In which you're a model student who just managed to catch not just one, not two, but all seven 'transfer students' who just happened to visit your university.

At the end of the road, will you stay or will you run? Or...

≪ Yandere!BTS x female reader ≫
Reader discretion is advised. If you are not ready for dark content, please please PLEASE do not read. Your mental health comes first♡

Probably a lot of grammar mistakes and a lot of loopholes. Expect cliche and cheesy scenes. This story is written for self-enjoyment and is a byproduct of fantasy and nothing more.

[Find Extra Contents Here!]
It was just another normal day when your university's boarding house's housemaster had called you into his office.

You had finished your classes few hours ago and had been relaxing on your room when you got the message from your phone, and while the notification had broken your supposedly reading time, it made you curious. The boarding house you had been placed in has been empty aside from you for the past month, as the other occupants were seniors and they had graduated with their Masters and Doctorate degrees. This meant that the only reason you were called in could only be because you were in trouble, or you were going to have some housemates. You hoped it was the latter.

Your knuckles met the polished wood of the housemaster's office door a few times before you wrenched the old handle down and pushed. The elder male welcomed you with his warm smile and gestured to the seat in front of his desk.

"Miss [F/N], I've been expecting you. Come sit down."

You nodded and obliged, trying to appear nonchalant as you sat down on the guest chair.

"Am I in trouble, sir...?"

"Oh, no," he shook his head, "Of course not. I was just going to alert you about the new occupants of the empty rooms in your dorm."

Oh thank god, you sighed in relief inwardly, "New occupants. I see."

He nodded and continued as his hand rubbed over his stubble, "There will be seven of them, all boys, with varying majors and degrees. They will be moving in in one week from today."

"--all boys?" You couldn't help but repeat the fact in slight disbelief.

"Yes, but don't worry, they will only be staying for around two months. They are here on some sort of a homestay program, sponsored by one of our biggest donor. I was hoping you could welcome them and show them around the town," he explained kindly, warm dark eyes watching over you, waiting for your reaction. You understood immediately the underlying nudge in his words.
They were important people, and you were to treat them with utmost respect if you didn't want to be kicked out from the dorm—or worse, expelled.

"I'll... do my best, sir," you tried to sound as reassuring as possible although you were panicking internally. The housemaster seemed to buy your act and smiled wider, satisfied at your response.

"Thank you. The Dean will surely appreciate this," he waved his hand, and you knew you were dismissed. You quickly bowed, uttered your goodbyes, and exited the room.

While the thought of extra credit lifted your spirit a tad bit, they were still much in a slump, knowing that you would have to be living with people whom you must be careful around with, starting next week. You sigh as you walk down the hallway of the campus, deciding to treat yourself to a cup of good coffee and maybe a slice of cake, to prepare for what you thought would be the worst two months of your university life.

.... Oh well. At least after those two months, those boys would go back to wherever they came from, and everything will go back to normal again, right?

Right.

And yet, a week later in the airport, as you gazed at all seven boys, (almost) all smiling down at you, you couldn't help but question whether your life would ever be normal ever again. After all, they all looked like angels who just descended from heaven, and you couldn't shake the feeling that they would become an important part of your life, whether you like it or not.

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You had always been never really good with strangers. In fact, they terrify you, because you never knew what they were thinking, and instead, you had this habit of just assuming what they thought of you. And most of the time, your thoughts were more negative than positive.

Couple that with seven attractive strangers staring down at you in interest, and you could swear your heart was going to explode into smithereens any moment soon.

As you were standing in your place like a frozen idiot, one of them took a step towards you with a dimpled smile. It took a lot of you to not stare like a teenage girl in love and accept his handshake, and when he spoke, you found yourself mesmerized at the deep voice that came from his vocal chords.

"Hi, I'm Kim Namjoon. Ah-- Kim being the last name, and Namjoon being the first name," he explained, and you briefly appreciated how he clarified for you, seeing as you might not be too aware of their culture.

You told him your full name in tow, and smacked yourself inwardly at the stutter in your voice, "--A-And, um, I'll be your housemate and guide while you're here," you wavered at the end and added timidly, "I hope that's ok with you..."

"Of course! Nice to meet you!" Another one chirped merrily, his wine red hair as vibrant as his smile, and you smiled along, taken by his cheerfulness.

You were glad for the different colored hair of the boys', because honestly you were having trouble remembering their names. At the very least, the dye in their hair helped you to memorize their foreign-sounding names, and by the end of the car ride (which the housemaster had kindly provided you with) you were confident you could identify all of them. The whole ride had also consisted of you trying to make conversations by asking them about their majors, which escalated into expectations when living together and their habits which seemed mostly pretty tame for young male adults.

Kim Namjoon, the one who introduced himself first, with bright blond hair, dimpled smile and deep voice, was apparently a philosophy major. He did look intelligent and well mannered, although he managed to somehow bump his head to the car window and the headrest in the short while of your car trip. To you, he was a little intimidating, but seemed like someone you could trust on keeping the other rowdier boys out of trouble.

The same goes from Kim Seokjin, a business major, who was the eldest out of everyone and seemed to be the one who 'mothers' the boys, and by the end of the journey, even you, too. This came to light when the brunette asked whether you have eaten, and you answered with a negative, to which he frowned and declared that he was going to cook as soon as you all arrived at the dorm. You told him the fridge was empty and there were only instant noodles in the cupboard, and he had slapped his forehead in exasperation and said with a defeated sigh, "Even here in this foreign land, I'm still the one who has to ensure you lot are getting fed properly."

While you rejoiced at the prospect of two months of home cooked meals however, your eyes strayed
to a grumpy looking male, soft teal bangs almost covering his eyes as he slept. Min Yoongi was the one whom you knew almost nothing about besides that he majors in music, and honestly you were kind of scared at how cold he was being. You can only hope he tolerated you, and made a mental note to be as quiet and mindful around him as much as possible.

On the other hand, Jung Hoseok was the exact opposite-- he was the sun and the rainbow combined. You would've believed him if he said he was the descendant of Apollo himself, seeing as his smile and laugh was so contagious, and even his major, dance performance, came as no surprise to you. The boy seemed to be one of the rowdier bunch, but he still knew when to stop and be a responsible adult, which you admired because you would give anything to have such a magnetic presence and charm whoever is within five foot radius.

Park Jimin intrigued you, and it wasn't just because his pink hair or how he majors in contemporary dancing, but despite how shy he was towards you, he was literally an angel when he interacted with the other boys. You hoped he would be more comfortable interacting with you as time passed, because his smile was brilliant and made your chest squeeze with that feeling of when you looked at something precious. He seemed to be quite close with the last two -- a certain Kim Taehyung and Jeon Jungkook.

The former, you noticed, had this adorable rectangular grin whenever he laughed or smiled. And even when he didn't, his beautifully defined face and short ash grey strands of hair made him look like the male personification of Aphrodite. Maybe it had something to do with the fact that he was an art major. Or maybe it was just in his DNA. So far, he was one of the friendliest bunch who seemed to not mind your presence at all, and you were really grateful for that.

But Jungkook, the youngest, seemed as if he was scared of you or something. You had tried to make conversation with him, asked about his major (computer science) and his hobby (playing games), but he just answered with clipped replies and looked so much like a frightened bunny, so you decided to not bother him anymore. He was probably just so stressed and uncomfortable with the unfamiliar surroundings, and it made him nervous. You could relate.

All in all, the boys seemed like a good company, and you were kind of looking forward to live with them and getting to show them around. They seemed so normal compared to the image of rich, spoiled men who expected you to do things as their biddings, which you thought you would be facing. Maybe this wouldn't be as bad as you imagined.

..... If only you knew.

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You couldn't believe three whole weeks had passed.

Three weeks since meeting your dorm mates. Three weeks since picking them up from the airport, almost dying from escalated heart rate caused by how pretty they all looked like. Three weeks since your life had changed for the better.

By now, you knew Seokjin fusses about everyone's health as much as Namjoon likes his books and Yoongi is passionate about his music. You've learnt first hand how much energy Hoseok has especially when he dances, how Jimin's eyes crinkles when he smiled, and the adorable whine Taehyung makes at the back of his throat whenever he saw a cute dog on the street. And of course, you learned how everyone seem to baby Jungkook, and how the youngest male seemed to like it despite his seemingly annoyed response.

You sighed as your palms wrapped between your hot cup of drink. For once, all the boys were out and you had the whole dorm to yourself. It was so quiet now. You took a sip of your tea, relishing the silent afternoon.

Thinking back, it was ridiculous to think how you had grown to love the group of boys. Yes, they were kind of loud at times, but they were also lovely to have around. You saw them as your potential close friends, and loved how they seemed to not mind your awkwardness and low moments. They also didn't seem to mind that you were a girl, and treated you just as equal, which in turn made you comfortable enough to break out of your shell around them.

There were indeed some times you found them act a tad strange, like how some of them would suddenly get silent and seemed to slip into a deep daze in the middle of something... But you brushed the thought off since they were all generally nice to you.

After all, aren't we all a bit strange ourselves at times?
A certain Wednesday morning, you found yourself dragging your own body to the campus with much difficulty. Your head felt heavy, you were sneezing profusely, and you could swear the world were flashing into a white blur every few seconds.

After what seemed like your hundredth time sneezing in succession and interrupting your lecturer's speech, he had sent you out from the lecture hall, nearly begging for you to just go home and rest. With a written statement from your lecturer that said you were given extension to the assignment he gave today in class, you trudged home, miserable and tired.

Your hands fumble with the keycard as you tried to open the front door of the dorm. More sneezes followed as you uncaringly stepped out of your shoes on the hallway before making a beeline towards your room.

Only to meet Namjoon's eyes as he looked up from what seemed to be a rather thick textbook. You blinked a few times, confused.

You've never seen him study before.

You had always thought he was just really clever -- and the other guys did told you about how he was naturally the smartest out of their group, how high his IQ were, and how he always helped them in their assignments. He also helped you wrote an essay, once, even though your majors were different. You just assumed he was those type of people who had eidetic memories or something.

Too busy smacking yourself inwardly for your premature assumptions, you didn't hear him calling out for you worriedly, and asked him instead, "Why aren't you in class?"

