin doesn't provide verbal answer — instead, he snatches a dirty smile from Jungkook's lips when he reaches between their bodies to unbutton the younger's pants and push it down.

"Alright." he bends his knees just enough for him to wrap his hands around the back of Jimin's thighs and hoist him up.

He effortlessly carries him to the bed and plops him down so his hair falls messily above his hair.

"Do you even know how beautiful you look right now?" the younger asks, making Jimin blush, "I'm the luckiest motherfucker in the planet." he states and Jimin stares at him fondly.

He opens a teasing smirk. "If you're not about to have the best dick in the world up your ass then I'd refrain from saying this kind of thing."

Jungkook laughs, reaching on the nightstand for condoms and lube.

"How do you know I have the best dick in the world?"

Jimin stares at it, standing long and veiny between his legs and his mouth waters.

"I just do."

"Well, I have my doubts."

Jimin smirks and raises a brow, asking, although he already knows the answer, "And why is that?"

Jungkook tilts his head, shifting his look towards Jimin's cock and then looking back at him again with a wiggle of eyebrows. Jimin can do nothing but laugh, shaking his head.

"Just get over here already…"

And once again, Jungkook obeys. Jimin almost wants to order him around a bit more and have his fun, but his body doesn't seem to harbor the same patience.

Jungkook crawls on top of him once he wears the condom and lubes himself. He turns Jimin on his stomach and fingers him a bit more until he can fit four fingers inside of him, just like Jimin did with him. It overwhelms his chest with warmth, but all fondness is replaced by pure lust when Jungkook begins to kiss his shoulders repeatedly and presses the head of his cock against his hole.

Jimin freezes, breath catching up in his throat, and it's kind of good that he can't see Jungkook's cock right now or else he knows he'd panic. He turns his face to the side so Jungkook reaches over to kiss his cheek and whisper on his ear,
"Do you know you have the most perfect ass in the whole world, don't you?"

Jimin moans, curling his fingers on the sheets and that's when Jungkook chooses to start pushing it in.

His heart stops, and he's sure his lip splits from how hard he bites on it.

He's about to tell Jungkook to wait, but he already knows what to do, stalling his movements and proceeding to gift Jimin's entire back with light and soft kisses that relaxes his mind off the fact that there's a fucking dick going inside his ass.

He tries to stabilize his breathing while Jungkook gives him time to adjust. He doesn't rush it, nor moves until Jimin gives him the signal nearly two minutes later.

The thing about it, it's not even that it hurts a lot — like, it's uncomfortable when it's inside, but it fucking stings around his rim while it gets used to the stretch. Jimin has to hold all his breath inside and pray that he's not split open, because that fucking burns so much, dear god.

Jungkook takes it slow, but Jimin doesn't know if that's better or worse, because he can't wait until the pain becomes a pleasure so high that it makes him want to crawl up the walls.

It feels like eternity until Jungkook is completely inside him, but when it finally happens, Jimin releases a breath he was holding for too long.

There's a buzz inside his ears, so that's probably why it takes a while for him to hear Jungkook's voice asking, "Does it hurt?"

Jimin whines, "A little."

"Do you want to stop?" he sounds worried.

"No, just… getting used to it."

Jungkook nods, then drops his forehead between Jimin's shoulders' blades and releases a whimper. The older's curiosity gets aroused, so he opens his eyes to try and get back to his senses.

"What's wrong?"

"Absolutely nothing." he says in one breath and it flutters Jimin's chest, "Just feels like I'm about to come and we're not even moving yet."

Jimin laughs, empathizing with the feeling from when he was in Jungkook's position.

"Fuck, I just can't believe— The fact it's you makes it so much harder."

Something snaps inside him from the words. Jimin realizes that — yes, he's getting fucked by his boyfriend. Jungkook's dick is inside of him, not anyone else's and this alone is… Fuck.

"Jungkookie." Jimin chokes out, "Move."

"Wh— are you sure?"

"Yes, baby. Move."

And so he does. At first, the discomfort is still present, but Jungkook's small and held back moans by the edge of his ear completely wipe it out in a flashing light and replaces it with escalating and
unstoppable warmth.

Suddenly, Jimin feels so full, so complete that it is like a dream. Although, when the warmth is replaced by blinding, unleashed pleasure—

Oh, fuck.

Jungkook knows how to do a lot of things, but he also knows how to fuck.

"Ah—" it's the first sound Jimin can't control from tumbling outside of him and the response he gets is immediate. Jungkook fastens his thrusts, chasing the rest of the sounds out of Jimin's throat, "Ah, ah, Jungkookie, baby—"

"Oh, fuck—" the younger groans, face pressed against Jimin's back, breathing hard.

When Jimin starts to try to sync his thrusts with Jungkook's but the boy's weight on top of him stalls him, he's turned around and put on his side.

The first thing that happens is that Jungkook releases such a long and high moan that it startles even Jimin. His dick twitches in response, despite this position burning a little more.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck, hyung—" he chants, tightening his hold on Jimin's hips.

"What? What's wrong?" his voice is airy, breath failing him.

"Fuck… So tight like this, jesus christ, does it hurt?"

Jimin feels so turned on by Jungkook's reaction that truly he doesn't even feel any pain anymore.

He shakes his head, "No."

"Oh, thank god." the younger thanks who-knows-who, making Jimin laugh.

"Good?"

"Yeah, good, so fucking good." he seems like he's a bit out of his mind and Jimin loves it. "Tell me when I can move."

But instead of telling him, Jimin starts moving himself and enjoys the sound of Jungkook choking on his own breath.

"Fuck—" the younger mumbles, wrapping both arms around Jimin's waist and gluing his chest to his back. He tangles their legs together and Jimin almost faints. It feels so much more intimate like this.

He keeps on moving, enjoying Jungkook's hoarse voice whispering sweet nothings to his ear while his moans vibrate against Jimin's back. Himself is not much different, reaching with his hand to tug at Jungkook's roots when he kisses his neck and turning around to find his mouth so they can kiss while Jungkook moves.

It honestly feels like he's about to die from how hard his heart hammers against his ribcage, and it shouldn't be possible to feel like this, but Jimin does and—

"I love you." he babbles out in the middle of their kiss without thinking about it. It doesn't matter. "I love you so much."
Jungkook whines, bringing a hand to squeeze his waist. "I love you too. I love you so, so much, you have no idea. Love all of you."

Jimin's eyes roll to the back of his head.

"Yeah?"

"Yeah. Love what you do to me. Look what you fucking do to me, Park Jimin."

Jimin moans louder, so Jungkook fucks harder.

He fucks him and refuses to touch his dick, just for the pleasure of making Jimin come untouched.

And he does, barely five minutes later, moaning so loud that Jungkook chuckles and kisses his lips to swallow it down his throat. The younger comes not long after, Jimin clenching around him doing the job of sending him overdrive. He rides off his orgasm with Jimin kissing his entire face and when he's done, the older takes no time in turning around and attacking Jungkook with even more kisses.

They laugh together, safe in each other's embrace, hidden from the world and it's like paradise on earth, a piece of heaven in real life.

Jimin is almost fearful of breaking the blissful moment they enter post their high — hands running up and down each other's bodies, caressing skin and kissing stupid.

It's just when the sun completely sets and night greets them that Jungkook encourages them to get up and take a shower together.

They wash each other's hairs and laugh while splashing water on each other's faces.

In the end, their stomachs get the best of them and they get down to eat. Jungkook once again surprises Jimin when he tells him that he bought everything needed beforehand to cook his favorite meals and he has no option if not run to him and kiss his entire face at least a thousand times. When he's finished, he hops on the counter and watches Jungkook cook and look very hot while doing it, as they chat.

Jimin finally tells him about the exam for the exchange that has been eating him up for the last couple days. He opens up about his uncertainties and about what Hyoyeon told him and what it made him think. He talks for a lot while, actually, and Jungkook patiently listens. Once Jimin is over, Jungkook says something that manages to ease his anxiety in an instant,

"Time will solve everything, hyung. Just look at us."

It's simple, but it blooms the biggest of the smiles on Jimin's face. It's probably the look at us.

Jungkook turns around at his lack of response and frowns upon Jimin's expression.

"What?"

"Nothing. I just love you."

"Aish." he looks back to the oven, embarrassed.

It's not long until the food is ready and they eat on the couch, continuing with their conversation. Jimin feels so happy, that he thinks nothing could make him happier.
But very much wrong he was.

When they finish eating, Jungkook takes all the dishes and puts them in the sink, coming back with a wide grin on his face.

"What now?" Jimin questions, so Jungkook rubs his hands together before reaching out for a remote beside him.

"I have another surprise."

"You're kidding."

"I'm most definitely not. Are you ready?"

Jimin bites his lips with a smile and shakes his head when he realizes he's for real. His cheeks heat up. "I mean, I guess."

Jungkook, then, uses the remote to roll down a white panel/curtain in front of the glass walls and turns on the projector. Jimin gets startled by the size of the screen. It kind of reminds one of a movie theater, but what surprises him the most is the simple lettering in the middle of the black screen.

*for my one and only*

Jimin looks back at Jungkook with a baffled face and the boy just shrinks his shoulders in fake innocence.

The moment he hits play, Jimin's whole smiling face takes up the screen and the first seconds of *all of me* by John Legend starts playing. He has to hold onto his chest so his heart doesn't come stumbling down out of it. His eyes can't leave the screen for a second — every video was carefully recorded by Jungkook and all frames seem to be of Jimin alone, as if he's all Jungkook sees. There's cuts of him dancing distractedly, acting goofy, eating, laughing out loud, drying his hair, putting on a shirt, waking up and it's baffling because — Jimin looks beautiful in every single one of them.

His chest tightens. There's so much love on the screen. Is this how Jungkook sees him?

*How many times do I have to tell you*

*Even when you're crying you're beautiful too*

The video cuts to a scene where Jimin is playing cat and mouse with Wow on the street while Jungkook laughs on the background.

*The world is beating you down, I'm around through every mood*
Then, it cuts to another one where he has his arms crossed while Jungkook pinches his cheeks from behind the camera.

*You're my downfall, you're my muse*

*My worst distraction, my rhythm and blues*

*I can't stop singing, it's ringing, in my head for you*

Throughout this whole verse it's a video of the two of them in front of the mirror while Jungkook kisses his cheek and Jimin laughs.

Emotion starts climbing up his throat and reaching his eyes. He feels like crying.

*Time will solve everything, hyung. Just look at us.*

He is right. Jimin reaches for his hand in the dark, intertwining their fingers without his eyes ever leaving the screen. Jungkook happily takes it and squeezes his hand in his, pulling Jimin against his chest.

Jungkook's warmth against him, the song and the video, Jimin's body in his embrace — everything adds up to the tears flooding his eyes, it doesn't matter how much he tries to fight it.

They've gone through so much, Jimin felt so much pain in the process, but they're here. They're here and fuck, Jungkook loves him. Watching that, there's no doubt that he does. Jimin doesn't think he can be more grateful.

When the video ends, Jimin is obviously crying. Jungkook is breathing calmly next to his face.

"I'm not good with words like you..." he says lowly, kissing a stray tear from Jimin's cheek, "but I hope you could feel all of my heart in that. I love you. Truly, really love you. Happy birthday, Jimin-hyung."

Jimin sniffs, rubbing his nose and eyes with the back of his hands. "Well, good, because I hate you." he tells him in a choked voice. Jungkook throws his head backwards, laughing. "I can't believe you made me cry."

The younger tightens his hold around his waist. "Well, what was it that you told me when we got here? I think it was karma or something."

Jimin tsks, pouting. "You're so annoying."

Jungkook nuzzles against his neck. "Yeah, you sure do love having an annoying boyfriend."

He rolls his eyes, stomach fluttering at the *boyfriend* despite them having been throwing this word back and forth for nearly five months now.

He lays his head on his shoulder.

"It can be nice sometimes." he says nonchalantly, lashes still wet from his tears.
"Yeah? Like when?"

Jimin shrugs. "Right now is alright."

"Alright?!" he breaks at Jungkook's fake outrageous tone. And it worsens when Jungkook throws him down on the couch and attacks his stomach with tickles. He cackles loudly, kicking his feet in hopes of pushing Jungkook away.

It becomes clear that it's no use when Jungkook sits on his legs and pins his arms beside his head.

"Tell me this is the best birthday of your life."

Jimin repeats it with a coy smile, "This is the best birthday of my life."

"Now tell me you love me."

Jimin squints his eyes. "But do I really— okay, okay! I love you, I love you, I do!"

Jungkook retreats his hands from his armpits and falls beside him, satisfied. "Now, that's a good boy."

"You're insufferable."

○

The rest of the year runs by in a blink of an eye. Before Jimin knows it, October and November bids goodbye and present December knocking on his doorstep with a freezing cold winter as company. Their graduation happens in the first day of the month and it goes like most graduations go. Jimin happily aced all of his tests — even fucking chemistry — and was able to graduate with honors. Jungkook and Taehyung too, and all their parents reunited to praise them. Jimin is a bit worried about his father, but nothing major is said, thankfully. With the end of school and the much needed vacation, he and Jungkook get a lot more used to visiting Jungkook's grandma together. She often complained about them never coming over, so they take every opportunity to go bask in her funny stories and recipes learnt on youtube cooking classes. Jimin reunites with Seokjin and Hoseok out of the studio too — it is pointless now, to be honest, with each day approaching the arrival of the letter of the exchange program. They finally meet Jungkook in a planned date by Jimin and absolutely everything goes his way. There's nothing he could complain, really.

It's exactly two months after his birthday, in a negative degree kind of morning, that everything starts falling down. Jimin is wrapped in his blanket, sitting in one of the kitchen stools with his coffee mug in one hand, sipping on the warm liquid with swollen eyes. He has barely woken up. Jihyun is still sleeping.

Suddenly, his mother storms out of the front door in her winter coat, hissing and rubbing her arms in an attempt to warm her up. She barely acknowledges Jimin, too busy in trying to get warm, and throws the letters she collected from the mailbox on the counter messily. They scatter all over the marble and Jimin lazily blinks down at them. There's all kinds of domestic bills and subscription offers and—
Tokyo university.

He chokes on his coffee.

The liquid spills on the counter and on his blanket, but he can't care about it while he slaps his chest to help the coughing. His throat tickles and his eyes are watery, but that's all secondary in Jimin's mind right now.

He takes a deep breath, and it goes down into his lungs shaking. Closing his eyes to gather courage, he takes the letter in hands and rips the envelope.

It takes him another five minutes to have the guts to unfold it and another three to open his eyes and read it.

He skips all the formal blabbery and applies dynamic reading to find the words he's looking for.

Yet, they're not there.

What Jimin finds, instead, are words that feel like a stab in his heart.

_We are sorry to inform you didn't fill in all the requirements for the scholarship._

Those are the only words that matter.

Jimin starts shaking. He reads them all over again, wondering if they're somehow going to merge and change into what he wants— _needs_ to read.

It's not long until despair kicks in and brings an old friend of his along.

Jimin's heart frequency builds up so fast that he can't breath — one second he is sitting on the kitchen and in the other he is stumbling down to his bedroom, vision blurred.

He slams the door closed and sits against it, head weighing a thousand pounds.

What is Taehyung going to think? What am I gonna do? Mom… Mom is going to be so upset. 
_Hyoyeon-seonsaeng was right, I didn't get in and now I don't have a plan b. A fucking plan b. Stupid, stupid, stupid! How could I not have a plan b? How dumb does one have to be to do that? Am I going to have to work now and won't be able to find a good university to continue my studies? I can't expect mom to keep on providing for me when I have graduated already. Right? And Taehyung… Taehyung, god. I promised him, I made a promise. We made so much plans and know everything is going downhill, because I wasn't able to do a fucking exam right. Did Taehyung get in? Fuck, did Jungkook get in? What am I thinking, of course they did. They were so confident, there's no way they didn't. And they're going to go, together, become top students and… And together… while I'm, I'm… I'm…_

"Jimin-ah…"

A knock. A feeble knock behind him.

Jimin sinks his head between his arms crossed over his knees.

No.
He can't see his mother's face right now. No, not right now. He can't bear to see the disappointment. He can't believe he disappointed her one more time.

"Jiminnie…" she calls again, and this time her voice sounds closer, as if she's sitting by the other side of the door too. Jimin's throat closes up. "Open up, baby, it's mommy."

It's all it takes.

A sob chokes him up and he breaks down in tears. His shoulders shake and there's no way he can hold it in any longer. Not the sobs, not the tears, not the devastating humiliation of once again not being enough, not making it.

He cries so hard that he chokes once, then twice and without understanding how it happens, he's suddenly on his mother's lap while she cradles his head and pleads him to take deep breaths. Jimin can't see her expression past the tears but he knows she must not look good in this situation. He's so ashamed, she must be so embarrassed to have a son like him.

"M-m-m-mom, I—"

"Shhh, shh…" she pushes his fringe back, trying to soothe his anxiety.

But Jimin shakes his head, relentless.

"Mom, I'm so—" he coughs in the middle of a sob, "s-so sorry… So, so, so sorry..."

"Shhh, don't say that, it's okay, it's okay… Mommy's here, mhm? You're fine, baby, don't cry like that, okay? We're good…"

Jimin doesn't understand why her words ignite the reverse effect on him. Maybe it's because he feels even more guilty for burdening her to comfort him and say the things he wants to hear just to be a good mother when in fact she must feel like he's such a failure. Jimin wouldn't be able to blame her, because he is. A failure, can't ever do anything right, make anyone proud.

There's a rapidly growing blackhole inside him and he rolls right into it, doesn't ask for help and doesn't call for anyone, either. He wasn't able to make it, so he deserves it. He deserves to suffer through it all alone.

That's what urges to swallow his tears and calm his breathing to tranquilize his mother. He fakes he's fine until she leaves the room to make him some tea, and proceeds to fake it again when she comes back, despite the swollen red eyes.

He allows her to tell him meaningless words that he doesn't hear, but shakes his head to pretend that he's listening. And when she leaves the room to leave him be, Jimin feels like the most alone person in the world.

The fact he's expecting it doesn't mean it does not shatter him in a thousand more pieces when he receives the excited messages from both Jungkook and Taehyung telling him they got in. Jimin turns off his phone entirely after this and forces his eyes shut until he actually falls asleep and bypasses the entire afternoon, just to be awake all night staring at the ceiling in mute fear.
He sleeps the rest of the next day too, and when his mom comes to wake him up to tell him Jungkook is outside and wants to talk to him, he simply turns around and closes his eyes again.

By 2 am or something, his stomach gets the best of him and Jimin forces his body to move to the kitchen to find something to eat. It's only when he's munching on a barely kept sandwich against the counter does he notice the soft snoring coming from the living room. Jimin looks from over his shoulder and catches sight of Taehyung all shrunken in a fetal position to fit his massive body on the small couch.

He sighs, and finishes his sandwich considering his options.

None of them seem to get him out of that situation unharmed while being a good friend. So he sucks it up and after some good minutes of trying to find the courage, Jimin taps Taehyung's shoulder to wake him up.

"Tae… Taehyungie…"

The boy startles slightly, waking up alert in a sitting position.

"Jiminnie…" he mumbles confused upon seeing Jimin's face. "What…"

Jimin straightens his posture and releases another sigh. "Come on, let's go to the bedroom."

Taehyung follows him like a puppy, dragging the pillow and the blanket Jimin's mom probably gave him.

When they lay down to cuddle, Jimin ends up being the small spoon and he has to will a lot of his self control not to cry on the spot when he thinks this might be one of the last times he and Taehyung ever cuddle like this.

The younger has an arm wrapped around his waist and his forehead pressed against Jimin's shoulder.

It's only after some long and torturing minutes that Taehyung speaks,

"I'm not gonna go."

He doesn't waste a second in answering him.

"Don't be stupid."

"I'm not, I'm serious. I don't want to."

Jimin recalls the series of overjoyed messages Taehyung sent him when he got the news and a bitter taste floods his mouth. He's tired of people lying to his face and saying the things he wants to hear, just because they're scared of hurting his feelings.

"Taehyungie, we've been dreaming about that since forever." he reasons.

"Exactly, we as in us, you and me, not me alone."

Jimin sighs. He really doesn't need Taehyung to make this any more difficult than it already is. They've been planning this together, right, but Jimin also knows Taehyung hates his life here. He hates living with his parents, hates having to interact with them and just hates their draining presence in general. This is a way out for him and Jimin can't ever take this away from him. Or Jungkook. Not that Jungkook bears the same relationship with his parents as Taehyung does, but he
also wants to break free from their wings, wants to fetch for himself, be the owner of his own choices, his own life, and in a way, he's never going to get that here. He'll always be under the influence of his parents connections, his parents money and he doesn't want that. For the both of them, the scholarship is an opportunity of a whole new life they've been dreaming about, just without... Jimin in the picture. He can't be so selfish as of to make everything about him.

"You know that if you don't go, you'll only make it worse for me, right?" Jimin sincerely tells him in that moment.

The silence lasts a minute.

Or maybe two.

It's tainted when Taehyung starts crying against his back, and it's the worst moment of the night.

Jimin doesn't cry, doesn't feel like he has the right to when he's the one withering one of the supposed to be happiest moments of their lives into this. Into his best friend crying over their imminent farewell that already hangs over their heads like a threat.

He intertwines his fingers with Taehyung's and rubs circular motions on the back of his hand with his thumb.

"I'm sorry." Jimin whispers to him in a lonely attempt of self-respect that allows him to apologize.

Taehyung doesn't say anything, but he cries harder, and harder, until he's out of breath and eventually falls asleep hours later with his head on Jimin's pillow instead of his own.

Jimin stays awake the entire night.

Dealing with Jungkookie is supposed to be easier, since he got the pre-training with Taehyung last night.

But it's not.

Jimin has been avoiding thinking about anything related to him and their parting, but—

It all comes tumbling down with a knock on his door somewhere in the evening, when he's numbly folding the clothes on his bed.

Jungkook slides in the room with a careful expression and Jimin freezes.

He stalls by the door, though, hands on his back as the two of them hold a stare that speaks more than a thousand words could.

Jimin feels the first crack in his heart surging.

When Jungkook speaks, his voice is weak, nowhere near the livid energy he usually harbors on it.

"You know I'm staying, right?"
Jimin sighs. He shouldn't have to go through this again.

"Jungkookie…"

"No, hyung." he sounds annoyed, his jaws are tight. Jimin gulps and Jungkook looks away. "Tell me one good reason why I should go."

"Jungkookie, we've talked about this before. You told me, your parents—"

"So what? I don't care." his eyes return to carve holes into Jimin's. They're shining with unshed tears and it fucking breaks Jimin to know he's the cause of it. "So because I want to stop being a spoiled asshole I have to lose you? No."

Eyes falling to his fingers nervously picking at one another over his lap, Jimin argues weakly. "You'll not lose me…"

"How the hell not?!" the younger snaps, "Five fucking years, hyung!" the reminder pangs Jimin's heart and he squeezes his eyes shut.

"Jungkookie, we…” he swallows thickly, "It's okay, we can make it. I mean, we can— We can video chat everyday a-and we can visit each other during breaks and— I've seen people make it, so why can't we?"

"But I don't wanna make it like this!" Jungkook's voice is high and he sounds desperate. When Jimin looks at him, he realizes he's crying and his own eyes fill with tears immediately. Jungkook slides down the door and takes his head into his hands, sobbing, "This is not fair, I… I want to be close to you, and I want to hold you, I want to see you whenever I want, I-I want to have you when I feel like shit."

Jimin swallows the lump in his throat and walks up to him. He sits down in front of him and pulls his hands into his chest, where his heart is hammering like it wants to break out.

"Hey… Jungkookie, hey…” Jimin runs a thumb over the tears on his cheeks and attempts a small smile, "Don't cry, it's okay…"

The younger frowns, more tears spilling past his lashes. "It's not okay, hyung…” he sniffs, and covers Jimin's hand on his face with his own, "Please, don't make me go. Tell me to stay."

Jimin bites the inner part of his bottom lip until it splits, and the bitter taste of blood floods his mouth. His voice is barely audible when he answers, "You know I can't do that."

Jungkook squeezes his eyes shut and shakes his head, "Why? Of course you can. Don't you love me? Hyung, please, please. Tell me you want me to stay… Please."

Jimin's vision gets blurrier and blurrier, and he can't help thinking Jungkook is being so unfair right now. His chest aches so bad that it feels like it's being torn apart.

"Of course I love you…” he chokes up, "How can you even ask me that?"

The boy cries harder.

"I love you too… So why… why…” he tightens his grip over Jimin's hands, "Hyung. I don't want to do that. I hate having this conversation, I hate thinking about it, I just don't want to."

Jimin sighs. "Jungkookie… Please, you're not thinking straight right now… This… I know it feels
like it, but this is not the end of the world. This is your future we're talking about, right? How much more do you think I'd hate myself if I was the one holding you back?"

Jungkook shakes his head. "Don't say that."

"It's true… Hey, look at me… Jeon Jungkook, look at me… It's not… It's not a few miles on the account that will make me give up on you… Give up on us… Right?" Jimin's first tears slide down his face, because he knows this is the ultimatum. "We can do this."

He's not convinced. "Why does it feel like I'm losing you, though?" he sobs, shoulders shaking and Jimin squeezes his fingers on his. He can't say it out loud, but he knows. He feels it too.

A hiccup escapes from his throat.

"You're not losing me." Jimin argues weakly, "You're not losing anything. We'll be okay, mhm? Promise me we'll be okay…"

Jungkook opens his lips, but nothing comes out. "H-hyung…"

"No… Jungkook, please, promise me… Please…"

The younger seems to fight a lot of things in that moment. He squeezes his eyes shut and frowns deeply, head shaking as if he wants to deny something. But suddenly he buries his face on Jimin's neck and more tears stream down both their faces. He holds Jimin so tight that it hurts, but he can't find in himself to complain, or even mind the pain. The inside burn is worst.

It's a few minutes down the clock — or maybe a lot, Jimin has long lost track of the time —, but eventually Jungkook's sobs subdue into light tremblings, so Jimin attempts in blocking his own tears too.

He's still waiting for Jungkook, desperately needs him to say it, but what he receives instead is a kiss on the neck. It starts off feeble and barely even there, but it escalates quickly.

When Jungkook grabs him by the nape and starts to suck his neck, Jimin whimpers. He's too vulnerable for this, but be still indulges Jungkook when he comes forward and kisses him. Kisses him so hard like he might die without it. Kisses him like it's the last time.

Jimin's tears return in the middle of the kiss and he has to hit Jungkook's chest to break them apart.

"Jungkook…" he sobs, "Promise me… Promise me right now…"

Panic is already rising in his veins at all the time Jungkook is taking to say it and Jimin thinks he might break for real if he doesn't hear it.

But the roles have reversed and now Jungkook is the one softly drying the tears from his cheeks with his fingers. He kisses beneath Jimin's lashes.

"I-I promise we'll be okay." more tears overflow from him at that, but it's with a sense of relief, "I love you."

Jimin takes his hands on his and squeezes it. "I love you too," he hiccups.

Jungkook proceeds to leave another uncountable kisses around his face, until Jimin is not shaking anymore, until he's breathing with ease.

For the time being, it is enough.
Jimin has always been great at it — hiding away his feelings, mastered at masking it so well that he could fool anyone. Sometimes even himself.

So it comes as no surprise when he becomes the rock for anyone to lean on when they stumble. He fakes smiles so real that it triggers others smiles as well — uses so well constructed words that he convinces both Jungkook and Taehyung that this is no big deal. He jokes and he laughs and he spends as much time with them as he possibly can.

They travel on the 15th of January and Jimin is numb inside.

Christmas feels like torture. The whole families reunite in Jimin's house — Jungkook's parents, his mother and her boyfriend, Jihyun and his girlfriend, Taehyung and some of their friends. His father misses the holidays with them, because he chooses to spend it with his girlfriend's family, but it's not like Jimin has the energy to care. He spends it all entertaining everyone in his play, smiling so wide that his cheeks hurt.

New Years is a constant reminder of a year to come without his best friend and without Jungkook. This is the one that's hardest to fake, even more because this time it's spent in Jungkook's home and Jimin feels the most alone he has felt in years in that big house. For the half of the night, Jungkook has to engage with the guests, so Jimin sits quietly beside Taehyung and their friends until Jungkook's grandma approaches him and takes him for a breather outside.

She seems to be the only one who sees through him, but even so, she doesn't touch the subject. Instead, she talks about what she usually talks with him. Her funny antics cheer him up until Jungkook comes to collect the both of them to warn that the countdown is near.

They kiss in the first minute of the year and Jimin nearly cries, but he holds onto Jungkook's shirt and convinces himself that it's alright before he can break down.

The rest of the days are a blur in his mind. Every passing moment is one less moment beside Jungkook and Taehyung and this reminder drains Jimin little by little, every day.

Jungkook cries the hardest in the airport. He refuses to let Jimin go and his mother has to tug him into her arms, so Jimin can say goodbye to Taehyung.

For some reason, Jungkook had him numb, but seeing Taehyung's teary eyes has all air punched out of his lungs.

A timeline runs through his mind for all the years that they've known each other and he can't help but feel like he's being robbed. Robbed of everything he loves in a single unfair move. He still doesn't cry, but he hugs Taehyung through it until he can stand straight without Jimin fearing his legs might give out.

This time, when he holds Jungkook, the pain is different. It's so much worse. He's leaving, this is the last time Jimin is seeing him in maybe a whole year and there's nothing he can do to change
that. He's powerless and he can do nothing but watch as some of the most important people in his life simply walk away from him.

He feels the most miserable when Jungkook kisses him, one, two, three, six times, and continues on kissing him until their flight is called.

This is the time Jimin hears it, the sound of his heart breaking, but he smiles at the two of them and wipes their tears, fondly kissing their foreheads.

Taehyung rips the bandage all at once and stomps away after getting one last look at Jimin's face.

Jungkook is not so easy.

He cries on his neck until it's the last call for him to board. He drags his feet towards the gate and he looks back the entire time.

Jimin is falling in pieces, but he raises his hand and waves him goodbye with a smile. He mouths *i love you* before Jungkook disappears and the boy says it back while rubbing his cheeks off his tears.

Jimin's mother is waiting for him when he breaks down, falls lifeless on the ground of the airport and cries like something is being ripped from deep within him, out from his throat.

People rush around him, talking on the phone, laughing loudly and running after their children. Because life goes on. But Jimin stays frozen in place like time has stopped. Maybe if he wishes hard enough and it becomes his reality, he can stop the plane from flying away.

His mother's hand on his back is what snaps him out of the trance, and suddenly all the noise in his ears is clearer, his senses are heightened.

And everything hurts.

Because when Jimin looks around, he's alone.

They're not there.

They're not fucking there.

Chapter End Notes

this is my fastest and longest update so far.................hah..............laughs in tired

twitter
TW: i know jimin's mental health issues have always been addressed on the other chapters but i feel the need to place a tw here because it's relatively worse. also i'm sorry for not putting this in the tags before, i have no idea why, but it completely slipped my mind and i've been anxious abt this ever since i realized so i'm terribly sorry if i ever triggered anything on anyone, it was never my intention :( also!!! he doesn't on this chapter but he's going to get professional treatment i promise

TW2: there's cheating >misunderstanding< in this chapter, please have this in mind in case it's triggering for you

two updates in one month is this rly the author who normally takes 7 months to update lmao yes it is lets board on the angst train gays

See the end of the chapter for more notes

If I had told you that I'd never hurt you,

would you believe?

Home used to be a place.

It was easier like that, when it was an unmoving, inanimate object.

But now home has big doe-eyes, playful and genuine, always ready to give without ever bothering to receive. Now home has a smell that Jimin misses, strong arms that are the source of all the warmth he needs. Now home has a smile, a voice, a quirky way of sorting clothes that it’s too endearing to be mad at how long it takes to tidy the closet.

Now home has a loud and boisterous laugh that draws everyone’s attention. Now home tells I love you when Jimin is supposedly asleep.

Now home is a free, glowing person. Home is not attached to solid ground anymore.

Now home can walk away.

“I miss you.” he whispers quietly, probably the most recurring sentence that has fallen from his lips
Jungkook smiles, and although the connection is pixelated and lagging, Jimin hugs his pillow a little tighter. “I miss you more.”

He wants to cry. Because—

“That’s not possible.”

But he doesn’t. He never cries in front of Jungkook. Doesn’t want to be the dead weight pulling him down when he’s so elated — Jimin can see it in his eyes, the glint.

He wonders if putting up a facade for the other person’s happiness is what real love feels like.

It hurts.

Jungkook proceeds to argue, apparently a hundred percent sure he is the one longing the most. Jimin doubts it.

He is in a new, foreign country, meeting new people, making new memories while Jimin is stuck with everything that reminds him — them. He is stuck with the bed where they had their first time, he is stuck with the beach where they said their I love yous.

"Are you in my room?" the younger questions after a while.

Jimin hums in agreement. "That’s how much I miss you."

This time Jungkook doesn’t argue.

Jimin hangs up moments later after he reassures Jungkook everything is fine— his voice sounds tight because he caught a cold. Last time was the exhaustion. And the one before that he was sleepy.