"I don't have any class today. But--"

"You're studying," between your dazed mind and the pounding headache in your head, the words seemed to slip out easier now, "Oh my god, I'm so sorry."

His expression twisted into befuddlement, "Why? You didn't do anything wrong."

"No, I've always just assumed that you were smart, like-- really really smart. I didn't think you needed to study hard or anything. It's so ignorant of me," you sniffled and went into another sneezing spree.

Namjoon observed you in amusement and waited until you settled down from your continuous sneezes. Your shoulders slumped and an irate groan slipped out your throat, which felt swollen and kind of itchy now.

"Hey, it's alright. Thanks for noticing and recognising my effort. But for now, you've got to lay down. I'll go make you a--" his smile wavered as he tried to stand from his cross legged position on the floor, only to get one of his foot caught on one of the coffee table.

You watched, agape, as he fell onto his butt to the carpet, along with the wooden table. It wobbled and tilted, before landing on the side with a deafening crash, sending books, papers, a set of iPod and
a headphone, and a Nintendo Switch dock all smashing onto the tiled floor.

The two of you watched the scene of destruction in silence.

You erupted in giggles, making the blond switch his gaze towards you, his expression frozen in his signature 'oh-no-I-did-not-mean-that-damn-it-not-again' face. The same look which was present on him when he somehow accidentally knocked your phone from your hand three days ago, where it then proceeded to hit the ceiling, the ceiling fan (which was on and in its max speed), and flew across the room towards the wall. Needless to say, it was smashed to bits, and he had given you a new one the day after while apologising endlessly. You honestly thought it was more funny than anything.

"I'm sure they'll forgive you," you glanced at the gadgets on the floor, wincing at the visible scratch or small crack at the edge of its screen, "I'm pretty sure Jungkook will forgive you. And the iPod and headphone owner, whoever they are, they'll be fine with it so long it's still usable. Hopefully."

Namjoon was silent for a few seconds before he answered in a terrified whisper.

"..... They're Yoongi hyung's."

"..... Oh."

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Seokjin-- or, whom now you call Jin, or sometimes by the slip of tongue, 'Mom' (the first time you did the whole gang just grinned at you knowingly while Seokjin fumed in the background, but he still slipped you some extra food to your plate that night's dinner anyway, so you supposed he wasn't really angry) had kept true to his words from the first day they met you, by providing the dorm's occupants with meals almost every day. While at first you couldn't get used to the amount and taste of the various food in front of you, the habit warmed up to you soon enough. By now, you had fallen in love with the spicy tang of kimchi and was considerably proficient with chopsticks.

You saw Seokjin as a smart, caring, and kind individual. It wasn't just because he was the eldest -- you assumed it was just his nature and who he was. You also noticed that he would appear the most comfortable whenever all members of the group were present, and would look kind of lonely whenever some had to miss dinner.

And now, as you walked into the kitchen to refill your water bottle late in the night, you saw him wearing the same look as he sipped a cup of what seemed like hot chocolate. His eyes met yours, and you replied his beautiful smile with your own.

"Can't sleep?" Seokjin asked, eyebrows raised, "Do you want me to make you something warm--"

"No, no, it's alright," you raised your bottle and tapped the plastic, implying your reason to the worried brunette. He relaxed back to his chair, and you went to fill in the container. When your bottle was full, you glanced at him again, and upon seeing the thoughtful expression in his face, you decided to sit across him instead of returning to your room.

He frowned in reprimand, "Don't you have to sleep? You have class tomorrow."

"So do you," you shrugged.

Seokjin chuckled and lifted his cup again. You braved yourself to ask.

"Are you okay? You seem to be thinking hard about something," upon your comment, the male looked at you with a polite smile, and you fidgeted in your seat. Maybe it wasn't your place to ask. "I mean-- You don't have to tell me if you don't want to, but I was just-- Talking makes things better, right? So I thought you might want to talk... I might not be of help, but..."

An awkward silence settled in, and you berated yourself at the word vomit that probably didn't make any sense in the first place. While you were contemplating on how to escape and hide in your bedroom, Seokjin gazed at your slouched head fondly and called out your name to get your attention.

"Thank you. But don't worry, I'm just stressing on stuff like how Jimin keeps skipping meals these days and how Taehyung can't seem to remember to turn off the stove properly whenever he makes his late night hot milk."

Now it was your turn to frown. Was that really all it was?

The eldest male in the household noticed how you didn't believe him, and sighed in defeat before his fingers started to tap lightly against his cup of chocolate, warm brown eyes focused at the small
bubbles floating on the surface of the drink. You decided to wait.

When he spoke, his voice was calm and serious, and you instinctively leaned closer to listen, eager to know about what was troubling him, "Sometimes I just... don't recognise myself," his eyes flickered to yours, watching your confused expression.

"What do you mean? You're Seokjin."

"But who is Kim Seokjin?"

"..... Well," you tried again, firmer and resolute this time, "You're someone who cares for us, sometimes too much and even more than yourself. You're the kind person who always have the best dad jokes and could always brighten other people's day. You're someone who has such an important role in your friends' lives and someone the boys all loved, for just being there. You might be awkward at times, but to me, you look like you're always trying your best to make everyone content and comfortable and--"

He smiled as you ranted on and on, listing every single facts you knew about him and trying your damnedest to make him see what a wonderful person he was in your book. When you were finally out of things to say, another silence settled, but this time it didn't feel as stiff as before.

"Thanks... I'm glad you see me as a good guy and all--" he blinked, "-- but what if I'm not who you think I am?"

"What do you mean?"

"What if I told you... I have this... darkness-- in me."

You pondered at his choice of words. You couldn't seem to connect 'darkness' and 'Kim Seokjin' together. If he was a colour, you would've pictured him as anything but black. Maybe he meant that he felt bad for having negative thoughts inside his mind? You supposed he had his own troubles, and that was his way to describe it to you. Dark and depressing thoughts. Darkness.

"Doesn't everyone have them?"

He tilted his head, a little surprised at your reply, "Do you?"

You thought back to the times you cried yourself to sleep when you felt not good enough. Of the times when everything you did just made you feel numb, and the moments you believed that everyone existed just to bring you down. You thought back of when you wanted to hurt others, desired to have them fall, because of your jealously whenever you saw them, the overachievers who accomplished so much more than you ever could.

"Yes," you looked away from him, a little insecure at admitting it, ".... At times. But that's okay, isn't it?"

"That's okay?" he paused, "So you don't think I'm weird? You're not afraid of me?"

"Weird? Afraid?" you chuckled and waved your hand dismissively, "Jin, you feed me almost every day, packs me lunch, texts me reminders to drink enough water.... No, I don't think you're weird, and I'm definitely not afraid of you."

You patted yourself figuratively when Jin's smile widen, full lips stretched upwards, creating wrinkles above his cheeks in the way whenever he would smile or laugh. Yet another silence returned, content and relaxed. His smile still stayed, although now it was smaller and appreciative,
when you finally yawned, and he ushered you to go to bed.

As you wished the brown haired male a good night and left him in front of his room in the hallway, you never noticed the longing look affixed onto your back.

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You've seen how Yoongi would abuse his own body just to produce that one, *perfect*, single track of music. You've noticed him skip meals in favour of writing lyrics. You've had your share trying to persuade him to come out of his room after he had locked himself in for a whole twenty four hours, lost in composing. You've known his love for music since day one living with him and the others, and you were sure nothing could surpass such a pure appreciation and passion for music.

So when one day you came back and found him just laying on the floor, unmoving, you immediately dropped your possession and rushed to him in panic, calling out his name in a series of horrified chant, wild thoughts running rampant in your head. Did his fatigue finally caught up with him? Did he faint because of caffeine overdose? *Could you even overdose on caffeine and faint??*

His eyes opened with a scowl at the loud noises, and he gruffly returned your question about his wellbeing with a short, clipped, "*Noisy.*"

You stared at him in disbelief and dropped your voice into a whisper, "What are you doing on the floor?"

"Dying," he said dryly. You held back the urge to roll your eyes. He sighed, "I'm trying to finish this song, but nothing's coming to me."

"..... Will it come if you keep pretending to be dead on the floor?"

The corner of Yoongi's lips twitched at the deadpanned tone in your voice, "..... Probably not."

You watched him silently as he continued to stare at the ceiling, and chewed the insides of your cheek. The gears in your brain turned.

His complexion was far too pale. You last saw him yesterday morning when you were having breakfast with the others. Assuming the worst, which is probably what the current situation was, he hadn't eaten and hadn't exited his room since then. That was most definitely not healthy and wouldn't help his brain to have the energy to crunch out the song he needed.

Maybe you could bring him to a place he could relax and eat. A cafe?

Memories of the many times Taehyung would giggle and showed the musician all the adorable dog photos on his phone fell into your mind out of nowhere. With the idea lightbulb lit up inside your head, you stood up, and resolutely grabbed his arms.

He stared back at you blankly, unmoving, "What."

"Let's go outside."

"Ugh."

"Trust me. I know of a place."

"I don't need alcohol right now."
"You can meet my favourite Pomeranian, he's friendly and fluffy and his name is Ollie."

Something flashed in his eyes, and he allowed you to pull him up, obediently waiting as you grabbed one of your bag which contained your essentials, and went straight out the door. You marvelled at how he was following you, his eyes considerably brighter, and were kind of impressed at yourself for the great idea.

Thirty minutes later, true to your prediction, Yoongi looked extremely at peace as a dark brown furred poodle sat on his lap, a cup of steaming black tea and a proper meal laid on the table in front of him. The gummy smile on his face was just as endearing as your small friend who had been sitting on your lap and had been insisting to lick your face every ten seconds.

You would make sure to relay the information to Jin, in case he needed to persuade the bright haired boy to go and get some fresh air next time.

As you both walked back home in sunset after three hours well spent in the dog cafe, you were heedless at the way your companion studied you from behind. He observed the scene in his eyes, taking in every details, and just then, the inspiration struck him out of nowhere.