Jungkook buys it every time.

Perhaps that’s what kills him the most.

"I've literally had enough of this shit."

Jimin groans and rolls to the other side of the bed.

"Jimin, get up."

"Close the curtains." he nearly roars, annoyed, pressing a pillow to his ears.

"I said up!" Eunbi emphasizes, voice strong and loud as well.

All his patience and good manners goes down the drain.
He sits up in one single abrupt motion, breathing heavily.

"What the fuck do you want?"

Her long hair falls over her small shoulders while she crouches down around the room after having opened the curtains, picking up the clothes scattered on the ground, seemingly unbothered by Jimin's outburst. After she collects all the dirty clothes across the room, she steps closer and snatches Jimin's blanket as well.

He gasps in shock.

"Wh—"

He's hit with a clean towel on his face. "Shower. Now."

Jimin is beyond angry. He's outraged. How dare she—

"I'm not fucking showering," he bites back so his sister stares at him with an eyebrow raised, unimpressed.

"Oh, are you not?" and then, while balancing all the clothes and blanket with one arm, she reaches for her phone is her back pocket. "Fine, I guess I'll just have to call Jungkook and ask him if he's aware you've been barely eating for a fucking month—"

Jimin immediately pales. All the fight melts right off him in a matter of seconds. He gets up, tripping on his own feet.

"Stop, stop!" he urges, halting Eunbi's movements. They hold a stare battle for five seconds or so, before she pockets her phone. Jimin's shoulders sag and he releases a breath of relief. His sister's eyes seem to have softened too.

"Go shower, please." she asks more nicely, "Everything you need is in the bathroom already."

And with that, she leaves the room, and Jimin is all alone.

He contemplates just ignoring everything she said and going back to sleep, but he also doesn't want to be difficult. He know he has been being a burden lately. He doesn't like it, but at the same time, he just wants to be left alone.

At last, his mother's downcast expression in the back of his mind is what pulls him together. He slowly reaches out for the towel that fell to the ground when he got up, and makes out of his bedroom.

It's strange.

It feels like he hasn't seen his own house in ages.

Jimin gulps, hearing his mother and Eunbi's quiet voices talking in the kitchen.

He closes his eyes.

If his mother walked over her own proud and resumed to call Eunbi to seek for help she must really be considering this an emergency.

He doesn't dare stop long enough to make out what they're saying and walks straight to the bathroom.
The warm water is foreign, but welcome. In all honesty, Jimin doesn't remember the last time he showered. Everytime he did, he'd remember when him and Jungkook showered together in his birthday, and somehow would end up on the ground, against the cold tiles and unable to breath. So he stopped trying. But staying in his room reminded him of Jungkook too. So all he could do was sleep. Sleep and wake up with his phone ringing when Jungkook called him. Sometimes he'd reject the video calls in order to clean up and look decent before he could call him back, using the excuse he didn't see it. And sometimes he didn't have strength even for that, so he'd just pick up under the blankets, as vulnerable as he looked. And those were the times Jungkook would be extra loving, extra caring. Telling Jimin how much he loved him twice every five minutes. He was grateful but also overwhelmed for worrying him, so he refrained from doing it a lot. Just when he was specially needy.

Two weeks in the long-distance thing, Jungkook learned how to phone sex. And those were the only times Jimin felt alive. Those were the times he could close his eyes and feel Jungkook close to him. But it was only for some passing moments. When the high of his orgasm slipped right through his fingers and Jungkook wasn't there to hug him afterwards was devastating. He learned how to hold his ground while they were talking, though. Jimin also liked to sleep with their call ongoing, to listen to Jungkook's faint breathing on the other end. It added to the illusion that he was by his side, and honestly, Jimin would take anything he could at this point. The hardest part, however, was to pretend he wasn't crying when Jungkook would think he was asleep and would begin to murmur sweet nothings on the phone. Telling Jimin he loved and missed him. He'd always sound extremely vulnerable and much sadder than he normally did when they talked while Jimin wasn't supposedly sleeping. He never addressed those times, though — was scared Jungkook would stop if he knew Jimin was listening.

"Jimin-ah?" there is a soft knock on the bathroom door. It's his mom. "Everything alright?"

He swallows in dry, and only then realizes he has been standing motionless under the water for who knows how long. He blinks, looking at the door.

"Yeah. Yeah, I'll be out in a minute."

Jimin washes his greasy hair and uses all his will to not think about anything, leave his mind void of any thoughts. After washing the soap away from his body and the shampoo out of his hair, he wraps himself on the towel and half heartedly dries his skin before getting in his clothes.

Staring in the mirror is a punch in the stomach. He looks awful. Absolutely awful. He can't believe he has been letting Jungkook see him like this for the past month. Is the connection really that bad that Jungkook couldn't notice him like this or he just didn't care?

Jimin ruffles his wet hair and closes his eyes. He can't have these kind of thoughts.

Coming out of the bathroom and letting the cold wind blow against his warm skin rises shivers over his arms. He walks over to the living room with his dirty clothes in hands and finds both his siblings and his mother watching tv together. It's kind of an odd sight. He forces a smile.

"Hey."

Everyone smiles back at him, almost like they're trying to communicate how happy they are that he left his bedroom.

Wow curiously gets up and comes running to him when he realizes who it is. Jimin smiles sadly, crouching down to pet him.
"Hi, baby. Have you eaten today?" Jimin asks in a baby tone, caressing his ears softly. The sight of him pangs his chest, but he pushes through it. The dog licks his chin in response.

His mother is the one to get up, coming to him and taking the clothes from his arms before dropping a kiss on his forehead.

"Hey, love. You smell nice." she says and rushes off to the laundry to discard the clothes in a basket. Jimin doesn't even have the time to stop her and argue he could do that, because in a blink of an eye she's already back to the kitchen searching for a plate.

"I cooked lunch, will you eat a little?" she asks and it's such a hopeful tone that it'd be just cruel if Jimin denied her.

"Sure." he agrees, getting up and taking a seat at one of the stools by the counter. Wow loyally follows him and lays right by his foot. Jimin can't help but smile, ruffling his fur softly with the tip of his toes.

Eunbi props an elbow on the backrest of the couch so she can turn around and look at him. "Hey. Wanna go somewhere with me and Hoseok today?"

He snorts. "Thanks, but I'm not currently looking for third-wheeling."

She rolls her eyes. "Jin is coming too, you ass."

"Where to?"

"Seoul."

Jimin frowns. "What the hell are you going to do in Seoul? Thanks," he says when his mother softly places his plate in front of him and then tries not to grimace at how much food there is in there.

"They want to visit KNUA."

Oh.

Right, they're probably gonna attend there next semester. The two of them delayed taking the transfer exam, because they have a showcase with their dance group in May, and besides it being a big opportunity, since many companies are gonna attend, they didn't want to ditch the group and leave them short of two members suddenly.

So yeah, more two people to leave Jimin in the middle of the year. How exciting.

He feels his stomach churning.

"Uh, I'm not sure I want to, noona..." he says, munching on the rice with effort. For some reason it tastes bland.

"Aw, come on. It'll be fun... We can stay somewhere the night and come back tomorrow. Mhm? It'll be so nice... Please, Jiminie." she adds aegyo in that last sentence, making Jimin snort. He scans around the room and finds a backpack by the side of the front door.

Shaking his head, he deadpans, "You already packed for me, didn't you?"

She doesn't even look ashamed, just amused. "Well, gotta make it seem like you have a choice, don't I?"
Jimin chuckles shortly. Yeah, that's Eunbi alright.

"The boys are coming to pick us up with the uber in twenty, so eat up!"

He looks down at his plate with all that food and sighs.

Yeah. Eat up.

An hour and a half into the trip, the song in his earbuds gets interrupted by his phone vibrating. He looks down with his heart already unbridled and smiles at the picture that's popping up.

"Hey." he picks up.

"Hey." there's some ruffling on the other side of the line, before it finally gets quiet with just the other's soft breathing. "So guess what just happened."

"Good or bad?"

"Bad."

"You found another boyfriend and is calling me to say we should break up."

"Ha ha. Very funny, Park Jimin. But, no, not in this reality." Jimin was truly just teasing (partially), but hearing Jungkook's response warms his heart a little. "I actually was missing you so much that it made me sick, so I was desperately craving for some ddeokbokki... I know, corny, but it reminds me of you and our first date, so what can I do?" Jimin chuckles quietly, cheeks flushing. "Anyway, I went down to a korean restaurant to look for it, but it fucking tasted like ass." This time, Jimin throws his head back, laughing loudly, mindless of the other people in the train. He stifles it with a hand when sleeping Eunbi shuffles where she lays on Hoseok's shoulder, also asleep. Jin is beside him, listening to music and texting someone, unbothered. "Yeah, you can laugh alright, but like, it was awful."

Jimin smirks, biting his lip. "Why, I thought you liked eating ass..."

He's immediately satisfied of his joke when he hears Jungkook snorting. "Yeah, your ass. Which, by the way, don't remind me, please. This whole thing began because I'm missing you, so I'm trying to cope, still." Jimin's cheeks darken more, his heartbeats fastening. "Anyway, it was so bad, that I actually got sick, so now I'm skipping class at home with a stomach ache."

Jimin coos. "Oh no... My poor baby. Have you taken medicine?"

"Yeah, it's nothing serious. Taehyung is just unable to use our bathroom for the time being, because I'm taking a shit every two minutes."

Jimin laughs again, but quieter this time. "You're ridiculous."

"Mhm, tell me about it. Hey, is that train noise?"
"Uhh, yeah, actually. I'm going to Seoul."

"Seoul?" Jungkook sounds confused. "What for?"

"Hobi-hyung and Jinnie-hyung are going to visit K-Arts since they're transferring there next semester so I was forced to tag along."

"Forced?"

"Eunbi."

"Oh." he laughs, "But, hey, isn't that a good thing? It's the biggest arts school in Korea, maybe you'll like it."

"Yeah, I don't know…"

"What's wrong?" Jungkook asks, but at Jimin's lack of response he sighs and continues, "Hyung, we didn't talk about it yet, but you really should decide what you're going to do now, y'know…"

Jimin releases a sigh too. A tired one, at that. "I know. And dance seems cool, but— We talked about this already, Kook, I need the money."

The younger seems to weigh his words for a moment, before he speaks again. "I think you should talk with your mom about that. She could ease your worries a little, I guess." there's a pause before he continues, "I know you think I'm not the most proper person to talk about this, because I'm crazy privileged and I may not understand all your struggles, but hyung, think about this. You say you want to provide for your family, and alright, that's cool, but it's your life. And your mom and Jihyun are your family right now, but you're going to have a new family one day. Your mom is dating, Jihyun is too, someday the both of you will get out of home and she'll continue to live her life. And it's fine and beautiful that you think about helping her even when you're not home anymore, but do you really want a job that you hate when you're living by yourself and the both of them are with their own lives too? You don't know what's to come tomorrow, she could be promoted from her job and start earning a lot more, and let's be honest, the reason she struggles so much right now is because she has to raise the both of you on her own. It won't be like that in ten years, when both you and Jihyun have your own jobs, it'll be much easier for her."

Jimin chews on his bottom lip, watching the scenery outside mix into formless colourful flashes from the speed of the train. Jungkook's making a lot of sense right now and he had never thought about it like that, but still…

"It's not only that, Jungkookie. I mean, I get it, you're probably right, but also— You said it, it's the biggest university in Korea. I've been training as a hobby, for what, half a year or less? Besides that, I've never taken real dance classes, everything I knew before meeting the hyungs, I taught myself in my bedroom, watching videos on the internet and stuff. It was always for fun. How do you think I can compete with people that have been doing this and only this their entire life, since they were kids? I couldn't even pass on something that I dedicated who knows how much time into and that I was actually serious about, so how am I going to pass on this?"

"Were you really?" Jungkook questions and Jimin frowns, confused.

"What?"

"Serious about it."

He feels immediately offended. "Of course I was." It was mine and Taehyung's dream. You were
"Hyung, you ditched me and Taehyung more than I can count on my fingers on our study sessions to go practice with Hoseok-hyung and Jin-hyung. And I know that near the exam you stopped practicing, but like... I don't know. Even on our break, when yes, you spent the entirety of it studying, but you wouldn't even find time for me, yet you would for dance. And okay, maybe you were serious about the exchange, but you were just as serious about dance." Jimin thinks about it, but remains silent, "I'm not saying it as a bad thing, or trying to accuse you of anything. Truly, I just want to see you happy, but I think that's something you should consider. I've seen you dance, hyung, and even if you were doing it only for fun," he says that in a mocking tone, which pulls a small smile from Jimin's lips, "you were magical. I think if you performed in front of those people who trained their whole life and then said you only practiced for some months and for fun, they'd actually want to hit you."

Jimin laughs, some of the tension dissipating off his muscles.

"Shut up."

"Please, promise you'll think about it."

Jimin sighs, relenting at last. There's no hurt in trying, he guesses. And he should really talk with his mom about this.

"I will..."

"Alright. I want to know all about the visit!" he says animatedly and Jimin sinks a little more on his seat.

They remain on the phone for nearly the entirety of the train ride until Jimin is forced to hang up since they arrived.

"I have to go now, but I'll call you before going to bed." Jimin says, happy that they're at least in the same timezone and that's not a problem for phone calls. He should call Taehyung soon too, or else he's going to whine for the entirety of the phone call when Jimin does.

"Okay, I'll be waiting. I love you, hyung."

The oh-so-familiar warmth spreads over his chest at the words.

"I love you, Kook." he answers, and after they stay in silence for a few moments more, listening to each other's breath, Jimin hangs up, longing clutching at his chest more than it ever did before.

Seoul is chaotic. Not that Busan is a quiet city, but there's a hint of capital in Seoul that quite baffles Jimin. First, the magnitude of the buildings and constructions are on another level and, also, the way people run by as if they're on a marathon of their own and not in a living world with the rest of the people around them. He doesn't mind it, though. He's been there when he was younger, but he didn't really have solid memories of it.
After the conversation with Jungkook, he decided to, at least, go through this experience with an open mind. He knows it is what everyone is expecting from him and he feels like he has let people down enough times. And besides, he's doing it for himself too. He can't deny that excitement bubbles up from deep within him the moment he steps in the campus.

The building is an infinite display of glass windows that are quite the face of modernity, but the facade is not what leaves him restless. It's the inside. The longer they walk through the hallways, passing by classrooms with students painting art pieces or engaging in acting lessons, the more he fidgets with his shirt, looking around and searching for the dance department.

When they arrive in it, though, his heart thumps and it's quite an odd thing to experience when Jungkook is not there — he has become used to his heart reacting to the younger boy only, so his breathing staggers when he notices it losing rhythm inside his chest.

Hoseok and Jin are all over the place, smiling and talking animatedly, while Jimin is just walking around with his jaw hanging as he peaks inside every classroom that he manages. He drifts away from the group along the way, too entranced in his own thoughts to care, walking further into the hallways when Jin and Hoseok, as the social butterflies they are, start to have a conversation with some dance students they bump into. Eunbi has also trailed behind a while ago, watching a girl paint an art piece through the glass doors of a huge atelier. Jimin walks alone, atent ears to the muffled sounds of music seeping through the doors' cracks, when he catches the strings of a familiar melody.

He follows it, interested, and smiles faintly when he finds the doors to the room partially open.

Inside, there's a person only, and after some observation, Jimin assumes it's a guy, despite the slim figure and soft features. He's undoubtedly gorgeous, but that's not what swipes Jimin off his feet. True to words, he's seen a lot of great dancers with his own eyes. Take Seokjin and Hoseok, for example, and damn — Hyoyeon.

But there's something about this guy, that he can't place a finger on. Maybe it's the energy, but he really does have the atmosphere of a focused professional that has been doing this for his entire life. Jimin can feel his stomach dropping and he suddenly feels sick. He's wonderful and if this is the level of people who study here he's doomed. It's maddening, because he realizes he doesn't have even an inch of a chance. He's so fucking fucked.

The trance he enters is so deep that he doesn't realize when the guy gracefully twirls around, yet comes to a sudden halt, staring directly to where he stands. It's only when he clears his throat that Jimin blinks, startled, and averts his eyes, self conscious.

"Hi?" the guy tries, when Jimin can't step off the cycle of opening and closing his mouth while feeling his cheeks heat in a scary speed. He's so embarrassed for being caught staring that he's stripped of any coherent words. "Can I help you?" he presses, and despite the words being a little passive-aggressive, his tone is gentle, and that drives Jimin even more timid.

"I, uh— I'm sorry." he stammers, if he couldn't look even more stupid. The black hair of the other man gives him a kind of intimidating presence, it doesn't matter the soft smile he wears on his lips. "I was just— um, passing by, and you were— Mhm, you're really great." he chooses to finish it with, hoping to not make a bigger fool out of himself.

The guy chuckles, and it's a bit of an airy sound that leads Jimin to believe he's, too, embarrassed. "Ah, thank you." he bows politely, so Jimin hurries to do the same, accidentally hitting the door that's not completely open with his shoulder and immediately hoping to die on the spot. Although,
his clumsiness seem to actually entertain the black haired guy, seeing how he giggles behind his fist and offers, "Ah, you're cute." Jimin can't find anything to answer to that either, so he just resumes to awkwardly nod and stand there like an idiot, "Do you study here?"

"Ah! Not— not really, I'm here on a visit with my friends." he shows off his visitor card hanging from his neck.

"Ohh, I see. Do you want to study here, then?"

Jimin looks down, shuffling his feet. He can't say he's with high hopes after watching that. "I don't know, really. I'm nowhere near what you guys can do."

"What, do you dance?"

He scratches his cheek, and still can't meet the other man's gaze. "Barely."

"Are you being humble? I feel like it's a lie." he teases and Jimin marvels at how soft around the edges his voice is. He speaks with calm and gentleness — if anything, it's soothing to hear him speak.

"I'm really not... Let's put it like this. You're a professional, I'm a beginner. The control you have over your body is crazy." he explains, risking a glance his way and blushing harder when he catches the guy smiling softly.

Jimin doesn't know why he still feels so intimidated, but being around someone who's so good at something he's not leaves him feeling small.

"I'm flattered, but I'm not a pro. If you ever come to study here, you can look for me, though. I could teach you some of my body control." the black haired blinks coyly and Jimin is so taken aback that it gets him a few moments to understand he's flirting.

He immediately feels inadequate. Stammering, he tries to find the words, but he also can't exactly just spill I have a boyfriend, because it wasn't a direct flirting and he could always have just misinterpreted. The guy could just be offering his help and Jimin doesn't want to be taken as an entitled asshole before he even has the chance to step in the university as a real student.

"Ah, thank you." he ends up with, bowing awkwardly. Before he even has time to elaborate further, he's granted another question.

"Where are you from? I hear some satoori in your voice."

That's a safe question.

"Busan."

"Oh, Busan, really? And do you have a name, mystery beginner?"

Jimin blushes at the usage of his own words against him and wishes desperately to stop reddening at every damn thing this man says, because he could be misinterpreted.

"I'm Park Jimin. Nice to meet you."

"I'm Lee Taemin. Nice to meet you, too." he bows back and this time he's the one who seems a little embarrassed. "I wanted to ask you to dance for me a little, but I think that's off the question, right?"
Jimin laughs. "Right on cue."

Taemin sighs in disappointment. "I was just looking for fairness, y'know. Since you saw me dance."

"I promise it'd be nothing you haven't already seen."

"Every dancer is something we've never seen. We're all different." he kindly corrects Jimin, to which he smiles a bit bashful.

"See, even in the rhetorics you're a pro and I'm a beginner." Jimin jokes and oddly finds pleasure in making Taemin laugh.

"Now, I bet that's a lie too."

Jimin is opening his mouth to answer when he hears Eunbi's voice calling for him. He looks back to find her at the end of the hallway, so he waves to show where he is. Once she spots him, she starts to jog in his direction.

He twists around to take a last look at Taemin. "I should get going, they're looking for me."

"Oh. Okay. But if we bump into each other here someday you have to promise me you'll dance for me."

Jimin doubts that will ever happen. So that's why he answers,

"Promise."

Taemin opens a bright smile and tilts his head to the side, waving him goodbye. "I'll be waiting, then. It's a promise."

He opens his mouth to respond, but it's in that moment that Eunbi grabs his arm, tugging him backwards, "Where have you been? Hobi is looking for you." she peeks inside the classroom, so Jimin can't help but do the same. Taemin already has his back to them, but his face can be seen through the mirrors, "Damn, who's that? He's fine."

Jimin flushes, immediately pushing her away from the doorway and hearing distance. "Shut up! You know he could hear you, right?" he whisper-yells in the middle of the hallway.

She simply shrugs. "So? What bad is it in letting people know they're hot? He is."

"Okay, Hobi-hyung is looking for me, right? Let's go." he cuts her off, wrapping his arm around hers and pulling her away from the classroom.

Eunbi narrows her eyes at him, but overall remains quiet, to which he is grateful.

It happens Hoseok was looking for him because he befriended a pair of female dancers that are hyping them up to use the studio they're gonna practice for the afternoon, so they can dance together and he wanted Jimin to join. He follows suit, but is reluctant at first, sitting on the back with Eunbi and simply watching them, evaluating their skills and comparing himself, mentally noting things he should work on. When it's time he can't run away from it any longer nor brush them off, Jimin ends up in the center of the room, performing an upbeat song that he had half-assedly choreographed in his room during boring times.

The afternoon passes by in a flash and he's startled to find himself smiling when he steps out in the
corridor. He hasn't felt so alive in a while — the frantic heartbeats are still thrumming throughout his whole body and he doesn't know what to do with himself. The moment he fishes his phone out of his pocket to call Jungkook, it starts vibrating in his hand and he wears the biggest smile staring at the ID. Right on time.

Although, he's disrupted when he bumps into someone on his way down the hall.

"Oh, sorry—"

Jimin looks up and is slightly surprised to find Taemin staring back at him with probably the same expression he wears, also looking down at his phone. Different from Jimin, the guy pockets his device to give him his full attention.

"Hey. Didn't think we'd run into each other so soon."

"Ah—" Jimin mumbles, looking down at his phone. He doesn't want to come off as rude, but he also doesn't want to engage in small talk. He just wants to pick up Jungkook's call. "Yeah." is all he chooses to say with a small laugh. He's about to excuse himself, when Taemin asks another question.

"Were you dancing?" he narrows his eyes at him, "You're all sweaty."

"I, um, yeah! My friend bumped into some dancers who asked us to join them, so…” he nervously looks down to his phone, still vibrating. "I have to—"

"So you danced for them, but wouldn't dance for me… I'm hurt." Jimin looks up and finds him with both hands on his hips and a gentle smile that leaves it clear he's joking. When his eyes drift from Jimin's face to his hands, his eyebrows shoot up and Jimin silently wishes he read the baby on the screen. "Oh, sorry, you should probably take that." he says apologetically and Jimin breathes out, relieved.

"Yeah, I'm going to. Bye, sunbaenim!" he bows politely, but Taemin brushes him off.

"Oh, please, just call me hyung. Bye, Jimin-ssi!"

Jimin nods once again, before continuing to walk towards the exit and finally picking up the call.

"Hey." he answers a little breathless, thanks to the intense practice he just had.

"Hey, baby. That took a while. Were you busy?" he asks casually, and Jimin can hear outside noise on the other end, so he assumes Jungkook is walking down the streets.

"Yeah, I was dancing with some students from the uni, since they invited us. It was so cool!" he says, still high off the energy.

"What, really? Are you allowed to use the classrooms when you're not a student?"

Jimin tilts his head, wondering. "I don't know. Probably not, but we weren't caught so that's fine."

Jungkook chuckles at that. "My little troublemaker. But hey, I'm happy for that! You sound really excited."

"I am! I haven't felt like that since you guys were gone, actually." he confesses and hopes he doesn't sound sad, because well, he's not. At least, not right now.

But he can't quite catch Jungkook's reaction, because Eunbi's voice starts to reach his ears as she
talks with the guys in the back and Jimin kind of freezes.

"Did you see the guy Jimin was talking to? Isn't he like the hottest motherfucker you've seen in this entire campus?"

"Hey!" Hobi whines, but Jimin can only focus at how both he and Jungkook fall silent. He's sure Jungkook can hear the conversation, because now they're practically walking behind him. "I'm here, okay?"

"Ah, so what? I'm not blind! Besides, are you going to deny he's hot as fuck? Yah, Park Jimin, you lucky—" she swallows her words the moment Jimin turns around with a murderous gaze pointing to the phone on his ear. She squeezes her lips shut. "Oops. Sorry."

Jimin closes his eyes and releases a sigh, before turning around again and walking faster to put some distance between them, so he can talk privately with Jungkook.

"Mhm, Jungkookie?" he tries, since he still hasn't said anything, "You there?"

"Yeah, mhm…" he chuckles, but it just sounds uncomfortable. Jimin can imagine him ruffling the back of his head, while deciding on his next words, "Uh, hey, what was Eunbi talking about?"

Jimin sighs.

"It's just a guy I met here by accident."

"Just the basics? Like what strangers talk about when they meet. He asked if I studied here, if I danced, these things."

"Mhm…" the younger trails, "Was he really that beautiful?"

"Jungkookie…"

"What? I should know what guys I'm competing with, right?"

Jimin laughs.

"Don't be stupid, you're not competing with anyone."

"Okay, but was he?"

Jimin rolls his eyes.

"He's not you, y'know."

That seems to comfort his boyfriend better, because Jimin swears he hears him cooing.

"Okay… What's his name?"
"Taemin."

"I don't like him." Jungkook declares matter-of-factly.

Jimin throws his head back, laughing.

"You don't even know him!"

"I have a feeling he's prettier than me."

Jimin tsks. "No one's prettier than you."

"Ouch." the younger lets out dramatically, "Wait a minute, I have heart damage." Jimin shakes his head at his antics with a smile on his face. "You just gave me heart damage, I'll be forced to board the next plane to Korea right this second. You deal with it."

That makes him sigh dreamily.

"Please do?"

"You can't say shit like that, y'know. It makes living a thousand times harder."

Jimin kicks a feeble with a pout. He takes his card out of his neck and places it on the reader of the turnstile by the gates to free his exit.

"Well, you're welcome. Now we're even."

He waits for Eunbi and the guys on the sidewalk and then proceeds to wait for the uber they're taking for the hostel with them.

"But there's no reason for you to be jealous of him, really." Jimin decides to say, hoping to erase every negative thought from Jungkook's mind, "I'm probably never seeing him again, anyway."

"What? Of course you are! When you start to attend there, you're probably going to bump into him a lot." he says grumpily, but Jimin feels kind of down talking about this.

"Jungkookie, there's no way I'm being accepted. You should've seen him dancing, he's... I can't equal to that."

"Hey... Don't say that. If you really want to try, you have what? More four or five months to train non-stop, right?"

"It's not that easy, Jungkook-ah, four months are nothing close of people who have trained their entire lives." he snorts frustratedly. Just thinking about that is a bucket of cold ice on his small string of hope.

"Come on, hyung, don't be like that. Will you let your insecurity stop you from even trying?"

"What's even the point—"

"The point is proving to yourself that you can do it."

"And what if I can't?"

"Then you get up and try again. That's what life is all about, right? Taking chances and learning from our mistakes."
Jimin rubs his eyes. "I guess."

"You should try it. You sounded so happy just now. Weren't you happy? Dance does this to you, so why would you not allow yourself to have it?"

Jimin bites down on his bottom lip, looking ahead. "You sure you in the right course? Drop law and start taking psychology classes, I dare you."

Jungkook laughs. "Nah, I'm terrible in giving advices, but I work hard on yours because I care about you."

"Aw. That's sweet."

"Yeah, your boyfriend is a sweet guy."

"Mhm-mhm, I wonder who else is falling for your charms there..." Jimin hints, teasing him, but also chasing for some sort of information that has been nagging on the back of his mind. Jimin bets he's got heads turning everywhere he goes. He should ask Taehyung that.

"No one can stand a chance against you."

"Oh, so you admit there's people falling for your charms..."

"Well... We can't deny that I am a good-looking guy, right?" Jimin rolls his eyes with a smile.

"I hate you."

"Don't worry, I make sure to let them all know I'm taken."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah..."

"Wish I could be there to kiss you in front of all these people and show them to know better and not fuck with you."

Jungkook groans.

"Fuck, I'd love that. Shit. Okay, don't say stuff like that for the rest of the call, I'm Jimin-deprived and I'm in public."

Jimin chuckles. "What? Scared of popping a boner in front of everyone, baby?"

"Jimin..." the younger warns in a deeper tone, so he laughs.

"Okay, okay. Whatever you want. But just know I'd make a mess out of you."

He's pleased to hear Jungkook gasp.

"You..."

He spots a car stopping by the curb and Jin waving at him, so he starts making his way to them.

"Hey, baby, I gotta take the uber right now, so I'm hanging up, okay? Tell Taehyung I'll call him before going to sleep!"

"Okay, but call me too!" he whines, "I've been the only one calling you for the last two days!"
Jungkook complains and it's honestly endearing.

Jimin giggles. He's so cute. "Okay, okay. Love you, alright? Gotta go!"

"Love you too!" it's the last thing he catches right before he hops into the car.

Having a good day doesn't mean having a good week, and Jimin learns this as soon as he gets home. And the worst part is that he can't blame anyone but himself.

He's swarmed by bad thoughts that arrive from who-knows-where. His mind is a scary zone to spend too much time with, in the first place, so it's probably not good that he decides to log into twitter to see both Jungkook's and Taehyung's activity there when he's bored (which is basically all the time). Jimin isn't one for the social media, but the two of them have always been and he realizes they interact a lot there. It also makes him notice how awfully closer they seem to have grown. And it's expected, in all truth (they're sharing a dorm, for god's sake), but it doesn't make him feel any less inadequate in his own skin. It's like he's been replaced in both their lives by each other and the simple thought of it hurts like a bitch.

Nearly every tweet makes his stomach churn, but one of them takes the cake.

@kinta_e: someone tell jungkook to collect his clothes before i snap

→ @kinta_e replied to this tweet: and you'd say he's the virgo in this house. a joke i tell you

→ @kook97 replied to this tweet: can you be any more annoying...... stop exposing me online!!

→ @hwacherry replied to this tweet: you two are so cute it makes me hate being single

→ @kook97 replied to this tweet: we're not a couple so you should be fine

→ @hwacherry replied to this tweet: aw thats sad you look terribly good together

Jungkook didn't answer anything else and for some reason it makes Jimin unable to get up from his bed the rest of the day.

Actually, he knows exactly the reason why.

"Don't worry, I make sure to let them all know I'm taken."

He clicked on the girl's username to find out who she was and discovered she's an exchange student in their university as well. That only makes it worse, because now Jimin thinks that she probably has the property to talk like that and must have witnessed many moments in real life where Jungkook and Taehyung looked like a couple — and unlike Jungkook's statement, he never told
her he was taken by someone else.

There's a selfie of him and Taehyung that it's filled with Japanese comments of how cute they are and just generally gushing over them, and in that moment, Jimin thinks it's a curse that he learned Japanese at all.

The ghost question he decided to bury last year comes back to haunt him full force this time around.

**Who was the guy Taehyung kissed?**

Everything else in his life feels secondary when compared to these distresses that eat him up every day and takes the most part in his mind.

With Taehyung and Jungkook's absence, Heeyeon and Junghwa turn out to be the ones he becomes closest to. They start coming over upon realizing his constant downcast moods and despite not urging him to go out, they do their best in cheering him up at home. The only time he willingly goes out of the house, is to visit Jungkook's grandma. Jimin gets sad thinking about how lonely she must be feeling since he knows Jungkook practically lived there. So he visits her as much as he can and feels happy every time, because she always makes him feel like he's the best company she could have.

He also decides to have a talk with his mom once and for all about his future and surprisingly finds out she shares a lot of the same opinions Jungkook does. She caresses his face and kisses his forehead when he tells her the real reason he wanted to try engineering and tells him she'd hate herself if he became unhappy thanks to her. This conversation changes everything, and two days later they sit down with Jimin's father to discuss it with him as well. He's immediately supportive, which comes as no surprise, after all, he was the one who gifted Jimin his dance shoes and paid for his hours in the studio as well. They decide to pay Hyoyeon to teach him five times a week, 4 hours a day, while also paying English classes for him to take every Saturday. They say that if he wants to chase dance professionally, he should widen his perspective and consider he could try his luck abroad as well. And for that, he needs English. Jimin worries about the money, but they reassure him that the cost of it all combined is way less than what they paid in his school — so that's why he agrees to it, and thanks them infinitely for their effort and trust. He's hopeful, it's true. Scared for the most part, but hopeful, nonetheless.

Hyoyeon glows when Jimin approaches her again, and she seems satisfied while setting a schedule for him. She's a personal teacher, but Jimin finds out he's sharing his classes with two other girls during two days of the week, when he has to take ballet classes. During Mondays and Wednesdays he's taking contemporary, while Fridays are for hip-hop (which was the style he practiced the most with Jin and Hoseok), and Tuesdays and Thursdays turn out for classical ballet. He's going to follow with this intensive program for three months non-stop and then, on the last month, they're going to set a routine for him to practice for his performance test. Seokjin and Hoseok are also a big helpful hand, and decide to take turns to help him with theoretical classes about dance, since the entrance applications require written and oral tests according to the chosen field.

Overall, Jimin becomes terribly busy once everything starts. But, the thing is, it doesn't help him getting better at all.

On the contrary, after some time, the pressure seems to crash over him more and more. The weekly classes are exhausting — he thought he knew pain when he practiced twice a week, two hours a day with the guys, until Hyoyeon presented him what *real* pain was like. Ballet is pure fucking torture and one day when he's walking home, his muscles shake so hard that he has to sit by the sidewalk and ask for Eunbi to come and pick him up.
It's also probably no help that he starts picking up on his past unhealthy eating habits. He knows it's a coping mechanism for when he tethers around depression again, but he closes his eyes and pretends not to see it. It's dangerous — considering how awful his mental health is, he should be seeing a psychologist years ago. But he's stubborn, and for some unknown reason, he believes he's able to handle himself alone. He was getting better and with absolute no professional help, so why can't he do it again? It's fine.

A bike passes by him as he makes his way to the dance studio while chatting with Taehyung on the phone.

"We're doing groceries." he tells Jimin. "Jungkook, I told you we're not having this cereal, put it back!" Taehyung huffs on the phone and Jimin picks on his bottom lip with his teeth.

"Why not? It's my money!" he hears Jungkook whining on the back.

"Because you buy it just to let it rot on the shelves, since you can't eat it more than two times. Put it back right now!"

After some more groaning and complaining, Taehyung focus back to the phone call.

"Sorry. Your boyfriend's a pain in my ass."

Jimin chuckles awkwardly. "Yeah."

He hates how domestic they sound.

"So, how are your classes going?"

"Fine. Ballet is terrible. I mean, it's beautiful and I kind of like it, but Hyoyeon is attempting the impossible of teaching me every technique in three months, so…"

"Shit, that's tough. But I bet you're picking up fast."

"Yeah, Seokjin-hyung says so too."

"And he's right, then. I'd pay actual money to watch you dancing ballet."

"Me too!" Jungkook shouts in the back, which causes a small smile to appear on Jimin's lips.

"Quiet!" Taehyung scolds, "It's my turn to talk to him!"

Jimin hears some mumbling that he can't make out, but other than that, Jungkook's voice is not heard anymore.

"When are the entrance tests?"

"By the end of May."

"Oh, it's getting close. And are you staying in the dorms once you get in?"

Jimin doesn't state it out loud, but he loves the way Taehyung always says once or when you get in and not if.

"I don't know yet. Wish I could share an apartment with Hobi and Seokjin-hyung, but I think an apartment of three bedrooms in Seoul would be fucking expensive."
"You can always share a room with one of them. Hoseok-hyung sounds like he'd be a good roommate."

"Yeah, don't know about that. I like my privacy. I guess until I could find someone to share an apartment with me, I'd stay in the dorms."

"Well, the dorms aren't all that bad. Right, Jungkookie?" Taehyung asks, but Jimin hears no answer. "He's still sulking, because of the cereal thing. Aigoo, my Jungkookie." he says with a cute voice and Jimin is pretty sure he squeezes his cheeks or something. He chews on his bottom lip harder. It's ridiculous that he feels like this. Taehyung is his best friend and Jungkook loves Jimin, but…

He sighs.

He hates overthinking.

"Uh, Taehyungie, listen. I arrived, so I have to go now, but I'll call you later, okay?"

"Okay, baby. But do call me, okay? I miss you."

"I miss you too. Love you, bye!"

Jimin doesn't wait to hear his answer, simply hangs up and takes a deep breath to calm his roaring insides, before he's walking again.

It's not until fifteen minutes later that he gets to the studio.


The pencil dangles from his fingers while he scribbles down on the paper. His mind has long drifted from Hoseok's voice, teaching him all from the history of ballet, and the details and secrets about each position. He doesn't care. Well, he should, but he doesn't.

"Jimin, are you fucking listening to me?"

He snaps out of it.

"Sorry."

"You know, there's no reason for me to do this if you don't want it. It's not like I'm doing this out of boredom, because I have so much time to kill." he lays it bare for him at once and Jimin knows he's only doing it because this is the third time he has spaced out. And it makes him feel like absolute shit.

Hoseok's right, he's here kindly giving Jimin time on his packed schedule to teach him and help him pass on the university he wants and yet he's fucking thinking about—
"I'm so sorry, hyung. I'll pay attention now, I promise. But you can leave if you want to, I'll understand." he says in a small voice.

Hoseok pinches the bridge of his nose, scrunching his face in distress for a moment, before he eases his features and exhales a breath, calming down.

"Just… What's wrong?"

A knot clogs up his throat.

"Nothing is," but he answers without looking into his eyes.

"Jimin." he starts with that condescending tone of his and Jimin already knows he's about to be scolded, "I'm gonna be real serious with you right now. This is already difficult with you giving your absolute best. It's K-Arts we're talking about. If you half-ass your way through this, there's no way you're gonna make it. Can you understand? I'm not telling you this to discourage you, I'm telling you this, because you need to work hard. Harder. And I know you're doing a lot. But you need to do more. Spacing out thrice during the only time in the week I can teach you is not giving your best."

Jimin gulps, looking down at his fingers. He has never felt so ashamed.

"I know. I'm sorry, I'll do better."

"You can't do better if you don't open up about what's bothering you. You have to focus and if there's something else on your mind you won't be able to."

Jimin knows he's right. He knows, but he can't talk about what's distracting him after Hoseok just said all that. He'll be even more disappointed that he's losing focus over something so trivial.

The older seems to sense his hesitation, because he sighs and takes his hands on his.

"Hey… I'm sorry for being harsh, but someone had to say it to you." he nods, feeling even more of a child. He knows.

"I know." his voice sounds more fragile than he imagined.

"Jimin-ah… I'm your friend. You can talk to me about things, I'm sorry for snapping. I won't judge you."

Jimin tilts his head to the side. "No, you're right." he says, tone a bit choked, "It's just… Jungkook."

The way Hoseok's shoulder slump is like he was waiting for it. "What about him?"

Jimin laughs.

"It's stupid, I'm just insecure."

"Don't say that, it's not stupid…"

"Yeah, it is. I'm self-conscious about him and my fucking best friend, isn't that ridiculous?" Jimin sniffs, although he's not crying.

Hoseok is the one to tilt his head now, confused. "Taehyung?"
"Yeah."

"Why, though?"

"I don't know, they're just... there, living my dream together and... Everyone thinks they're a couple, y'know? Because, well, they look good together and they're becoming more and more intimate as the time pass by and— Just... Jungkookie told me he always tells people he's dating, but on twitter I've never seen him telling people he's dating me, and... I shouldn't feel like this, y'know, hyung. He's so good to me, but... I'm so scared."

"Scared of what?"

He lets out a shuddery breath.

"Last year, Taehyungie told me he kissed a guy. And it was fine until he said he couldn't tell me who it was. And I started panicking, because Taehyung and I don't have much mutual people that would make him not want to tell me, besides... Well, besides Jungkook. So one day, I approached Jungkook about it," Jimin pauses to take a breath. God, he forgot how much talking about this hurt. He already feels on the brink of tears, "And I was like, hey, did you hear Taehyung hooked up with a guy, trying to sound casual and all, and I swear, hyung, he froze. I can still remember clearly, I was sitting on the counter and he had his back to me and you know when you can just see someone's back muscles tensing? He paused everything he was doing for a second and then he was so awkward about it and I just—"

Hoseok's voice is a complete downturn from earlier, when he asks, gentle,

"What did he say?"

"Nothing. That's the fucking thing, he said nothing, but a moment before he couldn't stop talking, literally nothing would make him shut up until I mentioned this."

Jimin rubs his nose, uncomfortable with the way it prickles and he casts a glance at Hoseok's face ever since he began telling the story. He looks... angry, brows pulled into a frown and the corner of his lips curling downwards.

"That's bullshit. I'm ready to kick both of their asses if this is true, what the fuck?!"

Jimin is grateful for the protective reaction, but the laugh he lets out is humorless. "Well, we can't know that. I'm a bit paranoid about things, so this all could be me projecting my insecurities on a situation that has nothing to do with it, but... No matter how hard I think, I can't come up with something else."

"It really sounded suspicious." Hoseok agrees and Jimin's whole posture deflates. He hates sharing his insecurities with people, because when they tell him he's reasoning he can't brush it off any longer with the excuse he's crazy or some shit.

"Yeah. And I'm scared that... if they really did... y'know... Now nothing is stopping them from falling for each other and shit."

"That's what you're scared of?" the older sounds baffled, "Jimin, you do know that if you're right they cheated on you, right? Both of them."

Suddenly, breathing is the hardest thing he has ever tried doing.

"Yeah. But it feels wrong to think that of them. I know they love me, just... I don't know. I'm such
a fuck up, hyung, I'm so sorry."

"Hey…” Hoseok scoots closer to him, "No, you're not." kissing his temple, he starts to caress Jimin's hair.

They stay in silence for a while, and Jimin basks on the warmth, because he has been longing another person's touch for too long.

"Don't you think…” Hoseok starts, "Maybe this long-distance idea was not a good idea?” he tries, careful.

Jimin straightens his posture to look at him. "What?"

The older averts his eyes. "I don't know, Jiminie, but… Don't you feel it's hurting you more than doing you any good?"

Jimin feels immediately kind of annoyed. "So what, I should just break up with him?"

Just the idea of it gets him sick in the stomach, bile rising.

"No… I mean, I don't know? It's just… Five years is a long time… Not even two months have passed and look at how you are. Do you want to keep like this for five years?" When Jimin just looks down and doesn't answer, Hoseok sighs. "I'm sorry. I'm just worried about you. We all are. You don't look much like… you, lately."

Jimin gets up.

"I think I'm gonna go."

The older startles, looking up at him with wide eyes, "No, Jiminie… hey." he tries reaching for his hands, but Jimin brings up to brush his hair back. "I'm sorry, don't go."

"No, I need a—" he chokes, gathering his belongings over the table, "breather, or something. Thanks for the help." he hooks his backpack over one shoulder and before Hoseok can even try to say anything else, Jimin is out the door.

Because fuck him, this is him too. No matter how broken or damaged, this is him too. And no one has a fucking right to say it to his face that he doesn't look like himself. Because he has never felt more like himself than at this moment. Yes, broken and insecure and ugly, this is him, and if Hoseok or whoever else the fuck can't accept that, then… Then Jimin really is alone to fend for himself.

○

Chanhee and Wow are small pieces of Jungkook left in Korea that Jimin clutches onto. He's quietly studying beside the old woman while she focuses on her crochet in silence. It's a good two minutes since she started before she throws it down harshly.
"This is ridiculous!"

Jimin snaps his attention at her, eyes wide in bewilderment.

"What is, nana?" he has picked up the habit of lovingly treating her as his grandma too and she doesn't seem to mind — rather, she finds it the most endearing thing.

"This stupid thing. Who ever said crochet was a nice activity for old people? Honestly." she snorts, annoyed and Jimin breaks out in a small smile, "You know what a nice activity for old people would be?"

Jimin props his head on his hand, fully attention on her.

"What?"

"Stealing!" she states very matter-of-factly and Jimin cracks up, laughing out loud.

"Stealing?!"

"Of course! Think about it! If we get caught, we just have to pretend we're crazy! Who would doubt us? What would they do? Arrest us? How bad would they look, then, arresting poor, old, mentally ill people?"

Jimin shakes his head, chucking. She's unbelievable. "That's a pretty nice idea. You should start a community. I bet it'd be fun."

She waves her hand in the air as if she's already dismissing it. "Oh, we'll see. Are you done with that boring scribbles on your notebook yet?"

"Why?" Jimin closes it without a second thought, "What do you need?"

"Let's take a walk. I'm tired of this old house, I need some fresh air." she says, getting up from her seat with difficulty but refusing Jimin's hand for help.

She's stubborn as hell, thinks she can do everything on her own. Now Jimin understands why Jungkook would constantly lose his temper with her — it came from worrying too much.

They walk through the commercial center of the city during rush hour which is probably not the wisest idea, but Jimin stays by Chanhee's side securely, walking slower to match her pace and offering an arm for her to hold onto, which she decides to take this time around. They stop by a vegan restaurant when her legs ask for a break.

She's a talkative person, so Jimin just has to be a good listener, but after they're served their orders, she becomes silent and Jimin is left to wander through his thoughts.

"Hey, nana." he calls. She looks up with her mouth full.

"Mhm?"

He's only been rolling his food around on the plate, back and forth. "If your husband ever suggested you to have a long-distance relationship in the past… Do you think you could take it?"

Once she swallows down the food, her answer is immediate.

"Absolutely not."
"Wha— really?"

"Yes." she wipes her mouth with a napkin before continuing. "I could never do it, I need to be close. To touch, you know? To see, all that. That's why I admire you and Jungkookie a lot. You're very brave."

Jimin thinks it's more along the lines of stupid rather than brave, but he doesn't utter this out loud.

"Don't you think it's crazy?"

"Oh." she dismisses it with a wave of hand, "What interesting love story isn't a little bit crazy?"

Jimin sighs. He doesn't know about that.

"What's the problem, love?" she asks, reaching out for his hand over the table, eyes concerned.

"It's just hard. I mean, five years is a lot of time."

"Yeah." she sighs, retreating her hand. Jimin looks up and instantly regrets saying that. She looks sad. "Yes, it is." Sometimes, he forgets that she's also in a long-distance relationship with her grandchild now. She must miss him just as much as Jimin does.

"I'm sorry." he tries, but she's already dismissing it again.

"No, don't be. It's okay. I've been through this before, his parents took him away when he was younger. He told you that, right?" Jimin nods. "It's okay. But I think you should do what's best for you, honestly. Maybe five years is not that much of time if he makes you happy."

And the problem is, he does. He does make him happy. But he also makes him so scared.

"I don't even know what's best for me anymore." Jimin mumbles out, nudging his food again.

The silence that presses over him urges him to look up, Chanhee’s stare demanding to be reciprocated. She smiles gently at him and takes the liberty to brush a stray strand of hair out of his face.

““You’ll know. If the time ever demands it, and you have to choose, you’ll know. But don’t stress too much over this, right? You’re young and beautiful and this frown does not look good on you.” she says, pressing her thumb in between Jimin’s brows and easing his lines.

He smiles, shaking his head.

Right.

All he has to do is to trust himself.

He’ll know.

He hopes.
The thing about trusting himself, though, is that he usually makes really bad decisions. He's worrying his lip between his teeth while Wow tugs him forward by the leash and happily runs down the street. Jimin lets him have his way and doesn't mind much, because he has some more pressing matters in mind.

Jungkook still hasn't answered the text he sent yesterday morning. Neither has he called. And really, Jimin isn't that person, but he's worried. Normally, Jungkook calls him two to three times a day and not hearing anything from him in a whole 24 hours is, well, weird.

He's worried the honeymoon phase of the long-distance is starting to fade (if that is even a thing?) and now they'll just talk less and less.

The shitty thing is that Jimin already has it hard enough with being apart while talking as much as they do — but being apart and barely talking at all? Yeah, that's another level of fucked up he didn't think he signed up for.

When he gets inside again, the morning is almost turning to afternoon and Jimin's anxiety is pricking underneath his skin. So he sends Jungkook a pair of interrogation points and puts his phone face down on the counter to fetch himself some water.

Not even a minute later, he's choking on his cup thanks to the familiar buzz of his phone vibrating. He feels pathetic, coughing out the water that caught in his throat and putting the glass down, to see what is it.

babe — 11:48 am
omg sorry hyung
totally thought i had answered that
what are you up to??

Jimin scoffs at the screen. Is that it? Has he been worrying about this for the whole day to get this bland of an answer? He plops down on the couch and decides to ignore him for the next two hours at least.

He only manages to go through one without breaking, but hey, no one can say he didn't try.

you — 12:56 pm
uh okay??
you didnt even call me

Jungkook's response, on the other hand, is immediate.
**babe — 12:56 pm**

well you didn't either

i always call you

Oh.

So this is what this is about? Jimin rolls his eyes.

**you — 12:56 pm**

i would if you hadn't ignored me the whole day

i thought you were busy

**babe — 12:57 pm**

i didn't ignore you wtf

i just told you i thought i had answered

Jimin snorts. Fucking fine, then be like that.

**you — 12:57 pm**

whatever

**babe — 12:57 pm**

what, really??

you're really gonna act like that?

**you — 12:58 pm**

i mean

you didn't even check to see if i had answered what you supposedly thought you had sent

so you clearly had more important things in mind
Jimin snorts and begrudgingly accepts the phone call.

"What do you want?" he shoots straight away, tone cold.

"Ah, come on, hyung." Jungkook retorts and he doesn't even sound bothered, so Jimin grows even more irritated. "Don't be like that, okay? Let's not fight..." he says with a lazy-stretched tone as if he's just woken up. Confirming Jimin's assumption, he yawns, then.

"Did you just wake up?" he asks with his brows furrowed. Yeah, it's a saturday, but he's waking up one in the afternoon.

"No… I mean… Kind of. I woke up at eleven, but then I napped and got up again just now."

"Why are you waking up so late?"

"Taehyung dragged me into a party last night…" he says as if he's pressing a hand to his skull, feeling some kind of pain.

Jimin's stomach drops an inch. So that's what he's got distracted with.

"Oh."

"Yeah. Sorry for not answering your text. What are you doing?"

Jimin sits there, with his phone to his ear and he has no fucking idea what to answer.

Jungkook's not bothered to give any further explanation, no nothing. Just 'hey, didn't text you back, right? yeah, that sucks :/ by the way, crashed a party last night and didn't even bother telling you haha so anyway, what's up'
Jimin feels like a fucking hookup when he's his fucking boyfriend and just? Everything sits so wrong with him. Yet, he doesn't want to sound like that kind of boyfriend, because he's not. Jungkook is free to go out and do whatever the fuck he wants, but he doesn't want to be treated like he's just some fling either.

"Nothing. Was the party fun?"

"What, are you mad for real?"

Jimin huffs. "No, my boyfriend just ignored me for an entire day and completely forgot my existence to go partying without even bothering to tell me. I'm not fucking mad that you have the same consideration for me that you'd have with a no one." he ends up, nostrils flaring.

Yeah, he's fucking mad.

Jungkook's silent for a moment, as if he's considering the weight of what he did before he says anything. When he remains silent, though, Jimin continues, too caught up in the heat to care.

"Just consider my feelings for a fucking second. I was so worried yesterday, thinking something bad could have happened and you were partying. I mean, it's fine, you're free to do whatever you want, god forbid I'd be the one to keep you from going out, but—" he lets out a frustrated snort, "The way you just talked to me really made me feel like a nobody in your life. Imagine if you were in my shoes, and I just went out after not answering you for a whole day and then you'd find out by seeing pictures going on the internet, because I didn't even bother to tell you."

He finally lays it all out and is proud of the way his voice didn't falter once.

Jungkook’s attitude considerably fades, because when he speaks next, his voice sounds small.

"You're not a nobody… Don't say that."

Jimin sinks on the couch, voice also dropping in tone after venting.

"Then fucking act like it." he tells silently, looking up to the ceiling.

"Don't be mad, please…" Jimin rolls his eyes, picking at the hem of his shirt and remaining quiet. Sure, now he's magically not mad. "Hey… Hyung, please. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I did that, I won't do it again. I didn't think it like that. Actually, I didn't think at all. Please, say something, I'm really sorry. I don't like fighting."

Jimin releases an annoyed snort for the millionth time and licks his dry lips, before questioning,

"Why didn't you answer my text?"

Jungkook takes a moment to respond, which makes Jimin wonder if he's coming up with a lie.

"I really thought I had answered. And I spent the whole day caught up in my studies, I forgot about it, I'm sorry. I was so concentrated that I even forgot to lunch, so at night Taehyung demanded that we had to go out for me to clear my head. I'm sorry."

Jimin twists his torso so he can lay down on the couch. That's reasonable, yet there's still annoyance nudging the back of his ribs. But it's also not like he can be an asshole after Jungkook explained himself, so he relents. There's really nothing else he can do.

"Okay."
"You're still mad, aren't you?"

"Well, it's not just going to go away because you said you're sorry."

"What can I do to make it better?"

Jimin sighs, smoothing his shirt. "I don't know, I think I just have to sleep through it."

"What? No, please… I don't want you to go sleep mad with me. Can I facetime you?"

"What?"

"Please?"

"Jungkook, I don't think that's a good idea…"

"Please, please, please? I really want to see you…"

Jimin bites on his lip to stop the snarky comment about how now he wants to see him.

"I have to meet Hoseok-hyung in an hour."

"Oh? Uh, that's… That's fine, I won't take long. Please?"

He lets out a deep breath. What is he supposed to do? Say no?

"Okay."

Jungkook makes a little squeal of happiness that totally doesn't make Jimin smile, and a second later he's calling him. He runs his hands through his hair in a failed attempt to make it look decent before he picks up.

The younger shows up in the screen with a sheepish smile and a really messy hair — worse than Jimin's. There's eyebags under his eyes and a little bit of smudged eye shadow, Jimin notices and bites his tongue to not say anything. He's laying on his bed, white shirt hanging off his collarbones and there's no denying he's gorgeous, even when hangover and probably not having showered yet.

"You're a mess." he can't help to say.

Jungkook pats down on his bangs, self-conscious. "Yeah, I know. Sorry. Do I look ugly?"

"You never look ugly, you know that." Jimin responds in a smaller voice.

They stay silent for a moment, before Jungkook is the one breaking it by sighing and bringing the phone closer to him as if he's bringing Jimin himself. His nose nearly boops the screen and Jimin feels heartburn. He misses him too much.

"I'm really sorry, hyung. Do you trust me?"

It's not like he can say no.

"Yeah."

"Are you lying?" Jungkook narrows his eyes, so Jimin shakes his head, chewing on the inside of his bottom lip.

"No."
"Wish I had you close to me... I'd kiss your whole face until you were smiling, but from here I can't do anything." Jungkook frustratedly confesses and he doesn't know what to answer, the words stinging his chest. "Please, don't be mad with me anymore. I promise I won't do it again." the frown on his forehead tells Jimin he's being genuine.

He releases his lip from between his teeth so he can speak.

"It's okay. Maybe I overreacted."

"No… No, don't say that, you didn't. I'd be super mad too, if I were you."

"Yeah, well." he sighs, tired of that subject, "How was the party?"

"Is that a tricky question?" Jungkook asks suspiciously, making Jimin chuckle.

"No, I just want to know. It's your first party there, right? How was it?"

"I mean, I went to better ones. But it was nice. The alcohol's good."

"Oh, right, I forget you're a party sommelier from all over the world."

Jungkook smiles in amusement. "Shut up."

"And was the music good?"

"They played mostly international and japanese songs from k-pop groups that are famous here."

"Mhm, right. So you felt like home."

"Nah. Can never feel like home when you're not here." he casually lays out as if the words doesn't make Jimin's heart perform violent somersaults in his chest. "By the way, speaking of home, nana said you've been visiting a lot."

Jimin scratches his cheek nervously. "Oh, did she?"

"Yeah. That makes me happy, thank you. She doesn't say it, but she gets pretty lonely sometimes."

"I know."

"And what about your studies? She says you get distracted easily."

Jimin purses his lips. "Oh, yeah? What else did she tell you?"

"Oh? Nothing much, why? Have you been sharing secrets with my grandma that I can't know?" he teases, so Jimin rolls his eyes.

He just really doesn't want Jungkook to find out he had been second-guessing this whole long-distance thing. Because he doesn't know. It's over, completely out of his mind. So yeah, there's no reason why he should know.

"Don't be stupid. And I don't get distracted easily, she's the one distracting me all the time." he defends himself.

But Jungkook gives a kind of awkward laugh that makes Jimin frown. Yet before he can ask him about it, he's already saying. "Oh, is that it? Yeah, it sounds like her alright."
"Yeah… Well, now that you've seen my face, I really should get going. Hobi-hyung can arrive any moment and my room is still a mess."

"Oh." Jungkook scratches his nape. "Is he coming over?"

"Yeah, him and Jin-hyung take turns to teach me dance theory, I told you."

"Yeah, no, but I thought… I mean, nevermind. It's alright."

"Why, what's wrong?"

"No, nothing is wrong, promise. Study hard, okay?"

Jimin stares at him with narrowed eyes for a moment, trying to fish something out of him, but Jungkook seems resolute, so he gives up, at last.

"Okay. I'm going to go, then."

"Mhm." the younger nods, but the way he's biting on his lower lip and averting his gaze tells he has something else to say, so Jimin waits. "Hyung?"

"Yeah?"

"Tell me you love me?" Jungkook looks shy when he asks, so that probably adds to the reasons why Jimin's taken aback.

"What? You know I do…"

"Yes, but please tell me?" he repeats, this time unwavering eyes on Jimin's ones, as if he's trying to prove something.

Jimin doesn't miss a beat. "I love you."

Jungkook exhales a relieved breath and closes his eyes. "Again?"

His heart tugs inside his chest.

"I love you."

"I love you too." Jungkook answers and opens his eyes with a small smile. "Thank you. Call me when you're over? I'm really sorry about yesterday, hyung."

Jimin breaths. "It's fine. I'll call you, okay? Bye, Jungkook-ah."

"Bye, baby."

Jimin smiles at him, probably driven by the petname, and hangs up first, pressing the phone to his stomach and releasing a breath he didn't know he was holding.

Jungkook is right.

He also hates fighting.
Although, the blurry, grainy days don't fade away with that first fight.

In fact, they seem to worsen.

It's not like Jungkook has broken his promise and did anything like that again, but something is definitely different. And it kills Jimin to not know what.

He notices it in Jungkook's answers becoming less and less enthusiastic, in the loss of frequency in his phone calls and in the extended period of time he takes to answer a simple text. Jimin risks himself on the border of a cliff and he doesn't know what to do to make the earth stop shaking and threatening to pull him down.

Every night when Jungkook doesn't answer his, hey baby, you there?'s, he feels more and more like a fool, but the knowledge doesn't stop the tears from forming in his eyes. He never lets them down, though. At least, until one night—

He's scrolling on twitter without really interacting with anything — it has long became an habit now — when his eyes suddenly catch on a picture. He averts them to the account who posted it and it's not someone he knows. This probably makes it worse.

The caption reads, in japanese,

*ain't them stupid*

And the picture has Jungkook and Taehyung in a sort of chantilly fight, the white cream smudged all over their cheeks, which squeeze their way towards big and bright smiles. Jungkook has Taehyung's wrists secured on his hands while the latter tries to force his arms down on him to reach his face. They seem happy. Really happy. And Jungkook hasn't answered him since morning.

Normally, Jimin tries to tell himself it's not a big deal — he shouldn't be this paranoid, mourning at the sight of the happiness of two of the people he loves the most in the world.

But not tonight.

Tonight he hugs his pillow and he cries so hard he gets a headache. He cries so much, the hiccups can't help but break free from deep inside of him, and it grants him a sore throat in the morning. Because in all honesty, Jimin knows loss. And, right now, he's losing. He's losing his lover, he's losing his best friend and he's losing his happiness for theirs.

But that's on him.

It's a well known fact, don't ever lay your happiness on somebody else's shoulder, but Jimin was never one for popular knowledge, so now he pays the price of it.

"You look awful." Seokjin tells him when he walks in the studio the next morning.

He's sitting on the changing room with his legs crossed and his back to the wall mirror.

"Thanks." Jimin's voice barely comes out, too hoarse to be audible. He sighs and pushes his hair
back, dropping his backpack over the bench before he sits down beside it.

His skull is banging so he fishes an advil, strategically placed on the front pocket of the bag, and dry gulps it under his older friend's gaze.

"Let me guess. Jungkook?"

Jimin fixes him with a stare that deadpans, what do you think?

"Well, don't let Hobi see you like this. He's hating Jungkook's gut too much already. And to be honest, I'm also starting to."

Jimin releases yet another tired breath and starts stripping off his sweats until he's standing only on his tights and leotard. Staring at his reflection on the mirror makes him take notice of how much weight he's lost in the past three months.

When Jin speaks up again, it is to address something else, thankfully.

"This is one of your last classes, right? Before you start your routine."

He nods. "Yeah."

"Have you picked your song yet?"

"I let Hyoyeon-saeng choose for me. She's been doing this for a while, right? She knows what the judges want to see."

Jin hums in agreement. "Yeah. Smart. You'll do well, you know that, don't you? It's insane how much you've improved in just three months. I'm actually jealous, it took me years to do what you're doing."

That manages to steal a small smile from Jimin.

"Thanks, hyung. Uh, I should go before she comes to pick me up by the ear."

"Yeah, right. Good luck, Jiminie."

"Thank you."

But just as Jimin is about to step out of the room after grabbing his water bottle, his bag buzzes and he knows it's from a new message in his phone. He internally debates whether he should check it or not, but in the end, curiosity gets the best of him, so he takes it from his bag but decides to only read it through the lockscreen.

babe — 3 new messages

7:58 am

hey hyung, sorry for not answering you yesterday!!!

some of our friends crashed here by surprise and we got caught up in a little gathering
are you in the studio already?

Jimin's eyes run over and over the *our* and the *we* for a minute or so.

He shakes his head, locking the phone again and carelessly throwing it back inside his bag. If Jin senses any of his newfound annoyance, he doesn't spare any comments, and simply watches in silence while Jimin leaves the room with marching footsteps towards the hallway.

Noticing the shifts in a relationship while simultaneously being completely held back from doing anything to keep it from falling apart is perhaps the worst heartbreak anyone can go through.

Jimin doesn't think anything could have prepared him for the month of May.

It's the month of his entrance test.

It's the month of his one year anniversary with Jungkook.

And things couldn't be worse.

He doesn't remember the last time he heard his boyfriend's voice this week. Not a call or a simple audio message. Sparse texts throughout the day that doesn't account for any solid conversation. Just routine. Jimin learns to pretend indifference to protect himself. But it's the hardest thing to do, to keep a casual, unbothered exterior when your insides are shattering.

But he's hoping for better days.

After all, it *is* their month.

Yet, he's also scared. And that triggers a lot of anxiety attacks.

That's how, one day, he finds himself tumbling inside an elevator, pressing a number that he can't remember the reason why, and blindly making his way towards door 1223. It's open, so he makes his way in, silently heaving, desperately searching.

He scans the living room, but there's yelling voices coming from the bedroom.

"How could you fucking do that?!" It's Eunbi.

"What did you expect me to? *Huh?*!" And Hoseok.

"Not meddle into other people's business, maybe?! It was not your fucking place, goddammit Hoseok! Look how fucking better things got!"

They're fighting. Jimin doesn't understand why, but he doesn't care. He needs his sister. He needs
her, he needs her now. He follows their voices. There's tears running down his face and it's getting harder and harder to breath within every step.

His hands are sweating.

"I know, okay? Fuck, I— I know. I'm sorry. Eunbi-yah, I'm—"

Jimin opens the door to the bedroom, getting both figures inside to startle and immediately look in his direction with wide eyes. Their expressions don't change when they realize it's him and not a stranger.

"Noona…" he heaves and that's about all that he can do. His knees are getting weak, his vision blurring, and the only thing keeping him standing is his hold on the doorknob.

Eunbi is the first to move, running towards him and curling his arms around his trembling body. The moment Jimin's held, he starts falling down. Eunbi keeps him secured on her arms, while she sits both of them on the ground of her room.

Cradling his head against her neck, she whispers against his ear, worry overflowing out of her voice. "Baby, what happened? It's okay, it's okay, noona's here… Noona's here."

Jimin sucks in a breath.

"I can't— I can't breath." his voice can barely be heard, it's a simple scratch on his throat.

"Jimin-ah…" Hoseok says, and he sounds so much closer, but all of a sudden, there's a slap sound echoing around the room and Jimin looks up, startled.

Hoseok is standing right in front of them, wide eyes and gaping mouth, while he holds his hand close to his chest.

And Eunbi is fuming behind his back.

"Get the fuck out of here." she practically spits and Jimin's breathing pattern worsens. Fuck, he shouldn't have come. He shouldn't—

Hoseok takes his leave before Jimin can open his mouth to say anything. And he doesn't even look angry or sad, just ashamed.

Once he hears the front door closing, he turns to his sister with wide, pleading eyes.

"Noona, I'm s-so sorry. I-I just— Studio is closer t-to here and— I'm sorry, you w-were fighting, I shouldn't have—"

"Shhhh…" she soothes him, running her hands down his face and cleaning his tears. "Look at me, okay? Take one breath at a time. Come on, don't think of anything else, I know you can do it."

Jimin follows her commands, closing his eyes while the tears keep on falling silently and his sister counts.

"One…" she waits patiently for Jimin to inhale all the oxygen he manages, "Two…" her hands come to push his bangs backwards, running her nails through his scalp softly in an attempt to relax him, "Three… Yes, that's it. Now take a deep breath and let it go slowly… See, that's right, you're doing so good." she wipes his tears despite more coming to stain his cheeks immediately after.