You continued to be oblivious when Yoongi stopped walking and had opted to instead stare at your back, eyes focused on the way the setting sun highlighted your hair, the way the wind made you squint your eyes and lick your dried lips -- a picture perfect scenery in front of him. In his head, as if someone had flipped a switch, the lyric formed itself almost automatically, and he could almost hear the soft buzz of melody filling his ears.

You yelped in shock as Yoongi walked past you breezily and yelled at him to wait as you tried to catch up with him. He never did, and had went back to locking himself in his room as soon as you reached home.

A week later, someone had slipped a large bar of your preferred brand of chocolate under your door and a tub of your favourite ice cream in the freezer, clearly labelled with your name. You immediately recognised whom it was based on the handwriting -- you've seen the same style, written by a certain bright teal haired music major whenever he scribbled lyrics or melodies on any random surface he could find.

You flashed him a smile when you met in the hallway, hoping that he knew how grateful you were.

And you could swear you saw his lips curve upwards into a minuscule smile.

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"Hoseok?"

The red haired male looked up in surprise at your soft voice and smiled, albeit it was dimmer than his usual sunshine-bright grins. You frowned as you studied his attire, loose shirts and slacks, which was quite normal except for the bandages wrapped around his right ankles.

"Hey, Angel! You're back early today!" Hoseok chirped, ignoring your confused and worried look directed at him. Normally, the nickname would've made you blush and halted your sentence constructing capabilities, but you were far too concerned about the boy than anything.

"What happened...?" The question came out soft and timid as you sat down beside him.

"It's just a sprain, nothing to worry about," the male insisted, still smiling, but you've seen Hoseok's real smile. It was all teeth and sun-rays and rainbows when his lips bloom, contagious like a virus to everyone around him. Now, his eyes didn't shine and his cheeks looked strained, the gesture unnatural.

Not believing him but also not wanting to push him further, you nodded in response and eyed the bandages. Be it a sprain or something worse (you did not want to think nor entertain the idea, so you hoped with all your soul it really was just a light sprain), he was most probably rendered unfit to do any activities that required him to be on his feet, much less dancing.

-- Dancing.

You wondered how much it must hurt to not be able to do something you were most passionate about.

"Did you go to the doctor?"

"Yeah," his smile faltered, a small frown creasing between his eyebrows, ".... No strenuous activities for at least a week, they said."

"Oh.... That sucks..."

The male nodded, the trace of smile completely gone from his expression, and your chest clenched at the foreign sight. His eyes showed how frustrated he was for just settled down there on the sofa and not being out there, expressing himself with his body and sweating bullets from rigorous dance routines.

You've never really seen him actually dance-- just at times, whenever he would joke around with the others. On those events, he would act out some moves which left you speechless, regardless of how simple they were. Honestly, every single movement he took seemed so precise and languid, from his walks to the way he runs. Watching him and Jimin, you could see how different their movements were, and it intrigued you, how light they were on their feet and how gentle yet powerful they could be.
So seeing him just sitting down, his usual energy gone, somehow pained you.

"Have you eaten?"

"Yeah, Seokjin hyung made me something before he left."

"Okay. If you have nothing to do, let me accompany you. I have no more class today."

He looked at you in slight surprise and smiled, "It's fine, you don't need to--"

"No, I insist," you stubbornly huffed and surveyed the deserted common area. Seeing the Nintendo Switch on top of the coffee table, you hoped Jungkook wouldn't mind much if you borrowed his console. You've seen Taehyung and Jimin play using the red and blue controllers, and the youngest didn't seem to mind. "Do you want to play the Switch with me?"

"I'm not that good at games..."

"Neither am I."

You turned the console on and offered the red controller to Hoseok. He accepted and eyed you curiously as you tried your best to figure out how to choose the game and link yours and his controllers to the Switch.

"What do you want to play?" You asked, watching him, "I've seen Taehyung and Jimin play Snipperclips. Seems simple enough."

Recognition flashed in his eyes, "Oh, yeah. They play it a lot these days."

And so you loaded the game. At first, the two of you played terribly, since you had no idea what you were doing. The tutorials were easy, but you kept mistaking between the button to cut and regrow, which elicited several laughs and overly exaggerated screams from Hoseok. Slowly, you started getting better as you moved onto the different worlds, and even though Hoseok said he wasn't good at games, he was definitely a better player than you, at least. He knew how to be creative, and he definitely had some out of the box idea which helped you clear the levels steadily.

When you were both done with the game, it was nearly dinner time. Seokjin had apparently been cooking sometime within the timeframe when you and Hoseok were screaming your heads off, and so you went for dinner gratefully. When you glanced at the dancer as you ate, he looked significantly better and happier. You couldn't help but smile for the remainder of your meal.

The next day, you went out for morning class, and returned in the afternoon, only to find the red haired male scrolling through the game store on the Nintendo Switch. He beamed when you greeted him, and as if you had promised him the day before, you sat beside him and took the blue controller he offered to you.

"Overcooked?" You read the title out loud, "Wait, so we're chefs now?"

"Yep!" He grinned, "It seemed interesting, so I bought it."

"Does Jungkook know--?"

"It's fine, he's got so much balance in his wallet. He won't notice," the naughty grin and overly hyperbolic wink made you giggle in response.

The both of you lost yourselves in the game soon enough. You never really considered yourself a
gamer until this point, but you suppose you could see the appeal now. Lost in the fantasy world inside the screen, you barely noticed the increasing number of people who watched your little game session as the hours passed. Time flew by as you played until dinner. The same thing happened the next day. And the next next day, the cycle would repeat again. And again. And again.

And then, Hoseok was back on his feet, his ankles healed but a little stiff from under usage.

That still didn't hold him back from calling out to you one morning, a bright smile on his face as he showcased how he had fully healed by taking your hands and pulling you into a sudden energetic waltz dance. You couldn't help but laugh in amusement at his antics, and hoped he would see the redness on your cheeks as a symbol of how happy you were for him too, instead of the embarrassment and after effect of your heart going into overdrive at his touch.

When you both stopped moving around, his hand delicately fixed your stray strands of hair, a result of the sudden twirls throughout the short dance session, the vibrant smile still stayed on his lips.

"Thanks for keeping my spirit up these past few days. I promise I'll return the favour one day."

"It's no problem, Hoseok, really--"

"Aw, c'mon, after all the time we spent together, you should be used to calling me Hobi already!"

"Right, well, Hobi, it's really no problem. Really."

His smile dissipated into a smaller one, and yet the intensity in his eyes made you smile wider in return, "If you need anything-- And I mean, anything... All you need to do is ask. Okay?"

"I'll keep that in mind, Hobi," you crooned and patted his arm before waving him off to his dance practice.

You yawned and decided to go back to sleep, since you would only have class in the evening today. But your plans went to ashes when you heard a shy call of your name behind you.

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Jimin offered you a small, shy smile, as his hand ran through his light coloured strands of hair and kneaded against his nape. You smiled back in return, hoping it would ease his nerves (and your nerves, too, because honestly you still felt kind of awkward around him sometimes), and it seemed to work. He stood straighter and when he spoke, his voice was soft but hopeful.

"Hey... Are you busy?"

"Oh, no, I'm actually free!" You quickly crossed out your sleeping-in plans, for you were happy that he was actually trying to converse with you.

Jimin had always been as shy as he was sweet when it came to you, for some reason. You've seen him talk with other girls with no problem, and he was one of the guys who was insanely popular within the whole campus population. But somehow he always had this...inhibition, whenever you were around. Like he was afraid of something.

You honestly hoped he wasn't afraid of you or anything like that.

"Really?" He shifted onto one foot to another, "Well-- Could you, if possible-- and only if you want to-- watch me practice my dance?"

"W-What?"

You were taken aback at the sudden request. While Hoseok would freely exhibit his 'moves', Jimin was more of a conservative one when it came to their talent, almost always refusing to show his expertise on spontaneous demands. So you were shocked at the fact that he wanted you, of all people, to watch him dance. Not that you didn't want to, but what good would it benefit him?

"Only if you want to! I understand if you don't-- It's just, I'm so nervous about the upcoming performance and I need someone to--to give me opinions, comments, or just anything, really..."

"Jimin, I would love to," you twiddled your fingers together, "But I have no eye for art. I don't know anything about contemporary dancing. I'm not sure if I'm the correct choice, if you want constructive criticisms."

"That's fine, that's just what I need!" He flushed beet red and grinned, "It means that if I can't make you feel entertained, I need to work harder."

You wanted to say that you've seen and heard of how he have been working hard enough anyway, but held your tongue back. You were in no place to say that. Maybe he just needed someone to watch him and just be a regular audience; just like how artists and writers want people to acknowledge their creations.

"I guess if I can help with anything, it's better to make myself useful," you smiled at the pink haired
Thirty minutes later, the both of you arrived at the dance studio Jimin had booked for the day. You obeyed as he instructed you to make yourself comfortable on the floor, told him it was fine when he apologised for not having a chair you can sit on, and observed as he stretched (the boy sure was flexible, you mused) and warmed up (a part of your brain still doubts that the male was fully human, because seriously, just how is he able to move his hips without shifting his upper body?).

The male craned his neck as his fingers swept through his bangs, and gave you one last timid smile before he leaned down and pushed the play button on the small radio.

You watched as Jimin's expression turned into solemn seriousness. Soft melody started to resonate inside the small room, its soundproofing walls making the smallest sound reverberate. The early steps he took was small, careful, and elegant. Yet as the music's volume and tempo raised, so did his movements. Your mouth opened in awe as your eyes followed his form, effortlessly sliding on the floor and twisting and turning in the air. Jimin made it look so easy, and yet you knew it wasn't by the amount of pure concentration in his expression.

He was the one who danced, but the sharp focus in his eyes and how passionate each and every single movements he made left you breathless.

And then, as fast as it started, the show ended. You were left staring in a daze as your housemate stopped and panted from the physical exertion, small beads of sweat glistening on his skin.

Jimin gave you another small, insecure smile between laboured breaths, and asked, "Was that... okay?"

It took you a few seconds to find your voice, but in the end you gave him a proud grin, even though you didn't know why you felt proud, since it was all his effort which made you forget how to work your lungs, and you exclaimed, "'Okay'? 'Okay'? Jimin, I was very much entertained! So that means you've succeeded right?"