He continues to be guided by her, breathing in and out slowly, and he doesn't know how many
minutes pass until his heartbeat is not causing him headache, but when he can finally breath without help, he whispers,

"Noona, I'm gonna fail."

"What?"

"I messed up more times than I can count today."

"Jiminnie—"

"And Jungkook's gonna break up with me."

"What?"

"I'm feeling it. He doesn't— want me anymore." saying that, admitting it out loud, urges a whole new batch of tears to flow out of him.

"Hey, baby… Don't say that. Why are you saying that?" her voice is thin, as if she fears any abrupt sound could break him.

"He barely talks to me anymore. We're about to complete a year and he… He hasn't addressed it once. He stopped calling me baby." he scrunches his face up, hiding against her neck and letting a sob out while his chest hurts and hurts and hurts, it hurts so much, "I don't know what else to do, noona... P-please, please, h-help me. Everything is going wrong, I don't know what I'm doing..."

She stays silent, kindly rocking her body back and forth while caressing his hair and keeping him close. When his shoulders stop shaking, her voice surges gently,

"You know that I'm here for everything you need, but can I tell you something?" she questions cautiously, so Jimin nods. "This emotional dependence is no good for you."

He lets out a ragged breath, swallowing the knot is his throat.

The reason the words sting is because they're true.

But he doesn't cry this time. He feels his chest shake with the effort he makes not to break, until his head is weighing on his sister's shoulder and she takes the two of them to the bed.

The way her fingers run through his hair lulls him into sleep without resistance. God knows he's too weak to fight against anything in that moment.

○

The closer the fateful day gets, the more Jimin buries himself in the studio. He pays extra hours, and dances until his limbs give out and he finds himself panting, laying on the ground alone and staring at the white ceiling of his practice room.

Tomorrow is the thirteenth day of may. Which also happens to be the day Jungkook took him for
his first date. And gave him the necklace dangling from his neck right now. And asked him to be his boyfriend.

What a difference one year can make in people's lives, Jimin thinks. The clock above the mirror wall reads it's nearly eight in the night. The studio is closing soon… He should pack and leave.

Jungkook hasn't texted him at all today. Yesterday they texted about how their day went, but it didn't take more than ten boxes on the messages app for the conversation to die down. And then Jimin texted him good night when he went to sleep, only to be completely ignored. He didn't bother saying anything else after.

Taehyung is talking with him as if everything is completely normal. Jimin wonders if he realizes how Jungkook doesn't call him anymore, or if Jungkook lies to him and says he does.

But he decides that if Jungkook doesn't tell him about how everything is going terribly wrong, neither does Jimin. Because maybe he doesn't think everything is going wrong — maybe he just doesn't care.

When one of the receptionists come to knock on the door of the room to tell him he has to leave, Jimin drags himself out.

He gets home, although he doesn't remember how he did it. He takes a shower, but his muscles are numb. The plate of food his mother reserved for him on the counter goes down the trash, and he covers it with crumpled paper towels so she doesn't see it. He lays on his bed when his phone tells him it's practically 10 pm. And Jimin stays there, in that same position for the following two hours, watching the minutes change, until ten o'clock becomes eleven o'clock and, finally, midnight.

The change in the 12nd to the 13rd on his lockscreen doesn't erupt any reaction out of him. But deep inside, his guts twist, because it's not followed by any type of message or acknowledgement. And Jimin waits, because there's still a tiny part of him that's striving to keep alight, striving to clutch on any hint of hope. Maybe Jungkook is planning to surprise him. After all, one year ago that's exactly what he did.

So he falls asleep waiting and wakes up waiting. His phone's battery dies down and he uses the time it gets to charge to take a shower, because he feels dirty, even though he doesn't smell.

Jimin swears he doesn't try, but it's inevitable — the warm water floods his brain with memories he wishes he couldn't revisit.

“Love. I love you so much.”

Jimin still remembers the way Jungkook copiously cried upon these words.

“Baby…” Jimin desperately reached out for him. “Don’t cry like that, please.” he tried pleading, but in the end, his own dam broke and the tears burst out of him as well.

Jimin sees it all too clear, still, the image of Jungkook trying to speak but being choked by his sobs and then crying harder, hugging Jimin’s waist and burying his face on his neck. He remembers begging on the shell of his ear, “I’m sorry. Please, d-don’t cry. I’m sorry, I love you. I love you, I love you. I should’ve put that in the letter too.”

Jungkook shook his head and Jimin couldn’t understand, so he pulled him back and cradled Jungkook’s face in his hands, eyes attached to his teary, glowing ones. He used both thumbs to wipe the tears that slid down his cheeks, kissing under his lashes.
His heart still skips at the way Jungkook closed his eyes at the feeling and took a deep breath.

“Please, don’t cry.” Jimin whispered to him, lips glued to his skin, “I don’t want you to cry, I want you to be happy.”

The younger boy inhaled a breath that shook his chest, but got him able to let it out, weakly, “I’m happy…”

“Then why are you crying?”

“Because you love me.”

“Is that a good or a bad thing?” Jimin thought he never had felt so vulnerable that day. But little did he know it wouldn’t take long until he was reminiscing that same moment in the floor of his bathroom, crying like a piece was being taken from him.

“Fuck, hyung. I’m so relieved.” Jungkook had said, shaking his head and bringing the heel of his hands to wipe his eyes. He suddenly started to laugh, exhilarated, “Fuck off, Park Jimin loves me.”

Jimin laughed along, pushing the younger’s shoulder away. “Shut up!”

Jungkook, then, suddenly leaned closer, curling his hand around Jimin’s nape. “You have no idea how long I’ve been waiting for you to say that, do you?” he murmured and it’s maddening how the sight of his wet lashes made terrible things to Jimin’s chest. “You’re an idiot. I’m about to kiss the fuck out of you right now.” he warned, pushing him down until he was on his back and Jungkook was straddling him. “Do you know why?” he questioned and Jimin could do nothing but stare, chest heaving, “Because I love you so much that I might go crazy.” in a rushed breath, he confessed, and then he kissed Jimin. He kissed him like that could be the last thing he was doing in his life. “I love you.” Jungkook groaned against his mouth, “Fuck, I love you. I love you, I love you. I love to say this.”

Jimin whimpers, tears unrestrainedly running down his cheeks, back against the cold wall of the bathroom as everything inside him burns.

Fuck, fuck, fuck, god fucking dammit.

He can’t believe this is happening. How the fuck did everything go so wrong so fast? The memory makes his head thrum and bang, because he honestly can’t remember when was the last time they even said I love you to each other.

“Mhm… Fall in love. Marry by the beach. This is cute. Have you never fallen in love?”

Jimin shook his head, throat crumpled with feelings he couldn’t quite let out yet. “I tried a lot, though. I’d fool around with anyone that would give me just the slightest hope of falling in love. It never worked, so I just didn't carry on with them.”

Jungkook tilted his head, staring at him as if he could make out the shape of his soul inside his orbs. Jimin felt bare, completely exposed. “And now?”

A breath. “Now what?”

“How do you feel about falling in love now?”

There was a pause, where he wondered about it. “It’s scary.” he concluded, at last.
Jungkook was surprised. “Really?” At Jimin’s nod, he continued. “Mhm... We have very different perspectives about things, y’know... I think it’s beautiful.”

“You do?”

“Yeah. It made me see things completely different. Like new colours I was blind to until then.”

And even though it feels like this happened years and years ago, Jimin recalls the way his chest tightened when he asked, because it’s all too familiar to this day still. “Are you in love?”

Jungkook looked at him like he had set the stars up on the sky on fire. “Yeah. Are you not?”

Jimin took a deep breath and he realized he couldn’t lie.

“Yeah.”

He can’t help but think he’s jinxing his own suffering, crying over a heartbreak that still haven’t completely arrived, but at the same time, he feels it hanging upon his head, and it doesn’t matter where he runs to, he can’t escape. Because, in the end, it was attached to him from the start.

“I told you I brought you here because of the view, but that wasn’t completely true. Remember when you showed me your list of things you wanted to do before you die on the trip? There was a lot of things and one of them was how you wanted to see the stars with no city lights around? Well, look up. Best seats in the house.”

The moment Jimin's eyes averted upwards to the black night sky, the air squeezed out of his lungs, because there had been, all the stars in the universe.

"Jungkook, this is..." he had tried to say and his voice failed him, but it didn’t matter because Jungkook was not over yet.

"I've been planning this for days and I was so scared something was going to go wrong. I needed everything to be perfect, because god knows I already fucked up with you for a lifetime. But," he took Jimin's hands in his, "I'm willing to do everything in my power to make things right this time."

And Jimin stared at him, eyes shining with all the beautiful feelings in the world. It swept him off his feet, and it left him with nothing.

"This time?" he repeated, voice so small, and watched through dazed eyes Jungkook scoot closer to take his face between his hands, eyes never faltering on the connection with his own.

He brought a finger to caress Jimin's cheek in the most tender of ways while leaning down his forehead so it could touch his. It was so gentle that Jimin closed his eyes for a moment, and it was when Jungkook chose to say,

"Be my boyfriend."

Fuck.

Fuck, fuck this.

Jimin uses his hands beside his body to lift himself up from the ground, climbing the slippery walls until he’s standing on his two feet. He closes the shower and ceases the water hitting his skin, before inhaling a deep breath to stop his muscles from shaking.

The soft towel doesn’t soothe him, and as he dries the water from his arms and the tears from his
face, he feels nothing.

Just a growing void inside of him with the realization that every minute that passes and Jungkook doesn’t reach out to him is a minute closer to the end.

He spends the whole day like this, flatly staring out at the nothing in front of him, strumming with the hem of his shirt until it’s completely wrinkled. He doesn’t even notice, but neither cares. He tunes in and out of his memories, a stray tear running down the corner of his eyes every now and then. For awhile, every buzz of his phone means a heart skipping beat — until it doesn’t anymore. Until Jimin completely loses all the hope Jungkook’s going to say anything. It’s nearly nine o’clock and he’s watched his day go by completely motionless on his bed, phone beside his head, eyes fixed on the ceiling, yet again. It’s kind of becoming deja vu. Or maybe it’s too familiar for deja vu.

“Hyung?” Jimin hears the faint voice calling from his door, so he looks down. His brother sports a worried frown, but Jimin can’t even bring himself to put a mask on, smile for him and pretend everything is fine. He just blankly stares at him, waiting for him to formulate, “Uh… I— Mom is not home, so I… I tried something in the kitchen, for um, for kind of the first time. It’s really tasty, I promise… Do you want to eat?”

Jimin wants to say no. He wants to say no so bad, because just the thought of food going down his throat makes his stomach twist and churn, but he’s not an asshole. And he can read the pleading inside Jihyun’s eyes. He doesn’t want make the ones he loves sad. So that’s why he tries wearing a small smile and pushes himself off the bed.

Jihyun glows instantly, running off towards the kitchen and fetching a plate for Jimin. When he manages to arrive there, phone in hands, his food is already set, and he silently thanks Jihyun for putting just how much Jimin imagined he could eat. It doesn’t even take half the plate and he realizes how much his brother knows him. He pats his shoulder and ruffles his hair a little.

“It looks really good, Jihyunie.”

“Thank you! I worked really hard. Now, please eat!”

His brother gives him privacy, going to sit on the couch and watch television while Jimin sits on the dinner table alone, him and the plate staring at each other until he finally picks up the chopsticks.

He’s two mouthfuls in when he decides he can’t take it all in without some distraction, so he unlocks his phone and starts to mindless scroll his timeline on twitter just to take his mind off the fact he’s ingesting food and maybe make the slide easier down his throat.

Jimin judges it a pretty good idea until he catches sight of a tweet Taehyung made around thirty minutes ago.

His hand freezes on the way to his mouth, motionless in the air.

@kimta_e: just spent two fucking days marathoning haikyuu with jungkook if we don’t own the weeb losers title already then who tf does

It’s immediate how his body responds.
Jimin drops both the chopsticks and his phone on the table, pressing an arm on his roaring stomach as he sprints to the bathroom. The sound of the chair screeching backwards hurts his ear and he nearly falls down, tripping on his feet on the doorway and falling on his knees in front of the toilet.

The vomit climbs from his throat unannounced. It floods his mouth with that bitter taste and hits the ceramic walls of the toilet in a way that only makes Jimin throw up more. Everything he ate comes right back out, along with a yellow looking goop, until there’s nothing else in his stomach and he vomits water and bile.

By the time he finishes, his body falls limply against the toilet, cheek pressed to the border of it and dazed eyes realizing Jihyun is right behind him, pushing his hair back from his sweaty forehead with a desperate kind of expression. He’s mumbling apologies, but Jimin can’t hear. He can’t fucking hear anything besides the hammering inside his head.

Because Jungkook spent his whole day with Taehyung. His… Their day.

And he couldn’t even bother to send a single text to Jimin.

He knows he should feel enraged.

But he’s so defeated to feel anything.

He allows Jihyun to pull his head to his shoulder, the younger stretching his body in a way he can wet his hand on the sink to rub water on Jimin’s wrists and forehead while still keeping him close to him.

“Hyung, I-I’m so sorry, I ate it a-and I feel fine, I don’t know why—”

Jimin weakly reaches out to hold the boy’s hands. He’s shaking. “Jihyunie, it’s okay. It was not your food, hyung just doesn’t feel well. Your food is amazing. But don’t tell mom, okay?” he asks, voice as thin as glass, “I’m gonna rest a little.” he tells him, and before the boy can protest, Jimin is already rising on his feet.

His knees threaten to fail at first, but he manages it at last. His legs suddenly feel like it weighs ten thousand pounds. Jihyun helps him make his way to his bedroom and covers him up, so Jimin thanks him with a faint smile.

“I’ll be okay, don’t worry.”

The younger nods, gulping. “Okay. Do you want something?”

He shakes his head. “Just need sleep.”

And sleep he does, because Jimin can’t bother to think about anything. Not right now. His mind might implode on its own if he does. He doesn’t know if he can take it.

Waking up is just as hard as it was the day before. Time seems to have frozen, and he’s on a reality where everything is still. Too still. Waiting for the moment the clock shifts and shatters it all. The taste on his tongue is absolute horrible and it’s what makes him recall last night’s events. The way he went to sleep without washing his mouth is somehow what bothers him the most in that moment, so he gets up and drags his feet through the floor, a step after the other, until he’s on that same bathroom again. The one he spent some of his worst moments this whole month. He brushes his teeth without looking at it, keeping his eyes focused on the sink, and leaves before he can throw up again.
Once Jimin is back in his room, he notices his phone placed on his nightstand, and a sudden anger bubbles from deep inside of him.

He reaches out to it, and scoffs when there’s still no new messages on his lockscreen.

He opens his messages app, stares at the good night text he sent two days ago as if it personally offended him and his whole family. He wants to say so many things. He wants to curse him, tell him to get the fuck out of his life, yell about how he’s a motherfucking liar. But just as he thinks about doing it, his body feels drained. So he just types a simple ‘lmao’ and hits send.

It’s nothing. Nothing even close of what he’s feeling, but Jimin has no will to elaborate any further. He doesn’t get an answer until the next morning, when he has decided all that to be damned, and is getting ready for his routine practice with Hyoyeon at nine, sharp.

And it’s probably worse, because it comes when Jimin is not expecting, just as he’s about to leave, and it’s not a text or an audio, but a phone call.

He freezes, staring down at his phone by the door of his room, and wonders if he’s hallucinating. He hasn’t gotten one of those in so long. So fucking long.

His legs feel like jelly, and so does his arms. Jimin can’t even feel his heart beating, and he thinks it’s a little telling, because his ears are buzzing like he’s about to have a heart attack.

He can’t do this. Fuck, fuck, he can’t.

The call gets sent to voicemail, but before he can breath out in relief Jungkook is calling again.

Jimin squeezes his eyes shut, hands shaking around the device.

But he can’t run away from this forever.

So after some agonizing moments, he accepts the call and forces his arms up until the phone is pressed to his ear. It’s like it suddenly weights the whole world.

At first, there’s only a faint breathing, as if Jungkook hasn’t realized Jimin picked up yet, but when a little gasp is heard on the other side, Jimin knows he does.

“Hyung?”

And Jimin immediately has to find ground on the table to his right, because his knees wobble and he fears he can’t stand for much longer without some kind of support.

He wants to cry.

Jungkook’s voice.

Him.

Fuck.

“Jimin?”

He bites down on his bottom lip. So fucking hard it draws blood, flooding the inside of his mouth so it matches how Jimin feels inside. Bleeding.

“Mhm.” is about all he can provide as an answer while remaining intact.
“I— I don’t know what to say. I’m so sorry. Fuck. Jimin, I—” he listens to it, waiting for the words to hit, but it doesn’t come. He can’t even trust the distress in Jungkook's voice. “Yesterday, I— I was so caught up with the studies I had to make for a test, that I—” Jimin curls his fingers resting on top of the wooden table, and he can’t believe his ears. He’s not saying what he’s hearing, he’s not, he can’t— “It completely slipped my mind, and fuck, I know I— I’m so sorry, Jimin, I—” The fact he’s lying is probably the breaking point.

Jimin feels like the ground has been stolen from beneath his feet and he’s falling.

“Are you?” he whispers, and his jaw shakes with the force of the rage that hits him.

Jungkook is silent for a moment, before he asks, sounding startled that Jimin even spoke, “What?”

“Sorry. Are you?”

“Wh— I— Of course, why—”

“Really?” he chuckles, shaking his head, “That’s funny.”

“W...why? What's funny?”

“No reason. Go on.”

The younger sighs on the other end.

“Hyung, I... I know you’re mad, but—”

“No. I’m not mad.” Jimin corrects him.

“No...?”

“No. I’m done.”

Jimin thinks he hears the slight sound of a gasp, but he’s past the point when he cared.

“Wha—” Jungkook attempts to croak out, but Jimin cuts him off.

“How did you enjoy your two days marathon of anime with Taehyung on our birthday?”

He throws it at once, proud that his voice doesn’t shake despite him being in fucking shards. The fact that simply watching fucking cartoons made Jungkook forget about him makes Jimin feel like absolute trash.

But deep down, he knows it was not the cartoons that mattered.

“Jimin, I— I can—”

“You can what? Explain?” he shakes his head, and the first tear slips from the corner of his eye, “Don’t bother. I know... In the end, it had always been him, right?” and this time, his voice does fail, because he can’t hold it any longer. He feels like he’s breaking his own heart with bare hands in a two ways situation, because every crack digs a cut that reaches deeper inside his palms, and the blood is all over the place.

“What? No! I— Jimin, please—"
“I told you not to bother. It’s okay. I saw the signals. Just thought you’d have a little bit more of ethics to end it before it got to this and have to make me do it instead. But it’s okay. I’ll do it. We’re over. Now you’re free to go and do whatever the fuck you want.”

“Jimi—”

“Do not call me again.”

He hangs up and his whole body shakes.

Perhaps, all the strength in his body resided in that one phone call. The moment it ends, the phone slips right through his fingers, hitting the ground with a loud noise.

And that’s what erupts it.

The breaking sound.

Because all of a sudden, the pain is excruciating, and Jimin’s breath is knocked right off his chest. It’s too fast, too soon, like his whole body is exploding in a thousand million shards at once, while he still survives through it to watch the pieces hit the ground.

He can’t take it.

Everything inside of him burns, as if he’s catching fire from the inside out, and he can’t think, can’t hear, can’t see.

The pain blinds him for a moment and Jimin wants nothing but to scream, because— fuck.

He needs— it needs, it needs to stop.

He whips his head around the room, desperately looking for something, and his throat tightens even more when he finds nothing. He just wants to numb the pain, fuck, he—

He’s dizzy.

He’s dizzy and the table can’t balance him, so he leans against the wall beside it, forehead on the cold concrete, tears trickling down his chin.

He curls his hand in a fist, nails digging deep into his palms and he punches the wall beside his head weakly.

It’s over. It’s really over. It’s over, it’s over, it’s over, it’s—

Jimin only realizes he had been punching the wall within every loop in his head when Wow gets up from his place by the bed and starts to desperately bark by his feet. And it only makes it all worse, because now he’s crying harder and nothing even makes sense. His knuckles are bleeding, but not even the sting of raw flesh being shred compares to everything that’s being torn inside of him. Because Wow is the gift Jungkook gave him, and he is there and Jungkook is not, and he’s the wish he granted Jimin, and he granted him so many more wishes, just to—

Jimin sobs, knees hitting the ground with a dull sound.

He curls on himself, whimpering and wallowing in agony, but not even this eases the pressure off his skull. Wow is desperate, nudging him with his snout and crying along as if seeing Jimin hurt hurts him too.
Somewhere between his hair tugging and the way he started to scratch his nape until it cut the skin, a body presses against his. And the warmth is nothing but comforting. Jimin wants to be alone, and he is just about to yell that, when he raises his head and realizes it is his mom.

And the look on her face is one that Jimin has never seen before in his life.

If he was shattered, the sight of it happening was breaking her too.

He presses the palm of his hands against his face and cries harder.

“M-mom…” he sobs, feeling so guilty that she’s getting to see him like this. He wants to stop it, but it’s not under his control.

And she brings him to her, pressing him so tightly to her chest as if she wants to put him back inside of her body, where nothing can ever reach him. Where he’s safe and protected from all the ache from the outside world.

Jimin allows himself to cry on her shoulder like he never did before. All the times he hid it, worrying he’d only be a burden, worrying she’d feel like she was failing — he releases it.

And she hugs him like he should’ve done it all those times before.

Like she’s really going to protect him from everything with her bare hands, rip a part of herself to stop him bleeding — assemble him again, every cracked shard, piece by piece, just like she did on his birth.

Jimin buries his face deeper on her neck and tries to believe it.

Chapter End Notes

so as you've probably realized this is not the last chapter
i felt like it would be rly such an asshole move to put all this in the LAST chapter so i decided to make it in two parts, but also im happy that i did bc i feel like i was able to develop this more? and i know this is terrible right now im sorry!!!!!!!! believe me i cried like a baby writing this and kept on questioning myself why tf did i ever plot this the only feeling possible was REGRET the author regrets everything in big capital letters
but well that being said i promise the happy ending will be worth it (at least i think right.. i mean we can have different opinions lmao) but if i feel like i have to split the next chapter so it's not rushed i'll do it again!!
and we're getting jungkook's insight of absolutely everything the next chapter so hey!! prepare to love him or hate him more ig
if youre reading this while its ongoing rly i have no words youre the real mvp and i love you

twitter
In Jungkook's world, falling in love was not a virtue — it was a privilege.

One he thought he'd never be granted during his youth; had long grown past it. The period of time that attached him to a place was around six months before he’d fly somewhere else and start it all over again.

Until one day, coincidentally on the land he was born, he met what he thought to be impossible.

He couldn't place a name to it — the heart tugging, the palpitations under the skin. But he knew it had to be it. He would never state it out loud, but he read all about it in the books he secretly downloaded on his phone. He did under the excuse of curiosity, but beneath all those layers of denial, Jungkook knew he was yearning to feel it, too.

So it was a bit surprising that this one came a little short in height and also lacking a brain-to-mouth filter. He was short-tempered and Jungkook indulged in it to snatch a pair of pink cheeks out of him. It was the cutest thing he had ever seen till date and — cut him some slack, he was a weak
The books all talked about tall, sharp around the edges, polite man that knew how to be a gentlemen. But again, all the stories were about a boy and a girl, so he was not surprised they used to paint him the face of a prince charming. Jungkook didn't want a prince charming. To be honest, he didn't know what he really wanted at all.

Until he met Jimin.

The guy was a hurricane. After randomly meeting him in a party which he attended alone out of boredom just like he grew used to, Jungkook was completely swept off his feet.

Jimin run away before he could catch his number. But he wanted to believe destiny.

And so they met again on the renewal day of the year. They kissed at midnight like lovers and parted ways like strangers.

Jungkook couldn't take him out of his mind. Like a fool, he spent the entirety of his break searching him down the internet — any social media would do —, but it was no use.

When his efforts granted him no results and he had to get ready for his new school, he disappointedly let it go.

Jungkook begrudgingly attended the first day of classes, until — you call it; destiny, fate — decided to act upon him again.

He saw him on the hallways, hanging off some other guy's neck while bubbling with laughter at what the other one had said.

It didn't matter. His stomach still performed a swoop inside of him at the sight of his presumably lost love interest. He wanted to make it right this time — not that he had ever felt like this before, but he never cared enough to try and stay, or settle. It was no use when he was leaving in few months, every time. Jungkook learned how to grow detached, but not this time — this time he wanted to try. And he wanted to make a good appearance, snatch a couple laughs from Jimin even, so he spent at least a week planning how he'd surprise him. Jimin hadn't noticed him yet, and despite a little disappointed, Jungkook was happy, because like this he could follow up to his plan.

It wasn't until one day when he was in the bathroom of the school, urinating, that he unintentionally listened on the conversation of the two guys beside him.

"What, do you want him to suck you off?" the one on Jungkook's right asked a little baffled, holding back a laugh.

"I mean, he does look a bit like a girl, doesn't he? If I close my eyes, it's not like it'd have much difference. Besides, it's not like he wouldn't want to. I don't even feel bad, that one will hop on any dick that is presented to him, he doesn't care. If he was a girl he'd be such a slut."

Jungkook immediately felt uncomfortable, his skin prickling with annoyance.

Guys like them were the type Jungkook hated the most — supposedly-straights who couldn't admit liking men and would say shit like that to not unclutch from their toxic masculinity. It immediately made him sick. He finished off and went to the sink to wash his hands with a frown.

"Ah, but, seriously, Park Jimin is really something." Jungkook immediately froze at the words, hands still under the running water, "Heard from a friend of mine that he got a boy all head over
heels for him just to run off with some other guy who had a bigger dick."

They snickered.

"See? He doesn't even care, can't even respect himself, so why should I bother? I mean, look at mine. I'm pretty big, right? Bet he wouldn't mind giving me a head. Those lips were made for it."

Jungkook swallowed in dry, fingers curling in a fist.

"Oh, shut up! God, you're so gross."

Their laughs rang in the bathroom, before they walked out without washing hands, leaving Jungkook alone with the sound of the water running.

It shouldn't get into his head. It shouldn't. They weren't worth it. Jungkook shouldn't pay their words any mind, because they were evil and dirty, but—

What if he was the guy they were talking about? There was no way, right? He didn't even have a proper chance to express anything other than physical attraction towards Jimin, so there was no way that was about him. But also... If Jimin didn't care and had been in it just for the fun of it—well, Jungkook didn't want to take that guy's role. Not with the first person he was considering to open up to. No, he was not ready for the heartbreak and humiliation of rejection on the first try. He didn't want no unrequited feelings, or to play the fool and show up all bright and excited for Jimin to act like he was no one important. Because maybe he wasn't. Jungkook had no right to demand Jimin to feel the same just because he caught his head too deep into his own ass. It was fine, he just had to climb down from the clouds. It'd be fine as long as neither of them acknowledged each other's presence.

But, unlucky for him, Jimin had a friend with a big fucking mouth on him, that approached him one day out of the blue, asking if they could sit on the same table as him. Jungkook couldn't even see his face, was too focused on locking eyes with Jimin — but the moment Jimin reacted like Taehyung had asked the most absurd thing to Jungkook and turned around choking on his own breath, Jungkook had blurted,

"Sure."

He still doesn't know why he did it. But Taehyung was quick to sit down and introduce himself. Jungkook couldn't say he cared much — he could only see Jimin.

That was, until Taehyung asked, with a frown at their silent exchange,

"Do you know each other?"

And Jimin was prompt to respond,

"No!"

That was the moment Jungkook confirmed it. If Jimin remembered him, he wanted nothing to do with him. He wanted no lovesick boy hanging from his wings and Jungkook was not about to go and perform the perfect role for him.

Although, it didn't matter how much he lied to himself, he couldn't deny how mad and hurt he felt. He swallowed it all down, nevertheless, and poured all his remaining attention on Taehyung in hopes of gaining some sort of distraction so he wouldn't feel any more like shit than he already did. Jimin didn't even care — Jungkook caught him almost bored many times, eyes down smiling at his
phone, with clearly more interesting matters at hand.

Soon enough, another figure entered the scene and Jungkook discovered what was to be a fucking horrible feeling.

Jealousy.

Irrationally jealous. Blazing red. All-consuming.

Jinyoung was all around and he wasn't strong enough to hide his constant annoyance with the boy, so every once in a while he'd let a sentence or a glare slip. It was there, the raw feeling, bare and exposed for anyone to see — Jungkook felt vulnerable.

He didn't want to be put in the line of fire, but everything came tumbling down one day when him and Jimin had to meet up for a schoolwork and Jimin ditched him for what Jungkook knew had to be a date with Jinyoung. The flames were burning beneath his skin already, so it needed less than a flick for them to spread like wildfire, unrestrained, hurting everything around before he could stop, including Jimin.

The rage inside of him took form through some of the ugliest words he had ever said to anyone. But the knowledge didn't make him stop — on the contrary, it only got him more annoyed, worsening his reaction. He was angry at himself for letting so much show, and for speaking like a fucking asshole, like the guys in the bathroom that he allowed to get into his head.

He still remembers the bitter taste on his tongue when he said,

"Sure, hurry up. I bet your oh so important commitment of today can’t wait to get you on your knees."

Jimin had pushed his shoulders, incredulous eyes shaking while staring at him.

"What the fuck is wrong with you?!" he had shouted, but Jungkook could only smirk to downplay how fucking awful he felt, tongue on his cheek and teeth sinking on the inside of his mouth.

Jimin fled after the teacher asked what was wrong and it was all it took for Jungkook's facade to fall, once he had Jimin's back. All energy wore off his body and he spent the rest of the day restless. Not only because he knew for a fact that Jimin was spending it with Jinyoung, but also because Jungkook had basically called him a whore and ignored the hurt in his eyes, since it was too late to step back anyway.

He was such an idiot.

And Jimin was too good for his own sake, so that's why later that night, when Jungkook was too fidgety to sleep and begged Jimin to meet him, he agreed and accepted his apologies — even if he hadn't said with all the words that he forgave him, Jungkook would take anything he could get.

They restarted, slowly.

Building up their relationship for real this time, with small steps, until Jungkook could say they were bordering the label of friends. By this point, he was much closer to Taehyung, obviously, but he and Jimin managed to have some good moments of their own, too.

If only he could have settled for that — being friends.

However, mix up repressed feelings and a lot of alcohol one fateful night and you get a grand
disaster. Well, at least, Jungkook considers it one inside his chest, when Taehyung decided to have them all in the same party. He should have guessed he couldn't handle an atmosphere like that alongside Jimin when every little detail screamed déjà vu to his face. But Jungkook made himself deaf and blind to the blaring red warnings.

He didn't attend with his two friends, and got drunk before he found Jimin. Although when he did, be it sober or drunk, he doesn't think he could have resisted.

Jimin was beautiful. That much had always been a fact for Jungkook. But, sometimes, in certain situations, he was alluring in a way that made him magical. Fucking breathtaking and Jungkook had never been granted good lungs, to begin with.

They crashed, as it was long overdue, but Jungkook bared himself in the process. And amidst his frenzy of exposed vulnerability and pleadings for self-affirmation, he failed to realize Jimin might have stripped himself from his own lies too.

He sucked Jimin off on a stranger's bed, and Jimin got on his knees for him, yet when the silence drowned his moans and sighs of pleasure, Jungkook became increasingly paler, wondering what the fuck he had gotten himself into. Because now Jimin knew. Jimin definitely knew his feelings and he wasn't saying anything. Jungkook couldn't even look at him, too embarrassed on his own skin, eyes on the hands over his lap. He thought he couldn't grow any sickier until Jimin suddenly got up from the ground and, without a word, entered the bathroom inside the room.

Jungkook felt like throwing up.

He hung his head lower and took a deliberate long breath, before rising on his feet and getting out of the room as soon as he could.

He couldn't even give as much as two steps to ease himself into his own mind, before a girl he had been talking to earlier attached herself to his neck, kissing him with no opening for him to say no.

Jungkook was taken by surprise, but the distraction was welcomed at first. He sat down on a couch because his legs felt like jelly and the girl followed him, straddling his lap and kissing over his neck, where Jungkook could still feel the warmth of Jimin's lips on him. He squeezed her thighs, indicating her to stop, but it seemed she took the signal the other way around and started leaving her own marks on top of Jimin's. Jungkook then tugged her head back, despite gently, making her stare at him with a confused frown.

"What's wrong?"

"I'm… not in the mood." he remembers trying to explain, but to be honest, he doesn't recall much after that. Only that he basically fled out of there, out of the house, hopped into the first taxi in sight and passed out on his bed.

Next morning, Jungkook had set an ultimatum for himself.

He couldn't continue with this. He had promised from the start he'd not let himself fall into this lovesick trap, so he shouldn't be feeling weak now. He couldn't afford to be weak.

They should remain as friends. Who knows, perhaps Jimin didn't even care they made out. So Jungkook would act casual.

And casual he did.

But it was weird. He attempted, though, for the first few seconds when he saw Jimin and Taehyung
on the school again after the party, but Jimin… He seemed out of it. He and Taehyung were having
a weird talk about Jimin sleeping over Taehyung's house, so, worried, Jungkook offered his own
just late enough to realize what he was doing. That's why he quickly blurted an invitation for
Taehyung too, hoping it'd look less awkward. Although, it didn’t matter. The guy refused him
nevertheless. Jungkook was in the middle of convincing him, when Jimin simply froze. He froze
mid-sentence, eyes on something behind Jungkook’s back. He turned around, but there were
hundreds of students on the cafeteria and he had no idea what Jimin was looking at.

“Hyung?” he prompted, turning to face him again, but with complete mortification, Jungkook
realized Jimin was crying.

That was the moment his world shifted a little of its axis. He clutched his hands in fists over the
table, the breath failing him.

If Jungkook was scared of the heartbreak arriving from his own pain, he never once imagined his
heart could break at the sight of someone else hurting.

His throat closed, and he wanted to reach out, say something, cradle him in his arms and protect
him from whatever that was causing him ache. But it was not his place. So he wordlessly watched
as Taehyung did all of that instead of him and Jimin babbled something about having lost his
family. Jungkook tried adding two and two together, but he just couldn’t understand.

The both of them left when the bell rang without uttering a word to him. Not that he thought he
could be their priority in that moment, but he remained with that scene eating him inside for the
entirety of his classes. Not a single lesson got through his brain, not when it was filled with Jimin’s
crying face and theories of all the things that could have happened to him. Jungkook just wanted to
be there.

He really thought he’d never be granted that chance, until he caught sight of a familiar mop of
black hair hanging beside the principal’s office, shoulders slouched as he sat on the bench with
another guy on the far corner. Jungkook’s heart immediately soared inside his chest, but he
swallowed down his nervousness and decided that fuck it with being casual.

“Jimin-hyung?”

Not even a twitch. Jungkook bit his bottom lip, taking approaching footsteps and calling for him
again. “Jimin?”

Nothing. He frowned, worry growing in a very ugly manner inside of his chest. “Jimin?” he tried
one more time, and this time Jimin’s head slightly rose, as if he had just faintly listened, so
Jungkook called once again when he was barely two steps away from him. “Jimin?”

The older finally snapped of whatever trance he had been caught in, and looked up.

It felt as if someone had punched Jungkook on the stomach. Jimin had a huge, ugly bruise over his
cheekbone. Without warning, the ground was spinning. And worse than the bruise, his expression
was—

“What’s this, what happened to you?” he blurted in one rushed breath, but Jimin simply shook his
head, eyes casting down again.

Jungkook was having none of it.

He crouched in front of him, and Jimin immediately backed off, startled. He quickly rubbed his
cheek, as if to show he was okay, but it only served for him to pull out a painful expression. “I’m
Jungkook gulped, and bravely reached out for the boy’s wrists, gently pulling it away from his face so he couldn’t hurt himself any longer. “No, you’re not.” Jimin’s eyes were fixated where Jungkook’s hands wrapped around his, and suddenly his eyes filled with tears. Jungkook had to do his fucking best not to pull him into a hug right then and there. “Hey… Hey, what’s wrong?” he asked with the most tender voice he could muster, scared something harsher would trigger a crack.

Jimin cracked anyway, pulling his hands back roughly, as if the touch burned his skin. “I’m, fine, I said it.” he insisted, rubbing his eyes clean of the tears.

“Well, you don’t look fine.” he pressed.

“Just… Leave me alone, okay?”

No. Jungkook was stubborn and his mind was all about Jimin, so it came as no surprise when he acted without thinking, taking his hand towards the other’s face and softly brushing his thumb beneath the wound on his cheek. His skin was freezing cold. “Who did this?”

Jungkook was ready to bend whoever’s hand dared to touch him, but to his surprise, always overtaking his own conceptions and expectations, Jimin said,

“I broke his wrist already.”

“You— You what?!?”

“I broke his wrist.” he repeated like it was a daily occurrence. Rainy day in the morning.

Jungkook gulped.

Fuck, was it a bad time to realize how much he liked him?

“Well, that’s… An efficient way to not make him punch other people’s faces.” he uttered the only thing he could come up with in that situation, but Jimin simply stared at him. Jungkook sighed helplessly, and got up on his feet, trying to help him up. “Come on, let’s clean you up.”

Wrong move. Jimin snapped, yanking his hands away from him once again. The younger tried not let it get to him. How Jimin seemed he couldn’t even stand being around him anymore.

“Just leave me the fuck alone, Jungkook! Why do you even care what happens to me?!”

But that sentence was the most confusing thing of it all.

Jungkook went from feeling hurt to feeling puzzled in a span of two seconds. Why wouldn’t he care?

Yet, whiplash really crept its way into his brain when the stranger that had been sitting beside Jimin all this time, said, completely unabashed in his bare assholery,

“Troubles in paradise already? Can’t the faggies stay normal for a second without snapping and shrieking?”

Jungkook immediately saw red.

Who the fuck did he think he was? How the fuck did he even know about them? He hated almost everyone in that godforsaken school, but guys like him had a special place in the pit of his stomach,
where bile rose.

He took a step forward, hands balled in fists,

“What did you say?” he nearly growled, and he knew his corporal language was menacing enough.

Jimin’s gentle touch had been what grounded him. He wrapped his hands around Jungkook’s arms, tugging him backwards into his chest. “Jungkook, stop.” he asked, tone pleading, and maybe that’s why he looked back. All Jungkook cared about was him. He was hurting and Jungkook would do anything that Jimin wanted. Even if it meant him not breaking that son of a bitch’s nose.

Things happened too fast.

They were surely holding a silent conversation through their eyes, and Jimin’s touch was warm on Jungkook’s skin, but it all went to shit the moment the principal’s door opened and a middle-aged woman stepped out of it, towering a boy that was nearly her height, but looked small hidden behind her figure.

Jimin snapped his hand back as if it was electrocuted. Jungkook couldn’t understand a thing, so he simply stared in silence.

“How did it go?” Jimin asked to the woman, but she ignored him in lieu of turning around and nearly barking to the homophobe behind her,

“You can go in.”

He stomped his way inside the room and banged the door closed. He could choke for all that Jungkook cared.

The woman was, then, turning to him and asking with a cordial tone that was sugarcoating a lot of bitterness. Jungkook could recognize it — had heard it plenty of times from his mother before. “Can I know who you are?”

Jimin was instantly restless. He took a step forward. “Mom.”

Oh.

Jungkook looked between the two of them. Yes. He should have addressed the resemblances.

She ignored Jimin’s pleading in order to stare at Jungkook as if he personally owned her an answer. He felt nervous. This was Jimin’s mother.

“I, um… I’m Jeon Jungkook, mrs.” he stuttered his way through, bowing awkwardly.

“Jeon Jungkook…” she repeated in an airy tone, making him gulp, “Are you Jimin’s friend?”

Before he could even answer, Jimin interrupted again. “Mom, please.”

And unlike the other times, now she looked at him, hurt all over her shining irises. “Okay.” she settled, at last, “Let’s go home. Nice meeting you, Jungkook-ssi.”

Jungkook caught himself fully bending to his waist again, tongue stumbling on his teeth, “A-ah— Nice meeting you too.”

She nodded, and Jungkook was inherently lost, so he searched for Jimin’s eyes, hoping to find
some answers, but the older simply stared like he was the root of all his problems and walked away.

If Jungkook thought he knew restlessness for the second half of his morning after seeing Jimin cry, he probably should have prepared for what was to be expecting him the next few days. He really did toss casualty out the fucking window when he just about decided that it was a good idea to leave a flood of texts on Jimin’s phone the moment he stepped out of the school’s gates. He couldn’t help himself. He was beyond worried. He never thought he could feel like that towards someone else. It was eating him inside, and there was no way he could hold himself back when his fingers were dialing Jimin’s numbers so fast he didn’t even process what he was doing. Jimin wouldn’t pick up anyway.

He didn’t, so Jungkook proved himself right and called once again just to make sure.

Except that this time, Jimin did pick up.

And Jungkook had no idea what to fucking say.

Jimin was very straightforward from the beginning.

“What do you want?”

Jungkook swallowed down his surprised yelp at his harsh tone. “H-hyung, hi. I didn’t think you were gonna pick up.” Nice. Just bare honesty to stoke the lion. Great save, Jungkook.

“Yeah, well. So?”

The younger looked down, brows furrowed, playing with the hem of his shirt nervously.

“I, um, how… How are you?”

“Did you just spam me to ask how I was?”

Jimin sounded so cold. Jungkook pressed his lips together.

“No, I mean, that too, but—” he sighed, “I wanted to know what happened?”

“Why?”

He inhaled a breath, a bit baffled.

“What do you mean ‘why’, your face was—”

“Why do you keep pretending to care about me, there’s no one here to see, Jungkook, cut it off.”

This time the younger did frown, completely taken aback by his words. He scoffed, shaking his head. “Pretending to care, are you serious right now? Can’t I be worried after I see you hurt and bleeding?” What’s so absurd about it?

“No.”

“Why not?”

Jimin laughed then, hollow and colorless.

“You know why.”
And that was the fucking thing. Jungkook didn’t. He was the one catching feelings and burying it all inside of him when he didn’t even know how to deal with it, in the first place.

He pushed down all his inner turmoils in order to dig something useful out of Jimin. If he wanted to help, he should at least know what happened.

“Why did your mother talk to me like that? As if she knew me? And why did that boy say that to us?”

“It’s none of your business.”

Jungkook took a deep breath. Jimin could be so difficult at times.

“Clearly I’m kind of involved, so yeah, it is.”

The older snorted out loud, as if he had said something funny.

But he definitely wasn’t prepared for the blow that came along with his next words.

“Someone snapped a pic of us making out and outed me to my family. Happy now? Did I satisfy your curiosity? Good, I’m hanging up.”

Jungkook couldn’t even wrap his head around the information, or form a coherent kind of sentence, because—

“What— No, Jimin, wait—”

He hung up just like promised, but Jungkook felt like he was sinking in solid ground.

Outed?

Fuck, now everything made sense. Why he was crying, why he was saying he lost it all and Jungkook—

Jungkook was the cause of it.

No surprise Jimin was treating him that way. Shit, he must really fucking hate him.

If only he had kept it in his pants, Jimin wouldn’t— That wouldn’t—

Jungkook fell down backwards on his bed, knees giving out, head on his hands.

Fuck, what did he do, what did he do?

The rest of the whole day passed like a blur. No matter what in the world he was doing, he couldn't focus. Guilt was devouring him from the inside out, and that night he barely even batted his eyelashes, sleep trailing somewhere far away from his brain.

Jimin's mother didn't seem like an asshole, but Jungkook could never be sure when related to this. What about his father? Jungkook really did feel his heart ache when he considered Jimin could have suffered any physical punishment thanks to this. Fuck, maybe that was what the bruise on his face was about? Or maybe not, because Jimin mentioned breaking the guy's wrist… He wouldn't do that to his own father, would he? Fuck, Jungkook had no idea. He'd probably inflict a concussion on himself from how hard he was thinking.

The next morning, his lips were nearly on raw flesh from the way he had been nervously chewing
on them the entire night, hands sweating in anticipation to see Jimin and make sure everything was alright. But what he feared ended up happening — Jimin didn't show up to classes.

Jungkook did the only thing that seemed reasonable in that moment: cornered Taehyung against a wall to get the informations he needed. The boy was dead reluctant at first, but once Jungkook explained to him that Jimin told him already he was outed, he started easing up — Jungkook nearly on his knees begging for some clarification may have softened his heart a bit too.

To his unfortunate surprise, though, it seemed Taehyung knew just as little as him. He said Jimin hadn't updated him about everything yet, but he knew that he was suspended for beating the shit out of some guys that were bullying his brother.

And that was about all.

Jungkook couldn't help but feel a sense of pride in knowing Jimin could defend himself and whoever he loved from disgusting assholes like that, despite the awful situation. It was good for people to know not to mess with him. Jungkook felt relieved.

But at the same time, the newfound informations didn't ease his worries in the slightest. Instead, it just urged him to find a way to see Jimin even more. So that's why when Taehyung told him he was going to his house to take him the notes from the classes and update him about everything, Jungkook promptly offered himself to do it. He got a no straight away, Taehyung arguing he had to see Jimin to understand what happened no matter what, but so it happens Jungkook was very good at begging and convincing.

That's how he found himself on the school's gate with Taehyung's notes on his backpack, heading to the bus stop so he could go to Jimin's house.

His walk, though, was interrupted when he bumped into someone, distracted with his phone for a moment.

"Oh— sor—" Jungkook swallowed his apology the moment he looked up and recognized who it was. His annoyance from yesterday came rushing right back, all at once, at the sight of the guy who had insulted them in exchange of absolutely nothing. Just for the sake of it.

And stopping to think about it, how did he even know about the two of them?

The guy was around his height and he snickered upon seeing Jungkook's face, turning his head to the side to spit on the sidewalk.

Now that Jungkook was seeing him from up close, he realized he had some wounds on his face as well and immediately inflated with proud for knowing Jimin was the one who did it.

"What? Get out of my way, you faggot! Did you learn to get in people's ways from your boyfriend or what?"

Jungkook narrowed his eyes, breath cutting short. "What?" he demanded in a low voice, unable to believe his ears.

"You heard me, are you fucking deaf? Get the fuck out of my way!"

He pushed Jungkook's shoulders to get through, but Jungkook was quick to grab his wrist and squeeze it on his hold, twisting slightly. The surprise on the other's eyes faded in less than a second.
"What the fuck do you have to do with Jimin?"

He let out a short laugh. "Oh? Didn't he tell you? Bet he was so ashamed of knowing his brother got to see him like that... Like the little slut he is."

There was no rationalizing. One moment Jungkook had the guy's wrist on his hold, the other he was twisting his arm around and delivering a punch straight to his nose, pushing him backwards.

"What the fuck did you just say?" Jungkook stepped forward, grabbing his collar and pulling him to his eye level. His nose was bleeding but that disgustingly sinister smile was untouchable on his lips. "You say a fucking word about him again and I'll fucking end you." he growled close to his face, "Do you hear me?"

The guy chuckled, spitting on the ground beside him again.

"You're lucky your parents are who they are or else you'd be one with this fucking ground." he menaced and Jungkook's nostrils fucking flared. "Come on, are you over? Let me go. Or are you going to keep on beating up someone who's not fighting back? Careful, your boyfriend got pissy pussy with us exactly because of that."

Jungkook gulped down all the ugly feelings that were bubbling from deep inside of him.

"And he did a fucking great job on that horrendous face of yours." he barked before pushing the guy back harshly one last time.

Sadly, he did not fall square on his flat ass, simply stumbled some steps back. He laughed, showing Jungkook his middle finger.

"Shove that up your asshole, faggot. Bet you'll like it." he declared before walking past Jungkook and making sure to bump his shoulder on the way.

Jungkook had to stay in that same position for some good minutes, closed eyes, inhaling deep long breaths, before he could get on track again.

On his way to Jimin's house, the pain of his cracked knuckles hit him, but he did his best in dealing with it without much fuss. It was definitely stinging, but if the exchange was one more wound to add up in that fucker's face then Jungkook was fine with it.

Showing up to Jimin's doorstep, though, required a lot more strength and courage than decking the nose of that piece of shit. Jungkook stood outside of it for nearly ten minutes, and knocked on a last second decision when he panicked that a neighbour was starting to stare at him suspiciously.

He stuttered his way a bit once Jimin opened the door, and sweated coldly the whole time but that could be excused with the unforgiving sun burning his back. Jimin was unrelenting about his presence there, and Jungkook couldn't blame him, but suddenly—

He nearly passed out when Jimin noticed his bruised knuckles, except it came off as a blessing rather than a curse. He didn't want Jimin to know who got the decking, so he bullshited his way through pretty well, and swooned later over the fact Jimin was taking care of him. He took Jungkook’s hands in his and cleaned it, bandaged it, the whole deal. Jungkook had to gulp down his urge to keen. His heart did it for him, though, squirming inside his chest. He fell a little harder for him in that moment.

Jungkook was expecting brutal refusal and instant rejection, but to his surprise he and Jimin ended up falling in easy conversation. Again, or he was just terrific at convincing or Jimin was really the
greatest person to ever exist on that disgraceful land. Between the two of them — and analyzing previous situations — Jungkook would stick to the last one.

But as things usually happened with them, everything was fine until it definitely wasn't.

It could’ve been a perfect afternoon. Jungkook cooked for them. Jimin was eating and they were sitting side by side. But Jungkook decided to apologize for having him outed and Jimin dismissed like it was nothing. Apparently, the problem was not Jungkook being partly the reason he had been exposed, but Jungkook admitting he couldn’t resist the temptation because Jimin was irresistible on the night of the party. The moment he said that, Jimin shut him down, declaring he just couldn’t say things like that. Of course he couldn't. Jimin didn’t want to hear something like that from him.

Or so he thought.

It was a minute until things took a completely different turn than expected.

Because just then Jimin was interrogating him about why he pretended to have never met him before when they encountered in school.

And Jungkook was taken aback. Because he only acted like that because Jimin told Taehyung they hadn’t met first.

But he blurted out a, "You went along with it." amidst his nervousness instead of "You're the one who started it."

Jimin was not pleased by the answer. He started to corner Jungkook with questions and accusations he didn't see coming. And it totally pissed him off. The way Jimin was assuming shit about him and about this detached version of him. Jungkook hated that word. It just springed salt over old wounds, still open and slowly healing, of what he had lost to become that. Detached. He was fighting against it every day. He didn’t need it thrown across his face.

Maybe snapping at Jimin hadn’t been the smartest way out, but he had been impulsive like that, and he really thought it was over this time when he took his backpack and headed towards the door. But Jimin’s mother sprang through it, arms full of grocery bags, and there was no way Jungkook would give her a bad image. She had already seen the picture, probably recognized him, and he— he couldn’t allow that. There was no sense for him to want to look good for her, every possibility of him and Jimin being even remotely close far, far away from reality. But he still acted upon his instincts.

And that ended with both him and Jimin locked up in the older’s room.

Regretful of his actions already, Jungkook tried to soothe the tense atmosphere. Yet, apparently, everything he did was the wrong move.

Take it on him for being a fuking dumbass, perhaps.

But he still offered to let Jimin know the real reason why he didn’t acknowledge him when they reencountered. Jimin obviously took it.

And it was weird, because Jungkook never considered he gave a single damn about it. But there he was, prying informations out of his heart with curious eyes. Jungkook couldn’t deny him a thing. Much less the truth. As much ashamed as he was of it. Because the image Jimin had mustered of him was not him, and he knew what reaction telling that would trigger.

Albeit, it must have been better off like this.
With Jimin angry, he wouldn’t take notice of the underlying truth behind those ugly facts. He wouldn’t realize that Jungkook cared. That Jungkook cared so fucking much he debated with himself for a week about how to approach him and then gave up in fear of not being reciprocated.

But Jimin’s response still hurt, because he had his truths too.

He made Jungkook see that what he criticized in Jimin was mirrored in himself. He assumed so much shit about the older — when he feared Jimin wouldn’t as much as remember him, Jungkook took the lead and did it first. What if he had been wrong all this time? What if, like him, Jimin had cared too?

And he probably did.

Fuck, of course he did, with all that hurt in his eyes.

But it was too late now.

Jungkook had chosen all the wrong steps, and it could only have led him to that wrecked moment. It was inevitable.

There was no coming back.

The pain on Jimin’s expression was on his shoulders. It was all on him.

And Jungkook didn’t want Jimin to ache.

Not because of him, or any one. He’d do anything in his power to prevent that.

So after crying a river on his grandma’s lap about how fucking stupid he was, and being scolded about basically all his actions, Jungkook decided to withdraw. As much as it pained him to be away. As much as it hurt for him to know he had a shot, and that he blew it. Because that could easily be the end of it. It was their last year, anyway. If they didn’t see each other anymore, it was over.

And it was fine. It was fine as long as Jimin was okay. If being around Jungkook hurt him, then he’d do anything.

It was fine. He was used to being alone, anyway. He had been alone all his life.

Jungkook changed classes. All of them, chose all the ones neither Jimin or Taehyung attended. The lunch time was set different too. And it was like that for a whole month, or so.

Jungkook made some friends on his new classes, so yeah, things were awful, however they weren’t that awful.

Still, they weren’t Jimin. They weren’t Taehyung. And he missed them like crazy.

What a treacherous thing, right? He had thought he wouldn’t have to get through the whole ordeal of getting attached, that goddamn word again, just to be cut out of everything once more. Just that, this time, Jungkook was not gone. He was still in the same country, same city, same building as them, just a few steps from distance, but he could only watch everything unravel without meddling in. Like an spectator. Basically what he has been his whole life. An spectator of everyone’s lives, everyone’s happiness. Always watching a never-ending movie without ever getting a role.

Destiny, though, seemed to have it all planned out.
They met again on the train heading to Jeju for their school trip in the middle of the summer. And although completely taken aback, all circumstances seemed to flow his favor, so Jungkook didn't take it for granted and spewed his much needed apology for Jimin that day. He bared his whole heart for him, completely honest, stripped of any mask — and Jimin accepted it. Jungkook could feel he was cautious, but who wouldn’t be?

It was strange. Felt like a fever dream. A separate reality. Because suddenly, they were just like the Jimin and the Jungkook who met the first time at the end of the year. The light-hearted bickering that led to teasing, the flushed skins and the lingering stares. The whole trip was a fucking out of the world experience.

It felt like falling in love for the first time.

And Jungkook fell. Harder, so much harder. To the point he knew there was no way he could mold himself back to how he was before this feeling swept him off his feet.

Not after he kissed Jimin under the stars and the moonlight, on the pools, on the beach, on their room. Not after they spent hours pressed against one another, whispering sweet nothings, opening up like they never did before.

There was no way he could write the same when Jimin taught him a whole bunch of new words and structures. New words he couldn’t read until he met him.

It was no good that Jimin was a lot of his firsts, whereas Jungkook wanted no different. He watched his whole future with someone else be ruined right in front of his eyes, because all he knew was to want him. And only him, thoroughly, unconditionally. Addicted, perhaps, but he couldn’t care. The chance had slipped from in between his fingers one too many times, Jungkook was not willing to go down the path of his same mistakes again.

This time, he was attentive of everything, hoping to god to make everything right. He worked his damn hardest in expressing himself better — knew the way he acted in the beginning must have sent a lot of wrong signs for Jimin, so he was ready to replace all of them. He also used a lot of advice from his grandmother, since she was basically a love expert, until one day she demanded to meet Jimin. Jungkook was extremely cautious, because they weren’t even dating — yet — and the whole move of meeting the family was usually reserved for serious relationships. Not that he wasn’t serious, but since they weren’t there yet, he was scared Jimin was going to be set off. But his grandma was quite persuasive, per se, which just means Jungkook had the biggest weak heart for her, and in the end, he granted all her wishes.

And meeting his grandma Jimin did.

She was absolutely enamored by him, which came as no surprise, because really, who wouldn’t be? Even days after they had met, she would always find a way to talk about Jimin, how he was this angelic boy who looked at Jungkook like he set the sun on fire himself. He’d always blush and say she was exaggerating, but deep down, he wanted to believe her.

Maybe all her nagging was what prompted Jungkook to finally act upon it and take Jimin on their first date. He spent days planning it, worried over the most trivial details that didn’t even matter in the moment, because when Jimin was kissing him and saying yes, all Jungkook could see was his eyes, and the way they shone with the glow of all the stars in the night sky above their heads. All he could see was the way Jimin smiled like Jungkook had just handed happiness to him on a silver platter. Because now Jimin was his while Jungkook finally had a pair of arms he belonged to.
Dating Jimin came with a whole lot of learning. Sometimes, he presented as an incognita, and Jungkook had to learn how to solve unknown equations to understand him. But he was an applied student and when the reward was his boyfriend staring at him like he was one of the most important people in the world, it made everything more than worth it.

Learning often came from the silence, from carefully observing. Not all of them brought good feelings to him.

Just like how Jungkook started picking on Jimin's habit of not eating everything on his plate — or barely eating at all. At first, it passed by him casually, but when it became a recurrent situation, he started to feed Jimin while talking to him, just to make sure he ate. Sometimes, Jimin would blush and refuse, but once Jungkook whined in a way he hoped was cute and pouted, Jimin would roll his eyes and open his mouth while hiding a fond smile.

Jungkook was so in love it was insane.

Sometimes, just staring at him was not enough, so he used to touch him all the time, basically. When Jimin was talking to him, and Jungkook's attention would naturally drift to his lips, his hands would find way to his cheeks, scratching it off some nonexistent dirt just to tuck a lock of hair behind his ear afterwards. He'd find excuses to touch him anywhere, really — not that he needed one, but he didn't want to come off as clingy.

When Jimin was watching a movie beside him, attentively concentrated with a cute frown between his brows, Jungkook hid his smile and rested his head on his shoulder, sliding his hand down his arms until he could intertwine their fingers, playing with Jimin's small ones and nearly choking on fondness on how adorable they were.

It was hard being in love when the person you were in love with was easily the most beautiful person in the world — in and out. Jimin was terribly good and gentle, to everyone and everything, be it a stranger on the street or a stray cat on his doorstep. He often smiled at people he didn't know, unconsciously brightening someone else's day with his light and when asked about it he wouldn't even recall it. Jungkook fell for those small things all the more.

In retrospect, though, all his kindness ceased with his relationship with himself. Jungkook lost count of how many times he had to scold Jimin for a self deprecating joke that he knew he shouldn't take lightly despite Jimin's tone. His insecurity bared under the dim lights, usually when he was drunk in sleep, barely focusing on what he was saying and he'd blurt out shit like,

"I bet people can't understand how we're together. They must look at us and think you should be with someone just as beautiful as you."

"There's no getting more beautiful than you, so I think I'm with the right person." Jungkook would say, and Jimin normally chuckled without much humor before hiding his face on his neck with a sigh.
Jungkook would always hug him tight, hoping they were just light-hearted insecurities rather than deep rooted inside of his skin and nagging the back of his mind every time. But with how much they kept happening he worried it was more kind of the latter. Jimin seemed to have a special sense of comparison with Taehyung that Jungkook couldn't understand. He guessed it maybe came from too many years of friendship, so he usually didn't meddle in it.

Not everything was an one way path of feeling insecure, though. Rather the contrary, most of the times, Jimin was this cute, vibrant little thing that giggled at the smallest things and soared Jungkook’s heart to the sky. Whenever he was feeling confident it was fucking over for him and his weak health, because Jimin knew exactly the way to play with him to get him on his knees — both literally and figuratively.

He started to attend a dance studio to practice with some friends of him and the glow he acquired from that was so genuine that you could catch it from distance. Jungkook was infected by his truthful giddiness whenever he talked about it, it was clear in his eyes he loved every session of practice they had and it made Jungkook happy too, to watch him like that. In all honesty, there were times when he did get jealous and sulky because Jimin wouldn't give him attention and would prioritize his practices than them, but it was nothing to worry about — he'd simply solve it by showing up unannounced on Jimin's house and demand for attention in a way he knew he couldn't deny. It worked every time.

Spending most of his days beside Jimin and Taehyung ended influencing him on their excitement about getting into an exchange. He was reluctant about it at first — it seemed like something that was theirs and he didn't want to butt in it without being invited, but with every day that passed, thinking about it made more and more sense, how he'd have a shot at detaching from his parents while simultaneously sharing that experience with his two best friends. So he shyly addressed it to Jimin one day and he was so excited that his smile threatened to split his lips. Jungkook immediately felt more confident about the idea and started getting serious about it, focusing on his studies and on subjects he knew the exchange prioritized. Usually the three of them studied together when Jimin wouldn't ditch them for his dance practices.

Everything was seemingly fine until one day Jungkook woke up with a phone call that dropped the whole sky on his shoulders. His grandma was on the hospital, had fainted on her kitchen and was lying unconscious on a hospital bed all by herself. Jungkook didn't remember much of that night, just knows how his feet took him to Jimin's house in the middle of the night without him even processing it until Jimin was sitting next to him on the uber, comforting him with whispers on his ear and kisses on his temple.

Thankfully, it ended up being nothing too serious, so after he was allowed to enter the room she was at, and saw her characteristic smile and loving eyes, Jungkook allowed himself to breath again.

Jimin was there for him the entire time, despite having been woken up in the middle of the night. He sticked to Jungkook even on the way home, following him to his house when Jungkook begged him to not let him sleep alone.

Jimin was the perfect boyfriend in many aspects. He knew how to take care of others even if he didn't know how to take care of himself, so Jungkook was always granted the role of looking after
him in his place. He normally did a good job, but there was one day Jimin showed up in an unusual bad mood, with a cold expression and dry answers even for Jungkook, not exactly pulling away from his touches but not reciprocating either. That’s why Jungkook kept his ground and left him to himself as much as he could — after all, he guessed Jimin wanted to be alone. It was not until lunch time when Jimin wasn't even touching his food, just blankly staring at it, that triggered red signs on Jungkook's head. He was sitting beside him, so he pressed a hand to his lower back and asked lowly on his ear if he was okay. Jimin simply nodded with a tight smile and raised his eyes to focus on what Taehyung was saying for the first time the entire conversation. He sighed and dropped his hand, scratching his nape while observing him with close attention. Taehyung had been ranting about his family and the lack of attention of his parents the whole time so Jungkook was expecting for Jimin to melt his annoyance at least a little. After all, he was his best friend and Jimin was oftenly empathetic, but what happened was the exact opposite. The longer Taehyung talked the more irritated Jimin became, even going as far as snort and shake his head, looking down again with a sarcastic smile.

Jungkook was wondering if the two of them had fought without him knowing and just partially heard Taehyung complaining something about his maid, but that was what it took for Jimin to finally snap.

“Gee, it must be so difficult being you.” he said with so much annoyance that it granted the whole table shocked, suddenly falling silent.

Taehyung had a hanging mouth amongst them all, staring at Jimin as if he couldn't believe his ears. "What?"

Jungkook was expecting a lot of things from Jimin in that moment, but the way he answered was definitely not on his list. The malicious sarcasm dripping from his words was not something Jungkook had ever experienced from his — especially not directed at Taehyung, from all people.

“I mean, a trip for Europe in the middle of the year? Tsk, man, I’m so sorry, this must suck. And, like? Having a maid to clean after all your fucking mess? Can’t find it in me how much I feel sorry that you have to be going through this.”

Everyone was a little speechless, Jungkook included. He kind of got where Jimin was coming from now, because he realized Taehyung’s discourse must have sounded really privileged, but damn it, the focus wasn’t that. Taehyung was opening up about how lonely and uncared for he felt — even when opening up to his parents about what he wanted for his future his words fell on deaf years and they just handled him the way it most pleased them. From all people on that table, Jungkook thought Jimin would know best about Taehyung's personal struggles. It wasn't because he was in a bad mood that he had to take it out on other people. There was nicer ways to call someone out, especially when they were in such a vulnerable state.

“What’s your fucking problem?” Taehyung exploded in response, clearly angry. “You been sitting there mopping like a child and ignoring all of us just so when someone complains about their problems you get to belittle it and act all entitled?”

Jungkook held his breath. Fuck, that was escalating fast.

Jimin chuckled beside him. “I’m acting entitled? Do you even hear yourself? Like, at all?”

“Yeah? So, now because my parents are rich all of a sudden I have to love my life? I’m sorry if my family is not as perfect as yours, guess it’d take too much effort for you to take your head out of your ass to realize that.”
Shit. Jungkook snapped his head at Taehyung's direction, glaring at him. That was crossing the limit, he shouldn't be talking like that either. For god's sake, they were best friends, they knew each other more than anyone on that table, he couldn't understand why they were tossing those mean words back and forth at each other.

“Are you actually saying that?” Jimin asked.

Taehyung simply raised an eyebrow in defiance.

Jungkook took a deep breath. He had to do something before things got worse. He turned his body towards Jimin, but refrained from touching him, given his state.

“Hey, hyung, calm down. You’re being too much.”

Jimin took a second or two to process the words, but when he did, he turned to him with a hanging mouth and Jungkook just knew he said the wrong shit.

“Are you serious right now? Are you really going to defend him in this bullshit he just said?” Jimin gasped, clear shock on his features.

Jungkook's words caught on his throat. Fuck, he was not defending, he just didn't want them to fight anymore.

“I’m not defending anyone, I just think there’s no reason for you to be acting like this out of the blue.” he tried, hoping to make Jimin see he was outing his frustrations — and pretty harshly — on his best friend without any reason.

It didn't work out.

Jimin shook his head, looking around at everyone and laughing. Jungkook gulped, knowing this couldn't be a good sign.

He looked back at Taehyung, who couldn't fucking settle either, for god's sake.

“What? Still feeling too selfish to realize how great your life is?”

Jungkook's jaw hung this time, eyes wide, staring at Taehyung with incredulity.

Jimin laughed that annoyed laugh again and got up, flaring. Both his cheeks and ears were blazing red, but not even that could have prepared him for the way Jimin pushed his tray towards Taehyung and growled,

“Enjoy your food. Hope you don’t choke when it goes down that fake ass tongue of yours.”