Contrary to the smile you were expecting, he seemed doubtful of your assessment, "You really think so?"

"Yes!" You half yelled, motherly instinct kicking in upon seeing how unsure he was of himself and his potentials, and decided to add, "--and if anyone else says otherwise, I will punch them in the face."

His eyes widen at your sudden aggressiveness, but his lips stretched in amusement as he called out your name, "What? No!"

"Watch me," you challenged stubbornly, folding your arms much like a hard-headed child challenging their parent.

Jimin's smile widen, and the two of you laughed in unison. His eyes crinkled onto crescent shaped slits as he did, and you couldn't help but feel all mushy and ticklish inside, the kind of tingle you would get whenever you saw small baby animals.

"You're really kind," the boy cooed, and you never knew the effect you had on him when your cheeks dusted rose pink at his statement.
"Ahhh... Now I really want you all to myself. [F/N]."

※ ※ ※
Taehyung was an enigma.

On random times, he would be yelling out lyrics from a song which one particularly teal haired composer had created, and yet on other random times he was asked to sing, he would blush profusely and deny and look for other people's back which he could use as a shield. There were days he would be bright and sunny and had a permanent smile on his face all the time, and yet other days, he would be solemn and pensive and quiet, never speaking a word unless someone asked him something. One moment he could be washing laundry while reenacting a scene from a recent drama he watched, and then suddenly he would be sitting down and contemplated out loud about does fate exist and if it does, do we have free will at all?

Often times when Namjoon was around and he was feeling philosophical, he would entertain the younger boy. But often Taehyung's questions were left hanging in the air, unanswered. The art major didn't seem to mind, though, and instead would slip into a silent stare down with a wall or the ceiling, probably mulling over the mystery in his own mind.

Today on a rather late drizzly night, you were taking a much deserved break which consisted of a fantasy themed novel and a cup of hot tea, when he asked a question aloud onto the dimly lit living room. Jimin and Hoseok were nodding off across him, and hadn't seem to hear their friend at all. You did, however, and looked up from your book, but unmoving from your comfy position at the other end of the sofa from the said boy.

Jimin's head lolled onto Hoseok's shoulder, enacting a soft grunt from the older male before his cheeks settled on top of the fluffy bright pink hair. Soft snores filled the room. You watched as Taehyung tilted his head and pouted, before looking straight at you.

"... Isn't it different for each person? Since everyone has their own set of priorities," you answered after a few seconds of thinking. His eyebrows raised, his ash grey strands bounced on top of his head as he scooted closer to you, his gaze fixedly affixed upon your eyes.

If there was one thing you admired from Kim Taehyung, it was his ability to courageously and directly stare onto other people's eyes. Slightly daunted by the intensity of his look, you scratched your neck awkwardly and pretended to pick your nails.

"Dogs make me happy. Does that mean I would be truly happy if I'm surrounded by dogs?"

You couldn't help but smile. How so very Taehyung of an answer. "Maybe. Why do dogs make you happy?"

"Well, they're cute and cuddly and adorable. And they're great companions. They return your love unconditionally and treat you with an equal, if not more, amount of love you gave them."

You hummed in response.

"... How about the boys? Do they not make you happy?"

He answered without delay, and you knew he was smiling even though you weren't looking at him.
It was crystal clear by the fondness in his voice. For a moment, you envied the bond between the seven boys. How you wished to be able to find other people you could connect with so closely.

"Of course they do! Namjoon hyung keeps everyone out of trouble. Seokjin hyung cares for all of us. Yoongi hyung doesn't show it much, but he's really mature and he gives the best advice every time. Hoseok hyung makes everyone feel happy and bright all the time. Jimin coddles all of us and helps with everything without question. And Jungkookie keeps us all entertained and safe from danger with those muscles of his!" He paused and sighed contentedly as you felt his weight sink further onto the sofa beside you, "..... I'm the happiest when I'm surrounded by them. They're my family."

"Then I guess your happiness is defined by who's around you."

Your fellow animal lover friend hummed back in agreement, "I guess so."

Again, you were unnerved at his staring. If it wasn't Taehyung, you would've honestly thought it was creepy. For the second time that night, your fingers performed the manoeuvre you always did whenever you feel awkward and nervous against your neck. This time, however, the younger male's hand grasped yours to tuck them away.

Taehyung called your name softly, and you turned to look at him reluctantly, feeling your cheeks getting warmer at the intense gaze he affixed you in.

"Will you stay with us?"

"..... Yes? I mean, I have to. I'm your guide and dorm mate here, remember?"

He pouted at your answer, "No, I meant even after this."

You felt a soft tug in your heart at the question. Did he mean that he want you to keep in touch even after they go back to Korea?

You smiled as you looked back on how much your life had seemed to shine brighter ever since the seven boys entered your life. Maybe, hopefully, to them, you were someone whom they would remember in their hearts, just as how you would keep them in your memories even after they moved out from the dorm.

"Of course. I'm happy you're all here, too."

Taehyung smiled, and underlying his sweet smile, you thought you saw something dark, but the way his fingers brushed past your cheek to tuck the stray hair behind your ear took your attention, and the thought was pushed onto the back of your mind.

"I guess my question was meaningless, then."
'What is the best way for someone to attain happiness?' Taehyung wonders.

By helping people in need?

By doing the things you love?

By keeping people important to you as close as you could, even if it means robbing them of their freedom?

※※※
ten.

Chapter Notes

Heyo. Damn life, bothering me so much to the point I've got no time to beta and post stuff :(  
PS. I'm legit crying because of the comments y'all omg thankssssss here have a kookie~  
(no that is not a typo)  
PPS. I love you guys so much

※ ※ ※

"--you're stressed, so just go and take a refresher--"

"Whatever."

You peered towards the closed door of your bedroom, from where muffled commotion still reaching your ears. Curious and a little uneasy of what you might found, you peeked out from your room onto the common quarters to see Jungkook and Namjoon, the former storming inside the house with a permanent scowl on his face, and the latter looking tired and distressed.

"Hey. Come on, let's order in something and we can play some games while we relax and eat, yeah?" The older male tried to persuade, voice soft and gentle.

"I don't have time," the raven haired boy bristled, shrugging off the comforting hand on his shoulder, and stomped his way onto the hallway, momentarily stopping as your gazes met.

"Um, is everything okay--"

Jungkook rolled his eyes, adjusted his grip on his backpack, and completely ignored you before wrenching his bedroom door open and slamming it close with unneeded force. The loud noise made you wince, and mere seconds later Taehyung's head poked out from his room, his eyes heavy with sleep and hair mussed with a severe case of bedhead.

Namjoon sighed as he rubbed his temples and eyed the both of you, but especially you, with an apologetic and yet tense smile, "Sorry. I think he's stuck with his assignment and is in a bad place. Ignore him, alright?"

You nodded. Taehyung grunted and smiled sleepily at you. Cute, you mused.

"Hey, do you wanna cuddle?"

The question was so unexpected and out of nowhere that your brain short-wired. With your mind being in such befuddlement, you could only manage a jumbled series of unfinished words, and in the end, settled for a confused sound instead of an answer, "I--Wh--Cuddle--M-Me?"

"Taehyung....," the blond's voice was low and reminding, making the addressed boy's lips pucker into his signature sulky pout.
"But Hobi hyung and Jimin went for dance class, and Jin hyung went to that business party thing..."

The soft sound of piano tinkled softly in the hallway, and Namjoon gestured to a door, "Yoongi hyung's in."

"Hyung, what I'm lacking is sleep, not desire to live."

You snorted and choked back a laugh. Taehyung gave you another endearing weak grin.

"Well then, it seems like there's no other choice."

"Right? So me and [F/N]--" Taehyung's grin slipped from his face when Namjoon stalked towards him resolutely, bag in hand, "Hyung, what are you doing?"

"What? You want someone to cuddle with. I can do that."

The ash grey haired male's expression morphed into a protesting frown, "No! Hyung, you always kick and punch and steal the whole bed in your sleep! I'd rather sleep alone!"

"Oh, c'mon, you big baby," the blond grinned somewhat evilly, as he pushed the younger male into the room, but not before turning towards you and motioned towards Jungkook's door, "Could you check on him later? Just make sure he doesn't combust into flames. He's pretty strung up because his laptop broke while he's working on his assignment."

You nodded and waved the two off with a soft 'good night' as the door closed, muffling Taehyung's disagreeing whines and an annoyed shush from Namjoon. Your cheeks still sizzled from the random suggestion from Taehyung, but remembering Namjoon's words, you stood in contemplation against your doorframe as you eyed Jungkook's bedroom's door.

Each day that passed, you honestly felt as though you were getting closer to all the boys, except him. You've had your shares of conversations, but they were all short and meaningless small talks. You didn't know why he avoided you when you barely interacted with him. More than once, you've offered to watch or accompany him play his games, hoping the setting would make him more comfortable, but he always had an excuse to reject your invitation. He seemed to be afraid of you, and would treat you as if you didn't exist, so you just naturally treated him with the same attitude after some point.

*Why should you bother?*

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Against your thoughts, two hours later, your fist knocked against the wooden door softly. Annoying Jungkook wasn't your purpose -- you just wanted to be a good friend (actually, were you even friends?) and check on him.

No answer.

You huffed. Think about it as a request from Namjoon. He was your friend. Hand slightly trembling, you knocked again, a little louder this time, suppressing your frayed nerves. You were doing this for Namjoon, because he was worried about his friend's wellbeing.

And well, you were partly concerned about Jungkook too, but he didn't need to know that.

No answer.
Just once more, you convinced yourself. If he didn't answer, well, then he didn't want to be disturbed. You could take a clue and leave him alone then. Or maybe he was just sleeping, in which case, you shouldn't disturb his probably much needed rest.

This time, your knuckles barely made contact against the polished dark surface when you heard a frustrated groan from inside and froze in place. Seconds later, the door jerked open, and you stood wide eyed as a pair of furious black eyes glared down at you, their white part bloodshot, with dark circles hanging beneath each of them, contrasting against his rather fair skin.