He turned his back and stomped away. Jungkook immediately got up, leaning on the table with his air catching on his lungs to look into Taehyung's eyes.

“That was too fucking much, don’t you think?”

Taehyung scoffed.

“Too much? Look at my damn shirt.” he barked, pulling the dirty cloth from his torso to keep in from wetting his skin.

Jungkook snorted a breath, annoyed at the both of them, at the situation, at fucking everything, but he didn’t have time to sit there and argue with Taehyung about how equally wrong he was. He
shook his head, making his leave to chase Jimin. He found him near the bathroom’s door and made to grab his arm right before he entered in it. He turned him around, heart compressing inside his chest and only hurting more when Jimin didn’t even bother to look at him, simply took a step back away from his touch and crossed his arms.

“What do you want?”

Jungkook swallowed in dry. He had to keep his ground.

“Where did that came from? Everyone was talking normally and you just snapped like that.”

Jimin’s words, however, sent his mind spiralling down straight to the ground.

“Why are you even here? Already tired of sucking up to Taehyung’s ass and standing by him when I was right there?”

Fuck. So this was what this was about.

Jungkook was so fuckinly fucked. Only then he realized what the thoughts inside Jimin’s minds were and it just all about froze his blood. Shit, he should have just stayed quiet.

“You know what, Jungkook? Don’t bother. Just leave me alone.”

And that was the last fucking thing Jungkook wanted to do, but given the whole situation, how pissed Jimin was and how everything he said seemed to be the wrong thing, he guessed perhaps that was the best thing for now. He should let Jimin cool down by himself and then later they could talk with their heads cleared.

Despite his logical reasoning, his jittery insides wouldn’t leave him alone no matter how many times he chanted to his inner self he’d solve everything that day. He’d look for Jimin as soon as he left that godforsaken classroom with that old ass of a chemistry teacher who couldn’t teach a formula didactically to save a life.

Yet, so it happens he kept them for ten minutes longer after the bell rang and when Jungkook run to Jimin’s class to search for him, he had already left. Frustrated and feeling uneasier and uneasier in synch with the progression of the hands on the clock, he walked down the stairs with his head hanging low and when he caught the bus he passed by the stop to his house and headed for the place he always ran to whenever he was feeling this restless. The sea had always been a safe place for him, a constant everywhere in the world it didn’t matter where he was — the sea was always the same and it was what grounded Jungkook when his mind was too detached from his body, wandering towards dangerous zones.

He climbed the rocks to reach his refuge where no one normally went and he could be completely hidden from curious eyes that might pass by. Only that this time he was not alone. He frowned on top of the rocks, narrowing his eyes to the figure sat by the shore, aggressively hurling shells on the waves. When Jungkook jumped down on the sand, the boy snapped his head back, startled, and they shared a confused gaze upon recognizing each other.

“What are you doing here?” Taehyung was the first to ask, rather harshly. He got up from the ground, flapping his clothes to get it clean from the sand. “If Jimin sent you, you can tell him to f —”

Jungkook cut him off. “What? What are you doing here? What does Jimin have to do with this?”

Taehyung shot him a suspicious glare. “Jimin doesn’t know you’re here?”
He shook his head, even more confused. “Why the hell would he?”

“Well— It doesn’t matter, just— leave me alone, okay?”

“No, fuck off. This is my safe place, you leave. I’m pissed at you too.”

“Oh, really? Get in line, you’re not the only one. And you get out, I was here first.”

Jungkook pinched the bridge of his nose. “Listen. You really should go back and talk to Jimin, he—”

“Oh, me? He’s the insensitive asshole and I should look for him to say what, exactly? I’m sorry? No, thank you.”

“Don’t you think you were quite insensitive too? I refuse to believe you really agree with the things you said, even more when you know Jimin and is his fucking best friend—”

“Jungkook, look. I don’t need you to fucking try and teach me how I should or shouldn't act with Jimin, okay? Exactly, he’s my best friend and he has been his whole life, long before you arrived. This is between me and him, you can stay away from it.” he grunted, clearly irritated and his words stunged. They were true and it left Jungkook without arguments to shoot back, because yeah, they knew each other for so much more time than Jungkook did, but still—

His thoughts froze midway when he caught sight of the last person he hoped to see in that moment climbing the rocks. Jimin was so focused in not falling off that he didn’t notice neither him or Taehyung until his feet touched the ground. And when it did, it was when shit hit the fan.

Jungkook squeezed his eyes shut, knowing exactly how this would be read and he had never felt more scared in his life. He watched with burning lungs as the color slowly faded from Jimin’s skin, and his eyes travelled from him to Taehyung, mouth parted and fists curled as if he was barely holding himself together.

He couldn’t bear to watch it in silence as he knew all kinds of untrue thoughts unfolded inside Jimin’s brain, so he took a step towards him. “Jimin, look—”

But the older wasn’t looking at him. And Taehyung’s words resounded louder in his brain, because he understood this wasn’t about him, or about him and Jimin.

“Really?” Jimin’s voice was more vulnerable than Jungkook had ever heard. His eyes were filled with unshed tears that immediately made Jungkook’s eyes water too.

Taehyung was equally speechless, petrified, all the fight from before with Jungkook completely gone from his posture and features. He looked genuinely scared and the fact he wasn’t saying anything made Jungkook want to scream.

Jimin laughed at the silent response, rubbing his eyes. “So I guess I’m selfish because I didn’t share Jungkook enough with you in the end, right?” he shook his head as if refusing to believe the situation he was in. Jungkook’s heartbeat was so loud in his ears that he feared going deaf. “Glad to know I’ve always meant so little to you.”

Taehyung swung his head back and forth, desperate. He reached for Jimin in his frenzied need to reassure him and be close, only to grasp around air when Jimin stepped back as if the touch was venom. He looked so betrayed it broke Jungkook’s heart in a million pieces. “No, Jimin-ah, I—”

“Stop. I don’t wanna know, I don’t wanna listen. Guess I was really right in the end, huh?”
He stated and Jungkook didn’t have a fucking clue what he was talking about.

“No, Jimin, please, that’s not it at all, listen—”

“No, it’s okay.” his voice failed, “You did call me selfish, so I’m not gonna stand in between. Have fun.”

He spun on his heels, but Jungkook wasn’t just about to watch him walk away with wrong assumptions without doing anything.

“Jimin…” he took another step towards him, and another, reaching to grab his arm, yet when Jimin looked at him with his eyes brimming with tears all his limbs paralyzed in place. Time stilled and all of a sudden there was just the two of them. Jimin’s skin was frigid.

He opened his mouth and the tears slid down his cheeks. Jungkook never felt so helpless in his entire life. He wanted to pull him into his arms and heal everything with a touch, but by the way Jimin was staring at him he knew that wasn’t possible. “It’s alright.” he choked up on his words and Jungkook’s own throat closed on him, “There’s no need to stick with your second best anymore. Now you get to really choose.”

What?

Second best? Jungkook swan through his rivers of memories trying to catch just when he made Jimin believe he was his second best of anything, but he couldn’t possibly recall what he had done to trigger this kind of thought in him. Sure, he knew Jimin was insecure, but he always guessed this was something about his own self that Jungkook had no relation to. To even imagine Jimin could think he wasn’t the only thing Jungkook saw was maddening. He felt sick to his stomach. And that was probably all Jimin needed to get away, drifting away from Jungkook’s touch when his legs were too weak to chase after him.

And even after Jimin left, Jungkook remained stuck to the ground, in that very same place, eyes focused in a spot on the rocks while everything inside of him tumbled down.

Taehyung left right after Jimin, and he stayed there alone until his legs recalled how to move on their own again.

○

If Jungkook ever managed to be away from Jimin, he completely lost that ability the moment they started dating. To think he went a whole month without seeing him before was so out of reach that he couldn’t even understand how he did it. Foolishly thinking they’d talk it through everything the next day was what made him able to fall asleep that night — but when he arrived in school just to find out Jimin had skipped classes instantly made him want to leave and go look for him in his house. He had to tortuously wait for the next five hours, doing all kinds of things to distract his anxious mind. But the worst thing of it all, was that when he finally got out of school and fled to go and meet Jimin — he wasn’t home either. His mom may have sensed something was wrong,
because she didn’t want to tell him where Jimin was, claiming that if Jimin didn’t tell him then maybe he wanted to be alone.

And perhaps she was right, but it didn’t stop Jungkook from feeling like complete shit. He spent the whole day in pain, curled up on his pillow, sending Jimin a million messages, all left unread. Jungkook cried his eyes out, fear of Jimin deciding to break up with him seeping down his bloodstream and freezing his functions. He didn’t think he could take it. His parents weren’t home and he was going insane with all that silence suffocating him so he found comfort on his grandma’s arms, just like he always did.

Head on her lap, her fingers threading through his locks, he sniffled his way through telling her all about the two of them, all about when they met, when they fell apart, their trip and how fucking in love he was.

Awkwardly, reminiscing on his pain and recalling the events of the trip was what lit a lamp on the top of his head with an idea of how to apologize to Jimin.

He adopted Wow on a whim, right down the street of his grandma’s house and kept him there until Jimin was back home.

The next day, though, the older didn’t go to school either, and despite Jungkook’s confidence that he had the best apology on the face of earth, he was nervous. Because what if Jimin was so mad and hurt that even that wouldn't get through his skin? What if he was resolute that he wanted to break up? What the fuck was he gonna do, then? Shit, be didn't plan this through. Just thinking about it brought immediate tears to his eyes.

Going home without any sort of response from Jimin that day broke him completely. He returned to his grandma’s house and spent the rest of the day gloomily playing with Wow, wondering if he did the right thing by adopting him.

Jungkook could barely sleep that night. When Jimin finally texted him early in the morning, he still hadn’t batted his eyes for even a second. His heart nearly tripped off his chest the moment his phone buzzed with his name, but Jungkook attempted in keeping his ground.

By that, it meant he replied with a simple request to call him. Jimin didn’t answer him straight-away and rather waited until around midday to text back. Jungkook waited the whole time with the phone glued to his hands and eyes wide open, like a resistance test of how long could he remain in that position.

Jimin was evasive with his answers, but Jungkook looked at the bright side of it — at least, he was answering him — and so, he took every little opportunity to try and snatch an information out of him. Like, for example, where he had been, but when Jimin answered he had been at a friend’s he immediately felt uneasy. Because what friend? And when Jimin refused to answer him he just felt worse.

His hands shook and the tears welled on his lashes when he typed,

“Are you breaking up with me?”

Rather than yes or no, Jimin answered with ‘I don’t know’ and Jungkook couldn’t choose what was worse. He silently pleaded, and it was probably what drove Jimin to finally ask why Jungkook had been there in the beach with Taehyung, which he was more than prompt to answer him. He bared no details, told him everything with full sincerity and only the truth — about how that place was his safe haven, had always been ever since he moved back to Busan. Jimin seemed surprised, also
so much less angry, and honestly, Jungkook would take anything at that point. So he risked his shot and asked to go to his house, because like that he could take Wow with him and just… see him.

Thanks to all the powers above, Jimin allowed him to. Jungkook had to take a good fucking breath so he wouldn’t mess it all up again. He spent some good minutes in the bathroom just to recompose himself, because honestly he looked like a fucking mess. That was his chance at taking Jimin back and if he messed it up he’d never forgive himself — he could get a few bonus points in his favor and walk in there looking like a wet dream, at least.

Jungkook wore his leather jacket that he knew Jimin was weak for and got Wow on a leash before he finally got the guts to go there.

Jimin was reluctant at first glance, but just the same amount of amazed when he got to see Wow at Jungkook’s feet.

Knowing the truth made everything so much easier, because now Jimin understood that whatever it was that he plotted in his head never happened. Jungkook just had to break through his wall to get to him again. And break them he did, touching him like he had yearned to do for the last couple days before scooting closer and scattering kisses over his face throughout whispered words — on the corner of his lips, on his forehead, under his eyes. He had to hold himself back so hard to not just go and kiss him, because he wanted Jimin to do it — it was his signal that he had forgiven Jungkook, that everything was fine again and Jungkook terribly needed the affirmation.

When Jimin did pull him in, it was like he melted on that couch, his heart sighing in relief and the dam exploding, because he couldn’t keep his hands to himself any longer.

Two days was enough for abstinence and he forgot just exactly what Jimin’s kisses did to him — they dismantled him to pieces, made him forget about anything that weren’t those lips and the way they moved and molded against Jungkook’s ones like they had been drawn to fit his. Roaming with his hands down Jimin’s waist, mapping the curves of his body and getting Jimin on his lap was everything that he needed in that moment. They kissed like they had been apart for months, Jungkook’s teeth tugging on his bottom lip and pulling him closer because he never wanted to let go again.

Jimin was the one to break apart to hug him and murmur apologies of his own against Jungkook’s skin.

He brushed them off, because he didn’t want to hear those words, didn’t want to hear Jimin blaming himself and especially didn’t want to hear him saying how he was a fuck up while Jungkook was great and that was why he didn’t deserve him. He didn’t want any of that to keep upsetting his boyfriend, so he shut him up with cuddles and kisses on the couch.

Although, Jungkook didn’t want to lose the timing, so mustering all the remaining courage that existed in his chest, he asked Jimin if they were going to address and talk about what he said to Jungkook on the beach. Jimin refused in light speed, but his voice was so broken that Jungkook didn’t even had the heart to pressure him. It was okay. When Jimin felt comfortable they’d talk about it.

But he still hugged him tighter and assured him of the one thing he was one hundred percent sure.

“You were never second best.”
All the cliché love stories Jungkook used to read on his own when it was dark, used to narrate jealousy in its ugliest forms. Jungkook often judged an over exaggerated description, because there was no way a feeling could be that all-consuming that it blindsided people when the truth was right in front of them.

Until it happened to him.

His enmity towards Jinyoung wasn't hard to be born. The very first day Jimin acknowledged his presence and sat on his table while simultaneously typing his life away on his phone was everything it took. The moment Jungkook noticed their exchange of glances and the coy smiles he grew sick. The fact Jinyoung was kind of handsome didn't help it one bit. Jimin seemed so interested that he didn't even bother to look at Jungkook more than once or twice, always avoiding the sight of him, because he was too focused on that goddamn asshole. It made Jungkook instantly dislike him and one could think he'd grow past that childish animosity once they started dating but all it took was one unhappy comment of one of his friends and one glance at Jimin's directions for Jungkook to lose it.

The sight of Jinyoung all over him, fucking *holding his hand*, triggered bad memories on the back of his mind and before he knew it, he was cornering Jimin and using his loud voice to demand answers from him.

But also contrary to every cliché story he read, Jimin wasn't a defenseless girl who'd nod and apologize at every display of possessiveness of her lover. Rather the opposite, Jimin was fierce, with strong opinions, and his cold stare could bury holes into skin.

Jungkook lowered his voice thanks to it, but it was probably Jimin's words that transformed the jealousy inside him in absolute guilt.

"What, do you think I'm just here flirting with him in public because I simply can't keep it in my pants just like you and whoever the fuck was that gossiped about me since the beginning?"

Jungkook didn't mean that at all. In fact, he didn't even think like that, he was just jealous at the scene and the fact Jinyoung was touching Jimin and just generally being so close, but he'd never think that of him.

Although, no words could appease Jimin when he was this annoyed, so all Jungkook could do was follow him somewhere more secluded for them to talk — only then he belatedly realized he had been making a scene in front of everyone and considered about how humiliated and exposed Jimin must have felt. He didn't like to fight in public spaces either, and he'd hate if Jimin ever spoke loudly to him in front of other people, so he felt even more guiltier.

Jimin was mad *mad*, but Jungkook was too, because despite him being aware he wronged in his approach, he guessed Jimin was being quite unfair, too. Their argument opened way for him to finally confess his dislike towards Jinyoung, so the next time Jimin would be conscious Jungkook
fucking hated his guts. Not that he was hoping to exist a next time, but still.

Despite his bubbling annoyance, soon Jungkook learnt through Jimin’s explanations that he was being unreasonable. Just like Jimin had came to untruthful conclusions in his mind before, so did Jungkook this time, but he was happy they were instantly talking it through rather than taking days to solve it. It was way less damaging for both their anxieties, he supposed. Jungkook apologized the way he should have and pouted the rest of the conversation, since he felt so embarrassed and regretful for not having approached Jimin in a kinder, more mature way.

Jimin, though, was a quick forgiver, and it wasn't long until he was peppering Jungkook with light kisses and easing his worries with his angelic smiles.

In the end of it all, Jungkook was left fulfilled because something about it made him think they grew a little stronger into their relationship.

Jimin and Taehyung took quite a little longer than he and Jimin did to get back on track. It was mostly on Taehyung's side, since Jungkook watched Jimin brood with remorse every day. He loyally stuck to Jimin's side, hoping to make him feel better, seeing with his own eyes what the lack of his best friend did to him. Jungkook was a little guilty too, knowing that it was partly his fault, so he used to spam Taehyung every night begging him to forgive Jimin. The boy would never answer, but Jungkook could see he read all of them.

They slowly returned to their normal pace, though, after some time, and it was like a breeze of fresh air into their lives. Jungkook beamed off seeing them both happy again, but especially Jimin. He hated seeing him sad — it was worse than when he himself was hurting, but on the bright side, being an spectator of his genuine smiles also felt better than his own smiles.

It was one ordinary day at school, where he excused himself from the class to go to the bathrooms, when he walked in on something he never thought he would — at least, not in their school.

There were two guys making out in the bathroom and it took a moment of mortifying realization for Jungkook to realize it was Jinyoung and Taehyung, for that matter.

His loud gasp was what shook them out of it and Jungkook dared to say they looked just as horrified as him.

Taehyung became so pale he feared he would pass out at any moment.

Vocabulary was a missing knowledge from all three of them and the silence overtook their words while they stared at one another in shocked silence.

Jinyoung was the first to move. He wordlessly ran out of the bathroom with his head down, passing by Jungkook with his breath held.

Jungkook’s gaze dumbly followed him out of the bathroom, his jaw hanging open. When his eyes
were back at Taehyung, the boy looked like a breath could knock him down.

"I—"

"Listen." he started, hands in front of his body, "I can explain."

Jungkook frowned. There were so many questions. Wasn't he straight? Were they secretly seeing each other? Did Jimin know? What the fuck?

"I-I mean. I have no idea how to explain. Just— I'm confused, okay? He kinda of jokingly flirted with me at a party, but it stuck to me and right now we were both here and just— Stop looking at me like that!"

Jungkook swallowed, eyes still wide. "J-just… Mhm, wow. Does… I mean, does Jimin know?"

It was Taehyung's time to bulge his eyes out. He closed the distance between him and Jungkook in a heartbeat, grabbing both his wrists in his hands in a silent plea. "Hell no. Jungkook, listen, you can't tell him."

Jungkook immediately opposed. "What?! Tae-hyung, you can't possibly ask me that—"

"Jungkook, please. You don't understand, I don't even know if— Like, we just made out for five minutes before you walked in, I don't even— It's not that serious, okay? I don't even know if I do actually like guys, so just— Please?" his eyes had a begging quality of their own and Jungkook felt cornered.

"Hyung, I can't, I tell him everything—"

The older snorted, irritated, releasing his wrists.

"This isn't about you and him, okay? It's not even about him, it's about me, can you respect that?"

Jungkook swallowed in dry. Fuck, when he put it like that it made him feel like a selfish asshole, but—

"Please, he's my best friend. And I'm really confused right now. I don't know if I want to talk about this, or possibly get him mad at me just when we got back to talking after that shitty situation." his tone had softened again and while staring at him, Jungkook thought there was no way he could deny him that, "I'm probably gonna tell him... Someday, when I'm ready, but not right now, please? Please, don't pressure me, let me do this on my own." Jungkook was already convinced, but Taehyung kept going and it probably spoke to how desperate he felt, "Listen, you won't even necessarily lie to him, you just have to not say anything. Pretend like this were just two strangers you walked in, huh? How about that? It's just a normal occurrence in your life that slipped your mind and you forgot to tell him. What do you say? Come on, Jungkookie, please, please, please." Taehyung clasped both hands in his heas height and shook them back and forth, squeezed eyes and head down begging for Jungkook's mercy.

He released a tired sigh, scratching the back of his nape.

"Well, I guess it's really not my business after all." he murmured, still a little troubled.

Taehyung quickly snapped his head up, shining eyes with relief written all over them. He jumped on Jungkook, hugging him so tight it definitely did bruise his limbs.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you." the older chanted, jumping with him in his arms up and down.
"Outch, ouch, ouch— Alright, alright— Hyung, just let me go, for god's sake, you're gonna kill me."

Taehyung stepped back with an unabashed smile. "Sorry." he didn't look sorry at all, "Thank you so much, seriously."

Jungkook looked away. He didn't know how to feel about this yet. "It's alright. Do you, uh… Do you want to talk about itself? I mean, if you— If you can't talk to Jimin, I can listen to you. This sexuality thing is kinda tricky."

Taehyung gifted him a genuine smile. "Yeah." he agreed, "But no, thanks. I'm good. I'll probably talk to Jimin anyway, just… In my own way, I guess. Don't go feeling all special, I also tell him everything."

Jungkook laughed at that.

"Well. Alright. I still gotta piss, so…"

"Yeah, sure. See you, Jungkookie." he walked past him, ruffling his hair and Jungkook heard him exhaling a breath of relief when he was out of the bathroom.

He shook his head. As long as Jimin didn't talk about this with him it was fine, right? There was no reason Jimin would talk about this with him anyway, so he was most likely safe.

If ignorance was a blessing, in Jungkook's case it was a fucking curse.

He was cooking for his boyfriend — who was cutely sat on top on the counter watching him, being the greatest listener while Jungkook casually ranted about his day. It was just another normal night and Jungkook was blissfully unaware of Jimin's thoughts until he dropped the bomb on him without any warning whatsoever.

And the problem was Jungkook wasn't a great liar as it was — with carefully planned lines, previously anticipated situations. But like this, out of the blue? He was fucking awful.

He couldn't even look into Jimin's eyes when he first presented the subject and he's pretty sure he visibly froze for a second mid-way tasting his sauce.

He squeezed his eyes shut and mentally cursed himself before opening his mouth to say some of the dumbest words he had ever uttered.

"Oh. Mhm…"

Yeah, that was pretty much it. Jungkook disguised his helplessness by continuing to take the sauce to his lips and humming obnoxiously loud even though he couldn't feel a thing on his numb tongue — his heart was beating too fast, bloodstream increasing its pace rapidly. He swallowed, picking a bit more of sauce with the wooden spoon and taking it to Jimin in hopes of changing the subject or silencing him. Luckily both.

At least, Jungkook was terribly good on his poker face so he had that on his side to help him pretend he was not rioting inside.
Jimin obediently opened his mouth when offered the spoon, but his eyes were restlessly travelling through every bit of Jungkook's face, searching for something — what, he wasn't exactly sure.

"Good?" he asked, running a thumb over where the sauce stained Jimin's cherry lips.

The boy didn't even seem to notice. He just swallowed and nodded, distressed.

Jungkook bit the inside of his mouth feeling so fucking guilty that it tore him apart, but he had promised and he couldn't do that to Taehyung. Not after the way he begged. So he went back to the stove and continued his task of stirring the sauce one last time.

Jimin didn't seem like he was letting the matter go any soon, though.

"Isn't it weird?" he pressed, tone a bit more urgent than before.

Jungkook decided to play it dumb, hoping it could buy him some time.

"What is?"

"Taehyung."

He closed his eyes since Jimin couldn't see him and released another weary breath, although subtly, for him not to notice.

"Oh. Um, I don't know, hyung."

But fuck, he just wouldn't stop making questions. As if he was just pushing to catch the moment Jungkook would trip and spill something. He was impossible.

"Did he tell you or did I just become an asshole and out him unintentionally?"

Like that question. It left Jungkook cornered and he couldn't guess a smart, quick way to get out of it without being suspicious or ratting Taehyung either.

Turning off the fire, he started to set the plates, avoiding Jimin's eyes like it was the plague. He could be good at the poker face, but Jimin knew him too well to not be able to read his eyes.

"You're not an asshole." was all he could muster under his breath.

Jimin seemed to sigh or scoff — Jungkook couldn't tell the difference over the loud pace of his heart. He hated lying to him, he'd fucking kill Taehyung for that.

"So you knew?"

Shit.

"Uh, no."

Yeah, award him for the worst liar in the fucking word or something. Seriously, fucking hell, he was just waiting for the moment Jimin would snap.

As if on cue, the older raised his voice, but Jungkook had anticipated so he didn't even look up. "Why are you being weird about this?"

Shit, he couldn't do this. Jimin was too good and he wasn't even a beginner.
"I'm not being weird!" he fired back, too defensive. He totally was. So weird he felt like cringing.

"You are!" Jimin pressed, but this time his voice failed and the sound made Jungkook's heart stop. He immediately looked up, and with mute horror realized that Jimin's distress had escalated to a point where it brought tears to his eyes while Jungkook had been too caught up in trying to convince him he didn't know a thing to realize sooner.

He ran towards him in a second, feeling like absolute shit and finding his place between his legs. With Jimin's face in hands, he gently brushed his thumbs over his cheeks.

"Hey." his voice seemed to only double the amount of unshed tears in his eyes, making them twinkle brighter and Jungkook almost told fuck it to everything and spilled it all to him in that moment. Not Jimin crying, this wasn't worth it. "What's wrong?" he kindly asked, voice thick with worry.

Jimin just silently stared at him for some moments and with every passing second Jungkook's heart grew smaller.

"Nothing's wrong." he whispered, swallowing in dry.

But Jungkook needed him to talk to him. He felt like they've been there before, and he never meant to pressure Jimin to open up, but he also felt like Jimin just had to say some things. Jungkook had to hear what he felt, for him to be able to act on it — he could try and guess but he could always be reading a situation wrong.

"Something clearly is..." he softly ran his fingers over his cheeks one more time, trying to ease the distress out of him. He hated that he was the one to cause it. "Tell me what's the matter, baby." Jungkook questioned, angling his face down so he could kiss his forehead.

Jungkook just wanted him to feel good again, but he didn't think an innocent kiss would trigger Jimin harshly pulling him down for a rather fierce kiss. He was taken aback at first, but he reciprocated it anyway — he'd do about anything Jimin wanted in that moment to erase that look from his face.

The kiss didn't last longer — Jimin was kissing him harder one moment, and the other he was pulling away and hiding his face on his neck.

Jungkook had half a mind to wonder if he was hiding his tears, but then, Jimin was apologizing and his head was full of red alarms blaring. He hated when Jimin apologized for showcasing feelings, it was like he always felt guilty for outing them, as if they were a burden of some kind.

"I'm just stressed, I'm sorry."

Jungkook made sure to continuously rub his hands up and down the older's back in a way he knew it relaxed him. He couldn't help the way he released a breath, exhausted of what that situation brought upon him. "It's alright. Just... You know that you can tell me anything, right?" he reassured him, wanted to make it clear that what he felt was valid.

Jimin nodded, Jungkook's lips brushing against the top of his head.

"You do too, right?" he questioned in the end, voice so vulnerable Jungkook thought he'd start crying for real any moment now, "You'd tell me anything, wouldn't you?"

And Jungkook had to bite his bottom lip the fucking hardest not to tell everything to him in that moment. He hated every second of it, but he hugged Jimin harder and found it easier to say without
To underestimate Jimin's capacity of repressing his feelings was probably one of Jungkook's biggest mistakes in their relationship. To be fair, it was Jimin's first time as much as it was his, and his biggest fear as a first-time boyfriend was coming across as a toxic asshole who didn't know how to respect Jimin's personal space. So whenever Jimin didn't want to talk about something, Jungkook would just let him be, faithfully believing Jimin would eventually come to him whenever he felt comfortable. But so it happened, most of the times, that moment never came, and the both of them simply ignored matters they should probably address, in lieu of talking it through like mature, grown men. Jungkook often felt like a kid when his fear of losing Jimin made him act in the most childish of ways.

Jimin never again touched upon that matter — and neither did Taehyung, even with Jungkook's pleadings for him to do so (Jungkook thought Jimin was insecure, because he supposed Taehyung told Jungkook about it but did not tell him, who was his best friend way before).

But not everything were struggles.

They lived some moments Jungkook couldn't have imagined even with all the inspiration the romantic stories granted him with. On his birthday, Jimin surprised him with the cutest picnic by the beach, a heartfelt letter that keeps Jungkook warm during cold, lonely nights, their first ever 'I love you's and a fucking pair of tickets to see Linkin Park. Simply attending a concert of his favorite band was already out of his mind, but to do it with Jimin by his side, religiously chanting every lyrics along him and being just as hyped up, made Jungkook soar above the clouds. Surely that was already set to be the happiest day of his life until they both crashed a party and then, on their way back sneaked into Jungkook's silent house in the middle of the night, and had sex for the first time. Jimin took his virginity like Jungkook had been thinking about the entire day. Of course, it wasn't his first time ever, but it was his first time with a guy, and to top that off, the guy was Jimin. Jungkook felt the luckiest man alive — wished he could have engraved that day in an external drive, so he could replay it in his mind with full details whenever he liked.

Of course, Jimin kind of set the bar too high for surprises, but Jungkook had his tricks, and he worked just as hard in awing the older on his birthday. He carefully planned everything beforehand and when the special day arrived, he risked a guess that he was more nervous than Jimin. He met Jimin's father and sister that day, which was already a win — despite being presented to his father as a friend, Jungkook was happy nonetheless. When Jimin's celebrations with his family finally ended, Jungkook took him to his father's private island where they would spend the rest of the day all by themselves. They had sex for the second time on Jimin's birthday and Jungkook thought it made it all the more special. Instead of a letter, he made a video for Jimin, which brought him to tears.

Jungkook kissed them away and kissed him altogether, until they were silly and laughing,
mumbling stupid shit that only the two of them ever found fun in. The teasing and the bickering only faded away once they slowly drifted to slumber, secured closely in the hold of each other's arms.

Life is unpredictable. Anyway you may plan it, anyway you may expect things to happen — a sudden turn is always waiting in the corner, hidden by thick branches that fall on the road and make it difficult to guess what's ahead. That's why whenever speeding up too fast, the promise that lays at the end is to either crash or fall of the cliff.

When he found out Jimin wasn't selected to attend Tokyo University with them, he felt like he was simultaneously going through both experiences. Jimin didn't speak with anyone for two days or so and when Jungkook grew sick of it and went to see him, was to state he was not gonna go. He couldn't leave Jimin, not when they were the happiest they could be. But as much as Jungkook hated, Jimin was always right, and when he started arguing with Jungkook against it, stripping down all his arguments to pure nonsense, he almost fell on his knees and begged him not to do it. In fact, he did, but Jimin was resolute on his take on that. And if Jungkook knew a thing about Park Jimin, was that there was no backing down once he set his mind to something.

They promised they'd be alright on that night, despite everything, they'd make it. But it was a broken promise from the start. How could they promise to be happy with tears on their eyes? How could they promise to always be with each other when their grips were tight with fear of slipping away already?

They promised to try, though, above all hardships, and Jungkook would be damned if he didn't.

Saying goodbye was easily the worst thing he had ever experienced till date and Jungkook cried his whole way to Japan, curled on his seat.

The first week was absolute hell on earth. He woke up every day feeling like a piece of him was being torn and stole right out of his hands. The high of finally being abroad without his parents couldn't even kick in and the fact Taehyung was just as miserable as him didn't help in brightening the situation up at all. His longing for Jimin would basically hit him every moment of the day, because everything reminded him of Jimin. Everything that he saw he wanted to tell Jimin about it and he had to physically hold himself back from calling him at least five times a day.

With the beginning of his classes the following week, things got a bit less unbearable, his mind finding ways to distract itself with his studies and just the overall atmosphere of being a freshman in a college abroad. Japan was beautiful, so Jungkook slowly felt the sadness seeping out of him and leaving space only for the longing that he doubted would ever go away.

He constantly worried about Jimin — sometimes he looked as devastated as Jungkook felt, but he forbid himself from outing it and making Jimin feel bad or guilty about it or whatever. Jungkook
never knew exactly what Jimin might think, so he always tried to put up a smile to him and constantly remind him of how much he missed and loved him. Jungkook often noticed when Jimin was better or worse, but he didn't want to make the other sad by bringing it up, so he'd always top their phone calls with random subjects that made them laugh.

One month into living in Japan, Jungkook was starting to get a grasp of everything. His new life in Japanese territory, his new habits now that he had to fend for himself — the school provided the dorm he and Taehyung shared and Jungkook used the money he saved up before coming for groceries and such until he could find a part-time job.

It was also around the time Jimin decided to visit K-Arts and Jungkook vibrated with so much excitement that he couldn't take his phone from even an inch of distance from himself until Jimin would call him again like he promised. But so it happens Jungkook was so excited by the news — worked his best arguing skills in a past conversation with Jimin to try and convince him to follow his dreams — that he ended up calling Jimin instead when he supposed he was out of the university already. He had went to the market for small groceries and was on his way back, walking down the street with a phone pressed to his ear while his other hand held all the plastic bags.

Jimin picked up on the seventh ring, but Jungkook patiently waited — knew he could still be occupied.