"Can't. You. Take. A. Hint?!" He stressed each words with a growl.

"Sorry, I just--"

"I'm trying to concentrate here, and do you think it would help if you keep disturbing me with those annoying knocks? Can't you just pretend I don't fucking exist; you were doing great at it!"

You flinched, but a small part of you brimmed with anger. He was the one who kept ignoring you first, wasn't he?

Jungkook seemed to see the fire lit in your eyes, for he clicked his tongue and continued on, his frustrations and stress clearly spilling out in each and every words he was saying to you, "You're so annoying, your voice is so damn annoying, your presence is annoying, just you being here in general annoys the hell out of me-- I don't understand how everyone tolerates you-- so meddlesome and such a naive and dumb busybody who--"

You pushed him as hard as you could and gritted your teeth as the tears fell. Whatever it was he wanted to say, it was stuck in his throat when he saw your pained expression, but you didn't bother to stay long enough to notice how his face dropped.

"Noona--"

You slammed your bedroom door just as hard as Jungkook did, locked the knob, and buried your face on your mountains of plushies as more and more tears fell. Seriously, why did you even bother?

To hell with Jeon Jungkook.

You're such a busybody, aren't you?

You sighed as you eyed your old laptop on your table, weighing your choices. No one in their right mind would do it. But you would. For whatever reason you didn't even know yourself.

Maybe Jungkook was right. You were such a people pleaser. Your self-worth came from the happiness of people around you. You care too much. Maybe that was why you always tried to help everyone, always thought of what they would prefer to have or do or wanted, rather than what you desired. Even though it would bite you in the ass almost every single time.
With one last sigh, you hoisted the battered gadget onto your arm and opened the door--

-- only to meet with a wide eyed Jungkook, whose hand was raised and poised to knock, looking like a rabbit caught in the headlights.

The two of you stared at each other in surprise for a few moment, neither expecting the turn of events. You managed to found your objective first, and not so sorriely thrusted the laptop onto the younger boy's chest, to which he accepted hurriedly with eyes still as wide as saucers.

"Wha--"

"Namjoon said your laptop broke and it made you really stressed," you barraged on coldly, "This is my old laptop. Still working fine. The specs for your broken laptop is probably better, but at least it's better than nothing."

".... Oh... Erm. Thanks...."

Both of you stood there awkwardly in silence until you opened your mouth, about to excuse yourself and slam the door on his face, when you heard a sniffle. Flustered, you looked up to see the boy crying, lips trembling and tears streaming down his handsome face as he clutched your laptop close to his chest.

"Ah. J-Jungkook--? Hey, uh, come on now, I'm not that angry, okay? I'm sorry..." Your hands awkwardly hover in the air, unsure of what they should do. You probably should comfort him, but how? Why was he even crying? What did you do??

"Why," he sniffled again, "--Why are you always so nice, noona?"

Your brain was fried. He had been shouting at you hours ago and now he was displaying such vulnerability in front of you? What is he? Why does everything he do is so confusing? Just what were you supposed to do?? Oh my god, if the other boys see this, what would they think about you???

"I--Well--Thanks? I... try...?"

"You try too hard," he brought a hand to wipe his tears, but many more streamed down, "You're still so nice to me even-- even after all I said. All I did. Why?"

"I... I don't know," you honestly said and laughed weakly, hoping it would help to ease the tension, "Maybe it's just like what you said; I'm a naive busybody?"

Jungkook rapidly shook his head, messy strands of black sticking on his forehead. Now that you were really looking at him, he was sweating all over, and his face was far too red just from crying. He was looking down at you, but you noticed how his eyes seemed to lose focus.

"Jungkook, are you okay? How long have you been standing here? Aren't you exhausted? Maybe you should lie down--"

"See, even now... Even now, you're being so kind, noona. You're just so nice. Gentle. Caring. Selfless.....," he continued on with a softer voice, and you thought you heard something that sounded like 'pretty' and 'cute', but the younger boy swayed on his feet, and you grabbed his arm in alarm.

Your other hand met his burning hot forehead, and your grip on his limb tighten in fear of him stumbling and collapsing on the floor at the feverish skin under your palm, "You need to lay down, Jungkook."
"No, no, I... have... I need to--"

"You can ask for extension to your lecturer, and if they don't give it noona will go and kick their ass, alright? You're going to bed, now."

He stubbornly continued to shake his head, but you stubbornly dragged him towards his open bedroom and tuck him behind the blanket despite his protests. After making sure he was fully tucked and has an easy access to his water bottle on the nightstand, you glanced at the empty corridor and ran through your next course of actions in your head. First of all, medicine.

"Okay, you stay here, and I'll get you a medicine for your fever and--"

"Noona, I'm sorry...."

You looked over the regretful, sickly looking boy, and rubbed your eyes in renewed determination.

".... You're forgiven..... dork."

"Noona?"

"Hmmm?"

"Um..... Wanna watch me play Overwatch?"

"......... Sure, why not."

※ ※ ※
eleven.

Chapter Notes

Just want to warn you guys, there's bits of gore in this chapter.

Also, I've never said this but hey, kudos and comments are always very much appreciated and if you do drop them, you can go on with your life knowing you've made this girl very happy :)

Enjoy!

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The boys knew something was off.

You've been going home way later or way earlier than your schedules were. That would've been fine, since they knew how serious you were when it came to your grades and classes in general. But whenever they saw you these days, you would have this pained look on your face, exhaustion radiating off your movements, and worst of all, your smiles were forced, unnatural, and fake.

The second giveaway was how you kept avoiding them. You had grown accustomed to spend most of your time with at least two of the boys around you, and while they knew you needed solitary times to yourself from time to time, you've been avoiding them far too often. There were no physical traces on your skin that they could see (fortunately for whoever or whatever was tormenting you), but it was obvious that you were deteriorating mentally, and none of them liked that fact. You looked best with a smile; a genuine, full smile with your pretty lips and perfect eyes.

Seokjin was the first to notice, being the most observant out of all of them. You started to constantly miss more and more breakfasts and dinners, and even when you sat down with them, you were mostly silent and unresponsive. Yoongi knew how many times you yawned in a day, and he noticed how it was gradually increasing by each days that passed, along with the tallying cups of coffee you downed as if they were plain water. Hoseok took a note of your dulled eyes and tired slouch of your body, how you wouldn't linger around whenever gaming nights were on (he loved being able to sit beside you, your thighs touching, your warmth on his shoulder, him playfully stealing your popcorn and poking your sides to hear those cute yelps), and how distracted you seemed even if he managed to get you 'help' him watch his dance practices.

They knew it wasn't a matter of you getting a significant other, oh no. They had continuously checked and verified that you didn't. And even if you did, they would make the poor thing learnt their place. Numerous forceful hits, several stabs on certain areas, and a few missing organs and limbs should do the trick. Your heart will heal with time-- they would delicately pick the shards and pieces and take a very good care of it as they restored them.

(Your so-called lover's wounds, is another story, though. They would have to make sure it could
never heal.)

Jimin called out to you merrily as you entered the common living room with your bag slung on your shoulder, and you gave him a tight lipped smile. He knew you were faking it, but he smiled back nonetheless. Two could play this charade.

"Hey, we're going to the arcade in three hours! You're coming along?"

"Come with us! Your class should be finished by then, right?" Taehyung piped in, and Jungkook beside him stared at you expectantly, with that adorable bottom lip biting habit of his as he waited for your answer.

You shook your head, "No, it's okay. I'm a bit tired, so I'll just go straight home after my class. Have fun."

"Oh... You sure?" The youngest out of the four of you asked sullenly. You wanted to kick yourself when you saw three kicked puppy faces staring back at you. But you didn't want to disappoint them, and you were running far too low on energy anyway.

"Maybe next time, guys," you looked away quickly and exited the front door in a hurry.

The three of them looked at each other, and a silent agreement was made between them as they moved with one goal in mind: to find a certain philosophy major.

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"Namjoon hyung!"

"I'm not going to help you prank anyone," said boy stated firmly, eyes stubbornly fixated on his textbook.

"You kids go play somewhere else," Seokjin waved them off with a gentle intonation in his voice, much like a mother's tone when scolding misbehaving children, before going back to stare at the papers of what seemed like a long essay in front of him.

The three looked at each other and unanimously Taehyung spoke for them, voice as cheery as usual as he maintained an innocent disposition, "That's not it, hyung. We want to know [F/N]'s location."

"Call or message her, then. How should I know?" The blond didn't even move, but the ash-grey haired male saw the slight twitch of the older male's finger as he shifted his hold on the thick wad of papers. Jin's eyes silently watched the interactions, his expression blank, his own set of paperworks forgotten.

"Oh, c'mon, hyung~ We know you have it!"

"Don't know what you're talking about."

At the continuous display of ignorance, Taehyung's smile slipped off as if it wasn't there in the first place.

"You put a tracker in the phone you gave her, didn't you?"
Namjoon stared at the three youngsters with an irritated scorn. Seokjin surveyed the two sides having a silent staredown, half amused and the other half uneasy, before finally deciding to step in, knowing how stubborn the younger boys were and the fearfulness of Namjoon's lash back when provoked.

"Why don't you just give it to them. We'll finally find out what's been bothering her. Besides, you know you could play a trick on [F/N], but not us. She's just too gullible, too trusting."

"Which makes her adorably precious," Jimin commented, grinning, "Hyung, we just want to know what's been troubling her."

Namjoon sighed in defeat. After a few seconds of hesitation, he opened his bag, rummaged inside and fished out a black smartphone, before offering it to the group, "...... Here. You lose or damage it and I swear to god, I will pull your nails off one by one."

"Thanks, hyung!" None of them seemed to actually heard what the older male said, as they immediately huddled together to stare at the screen of the smartphone, where a blue dot sat idly on one of the campus building.

"-- Kids."

The three halted in their tracks and looked over their shoulders at a certain brunette, whose eyes were uncharacteristically firm and glowering.

"If you run into any trouble you can't handle, give us a call, understood?"

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"Hey, can you help me with the assignment that teacher gave us today?"

You looked away, unable to meet your classmate's eyes, "Oh. Er... Again?"