"Hey." the older answered a bit short in breath.

Jungkook smiled upon hearing his voice.

"Hey, baby. That took a while. Were you busy?"

"Yeah, I was dancing with some students from the uni, since they invited us. It was so cool!" he declared, voice clearly giddy and it only stretched Jungkook's smile wider, happy for his excitement. This was what he was talking about all along.

"What, really? Are you allowed to use the classrooms when you're not a student?"

"I don't know. Probably not, but we weren't caught so that's fine."

Jungkook laughed, shaking his head with endearment. "My little troublemaker. But hey, I'm happy for that! You sound really excited."

"I am! I haven't felt like that since you guys were gone, actually." he said out of the blue, diminishing Jungkook's smile and he was about to clear the air with some light-hearted teasing when he started to catch bits of Eunbi's voice in the back. He didn't mean to eavesdrop, but Jimin fell silent and the words struck a pang in his chest.

"Did you see the guy Jimin was talking to? Isn't he like the hottest motherfucker you've seen in this entire campus?"

What guy? When did Jimin even talk to him if he said he was dancing? Had he been one of the students that he danced with? Jungkook swallowed in dry, chewing on the corner of his lips.

"Hey!" Jungkook made out what he thought to be Hoseok's voice, clear and louder as it seemed they were getting closer. "I'm here, okay?"

"Ah, so what? I'm not blind! Besides, are you going to deny he's hot as fuck? Yah, Park Jimin, you lucky—" she suddenly cut herself off and Jungkook assumed Jimin had everything to do with that.
"Oops. Sorry."

He made out a sigh being released on the silence that fell upon the line and some rushed steps, probably from Jimin putting distance between him and his friends.

"Mhm, Jungkookie?" he called and Jungkook could sense the caution in his voice, "You there?"

He stopped on a crosswalk and waited for the light to turn green, speeding cars running past the street. Jungkook watched them like they were a representation of his thoughts.

"Yeah, mhm…" he chuckled uncomfortably, and swallowed in dry once again. He didn't want to cause a scene like the last time this happened with Jinyoung, but also Eunbi's words just struck right where it hurt. "Uh, hey, what was Eunbi talking about?"

Jimin released a breath like he had been waiting for it. Jungkook didn't know how to interpret it. When the people around him started to cross the street he realized the light was green and then followed.

"It's just a guy I met here by accident." he began and paused for some seconds, "I was walking alone in the corridors and checking up some classrooms, because I was curious, when I heard a song I liked so I approached. He was dancing alone and when he noticed me, we talked for like three minutes before Eunbi appeared. Then, I went to dance with the students Hoseok befriended like I told you and just now I bumped into him again when I was walking out, exactly when you started calling me, so that's why I took awhile to answer."

He gave a pretty detailed explanation which helped in Jungkook breathing with a little less weight on his shoulders, but also it didn't mean he wasn't still fidgety. At least this time he didn't have a harsh approach and he clearly saw the difference it made in the way Jimin answered him. He sounded so much more thoughtful of his feelings that Jungkook couldn't help but slowly let go of the ugly feeling inside of him.

He hummed. "What did you guys talk about?" Well, he was still curious and since Jimin was spilling so much, Jungkook shouldn't be blamed for wanting to know everything, right? Maybe the whole picture would stop him from creating nonexistent scenarios later.

"Just the basics? Like what strangers talk about when they meet. He asked if I studied here, if I danced, these things."

"Mhm…" the younger mumbled, pouting when recalling Eunbi's words, "Was he really that beautiful?"

"Jungkookie…" Jimin trailed without answering.

"What? I should know what guys I'm competing with, right?"

That made his boyfriend laugh, but he wasn't trying to be funny.

"Don't be stupid, you're not competing with anyone."

Jungkook rolled his eyes. That wasn't what he was trying to know.

"Okay, but was he?"

To be called the hottest motherfucker in campus he must look like a greek god, right?
"He's not you, y'know."

And maybe those words shouldn't have settled those many butterflies in his stomach, but Jungkook was a lost case when it came to how whipped for Jimin he could be. He'd beat anyone to it.

He was still relentless, though.

"Okay… What's his name?"

"Taemin."

Taemin. Okay, he could try and find him on social media later.

"I don't like him." Jungkook declared, frowning. He didn't like that his name rhymed with Jimin's either. They'd have a cuter couple's name than him and Jungkook.

Jimin, however, was finding everything terribly funny if his loud laughter and probably throwing-head-back move was any telling. "You don't even know him!"

Jungkook didn't care.

"I have a feeling he's prettier than me."

Jimin scoffed. "No one's prettier than you."

Maybe that was all the validation he was needing, because he instantly dived into the goofy retort.

"Ouch. Wait a minute, I have heart damage." Jungkook made sure to use a pained voice for effect. "You just gave me heart damage, I'll be forced to board the next plane to Korea right this second. You deal with it."

His boyfriend sighed with longing through the speaker.

"Please do?"

"You can't say shit like that, y'know. It makes living a thousand times harder." Jungkook confessed with honesty.

"Well, you're welcome. Now we're even." he paused for a moment, as if he was considering his next words, "But there's no reason for you to be jealous of him, really. I'm probably never seeing him again, anyway."

If he was hoping to ease Jungkook's worries with that he did the complete opposite, because that was the very last thing he wanted to hear.

"What? Of course you are! When you start to attend there, you're probably going to bump into him a lot." he said, a pout still latched to his lips.

"Jungkookie, there's no way I'm being accepted. You should've seen him dancing, he's… I can't equal to that."

And with that Jungkook's demeanour immediately changed, his voice gaining a serious quality to it. Jimin demeaning himself was always red alert, it didn't matter the situation.

"Hey… Don't say that. If you really want to try, you have what? More four or five months to train non-stop, right?"
"It's not that easy, Jungkook-ah, four months are nothing close of people who have trained their entire lives." he argued.

"Come on, hyung, don't be like that. Will you let your insecurity stop you from even trying?"

"What's even the point—"

"The point is proving to yourself that you can do it." he cut him off before he could continue.

"And what if I can't?"

"Then you get up and try again. That's what life is all about, right? Taking chances and learning from our mistakes."

Jimin sighed tiredly. "I guess."

"You should try it. You sounded so happy just now. Weren't you happy? Dance does this to you, so why would you not allow yourself to have it?"

"You sure you in the right course? Drop law and start taking psychology classes, I dare you."

Jungkook giggled. "Nah, I'm terrible in giving advices, but I work hard on yours because I care about you."

The older cooed at the romantic cliché. "Aw. That's sweet."

"Yeah, your boyfriend is a sweet guy."

"Mhm-mhm, I wonder who else is falling for your charms there…" Jimin teased, but Jungkook felt a bit good that he was hinting that he was jealous of him too.

"No one can stand a chance against you." he reassured, though, didn't want Jimin to go feeling insecure for no reason.

"Oh, so you admit there's people falling for your charms…"

The younger smiled.

"Well… We can't deny that I am a good-looking guy, right?"

He could picture Jimin rolling his eyes and it made his smile bigger.

"I hate you."

"Don't worry, I make sure to let them all know I'm taken."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah…"

"Wish I could be there to kiss you in front of all these people and show them to know better and not fuck with you." he declared casually as if the statement didn't set him on fire. He groaned.

"Fuck, I'd love that. Shit. Okay, don't say stuff like that for the rest of the call, I'm Jimin-deprived and I'm in public."

Jimin chuckled like that wasn't on him. "What? Scared of popping a boner in front of everyone,
"Baby?"

"Jimin…"

"Okay, okay. Whatever you want. But just know I'd make a mess out of you."

Jungkook shook his head. Unbelievable, he was unbelievable.

"You…"

"Hey, baby, I gotta take the uber right now, so I'm hanging up, okay? Tell Taehyung I'll call him before going to sleep!"

"Okay, but call me too!" he complained, "I've been the only one calling you for the last two days!" he stated like the universal truth that it was. Like this Jungkook was going to start to think that he cared more than Jimin did.

The older giggled. "Okay, okay. Love you, alright? Gotta go!"

"Love you too!" he said nonetheless and ended the call with a smile on his face.

It didn't matter what he was feeling, hearing Jimin's voice and laugh always unraveled this kind of effect on him and if it didn't translate how badly in love he was, then Jungkook had no idea what else did.

Going to a different country where everything Jungkook attached himself to was simply not there was probably the second hardest part of it all — the first obviously being Jimin not being there. Taehyung was the only sense of home he had and it was only natural that they grew closer, especially after starting to live together. Although, their close bond was soon misguided for interest in each other by outsiders that started to say things about the two of them. Jungkook always knew the trend of fetishizing gay men in Japan was quite big, but he didn't expect it to happen with real people, always thought it was reserved for the pages of a comic book of sorts. At first, it wasn't something that bothered him, but when people wouldn't stop quietly gushing and whispering whenever they walked by and went as far as commenting under their stuff together Jungkook got really pissed. He had told multiple times he dated someone else, but it didn't matter. He chose to not reveal the gender of whoever he dated, because he supposed if people found out he was into men it was only going to inflame everything even more.

"Isn't this getting kind of annoying?" Jungkook complained to Taehyung one afternoon when they were watching some tv show and he got distracted with his phone, scrolling through nearly a thousand replies under his selfie with the guy on twitter. Thank god Jimin didn't use that godforsaken social media. Jungkook once considered dropping it, but he also didn't want to give up on his free will to do whatever he wanted just because people were being too intrusive.

He answered one of them stating loud and clear that they weren't together just to see if they could
get a grip.

"What is?" Taehyung questioned, yawning behind a closed fist. Jungkook turned his screen to him.

"Oh. That. Yeah, it kinda sucks." he looked up, "I mean, not entirely. All kinds of guys come secretly hit on me from time to time thanks to it." he smirked dumbly and wigged his brows. Jungkook retorted with a disgusted face.

"Ew. I can guess what kind of pick up lines they hit you with." Taehyung simply shrugged as if he couldn't care less. Jungkook wished he could be this laid back. "It bothers me. What if Jimin-hyung sees this? He'll be really upset."

"Dude, just relax. Jimin doesn't even log in twitter, to begin with. And just fucking ignore them or something. They probably only continue with this because you're so adamant in denying, it becomes suspicious."

Jungkook frowned, sinking on his seat with a pout. "Because it's annoying."

"Yeah, I'm aware. But pretend they don't exist and I'm sure they'll stop soon."

Jungkook sighed, resigned. He was not convinced, but there was probably nothing he could do. He just hoped Taehyung was right.

Studying law wouldn't probably be this hard if Jungkook didn't have this shit ton of reading to do. And don't get him wrong, he loved reading, so he couldn't guess what those hundreds books did to someone who didn't, because they were surely fucking him up. He couldn't understand where the professors thought they would take time from to read all of them, but he did his best.

Dating Jimin while trying to focus on his readings, though, wasn't probably the most recommended scenario because Jungkook just genuinely missed him 24/7 and it was difficult to keep his thoughts in check without drifting towards him every second. Especially when talking about joint responsibility and contractual lia... Lia... And contractual... What was that again? Shit.

Jungkook slapped his book shut, pressing the heels of his hands on his eyes.

He was on the dorm alone, studying for a surprise test while Taehyung was out on a date. The whole place seemed dark and chilly and while looking at the clothes scattered around the small couch, Jungkook wondered if he should call Jimin. The boy had texted him in the morning and Jungkook promised to himself he'd only answer after he finished studying what he planned for today or else he'd end up distracted just like prior times and he really needed to study.

But also, on the other hand, he had been studying the whole day non-stop with not even a little
treat… Maybe calling his boyfriend for a mini energy boost wouldn't hurt at all, right?

He bit his lip to stop the smile from blooming just by thinking in hearing Jimin's voice. Taking his phone in hands, the gadget surprisingly started to buzz as soon as he unlocked it — but the upcoming call wasn't from his boyfriend, even though it came from Korea.

He frowned, deep in thought, wondering who could it possibly be, before cautiously picking it up.

"Uh— Hello?"

"Oh, hi. Is it Jungkook-ssi?"

"Yes?" he tilted his head. He recognized the voice. Was that…?

"Oh, great. It's Jung Hoseok, Jimin's friend." Exactly. Jungkook snapped his fingers for guessing it right.

"Right." he let go of his momentaneous victory glint to ask, worried, "Is there something wrong? Did something happen to Jimin?" Jungkook was ready to board the next plane to South Korea, if so.

"Not exactly, um… Just, I thought maybe we could talk?"

He had to do a double take, bring the phone to his field of vision for a second to make sure the call was still going and he didn't just hallucinate that.

"Talk? The two of us?" when Hoseok made a sound of agreement, Jungkook's frown deepened, "Uh, okay… About what?"

"To be quite honest with you, I don't want to beat around the bush at all. Have you noticed any odd behavior from Jimin lately? Like, something you would be worried about?"

…

What?

"Not… Not really, I guess? Why do you ask me that?"

Hoseok laughed. "Ah, I imagined." Imagined? What the fuck was this about? What did he mean? "Nothing, really? Does he look happy or sad or I don't know, anything?"

Jungkook scanned around his room, trying to ground his brain in what exactly was going on.

"I, uh, he looks happy? I guess? He's always smiling whenever we talk."

"And you're blind enough to believe."

Jungkook scoffed.

"Excuse me—"

"Jungkook, listen. I'm gonna ask you something and I need you to be really honest with me." Jungkook's eyes stopped wandering and his heart skyrocketed inside his chest, nervous of what kind of question this would be. "How much do you love Jimin?"

Oh, but this was so easy.
He breathed out in relief.

"An amount you can't measure? He's everything to m—"

"Right." Hoseok cut him off like he couldn't give a bigger shit. "Then break up with him."

Jungkook nearly bulged his eyes out. "Wh—" but where his voice was weak and at the point of failing from the shock, Hoseok's one was loud and demanding.

"I'm not gonna lay it soft, Jungkook. I'm sorry if this may be harsh, but I won't watch my friend blow up his chance of getting into a renowned university because of a relationship. Jimin's fucking helpless here. He may not show it to you, because he's always scared of being a bother, but he's putting his all in practices to distract his mind. He exhausts his body, but he doesn't focus and like this all his work will be in vain because he'll achieve nothing. Sometimes he skips meals and hours of sleep and he overthinks absolutely everything about you. I'm not interested in how your life there must be, if it's miserable or a dream come true, but if you love Jimin as much as you say you do, you should've been a little less selfish to not let him hanging here while you live off what you wanted there. You can't fucking have both and you already chose, so at least be a little mindful and let him go." he said all at once, threw up all the words on him like sequenced punches and somehow hoped him to keep standing in the end.

Jungkook couldn't breath.

"That's all." Hoseok ended with all naturality in the world, but his tone cut thick past his skin. "Have a nice day."

He hang up but Jungkook remained frozen with the phone glued to his ear for who knows how long. His eyes fixed at the void in front of him, lungs short-circuiting on his functions and hands starting to grow cold sweat. The pace of his heartbeat rapidly increased and Jungkook knew all the signs of what was to be a terrible anxiety attack.

Things escalated quickly. One second he was sitting on his table holding his phone up, the other he was running to the bathroom and vomiting his entire lunch down the toilet.

Dragging his body to his bed when it felt like all remainings of his organs had just been flushed down was a particular difficult task — especially when added the fact that Jungkook was paralyzed for the most part. He managed at the price of blacking out as soon as his body hit the mattress. It was too much information to process at once and his coping mechanism was to sleep it away.

Less than two hours later the loud banging in the house woke him up. Apparently Taehyung was trying to cook something and the noise of the pans strung deep inside his ears. He groaned, turning around and pressing a pillow to his head, but soon the guy was walking inside Jungkook's room and plopping down on the bed.

"Yo, get up. I made ramen." he announced and by the slurping sound he assumed Taehyung was eating on his bed. He'd snap and make a scene whenever he did that, but in that moment he was just lifeless.

"Not hungry." he mumbled begrudgingly.

"What?! I go through all the work to cook for you so you won't eat? Your ass! Get up! Besides, you have to eat, because we're going out."

The words took a while to make way through his brain. Jungkook slowly removed the pillow from his head and risked a glance at Taehyung.
"What?"

He was sitting cross-legged on the edge of the bed with a bowl in one hand and a pair of chopsticks on the other.

"Yep. I got us a party, so start getting your ass ready." he let out nonchalantly while slurping another mouthful of noodles, droplets of broth falling directly on his sheets.

"When did I ever agree to this?"

"You didn't. You don't. I'm the older so I decide for the two of us." he declared with a raise of brows as if it had always been a given fact.

Jungkook rolled his eyes. "No, thanks. Not today. I'd rather become one with this mattress." he states, turning his head around so he's facing the wall and not Taehyung.

"Gee, what has gotten into you today? Just get up, I even made your favorite flavor." he tried brabbling him, but the younger was resolute. When granted with no consistent response, Taehyung huffed and set his bowl down. "Fine, if you're gonna be like this, then guess I'll just call Jimin and tell him how much of an uncooperative ass you're bei— Woah." the guy, startled, wide eyes and phone in hands, shocked at the way Jungkook immediately sat up, a little short in breath.

"I-I'll go, just don't... Don't call Jimin."

"Damn. That was fast. Okay." he pocketed his phone with a wide smile on his face, completely unaware of the mental torture Jungkook was going through. "Fine by me."

With that, he left the room waddling happily, and once he was out the younger let his body fall limply on the mattress again, wondering what the fuck should he do.

Well, at the very least, he could drink his distress away and forget about everything for some hours.

A hangover was everything he didn't need when waking up.

The party was a complete disaster. As soon as they arrived, Taehyung trailed towards the girl he had went out on a date earlier in the day and Jungkook realized he only dragged him there, because it was probably her that invited him and he didn't want to go alone. But in the end it was him that ended up alone, drinking his misery away and turning people down left and right, growing bitter and bitter by the second. He wanted Jimin there and the longer he sat on that bar's stool downing shot after shot, the more he recalled the day of his birthday when both he and Jimin escaped for the nearest party and claimed the dance floor their own. How they had kissed stupid without a worry in the world. And now he was being called in the middle of the day and being demanded to break up with the person that made everything in his life easier. He wanted to cry. When the alcohol blurred his vision more than he was capable to be accountable for, he called an uber and left.

The morning was unbearable. His memory was a mix of rushed events running in his mind that he couldn't completely distinguish. Switching in and out of sleep a couple times, he was confused when his phone buzzed inside of his pants and startled him out of slumber.
The 'baby' on the screen made him sit up so fast that the whole room spun for a moment. Jimin had only sent a couple interrogation points, but it instantly made Jungkook be swarmed by a wave of unrestrained longing that he couldn't care of what Hoseok said or wanted. Because yeah, fuck it, he'd be selfish for a day.

So he did his best in acting casual, as if nothing was wrong, and he did it so well that it granted him Jimin completely mad and their first fight ever since they were apart unraveling. He hated every second of it, and bared no weapons against Jimin's weak points to be forgiven the fastest he could. Begging cutely was his best ability and luckily for him, Jimin was easily angered but he also was easily appeased. So in the end, Jungkook got to facetime him and he had to really hold his ground, because besides still being a little drunk, he also was a lot emotional, and he didn't want to suddenly burst to tears and have Jimin unnecessarily worried.

Although that didn't mean he couldn't act needy and whine for a little validation. Especially after hearing Hoseok was about to go to his house and teach him whatever in his room while Jungkook was a miles away, unable to even see him whenever he wanted.

"Tell me you love me?" he asked with his heart tight in a grip, throat starting to close around his sparse flow of oxygen.

"What? You know I do…" Jimin's voice came through the speakers, and his head tilted a bit on the screen.

He was so beautiful. How could Jungkook let go of him?

"Yes, but please tell me?" he repeated, or begged.

Jimin didn't wait a second. "I love you." he said straight-away, without second-guessing.

A relieved breath made way through his dry lips and he closed his eyes. "Again?"

"I love you."

"I love you too." Jungkook murmured, sliding his lids open with a small smile to look at him again. Jimin smiled back and they bid their goodbyes.

If only Jungkook knew that would be one of the last times they would confess their love for one another, perhaps he would have asked Jimin to say it one more time.

A troubled mind really be the house of horrible decisions, maybe.

Alcohol free and supposed reasoning kicking in, made Jungkook sink in a sea of never-ending guilt that had him crying his eyes out every night.
Hoseok's words were a slap to the face whenever he recalled them.

"If you love Jimin as much as you say you do, you should've been a little less selfish to not let him hanging here while you live off what you wanted there. You can't fucking have both and you already chose, so at least be a little mindful and let him go."

How could he? How could he let him go? He had already hurt Jimin so much in the past, how would he do it again now? Even worse, how could he do it, break up, when it was possibly the very last thing he wanted? Hoseok was right, he was selfish. So fucking selfish. Because what if Jimin didn't manage to get into the college he wanted thanks to him? He knew Hoseok wasn't lying, even his grandma shared with him her concerns about Jimin's lack of concentration. She told him he always seemed too lost in a place inside his own mind that separated him from the real world. It was worrying, because Jungkook knew how insecure Jimin could be and he knew how much it broke him that he wasn't accepted in the exchange along with them. He didn't out it, but Jungkook knew it, he could read his eyes. He couldn't phantom what Jimin would go through if he failed on this one too — even more because it was something that he was genuinely good at. If he didn't get into this one, he could start doubting his ability in dance, wonder if this was really for him. And Jungkook knew it was, the whole world would know if they saw him dancing.

He felt so torn between both sides, as if he was standing at the edge of a cliff, and the worst part was that he couldn't talk about it with anyone. He could never tell Taehyung this, because he was definitely going to tell Jimin, who, on the other hand, would confront Hoseok and cause even more drama, that would only add to reasons for him to keep losing focus. Jungkook couldn't afford that. But if he suddenly broke up with Jimin that would be an equally huge distraction for his studies. What reason would he give? That he didn't love him anymore? He couldn't say it out loud even with a knife around his neck. Jimin would know it was a lie straight away.

There was no easy route out of this mess and each day that passed Jungkook only felt worse, to the point even Taehyung realized. He mistook it for homesickness and demanded all the friends they had made to come over to cheer him up. It did work, for a couple hours, until they were gone and he was all alone with his thoughts again.

His inner turmoil surely externed on his relationship with Jimin fast — they talked less and less each passing day and Jungkook often found himself obliged to lie to him and say everything was fine so he wouldn't fall suspicious. The longer they didn't talk, the colder Jimin grew, until Jungkook came to the conclusion that perhaps it was better off like this. If he distanced himself more and more, it would come to a point where Jimin would eventually grow sick of it and break up with him. Jungkook guessed that it was better for him to come off as a complete asshole and get Jimin angry rather than sad. Jimin knew how to make use of his rage, but he didn't know how to make use of his sadness.

The days went by, this pattern evolving, although, if Jungkook said it was easy he would be lying. Sleeping often came as a punishment rather than a gift — nightmares were constant and it wasn't odd for him to wake up in cold sweat with tears in his eyes. The arrival of May didn't make anything any better. It was the month of their one year anniversary, but also the month of Jimin's entrance exams, like an evil reminder for Jungkook to keep his distance.

The tears were difficult to hide when it was all that he could do the closer the date neared. Taehyung grew so worried that he stopped going out, using any excuse to be home with Jungkook. One day, he walked in the middle of an anxiety attack so intense Jungkook had to run to the nursery, because nothing he tried brought the breath back into his lungs. From there on, Taehyung always had been the shoulder he was crying on. He asked Jungkook what was wrong, but Jungkook
found a way to deceive him, change subjects, until the older came to the conclusion that he was simply depressed. He suspected Jimin had something to do with it, but the moment he questioned Jungkook about it he made him promise he wouldn't say a word to him, and used the fact he didn't say anything about Jinyoung in his favor.

However, the last couple days were the worse. Jungkook had to let his phone die so he'd resist the urge to call Jimin. They hadn't properly spoke all week, and the only thing keeping Jungkook sane was that he convinced himself the less they spoke, the more Jimin studied and practiced and filled his mind with other things that wouldn't stress him.

Hopefully unlike him, though, Jungkook couldn't think about anything else. When Taehyung found him, he was curled on the couch, clutching a pillow like he would break did he let go of it. It was a weekend, no classes for Jungkook to potentially fail, and his best friend demanded they'd marathon whatever he had been watching last week. Jungkook couldn't pretend he was interested, but he did his best in indulging Taehyung. The hours passed by without him taking notice and before he could realize, a day turned into another and he numbed his mind into thinking it wasn't the thirteenth of May until he couldn't anymore. He couldn't sleep at all that night, watching the day that was supposed to be filled with celebrations and love confessions turn into just another ordinary one like it was nothing. Like they were nothing.

Jungkook only gathered the courage to turn on his phone one day later, assuming he'd find a river of texts and missed phone calls, and possibly Jimin breaking up with him.

His hands shook so hard that he couldn't quite believe his eyes when he read there was only one message from Jimin. A simple ‘lmao’. Jungkook couldn't choose what was worse.

He spent the entirety of his morning staring at it, tears in his eyes until he decided he simply couldn't do it. He couldn't lose Jimin like this. Because if he had been so devastated like Hoseok told him why didn't he just tell him? They kept repeating they were everything to one another so it was just a given that they should share everything, right? Maybe they could come to a practical solution where it wouldn't hurt this much. It wasn't fair that he started this in fear of Jimin's pain when he ended up being the one feeling like thousand little pieces were being ripped from him one by one. There shouldn't be a way this was painless for the both of them? After all, they loved each other, god fucking dammit. He didn't want to give up without trying and if Jimin didn't break up with him yet, maybe that meant he still had a chance? Perhaps if he apologized everything would be fine. Of course it would have to be the biggest apology in the world, but still. There was just no way he could tell Jimin the truth, so he'd lie just this one last time. Just this once.

Calling Jimin never felt this much of a punishment. If before his hands had been shaking, now his whole body quivered with the thought of facing what Jimin had to give him. But Jungkook would go through it. He would go through it all if it meant having a last shot with him. Jung Hoseok be damned. Who did he think he was? Playing with his mind like that.

The call went to voicemail and it tamed his hopes of Jimin picking up considerably. He still called a second time, and would call a third and a forth, because this couldn't be what it took to tear them apart. They promised they would make it, so—

A breath on the other end and suddenly the ringing noises were gone.

Jimin picked up.

Jungkook nearly dropped the device down. He tightened his hold on it and swallowed in dry. This was it.
"Hyung?"

Nothing. Pure silence that fooled him into thinking maybe this was voicemail, but then a shuddery
breath was heard, which pushed him to try one more time.

"Jimin?"

A faint hum was heard, and Jungkook immediately recognized it as the ones Jimin would give in
lieu of actual words when he was holding back his tears. It almost broke him down, to acknowledge he hurt him this deeply. He hated seeing Jimin cry, he should've known there was no way this was going to work out. Fuck, he was so stupid.

“I— I don’t know what to say. I’m so sorry.” Jungkook swallowed around his own lump, hands
was so caught up with the studies I had to make for a test, that I—I—" He was so bad at this. He
squeezed his eyes shut and tears slid down. "It completely slipped my mind, and fuck, I know I—I
I’m so sorry, Jimin, I—"

“Are you?” he suddenly spoke, tone freezing cold, as if it could cut stone. Jungkook opened his
eyes in startle.

"What?"

“Sorry. Are you?”

He was so taken aback. Jimin was talking as if he knew. As if he knew he was lying.

“Wh— I— Of course, why—”

“Really?” the older chuckled and it was a heartbeat stopping in his chest, “That’s funny.”

The tips of his fingers became numb.

“W...why? What's funny?”

“No reason. Go on.”

Jungkook sighed, every single thing shaking inside of him. This was going terribly wrong, he knew
—he just knew.

“Hyung, I… I know you're mad, but—”

“No. I’m not mad.” Jimin harshly cut him off, as if simply hearing Jungkook's voice made him
sick. He sounded so angry and despite this being what Jungkook wanted from the start, now
everything he could feel was pure regret and despair.

“No…?”

“No. I’m done.”

Shit.

Fuck, what?

Jungkook silently shook his head, eyes brimming with tears again.
“Wha—”

“How did you enjoy your two days marathon of anime with Taehyung yesterday?”

Time stilled while his eyes gaped and suddenly his head weighed a thousand pounds. Jungkook put a hand over his chest, the frantic rhythm causing him dizziness. Maybe this would end with him at the nursery again, it was getting harder and harder to breath. Because how did Jimin even know? There was no way he would, unless— Unless Taehyung posted about it on twitter, but if Jimin saw that, it meant he used twitter which also meant he saw—

Fuck, no, no, no, no, this wasn't what was supposed to happen, Jimin would think this was the reason why—

“J-Jimin, I— I can—”

“You can what? Explain? Don’t bother. I know... In the end, it had always been him, right?”

Jungkook was hit like a lightning bolt in a revolting night sky. He gasped. Shit, no. No, he was so wrong, he couldn't think this, he couldn't, he'd link it to every shit that went down in the past and Jungkook couldn't let this happen, no—

“There’s no need to stick with your second best anymore. Now you get to really choose.”

Jungkook was so confused back then, but now he knew what this meant.

“What? No! I— Jimin, please—”

“I told you not to bother. It’s okay. I saw the signals.” Jungkook cried harder. Fuck, he definitely saw the comments, "Just thought you’d have a little bit more of ethics to end it before it got to this and have to make me do it instead. But it’s okay. I’ll do it. We’re over. Now you’re free to go and do whatever the fuck you want.”

No. No, no, no, no, please, don't—

“Jimi—”

“Do not call me again.”

He hung up, leading Jungkook to gasp so loud he choked, coughing in despair through his own tears as everything inside of him fell down and broke. No, this wasn't the reason, this wasn't what he was supposed to think, never, Jungkook didn't want to—

He curled on himself, sobbing on his hands, until there wasn't any sound coming out, just his silent wallow, dying on his throat. How did everything go so wrong so fast? He should have never come. He should have stayed in Busan with him, where he was happy, living a comfortable life, not here, struggling to breath and feeling like he had no one in the world.

Just when Jungkook was about to yell into his pillow, Taehyung barged into the room, but he did it anyway and felt the older's arms wrap around his body while his sobs were muffled by the cushion. He just wanted to disappear, this was too much. It was so much worse than what he imagined it to be, the pain wasn't just emotional, it was physical and Jungkook was weak, so fucking weak— His chest was twisting like his heart was trying to dig his way out in desperate search of the air missing on his lungs.

He was heaving and— Everything... Everything burned. He couldn't see a thing.
The last thing he heard before passing out was Taehyung's frantic voice asking for help.

Hurt, I can't shake. We've made every mistake. Only you know the way that I break.

Jungkook blows the cold air in front of him and watches as it turns into a white fog and momentarily blindsides him.

Busan has never felt this cold before. Or maybe it's just the way he matches his insides with the outside world. November came with a threat of him barely passing his subjects and consequently being cut out of the program. They were extremely rigid, but be it for better or for worse, in the end, he made it. And a promise of yet another year in Tokyo hung over his head. The prolonged break urged him to go back home — both him and Taehyung, actually, but the latter wasn't exactly looking forward for it to happen as fast as he could. He often spent the last year's celebrations with Jimin's family and now they weren't even talking. Jungkook couldn't say he didn't feel guilty about it, knowing it was partially his fault. The boy was torn into which side to pick, at first, and Jungkook didn't want him to pick any sides — didn't want to give all the more reasons to make Jimin believe there was anything going on between them. But before Jungkook could even process the break up and take his time to explain Taehyung everything so he wouldn't unreasonably lash out at his best friend, Jimin made the move for them. Jungkook didn't know all the details, since Taehyung refused to tell him, but what he did know was that Jimin sent a terribly long text to him that made him extremely mad and resulted in them having their worst fight to date and well, never speaking again. So Taehyung wasn't looking forward to go back to Busan. Even after Jungkook
decided to sit down and tell him all that really happened and the reason why Jimin was probably
reacting the way he did, in hopes they could get back in track, Taehyung didn't back down. He told
Jungkook that if Jimin thought he would cheat him like that then maybe he was never his best
friend to begin with. He was left with nothing to answer to that.

He knew Jimin made it into K-Arts through his nana. She learnt to call him a lot more ever since
the break up, constantly checking up on him and maybe making up for the lack of Jimin's presence
in her life too, ever since he moved to Seoul. He kept on visiting her even after all the shit went
down between the two of them, she told Jungkook one night. He even cried on her lap, she
reminded with a choked up voice, telling him how the both of them were the biggest idiots of the
planet. Jungkook smiles sadly at the memory, kicking a feeble down the street as he makes his way
to her house. He's making a surprise visit, she doesn't know he's in Korea yet. His parents weren't
home when he arrived, but he's kind of relieved, likes the idea of his grandma being the first person
he sees upon his arrival.

He quietly walks up the little drill that leads to her mansion past the iron gates, hands tucked deep
into the front pockets of the big, black coat he wears. He hasn't cut his hair in months, so it falls
directly over his eyes and he knows she'll nag him about it.

Jungkook sighs once he catches sight of her house and doesn't waste time until he jogs to the front
door, heart beating warmly on his chest. He has missed her too much.