He laughed, thinking you were starting a friendly banter. You frowned. Did you not look displeased enough? You didn't want to shout or make a scene, so how should you tell him you didn't want to 'help' him anymore? The all nighters you pulled in the cafe and library had been taking a toll on your health, both physically and mentally, and you were just so tired and fed up with the predicament you were in. You hated how weak you were, for continuously being unable to make clear of how you really didn't want him to bother you anymore.

"Yeah, well, you know how it is. I'm busy with physical therapy, gotta take care of my mom, and I just don't have time to do it, see?" He repeated the excuses you've heard hundreds of times before. It had been more than two weeks since this whole situation had repeated again and again, despite you trying your best rejecting his 'requests'.

How did things turn out this way, anyway? Oh, right.

When you saw how sad and alone he looked after the unfortunate accident which had befallen him, you thought you would assume the role of a kind, sympathetic classmate and tried to cheer him up. The one small act apparently made him open up to you, which would have been fine and all, if not for how often he asked for your 'help' with the assignments.

You stupid, naive people pleaser, you berated yourself as you felt that nauseous lurch in your
stomach and the sharp prickling in your chest.

"Y-You see, I'm kind of busy myse--"

"Oh, I'm almost late for my therapy! Talk to you later, and hey, thanks a bunch for your help!"

And just like that, he left you alone in the hallway within the crowd of people who couldn't care less about the inner self loathing acidity bubbling inside you.

You sighed in defeat. It seems like you wouldn't be able to go back on time again today.

"Aigoo... You did a bad number on this one," Taehyung eyed the bloodied and bruised skin in delight.

"It was well deserved," Jimin shrugged, his hand firmly gripping the wooden bat which was tapping softly against the ground, eyes focused on getting the bloodied gunk from under his nails, "Besides, Jungkookie got to him first. I only landed a few swings, and he broke easily enough."

"It was a good exercise," Jungkook commented airily with a brief glare to the whimpering mess on the ground, as he cleaned the blood smeared all over his hand and arms. Had he not stubbornly insisted to change from his usual light-colored attire before they headed out, the dark red stains would have stood prominent for everyone to see.

"Why did you just stand by and watch?" The eldest of the three prodded his same aged friend with the tip of his weapon, grinning, "Boring."

"Ah, stop that! Ew, blood!" Taehyung recoiled from the touch, pouting, "Can't you see I'm wearing bright colors? And it's Gucci!"

The youngest snorted and returned to their side, wiping off the excess water with the handkerchief Jimin offered to him as he, in turn, washed off the blood from the beautifully polished bat originating from the tap Jungkook had used.

"So? What do we do with this?"

Sensing eyes on him, the body on the ground moved, albeit in a very limited movement. The male whimpered in pain and mumbled something too soft for them to hear. None of them cared enough to try and acknowledge.

"The usual?"

Taehyung mussed his hair and sighed, "You're lucky we're not allowed to kill unless we have the
word. As much as we want to."

Beside him, Jungkook scoffed and muttered something that sounded like 'what a shame'. Few steps away, Jimin patted his stomach and called out cheerily as he looked over the phone, "Can we go for lunch now? I'm hungry! We'll bump to [F/N] if we go to that diner a few blocks down the street!"

"I want tonkatsu!" Jungkook agreed and walked away, eager to scarf down some food after a workout.

Taehyung laughed in agreement, but stayed and tilted his head as the male lying helplessly on the ground looked at them with fear in his eyes, his chest rising and sinking rapidly as more blood trickled down his wounds, between broken teeth and horridly split lips.

"Oh yeah, if you report us or alert anyone about this... We'll personally make sure you wished you died here and now. Also, you should bear in mind, there are four more people who wouldn't take it this kindly if they knew about you and what you did. So, it would be in your best interest to heed our words. Capiche?"

"And remember.....," Taehyung crouched, voice dropping to a whisper as he smiled down at the battered body, sweet and dark and deathly, "Stay away from our [F/N]."

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That night, just as you were about to start on your friend's assignment, a message came in from him, saying that you didn't need to do his assignment because he could do it himself. You had no idea what happened, but if he realized his mistake, then you were happy for him.

And so, you finally got your well deserved sleep.
I wonder if you would still sleep so soundly if you knew what happened?

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You watched silently in curious amusement.

The two hadn't seemed to pick up your presence by the doorway. You knew it was wrong to eavesdrop, but the door was open and you just happened to walk by when you heard Yoongi and Namjoon's voices talking about something in their mother language. Not to mention, you've never seen the former's room (you also never tried to, because you took the sentence on that small mat in front of his bedroom door quite seriously, lest you came face-to-face with Yoongi's wrath, oh no, thank you), which according to the others had been turned into a mini studio slash bedroom of some sort.

They were sitting on a chair each, the older male in a comfy leather desk chair and the other in a less grander one, while they peered over some papers, eyes scanning the words and hands busily moving the pen about. Three huge monitors stood upon two desk tables pushed into one, an electric keyboard sitting right below the bezel less screens, and whatever it was displayed on them, you could only perceive them as some kind of graph.

The two boys continued their debate, and you were just about to leave them to their discussion when Namjoon suddenly looked up and caught your gaze. To your relief, he sounded not that perturbed by your intrusion when he called your name, and even Yoongi smiled when he saw you fidgeting timidly by the door.

"Sorry, I was just curious on what you're working on," you reasoned honestly.

"I'm just helping Yoongi hyung with the lyrics in this new song of his," Namjoon explained, and you oooh-ed in awe.

"Wow. You're also a lyricist?" you asked in amazement. Then again, the revelation made a perfect sense; after all, Namjoon was an avid reader and always had his ways with words. You could picture him channeling that talent into music.

How was he so talented and handsome and yet so humble?

"No, no, it's just, you know.... Pieces of words just comes into my mind? And I just write them down," he smiled that endearing dimpled smile, slightly avoiding your eyes. Was he shy? You unconsciously smiled wider at the thought.

"Yeah, I'm pretty sure that's what a lyricist does, Joon."

This time, his eyes widen at the nickname you used, and he scrambled for words he could use to retort, something that sounded suave and maybe a little flirty, a set of comeback which would ignite...
your cheeks pink--

Yoongi’s eyes watched your interaction, calculative and silently observing.

Namjoon cleared his throat, "But Yoongi hyung taught me the basics. He’s the one who composes and strings up everything into an amazing piece of music."

You nodded sagely. From the lovely piano you’ve heard occasionally in the dorm and the amount of music majors who praised and spoke his name with high regard, you’ve long since fully ascertained that the boy was an amazing composer, "Well, that goes without saying. Hobi showed me one of his performance where he used the music Yoongi composed, and it was breathtaking!"

"Well, naturally," the musician smirked pridefully at your praise and motioned for you to come in, "Want to listen to what I'm working on now?"

You gaped. Even the blond stared at his friend in surprise. "Can I??" you asked in astonishment, unsure if he was just joking with you (unlikely, but still) or whether he really meant it (even though you’ve heard from the boys how he only lets a few selected people to listen to an unfinished piece of his creations).

"Come in and shut the door before I changed my mind."

Upon you entering, he immediately stood up and pointed at his chair to you as he moved aside to give you a clear path. You knew what he meant, and the gesture was lovely, but you were a guest and you didn't feel like you deserved the grandiose and expensive looking seat.

Namjoon sensed the silent debate in your mind and chuckled, "Just sit down, [F/N]. We don't bite. Promise."

Your cheeks flushed, you decided to obey for now and sat on the leather chair. It felt ten times comfier than your own humble desk chair, so you relaxed involuntarily, sinking into the comfy slope.

That is, until Yoongi climbed on the armrest and slung a hand over the top of the headrest, his other hand placed on the mouse over his vast desk. Add this with Namjoon clumsily bumping your chair together as he scooted closer and leaned sideways to your side as he stared at the screens, the close proximity causing you to unconsciously breathe in his cologne whenever you inhaled.

You gulped nervously and tried your best to focus on the huge monitors and not at the awfully close presences on your sides.

"The lyrics aren’t done yet, and some of the melody needs a slight tweak, but it’s nearing completion," the teal haired musician eyed you with an excited expression on his face, mirroring the amount of affection he had always addressed anything related to the field he was religiously pursuing on, "If you could give a honest opinion on it, I would appreciate it."

"I mean, I can only say whether I enjoyed the song or not, so don’t expect too much of, um, constructive criticism or the like...."

"Fine with me," Yoongi shrugged and handed you a pair of over ear headphones, which you accepted carefully and slipped over your head.

And he clicked play.
You didn't know what to say.

"Well?" Yoongi asked you as soon as you took off his headphones. You were too busy trying to string sentences in your head, you didn’t notice the curious gaze from Namjoon, and the worried Yoongi waiting for your verdict.

"I... That....... Wow," you exhaled a breath you didn’t knew you held, "Wow. That's definitely going to my playlist when it's done."

The answer brought a gummy smile from Yoongi and a soft chuckle from Namjoon. You grinned sheepishly and sank back onto the leather covered headrest. The music left you feeling giddy and probably just as excited as the two boys.

"Great. I'll make sure to give you a copy when it's done."

"What? No! I want to buy it!"

The bright haired boy laughed and patted the top of your head gently, "It's fine. Think of it as a reward for participating in the creation of this song. Sounds fair enough?"

"How am I counted as 'participating' when all I've done is sit and listen to it??"

"You did a lot more, you just didn't know it," Namjoon chided, his signature dimpled smile present on his face. You looked at him in confusion, unable to understand what he meant by that. Then again, you weren't sure what Namjoon meant most of the time when he got all deep and serious and philosophical.

Deciding to not pursue the topic further, your eyes caught the sheet of papers with a lot of scribbles in Korean hangul which you couldn't read, and automatically voiced out the question that struck you.

"What's the song about?"

Both of the males exchanged a brief glance for a second before fixing them at you. Maybe it was the cooling air conditioner, but you felt a strange chill run down your back when Yoongi replied, a certain calmness and underlying ominousness in his voice,

"It's about a boy who's falling into temptation."
Kiss me on the lip, lips

This is a secret between the two of us

I am addicted to the prison that is you

I cannot worship

Anyone else besides you

I knowingly drank from the poisoned chalice

My blood, sweat, and tears

My last dance

Take it all

My blood, sweat, and tears

My cold breath

Take it all

All

I want you a lot, a lot, a lot, a lot
thirteen.