He slides the glass door and is immediately welcomed by two kittens running down the wooden
stairs and coming to twist around his legs.

"Nana?" he calls loudly with a smile on his face, unwinding the scarf from his neck and dropping it
by the couch. The inside is warm in contrast to the weather outside, the fireplace crackling softly as
the smell of chamomile tea fills the place.

"Jungkookie?" her bright, surprised voice responds down the hall that leads to the kitchen and
Jungkook's smile widens.

He runs down there and finds her mid-way, both hands on her cheeks as she comically hangs her
mouth and squeals, "Oh my god, it really is you!" she exclaims before he engulfs her in a bear hug,
burying his face on her shoulder and marvelling at the smell of her hair that he missed so dearly.
She smells just like home. "How are you here, you little heathen, you didn't even tell me classes
were over and we talked yesterday!" she scolds in her usual chirpy tone and Jungkook chuckles.
Fuck, he really did miss her.

He pulls back to take a good look at her face. she dyes her hair blonde to disguise the white strands,
but the last time Jungkook saw her the blond was faded and ashy — now it looks golden, shiny.

"You look amazing." he honestly tells her, to which she scoffs.

"And you're terrible! What kind of hair is this?" she nags, running her veiny hands through his dark
locks, "Don't they got hairdressers back in Japan? Let me tell you something, the Jeons never had
eye problems in our whole family and now you'll be the first, because how can you even see with
this falling in your eyes."

He laughs, throwing his head back and pretending to groan in annoyance. "Ah, exactly like I
remembered." she slaps his shoulder.

"You brat! Let me take another look at your face." with his cheeks squished between her hands,
Jungkook makes a funny face that grants him a roll of eyes, despite her being clearly amused.
"You've lost weight, too. I bet you've been feeding yourself off instant noodles and basically rice this whole time." he doesn't answer. She's not completely wrong. "Aish, seriously. Come, sit." she guides him over to one of the stools, "Nana is making tea and baking cookies, they'll be out any moment."

Jungkook easily obliges, happy to just be in her presence. They talk over the food, conversation flowing easily between the two of them, despite the usual bickering. Once they're done, Jungkook washes the dishes as she proceeds to talk about how she'll find a scissor to cut his hair herself. When he answers that she'll only do that over his dead body, she huffs and mumbles grumpily,

"Aish, seriously, you're just like him."

Jungkook has to gulp, the silence falling over the kitchen when she realizes just what she said.

"Ah, Jungkookie, sorry—"

"No, it's—" he dries his hands on a paper towel, discarding it soon after "It's okay. You, uh…" he clears his throat, turning to look back at her, "Do you still talk to him?"

"Well, yes." she sighs, folding her hands over her belly, "He calls me from time to time to check up on me. He's very caring, you know."

Jungkook chuckles, eyes down, heart tugging. "Yeah, he is. How… How is he?" he doesn't have the courage to look in her eyes, playing with the hem of his shirt.

"He's doing fine. Actually, he… He has kind of a performance next week for the end of the year's event of the university. He invited me, but you know I can't walk more than a few laps downtown." she suggests, clear tone indicating that.

Jungkook releases a tired sigh. "I can't go, nana."

"Why the hell not? Do you have weak bones that stop you from walking around like me that I can't remember of?"

"No, but—"

"What buts, for christ's sake? Don't you want to get back to him?"

He chews on his bottom lip. "He didn't invite me. I'm probably the last person he wants there. And besides… You said it yourself, he's doing fine. He's probably better off without me."

She drags out a deliberately long breath, before calling out. "Jungkookie, come here." he's reluctant at first, but her demanding gaze pierces holes on his skin. When he stops in front of her, she engulfs both his hands on hers and brings it to his chest. "Don't you think he could have predicted this? Even after I told him I wouldn't be able to go, he still gave me the invitation, saying I should keep it just in case. Maybe a small part of him wants you there, don't you think? Even if for simple closure. We both know you didn't have it and god knows you deserve it. You both. You deserve to move on, be it with or without one another. I can tell looking at your eyes that you're not over him, yet."

Jungkook barely finds his voice to answer, fighting the tears which menace to fill his eyes. "Of course I'm not over him."

"So? Don't be a coward, my love. Go after him if that's what you want."
"I don't want to hurt him anymore, nana." he argues weakly.

"So you'd rather let him think you fell in love with someone else?" Jungkook widens his eyes. He never told her any of that, so it must mean— "Yeah, he told me all of it when he came here that night. He cried on my lap and made me swear I wouldn't tell you a thing. And so I didn't— until now. Both because I feel like you need to hear it and because I know there has never been anyone else besides him the moment you and him got together. But it didn't matter what I told him and it doesn't matter what I tell you, you're both stubborn like a stone." she sighs dramatically, "But if you don't go after this boy, Jeon Jungkook, I swear to god, I will wait until you fall asleep and I will cut all your hair off, until there's not a single lock standing there!"

Jungkook laughs through his wet nose, shaking his head. "You're impossible."

"Yes. I learnt from the best."

Jungkook stares at her with fond amusement for a moment before he brings their joined hands to his lips and kisses her knuckles. "I love you, nana."

She smiles and untangles their hands to run her fingers through his cheeks. "And I love you, baby boy."

Jungkook allows her to cuddle him in the couch for the rest of the afternoon as they turn on netflix and fight about whether they should watch Home Alone or Iron Man 2.

Seoul is just as busy as any other capital in the world. Buildings too high for the human eye, cars too fast for the human steps. Everything about it screams how it was not projected for them and Jungkook feels exactly how big cities are supposed to made you feel: detached, unfitting, mismatched. He inhales one last breath of decreasing courage and looks around, before he hops on the first taxi on the street and gives the driver the address of the theater the dance performances are taking place.

Jungkook arrived by morning and booked his stay on a hotel nearby, so he wouldn't be late, but take a guess: he's late. Blame it on his anxiety debating whether or not to attend (yes, when he's already in Seoul, fully dressed and hosted) or on his anxiety trying to choose an appropriate outfit. Either way, his anxiety is charged for the guilt. In the end, he opted for an all black one that would surely hide him in the sea of people in the audience.

Arriving at the venue, Jungkook is stated the obvious: the stages have begun for at least half an
hour. There are high chances he has missed Jimin's performance, but he hopes luck is on his side as he hands the ticket to the attendant and enters the theater. The place is huge, the majority of it red coloured with details adorned in gold just like a classic theater would look like. The staggered seats grant perfect view of the stage anywhere in the crowd, so Jungkook picks the farthest one.

A couple of females are presenting a ballet piece, which he finds quite revolutionary. He knows shit about ballet, but as far as his knowledge reaches, he is sure it's normally a male and a female that perform those kind of duets. He fidgets on his seat, wondering what kind of piece Jimin will perform. Is it going to be a duo? Group? Solo? Ballet? Hip-hop?

He straightens his posture when another performance is announced, but it's a group and Jimin's name is nowhere near the list the MC recited, so he immediately loses interest. Scanning the audience, Jungkook searches for familiar faces and doesn't take long until he finds a fluorescent green hair that he knows only can belong to one person. He stares at the back of the head until the woman turns slightly to talk with the guy on her side and Jungkook is able to confirm: it is definitely Jimin's sister. She is right in the front row and Jungkook tries to halt the pang on his chest from thinking that it's where he should have been too. Another group is announced, but this time Jungkook raises his eyes at the mention of both Jung Hoseok and Kim Seokjin. Jimin isn't with them, which makes him once again wonder if he has already performed.

The stage of Jimin's friends are of a group of five, but each gets their time to shine individually throughout the choreography. It is an international hip hop song that Jungkook doesn't recognize, but bops his head along to it nonetheless, because it gets him hyped up.

It isn't until he is wondering if he should go to the bathroom, assuming he really has missed Jimin's performance, or wait it out until the very end, when the MC announces:

"And to close the magnificent night of our very much talented students, we present you one of our incredible prodigies! Please give it up for the contemporary piece interpreted by Park Jimin from the first year!"

The front row roars, but Jungkook is paralyzed. His knuckles are white from how hard he grips the arms of his seat, but suddenly when the curtains open and Jimin is found standing on the center of the stage, no one else exists in the venue — just Jimin, shoeless, wearing all white, lint large pants and an equally large sleeveless shirt that bares his smooth skin in all its glorified magnitude. The first thing Jungkook realizes is that he changed his hair color: the deep dark black from the past gave place to shiny and bright gray locks that glows under the stage lights as if involved by a soft halo. He gulps, staring at the five different mirrors placed around the stage and stops breathing once the song starts.

The first keys of the piano awakens the movements of Jimin's arms and torso. Jungkook has seen him dance in the past, but this is nowhere near what he has watched before. He's three seconds into the piece and he already knows he's about to witness a work of art.

The singer starts harmonizing and Jimin moves back and forth as if lulled by her soft, low voice.

Don't be that way, fall apart twice day

I just wish you could feel what you say
His limbs perfectly hit every beat, even unravel small ones and brings them to light, which would go unnoticed by ordinary observers if not by Jimin's suave movements highlighting them.

*Show, never tell. But I know you too well*

*Kind of mood that you wish you could sell*

His coordination is impeccable, the way he couples both his arms and legs with the twists and turns of his head and the intensity of his gaze. Jungkook feels locked in place, compelled to watch everything with utmost attention, scared to lose the smallest of details.

*If I love you was a promise, would you break it,*

*if you're honest?*

*Tell the mirror what you know she's heard before*

*I don't wanna be you anymore*

By the chorus, it dawns on Jungkook that Jimin is dancing for himself. He follows along the lyrics with perfect synchronization and turns to the mirror, dramatically performing his moves to the reflection — grabbing the sides of it and proceeding to fall down to the ground, as if all strength has been drained from his body the moment he touches himself.

*Hands getting cold*

*Losing feelings, getting old*

*Was I made from a broken mold?*

The choreography follows on the ground, with Jimin moving through it as if he is water on a pouring day. Every movement is so carefully thought, yet so beautifully performed that it seems like it is just natural, as if he is doing a perfectly ordinary task, like walking down the street. Presenting splits back and forth, hitting the beats with open hands through his chest until they close around his throat and then twisting backwards and getting on his feet with a choreographed stumble that represents him being dizzy. By one point, he makes it seem like he is dancing with a partner when in reality he is just dancing on his own, pretending to be pulled, tossed and turned against his will.

It is a masterpiece — by the end of it, he falls on his knees, curls on himself and places both arms over his head as the lights slowly dim in synch with the end of the song, until the venue is completely dark and silent. The breeze before the storm, quite literally — the lights hasn't even brightened completely again and the whole theater is on their feet, roaring so loud that Jungkook feels disoriented. It's a standing ovation and it's nothing less than Jimin deserves. Jungkook gulps,
following the audience, rising on his feet only to realize he had been in tears, all this time. He wipes his eyes free of them, so he can see Jimin in the center of the stage, standing proud and smiling so brightly that Jungkook has to physically hold himself back from sobbing at the scene. He curls his arms around his body and stares, stares at the person he hasn't been able to in whole six months. At least ten rows of hundreds of people separates them, but Jungkook feels like Jimin can see right through him — he can't, obviously, too high of his successful stage, frantically waving down at his family and friends on the first row. He bows to the audience, a moment before the rest of the students enter the stage to join him in the thankful bows.

Jungkook loses track of the linear time — one second he's in the middle of thousand roaring people, clapping their souls out, the other he's out on the street, folding over himself and feeling like he can't breath. He doesn't know how long he stays there, but he finds a bench on a deserted square in front of the venue and waits, hidden by the shadows. People flow out of it in hundreds — Jungkook watches them as if watching a slow motion movie. Jimin is not between any of them, but fifteen minutes later when there's barely no one coming out of the venue again, he catches sight of the bright hair color he was expecting.

Jungkook wonders if he really should do this, but when a nagging voice speaks on the back of his mind that this might be his last chance, he raises on his feet and sprints towards the car the person is following to.

"Hey." Jungkook calls from distance, a little short in breath, and watches with a hint of horror as Eunbi turns around.

It's clearly written across her face that she wasn't expecting to see Jungkook there from all places, which means that Jimin probably wouldn't expect him either.

"Jung...kook?" she attempts, a little cautious and a lot incredulous, staring at him with wide eyes, hand frozen on its way to turn the keys of her cars' door.

He gulps and repeats, "Hey."

Realization seems to fall upon her, because she retreats her hand and buries it into her coat, looking around worriedly. "What... What are you doing here?"

"I... I need a favor."

"A favor? From me?" when he confirms with a nod, she closes her eyes and scratches over her brow, "Jungkook, listen—"

"Please?" he tries begging before she can continue, but his voice fails and he guesses he really must look awful right now, because Eunbi stares at him with pity in her eyes, "Please, I just... I just need to talk to him. Just this."

She releases yet another breath. "What do you want? He's inside, you can just go in there."

Jungkook's heart skips at the pure mention of it. "No... Alone. I... I need him to be alone. Can you give me his address? Please?"

She deflects her gaze, troubled. "Jungkook, I don't know, this—"

"Noona, please." By this point, he's not ashamed to admit he's on the brink of tears again, "Just... Just this, please. I promise if he tells me to leave I will. Just..." his voice trails and the street is silent for a moment with their held breaths, until Eunbi cautiously relents and agrees to type down the address on Jungkook's phone notes.
He waves her goodbye with a full bent bow and a 'don't fuck everything up this time' coming from
her. Jungkook promises to her and to himself that he'll try not to.

He goes back to the hotel. Jimin's address seems to weight a thousand million gigabytes on his
phone memory. He stares at it for so long that just a couple minutes later and he already knows it
by heart. Fear and anxiety keep him spread out on the beige sheets of his mattress, staring at the
white ceiling as if he's on a prison of his own.

He's unable to move for the next couple hours, until his grandma sends him a text with a winking
emoji followed by a thumbs up.

Jungkook grabs a boost of energy from that simple message and gets on the first taxi down the
street in his sudden spur of courage.

He obviously doesn't think his plan through, which ends him with a thousand million questions in
his mind while the driver hums a lovesick pop song on the front seat.

What if Jimin is out celebrating with his friends? What if he's asleep already? What if he has a
roomate? What if Eunbi gave him the wrong address just to get him out of her feet?

He's breaking in cold sweat when the car stops beside the curb of a residential complex. It's just a
few blocks from Jimin's university, which makes him conclude that perhaps this is really the right
address. Jungkook panics for the following ten minutes on the sidewalk, before a kind student
passes by and grants him access through the gates. He thanks her at least five times before she
smiles, friendly although a bit uncomfortable, and goes her way while Jungkook stands on his
place considering all his life choices.

When he finally decides that going up the building to the floor where Jimin lives is certainly better
than going off straight to the airport to fly back to Busan and never come back, he is sure his
stomach drops to the ground at gravity's will.

The elevator moves in slow pace, dragging itself up throughout the ascending floors, until it stops
on the sixth. The doors slide open, but Jungkook can't step out of it. He's grounded in place, his
feet are stuck. There's not a single voice in the hallway, no one in the elevator with him, and the
silence of loneliness seem to boost his heartbeats for the whole world to hear. The doors close and
Jungkook goes back down to the ground floor. He swallows the lump on his throat and presses the
'6' button again, curling his hands in fists beside his body.

This time, when the doors open on Jimin's floor, Jungkook has already taken a step forward, and
simply takes another one with his eyes down, seeing the metallic ground change into a carpeted
floor. He hears the doors closing behind him while he stays there, on the very same position, until
a door from an apartment opens in front of him and he looks up, startled. It's a guy approximately
his age. He smiles and makes a small bow to Jungkook, so he mimics him and steps to the side so he can call the elevator.

He's forced to walk away, then, scared to look suspicious standing there doing nothing other than freaking out. His heart beats high on his throat, eyes scanning the numbers over the doors and searching for the one he's been chanting on the back of his mind for the last hour or so.

643, 643, 643, 643.

He gulps, reading them over his left. 636, 638, 640, 642, 644… Jungkook stops, inhaling all the oxygen possible and turning his head to his right, surely to find the godforsaken number right in front of him.

643.

The numbers are in shining silver over a white wooden door.

Jungkook takes a step forward, pressure dropping, senses heightened. He hopes to hear something behind the door, but there's only silence surrounding him. He considers backing away and going back to the hotel. Perhaps Jimin is really not home and all this is useless. Then, whether he does knock or doesn't knock, it makes no difference, right?

Right.

But just as Jungkook is about to step back and walk away, he hears a tripping noise followed by a loud curse that definitely belongs to Jimin's annoyed voice.

His heart stops.

Fuck.

It's real, he's right there behind that door. There's almost no physical distance between them after a whole fucking year, and Jungkook shakes, muscles tense around his bones.

One last deep breath makes way inside his lungs before he decides that fuck it already, and raises his fists to knock on the door twice.

He holds his breath then, insides twisting painfully while he stares at his feet, the only thing resounding on his ears being the loud beats going off and off and off—

He hears the padding of Jimin's feet hitting the ground. Closer.

"Coming!" Closer. And closer, and fuck— "Who…"

The door is swung open, and Jungkook almost stumbles back with the force that the longing strikes him. He's immediately knocked down by Jimin's smell curling all around him and it's honestly a fucking curse that after all this time, he still smells exactly the same.

His bare feet are the first thing entering Jungkook's vision, the chubby little fingers that he used to play with and scatter small kisses all over, looking clean and smooth, like always.

It takes everything in him not to faint when he drags his eyes up Jimin's gray sweatpants, white tshirt, until they land on his face, eyes so wide Jungkook could probably count all the lashes on it.

Jimin has grown pale and at least in that, they can relate. Jungkook licks his dry lips, and finds himself unable to fight the urge of letting his eyes wander through every little detail of him. He's
missed this for too long.

His gray hair looks even more gorgeous from short distance, seeming soft to the touch, despite how messy it's arranged in the moment. The wet tips makes Jungkook assume he just got out of bath, which explains the inebriating smell. His skin looks flawless, hints of red slowly spreading the more he stares at Jungkook. He swallows dry when his eyes fall to the pinkish flesh of Jimin's lips, breath hitching on the way down his throat.

Fuck, he looks absolutely stunning. Jimin has always been beautiful, prettier than anyone Jungkook has ever met, but right now he looks fucking out of this world.

His stomach flutters when the older licks his lips and hovers his gaze from Jungkook's mouth to his eyes. Both their chests are rising up and down rhythmically, tuning in to the beats of their hearts, just waiting for the moment the bubble bursts.

Jungkook doesn't know what to say.

He took nearly three hours to make it to this point, and not a second of it he spent considering what he could possibly say when it happened. Not that it would be of any use with Jimin standing in front of him looking like that.

He can't recall a single word from the vocabulary.

Nothing, except—

"Jimin—" he breathes.

Jimin shakes his head, taking a step forward. "Shut up." eyes fluttering and hands closing around the hem of Jungkook's shirt, he repeats, "Shut up."

Jungkook freezes, head tilted down to follow the older's movements. All he can do before Jimin rises on his toes and kisses him is to find ground on his hips, grabbing him with both hands and pulling him closer in utmost abstinence.

Jungkook gasps, a thousand shivers running down his spine at the feeling of Jimin's lips against him. He feels like crying, but at the same time he feels like he's catching fire, so when Jimin parts his mouth and licks inside Jungkook's, he squeezes the grip on his hip bones and kisses harder, finding his tongue with his and blindly stepping inside the apartment.

There's no time to consider what the fuck they're doing — they've spent too long missing each other's touch to step back now. Jungkook groans, pressing Jimin against the wall to run his hands up his back, threading them around his newly dyed locks and tugging at it. Jimin opens his mouth wider in a silent moan, and Jungkook takes the chance to bite on his bottom lip, consumed by the flames licking up inside of him.

Fuck, it's like he's melting, finally coming back home after so long, so fucking long.

He squeezes his eyes shut, belly shrinking in desperate search of fresh air when Jimin sneaks his cold hands underneath his shirt.

"Jimin—" he squeaks, only half mindful of what they're doing. "We—"

"Shut up." Jimin nearly growls, sinking his short nails on Jungkook's abs, "I told you to fucking shut up." he sounds so angry, Jungkook can do nothing but swallow his words as if they mean nothing. Maybe they don't, not in that moment.
Sliding his hands up, Jimin drags Jungkook's shirt with them, until they have to break apart for him to raise his arms and have the cloth flying out of his head.

He looks down at Jimin, whose attention is completely focused on the nudity of his chest, open palms skimming down the skin with his breath failing.

He raises his head up to lock Jungkook's stare with his, red lips glistening under the yellow lighting of the living room. "How did you enjoy other people touching you like this?" he whispers, challenging.

The question is like a skillfully aimed arrow right across his chest. He frowns, voice fragile when he answers, "No one else has ever touched me after you."

Jimin swallows, the adam's apple on his throat bubbling up and down before he rises on his toes again, chasing Jungkook's lips. "Liar."

"It's true." Jungkook breathes, nearly whines, but it's like Jimin doesn't care.

"It's not." he declares, as if it's the only truth that matters and kisses Jungkook before he can argue.

Jungkook is too weak not to reciprocate the kiss just as eagerly, holding Jimin by the back of his thighs when he climbs his body and encircles his hips with his legs, locking the ankles on his back.

The difference in height urges Jungkook to bury his face on his neck, to chase the enticing smell flowing out of his skin with his lips. He adorns it with nice looking hickeys on the way inside the house, no idea where he's going but trusting the older hitting on the walls to guide them.

Hearing Jimin moan by the edge of his ear, so close like this, after being denied the sound for who knows how many days, gets Jungkook going extra hard. Sucking on the muscle to the point Jimin is panting and tugging on his hair roughly, until it stings the corner of his eyes.

Somewhere along the way, he finds a bed, and he places Jimin down on it with impatient hands pulling on his shirt. Once they're both chest naked, Jungkook drops his weight on top of the older and gasps when both their erections rub together.

Fuck, what are they doing?

He's about to pull back and ask exactly that, but then Jimin holds his strands harder and rolls his hips against him, eyes pinched shut and bottom lip caught in a tight bite. Jungkook's staring down at him and fuck. Fuck, he's missed this.

He grabs him by the jaw, uses his thumb to ease the flesh of his lip away from his teeth and replaces it with his own mouth, swallowing around the small moans that fucking shoot fire deep within his gut. Every time their lips touch, each and every organ inside him bursts with never-ending tingles.

Jungkook soars to the sky when he feels Jimin's heart knocking down against their pressed chests along with his, feels assured to find out he's just as nervous as he is.

When Jimin starts to strip off his own pants, Jungkook can't fight it anymore. He sits on the guy's thighs just for a moment long enough to appreciate him, but is left speechless to find the word nevermind inked across his ribs.

His jaw hangs open, fingers brushing over the tattoo absentmindedly. He clearly remembers how
this was one of the wishes on Jimin's list and fuck, the fact he's walking around and fulfilling them
one by one… It's so sexy.

"Stop staring." Jimin demands in a rough voice and he almost sounds hurt, "You don't get to
stare."

Jungkook swallows, unbounded of any restraint despite his words. "It's beautiful." he whispers,
fingers still running across each letter of it.

Jimin sits up, making his hands fall to his hips. "Shut up."

Jungkook frowns, unable to obey this time, realization having fallen upon him like a bucket of cold
water. They can't do this, it'll only make things worse.

"Why?" he risks and Jimin's gaze hardens. "Hyung—"

"No." the older snaps then, pushing at Jungkook's shoulders hard enough for him to fall to the side
so Jimin can climb out of the bed. "I don't wanna talk."

Jungkook gulps, watching him sit at the edge of the mattress, naked back turned to him. "Hyung,
please—"

But just as the words are falling from his mouth, Jungkook's heart freezes inside his chest.

He feels the tip of his lips paling, the blood rushing down to his fingertips. His eyes slowly follow
the path of vivid hickeys down Jimin's spine, where he certainly has not touched.

It feels like all air is being punched right out of his lungs and it stings.

Jimin turns around angrily to shoot something back, but also rapidly falls speechless, expression
straining when he realizes where Jungkook's eyes are stuck to.

It takes a moment of morbid shared silence, before the older abruptly stands on his feet and walks
towards his open window, arms around his body.

"You should go." he says, choked up voice loud in the quiet room — but all Jungkook can focus is
how the hickeys lead down to more bruises over his inner thighs.

He's dizzy.

"Who..." he chokes, eyes burning, "Who..." he attempts breathing, chest seemingly being ripped
open, but Jimin cuts him off before he can say anything else.

"I told you to fucking go, Jungkook." he turns around, still protective, hugging his own chest. His
eyes shine with the moonlight casting its glow over him, unshed tears clear on the way his voice
shakes. "Get the fuck out of here!"

Jungkook's forehead crease with the force he makes not to break down in that moment, looking
down at his curled fists sinking on the mattress.

There's someone else. All this time, Jungkook never considered he could have— Fuck.

Jimin's right. He has to get out of here, he has to—

Swallowing down the lump on his throat, he hops out of the bed by the other side and nearly trips
on Jimin's pants on the ground, feeling like he could throw up on it.
Jimin refuses to watch him leave, but Jungkook also refuses to look at him stay, grabbing his discarded shirt on the living room with a bleeding heart and running away from the building like it contains the poison for his happiness. He really never should have came, in the first place.

A tragedy follows the other.

Jungkook learns it through the worst possible way he could.

In the middle of his lovesick induced agony, he swore that Jimin having someone else in his life was the worst pain he could have possibly felt.

How naive.

He spends the last two days arranging his trip back to Busan. There's nothing much to pack and he would have gone home right after that cursed fucking night, but in this busy time of the year, he could only get the plane tickets for a couple days later. He has no strength to deny that when he's not busying himself with his bags, the ticket and the hotel fees, he's wallowing in self-pity and humiliation on his bed, curled around his own sadness, staining the clean pillows with his tears.

Jungkook goes back to Busan late night that day, heavy shoulders and aching chest knowing this is probably the end of it. There's nothing else he can do to change their fate — he's going back to Tokyo in February and Jimin will continue to happily live off his life with whoever he's currently with in Seoul. He should be happy for him, too. People always say that if you love someone their happiness must be your top priority. But he guesses Hoseok's right. He's just selfish, because happiness is the last thing he can feel in that moment.

He decides to take a last walk downtown before he leaves, judges that maybe the miraculously clear day in the middle of winter might cheer him up a little. Jungkook observes the bustle of life with tired, bored eyes. Nothing seems important, nothing catches his attention. It's mundane, it makes no sense when he sees a couple fondly staring at each other and whispering secrets through loving smiles. It makes no sense if all promises end up to break up, if all marriages crumple down to divorce. He feels bitter, hearing their overjoyed laughs when he's wishing for the earth could swallow him whole.

It arrives like this, when he least needs it, when he is least expecting it.

His mom calls him out of the blue, and at first Jungkook considers to not pick up — she's always calling him to nag about something different and today is surely to complain about how long he's taking to go home. But in the end, he decides that ignoring her is probably a big asshole move considering they've barely seen each other for a whole year.
"Hello?"

"Jungkookie?" her voice sounds faint, and Jungkook frowns, wondering if it's his speakers that are glitching, pressing it tighter to his ears.

"Mom?"

"B-baby— You need… You need to come home."

Jungkook rolls his eyes. He knew it. "Yes, I'm coming tonight, I—"

"No…" all of a sudden, she bursts to tears and Jungkook halts his steps in the middle of the street, shocked. "Y-you need to come home right now."

Never once in his life Jungkook has seen or heard his mom cry. He is taken aback, trying to make sense of it.

"Mom, I… I can't, the ticket—"

"You don't understand…" she keens and Jungkook is paralyzed with fear, people rushing past him on the sidewalk with not a care in the world. Something is wrong. Something is terribly wrong. "Nana's… Jungkookie, nana's gone… She's gone…"

The world around him loses sound, color and movement.

His mom continues to compulsively cry on the other end, "She passed away, Jungkookie, please —"

His knees buckle and he has to grab the wall to his right, head hanging forward. "What—" he breathes in one gush of rushed air that leaves him like a whirlwind.

He wants to continue to listen what his mom has to say, wants to somehow find out that he heard it all wrong, that it's not really what happened, that this is all just a fucking nightmare— He wants to, but there's no strength left in his body so his phone slips right past his loose fingers and crashes down on the sidewalk.

Jungkook numbly stares at it for a couple seconds, shaking his head and refusing to believe this is real. This can't be, he had already planned all about what him and nana were going to do while he was in Korea, had planned all the places he would take her to, this can't—

It can't be fucking true, no.

The tears fall down on his trembling hands when he crouches down to pick up his phone just to find the cracked, black screen. It's broken, completely broken and Jungkook can't even—

He tightens his hold around it, chest shaking with the force the pain suddenly strikes him.

This is not real, it's not.

It can't be happening, not right now, in this strange city, where he has no one, not even—

He looks around. Fuck, he doesn't have no one anywhere. His parents have never been a reliable source of love, Taehyung is out around the world and Jimin is... Nana was his only family and now — Fuck, now he has nothing.

Jungkook feels everything be set aflame inside him. The high buildings just makes him feel small
and smaller, simply remind him how it's such a fucking big world and he's— He's all alone. Once again, he's all alone.

He stumbles down to the street, vision blurred and nearly gets hit by a taxi. He only has half a mind to check inside of it before he hops in, unable to breath.

"T-take m-me to J-Jimin, please."

The driver looks back at him with confused, worried eyes.

"What?"

"Just take me to Jimin-hyung," he curls over himself and sobs on his knees, pulling on his hair. "Please…"

"Hey…" the old man cautiously places a hand over his back and rubs on it, "I will, I will, but you… You need to tell me the address."

Jungkook raises his head to look at him, shaking his head in despair. "I don't k-know… I d-don't know t-the address, it—" he squeezes his eyes shut, more tears coming down to stain his cheeks, "I-It was in m-my phone, but now it's b-broken and— a-and—"

"It's alright. Do you happen to know any reference point? Somewhere it's near to where I can just put on the gps?"

Jungkook hiccups, before he manages to answer. His head is banging with all the effort he's pulling to speak. "K-Arts." he whispers, "It's o-one of the s-students complex…"

"Got it." the driver nods and turns back front, "We'll be there in a minute."

Everything happens in a flash. Jungkook slumps on his seat and watches the city run by as he quietly sobs, shrinking more and more on himself. Memories of his childhood are everything he can think of, and it causes him whiplash when's tossed back in reality, the car halting on Jimin's neighborhood.

Jungkook doesn't know what he's doing. The driver doesn't accept his cash, but he doesn't have the mind to argue. He just needs someone. Anyone. He just needs—

He walks past the gates and into the building, but when he stumbles in front of the elevator, violently pressing the buttons until his fingers are red, the doorman looks back at him from his table and says with a monotonous practiced voice.

"The elevator's broken, kid. Try the stairs."

Jungkook stares at him with a frown, confused, trying to make sense of what he's said, until the words finally click. He shakes his head. Fuck, this has to be the worst fucking day of his life.

He climbs up the stairs slowly, holding himself on the railings so he doesn't trip and fall down. His knees still give out every once in a while, forcing him to stop and sit until he has enough oxygen inside his brain to keep him going. Jungkook can't see past two feet in front of him, the tears tirelessly falling down his eyes and turning everything into a watery memoir. It feels like he's underwater, out of this timeline, watching things happen from the yesterday or maybe the tomorrow, he doesn't fucking know. All that he knows is that this doesn't feel the present, it doesn't feel real, nothing is substantial and everything is insignificant.
Jungkook looks up when his shin hits on the last step of the stairs, making him fall with his knees on the ground. He drags himself on his feet with the wall's help, can't even feel the pain enveloping his leg. He raises his eyes, trying to focus on the letters and finds out he's on the sixth floor.

His brain works on practical tasks to get him where he needs — the coping mechanism is chanting, right, left, right, left, right, left, in his mind while watching his feet take a step after the other, a step after the other.

He stops when he's in the hallway — not because he's willing to, but because Jimin's far away giggle disrupts his counting.

Jungkook is rooted in place, eyes still on his feet, heart skyrocketing inside his chest.

Jimin's right there. He's heard him. He's right there, just like Jungkook wanted.

He just has to go to him.

That's all he has to do.

He just has to go to him.

But when Jungkook slowly looks up, the scene he finds is so earth-shattering that he wishes the ground could really open and swallow him right down to its darkest depths.

Everything has to be a fucking joke.

This time, there's no gravity that could keep him up. He has half a mind to take one step back to be hidden by the wall before he goes down. His back hits that very same wall, and Jungkook thinks the force of it might cause a concussion on his brain. He hopes it does. Because the pain is too fucking much. The way it feels like each piece of him is being ripped out of his body, torn into pieces, right before his eyes while he's forbidden to do anything to stop the slaughtery against himself.

Jungkook hangs his head to the side, eyes falling closed and all he can see before it all blacks out is another man's arms around Jimin's waist as he kisses down his neck.

Chapter End Notes

i promise this is the last suffering we'll get next chapter the fluff we'll be so unbearable that you'll ask yourselves can they get ANY cuter? and the answer will be yes they can hoping you dont hate jungkook anymore :(

you can find me on twitter if you ever want to talk abt this or anything else!!

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