Chapter Notes

Actually wanted to post this last night but I couldn't log in to ao3 for some reason :x
I can't seem to reply to a comment too. I keep getting error "archiveofourown.org is currently unable to handle this request. HTTP ERROR 500". Honorable ao3 admin, you've got a bug in your codes!

※ ※ ※

One particular dinner, Seokjin announced that he needed people to help him with some grocery shopping.
You were honestly unsure why he needed to do so-- their stay was nearly ending (and you were sad and kind of lonely, but you were determined to savour these moments until the end) and there shouldn't be any need to restock the pantry. But since this was Seokjin, maybe he wanted to make sure you would have something to eat even after they were gone. Yep. That sounded like him, alright, and that was really sweet of him.

While the boys who managed to attend dinner tonight groaned and threw excuses to not participate in the chore, you knew your schedule was free, and you wouldn't mind to spend time with Jin, so you casually said that you'll help. In response, he gave you an appreciative smile, and you felt like a little sister who had received a stamp of approval from her admirable older brother. It left you feeling warm and giddy, and it distracted you from the sudden influx of eagerness to help which had overtaken the table.

"I'll go!" Jimin announced, one arm raised in the air, barely missing Taehyung who was sitting beside him and had his mouth bulging full from his spoonful of food.

"Me three!" Hoseok chirped right after, waving his arms energetically from his seat to prove his point, "I need to buy some stuff, anyway!"

"That's not fair!! I also--"

"Hi wan hwo hom hoo!"

"Okay, okay, everybody settle down. Jungkook, lower your voice, you will stop yelling like a barbarian on my dinner table. Hoseok, stop waving your hands around before you slap anyone on their face. Jimin-- be careful with your hand, please. Taehyung, swallow first, or you're going to choke, Namjoon isn't here to perform Heimlich maneuver and I do not fancy arranging a funeral anytime soon. Now," Seokjin sighed, "I don't want any of you skipping class for this. Who's free tomorrow afternoon?"

All of the boys in the table raised their hands.

Jin facepalmed.
"Jungkook-ah, you have that programming class right after lunch time. Taehyungie, you have that group meeting for the whole day for your research assignment you said due the day after tomorrow. Am I right, or am I right?"

You giggled. Watching the eldest scold the younger boys were always a cute scene to see. Especially coupled with the fact how adorable Seokjin looked whenever he nagged and grumbled. The pouty look suited him somehow.

"..... Yes, mom," Jungkook scoffed and sullenly picked on his food. Taehyung threw a pout and continued back to chewing his food, even though it was clear that he was brooding.

"So we're allowed to go?" Hoseok asked, his legs jittery beneath the table as he looked between you, Seokjin, and Jimin, literally vibrating with excitement.

"Well, I suppose you two are the best candidate I could ask for...."

"Yay!" Jimin cheered and high fived Hoseok before turning towards you with two palms raised, expecting you to do the same gesture.

You clapped your hands with his and felt his fingers nearly enclosing your hand as you pulled back.

※ ※ ※

"Oh my god, why is it so hot today??"

You would've replied in agreement and donated your own complaints about the overly sunny and bright weather, but you didn't really have the energy, and only managed a soft grunt at Hoseok's protest.

The temperature was amazingly high this afternoon, and as soon as your small group exited the dorm, you knew you should've suggested to take a bus or something. Yes, walking could be a good exercise, but you were quite sure walking under such a particularly fiery sun like today was going to cook your brain.

"You okay?" Seokjin asked worriedly, even though he was sweating bullets himself, dark brown hair sticking on his forehead, "Where is Jimin, I swear, if he doesn't come back within a minute...."

Just then, you spotted the male with bright pink tuft of hair jogging towards you, "I'm back!" The cheery boy approached your small group, eyes crinkling.

"Finally! Can we move on? I'm dying! The sun is too much!" Hoseok, the literal sunshine in your life, ironically said.

As your group started to walk, you felt the sun's burning rays suddenly stopped sizzling the surface of your sweaty skin. Looking up and then to your right, you were greeted with a grinning Jimin, his hands holding up a parasol above the both of your heads, preventing the onslaught of the sun's deathly beam. You smiled back at him in gratefulness.

"You went to get that for us?"

"Mhm! I saw how you were withering away under the big bad sun, and we can't have that!" He eyed the instrument and then back down at you with a gentle smile, "It's cute, right? It has you all over it."

You squinted your eyes at the light colored parasol, ".... Those are flowers, Jimin."
"I know."

Hopefully your cheeks were already flushed red from the heat, he wouldn't be able to see your blush. But judging from the way he was smiling and giggling mischievously, he probably knew.

Since your group had agreed on not wanting to lug around heavy plastic bags filled with groceries, you had all decided to tag along for Hoseok’s errands first. Apparently he needed an outfit for his next performance, and so the four of you trudged in and out several clothing stores so many times you lost count.

Helping Hoseok with his outfits had been really fun, though. He looked amazingly good in every single clothes he tried out, it was almost ridiculous. The dancer seemed very particular about fashion, however, and took the whole process seriously than any one of you.

You heard the cheerful call of your name, and turned around to see Hoseok grinning at you with a new set of clothes, "How about this one?"

He was dressed to kill, was the first thought you had. You also wondered how it was possible for someone to look this good. A plain long sleeved white shirt and skinny black pants were an ordinary outfit anyone could wear. But when Hoseok wore them, it looked like the style was made for him.

You imagined him dancing with the outfit.

You could somehow sympathize with his fangirls who would be in the audience.

Then again, all of the boys looked extraordinarily handsome. If it wasn't for other people who stared at them as they walked pass, you would've thought your mind had went crazy and conjured seven imaginary boys out of all the stress you had.

"What was the song you're using for the dance again?"

"Ah, Yoongi hyung's new album, the first track."

Ten minutes later, you stepped outside the store, with Hoseok carrying his new clothes in a rather fancy and minimalistic bag, and you debating internally on how you might become an indirect cause for other girls' mental ovaries exploding.

"Oh, look, it's your favorite bubble tea store!" Jimin chirped as you wandered under a tree, while waiting for Seokjin to book an Uber to get all of you to the supermarket.

"Do you want one, Angel?" Hoseok's eyes light up as he eyed the small store and your eager gaze. He recited your favorite drink as a question, which was very much desirable in this heat.

Before you could answer, Seokjin was already walking towards the quaint stall, wallet at ready.
Jimin and Hoseok followed after telling you to stay, presumably to look at the menu and order their own drinks. You obediently waited under the shade and fanned your face with your hand. The hot air did little to ease your sweating.

They've been treating you like a princess today, and while half of you felt guilty for making them fuss over you, another half actually enjoyed the treatment. No boys had ever treated you this gentle and made you feel like you mattered so much, and now there were three of them, coddling you and escorting you whenever you go, always so attentive and caring and kind.

Any girl would kill to be in your place right now, judging from the dreamy stares and open mouthed gawks you've seen countless times when your small group passed by.

"H-Hi, excuse me?"

You were in a sunny mood from the care and attention you kept getting for the past few hours, and so you smiled at the nervous looking pair of girls. They were petite and cute, dressed in a lovely dress you would've loved to wear yourself-- definitely the kind of girls most boys would love to have as a girlfriend. Compared to them, your jeans and plain shirt was quite dreary, you thought in realization.

"Uhm... Sorry, the boys-- are they your friends? Could you perhaps, you know--"

"--maybe give us their number, or..."

"Oh," you awkwardly folded your hands across your abdomen. They were very brave for asking, you would give them that. But a part of you thought it was kind of unethical for you, of all people, to tell them what they wanted to hear, "I mean, that's not really my place to disclose such a private information...."

"Please? Help a girl out here?" One of them pouted and begged, an act which would melt any male's heart, but you didn't falter. The boys were your precious friends and they deserved the best, not some random girl who was attracted to their face and knew nothing about them.

Okay, maybe you were a little bit jealous.

"I'm sorry--"

"Hey, c'mon, the Uber will be here in five minutes, we gotta go to the pickup point," Hoseok's hand grabbed yours, and you let him drag you back towards the other two males. He handed you your drink and led you away from the girls with his hand in your back as he sipped his own drink.

You took one last glance backwards to see the two young adults staring at your group with longing and envy.
"Could we pleeeeeease buy some Sprite? Hyung?? Just one pack???

"Okay, fine, just chuck it in...."

Hoseok, as per usual, did a small victory dance as he threw the huge bottle onto the cart. Jimin stepped closer towards you and whispered softly in amusement, "You know, I noticed whenever you come along, Jin hyung becomes more lenient on what we buy."

You were about to retort back with a disbelieving comment, but was beaten by Seokjin who was reading aloud from the list on his hand.

"Next one is... Jimin-ah, Hoseok-ah, go get some meat."

"How many?"

"A lot."

The two obediently sauntered over to the cold freezer display, excited about the prospect of buying the delicious raw ingredient. You waited for the brunette to tell you what you needed to fetch, but instead he took his eyes from his list and motioned towards the snacks aisle.

"Hey, feel free to buy anything you want too, okay? There's no need for you to hold back. What do you want? Snacks? Chocolates? Ice cream?"

You were so tempted to say yes. But with what little allowance you have from your kind relatives and the small part time jobs you took last month, you had barely anything left after paying your stupid tuition.

"If it's about the money, I've told you, don't worry about it," as if knowing your thoughts, the older male reminded you as he patted your head, "Or do you want me to pick it up for you? Hmmm?"

"But I feel bad," you confessed, "You do this everytime. You're working and studying full time, Seokjin. I can't just leech off you!"

He laughed at that, seemingingly finding your protest irrelevant, "I'd rather think of it as I'm spoiling you."

".... You think I'm a little kid, don't you...." you sighed at the genuine smile he directed towards you.

"Oh, far from it, princess."

You froze on your feet, feeling your heart skip and beating a beat faster. But the male had looked away from your bewildered expression and sauntered over to the nearby snacks aisle, already gathering some in his arms with record speed.

By the time you all checked out from the supermarket, your favorite snacks was safely packed in one of the bags Seokjin himself was carrying.

Was it just you or were the boys being a lot more affectionate and kind of flirty today?

※ ※ ※
fourteen.

Chapter Notes

The BBMA goes live on Monday 8am here.... Darn it. But anyway! I'm stoked to see our boys perform!!! They're gonna be amazing!!!

Thanks for all the kudos and comments, by the way! I'll be replying them at a later date, sorry about that :x

※ ※ ※

"Okay, that was kind of fun," you admitted as you exited the building, Taehyung and Jungkook flanking your sides.

"Right? Right??" Taehyung beamed, grinning and wiggling his eyebrows, "See, you have the most fun when we're spending time together!"

You rolled your eyes and pinched his arm, effectively stopping him from continuously poking your sides to emphasize his point. He had been whining and asking you to hang out with him ever since you, Seokjin, Hoseok, and Jimin hung out without him on that grocery shopping trip.

It's not fair, he said. I could have made the trip a hundred times more fun, he said.

And so you obliged, just for getting him off your back. It was a little annoying, how obnoxious and envious he was about the whole thing, but you remembered how close their flight date back to Korea was, and you persuaded yourself to understand. Taehyung didn't take goodbyes that well, you knew that. You've seen him cry and literally threw a tantrum for a week when he visited the regular dog shelter in the neighborhood and found out that the puppy he adored had been adopted. Thankfully, the dog was returned, and his sour mood and glum whines ceased.

"Yeah, that was pretty fun," Jungkook commented, full on grinning.

And this boy. He was just as restless as Taehyung, dutifully asking you to sit down and play with him, asking you questions about his assignments, and generally vying for your attention like a child, although he didn't follow you everywhere like the former did. Still, you've never seen him so attention-seeking, and so when he jumped on the opportunity to tag alongside you and the art major's outing, you didn't deny him.

"--Especially with how freaked out that guy was."

"When I told him I painted his favorite painting? Yeah, that was gold," Taehyung laughed mischievously, "Just because I knew some techniques in oil paintings, he fell, hook and sinker!"

"I still think that was a little mean," you sighed and eyed the two with scolding eyes, "He seemed really genuine, you know."

Taehyung waved his hand dismissively, "Not if he really likes the painting, no. Where should we go
next? Are you hungry?"

You shrugged, "I could do with some snacks."

Jungkook perked up at this, and, after reconfirming your preferred food and drink of choice, pointed to a general direction on your left, "I know of a place you'll like, noona! Let's go for a bite!"

"Alright, guide the way," you smiled fondly at the fact of how Jungkook remembered your tastebuds. He might not look like it, but he could be quite attentive at times.

"Is it your favorite Iron Man themed cafe, Jungkookie~?" The ash grey haired male giggled, tone obviously teasing.

"That was one time!!" Jungkook hissed, cheeks dusted pink.

You glanced back and forth between the two. This was something you've never heard before, even though you did know that Jungkook was a huge fan of the character, "What cafe? What happened?"

"His inner.... ah, how should I put it? Fanboy? Yeah, his inner fanboy kind of got out of control," Taehyung giggled, his hand delving onto his pocket to fetch his phone, "Wait, I have photos."

"Wha-- Yah, Kim Taehyung!"

"Hey, I'm older than you!"

"You're the one who went all sparkly eyed when we came to that anime café!"

"Yeah, well, anime are awesome."

"You-- You're shameless."

You laughed at their banter. The two of them combined would always seem to age both of them younger by a few years, but they were entertaining to watch. It was similar to babysitting kids, you mused as you watched the older boy lunge at the other in retaliation. Jungkook yelped and laughed when Taehyung poked and tickled his sides, but fought back with his own set of fingers. Soon enough they were running all over the place as they chased each other, all the while laughing and taunting.

And you would've just smiled and let them be, if not for how the two seemingly started to move towards the side of the sidewalk as they tried to out-tickle each other, unaware of the close traffic they were unconsciously inching towards.

"Taehyung, Jungkook!" You called out in warning, starting to step towards the two, but they were quite far by now, too caught up in their silly little 'war'.

"He started it!" Jungkook yelled back, obviously thinking you were scolding them to stop fooling around because they were being childish. Taehyung yelled back something, but was cut by the younger boy's quick poke to his side.

"Kim Taehyung, Jeon Jungkook!!" You yelled, probably the loudest you've yelled ever since you became an adult.

They seemed to notice the urgency in your voice and stilled, but that didn't stop the bike whose path they just cut abruptly while they were having their play fight. The girl on top of the bicycle tried her best to turn, but the sharp movement made her lost her balance, and she toppled to the pavement with
a panicked yelp.

You arrived on their side mere seconds later and pushed the boys away as the woman sitting up on the concrete glared at the two, who seemed far too shocked to apologize.

"I am so sorry! My friends didn't pay attention to their surroundings, and I--"

"Just... Be careful next time. Geez. That scared me to death."

"Of course! I'll be sure to reprimand them--" you turned to the two and glared, "Do you not have anything to say?"

"Sorry." The pair mumbled, apologetic and a little unnerved by your anger. You've never been actually angry towards Taehyung before, and as for Jungkook, he didn't know you could be this angry.

"Watch where you walk, you two," the woman shook her head as she dusted off her clothes and climbed her bike back, waving off your continuous apologies, "Luckily you didn't stumble down the road."

When she finally left, it took all willpower in you not to break down right then and there. You were angry, at yourself because you should've known not to allow them to continue with their little squabble, and at the two of them, for not being mature enough to know that they should've thought about their actions more before they acted. But most of all, you felt scared. Scared of what could have had happened. Scared of them getting hurt. Scared to be the one who witnessed it and allowing it to happen.

And then before you could stop yourself, you were shouting at them. A silly picture for the bystanders, for sure, a girl scolding two tall, grown up males, but you didn't care. Taehyung and Jungkook just stood there, looking at you in shock at first, and as the words left your mouth, their expression changed to guilt and remorse, gaze fallen down to stare at the sidewalk.

"--And you were very immature! You heard what she said? Because it was true!! You're lucky it was just a bike and you got off with nothing, but what if that wasn't the case?! What if it was a busy traffic you stumbled onto, what if it was a car that hit you, what if it was a heavier vehicle, how do you think that would make me feel, how'd you think the others would feel?! You're both grown men, you know better than being a child in public spaces, you nitwits, you fools, you morons, you--you!!"

Both males slowly looked up at you, looking like kicked puppies. Not that you could see their heartbroken looks, since halfway through your scolding, you had broken down in tears. Your anger was dissipating, worry taking its place and causing a wave of salty tears run down your flushed cheeks.

Taehyung was sad to see your tears, but also happy to see he could invoke such emotion out of you. It meant that he actually mattered to you. To him, it meant that you needed him, it meant that you would be sad if he got hurt, and he wasn't the only one who felt that way. He also noticed how tears looked beautiful on you, but said nothing, because he knew Jin didn't like it when he spoke while he was scolding them, so he assumed you wouldn't either.

Jungkook on the other hand, was horrified to see your tears, because this was the second time he made you cry, and he hated himself for it. He promised himself to never make you cry anymore, and the insecurity he had been keeping at bay latched back to his heart. But knowing that you cried because you were worried about them-- about him, it made him feel all warm and giddy inside.
"I'm sorry....."

"I'm sorry, noona, it won't happen again...." 

You sniffled and started to dry your tears with the long sleeve of your cardigan, your bangs covering your face as you looked away. They stayed on their place silently all the while. When you were done, you said nothing, but you grabbed their arms and pulled them along. They obediently followed in silence.

After he sensed that you were calm enough, Jungkook spoke, soft and careful, yet the words reached your ears nonetheless.

"Do you still like us, noona?"

"..... No. Idiots."

They grinned. Both knew you didn't mean it, because your grip on their hands tightened, and you were mumbling under your breath about 'stupid dorks' and 'lucky you're adorable' as if you didn't want them to hear you. Plus, you were avoiding their eyes with that adorable blush on your cheeks.

That was enough for them.

* * *

* * *

For now.
fifteen.

Chapter Notes

Well. You've probably been waiting for this, so...... Here it is..... Enjoy ;)

**Warning:** Things will get darker from here on out. If you can't handle triggering situations, please don't proceed.

※ ※ ※

You stared at the calendar on your phone screen.

Two months.

Tomorrow, it will be two months. Two whole months since you had to pick the boys from the airport. Tomorrow, your friends will return back to their home country. Time passed by so fast, and you were torn between feeling happy (because you will soon have the whole dorm all to yourself again, but honestly you don't know if that was a good thing) or sad (because it meant that you wouldn't be able to interact with the boys directly on a daily basis anymore).

You finally knew why Seokjin insisted on getting all those groceries. The boys had planned a barbecue party tonight, and they surprised you with it as soon as you came back from your evening class, half panting and worried to death because Taehyung had called you and sounded so afraid when he said Jimin had accidentally ingested a mouthful of shampoo as a result of his and Jungkook's prank.

And of course you believed him. Damn his extraordinary acting skill. You could've sworn he was definitely *crying* when he was on the phone with you.

Yet there he was, smiling that boxy grin of his and holding a party popper as if he didn't almost send you into a panic attack.

You sat him down on his knees on the floor, and gave him a full ten minutes lecture before Jimin took pity on his friend and dragged you to enjoy the party they had set up, and you were weak to the pink haired male's puppy eyes and the mouth watering smell of grilled food, so you relented.

Almost immediately after you got your plate, Seokjin piled it in with mountains of meat and vegetables, nagging about how you must have been so hungry and how the younger kids should've thought of a better excuse.

You listened to Namjoon and Hoseok catching up with each other and exchanging playful banter, forgave Taehyung and fed him a series of meat after you've had enough of him following you around everywhere with his endearing apologies and constant pouting, chilled with Yoongi on the garden bench to take a breather from all the food you had forced down your belly, and watched Jungkook as he danced and fooled around and continued to effortlessly entertain you and Jimin (who had to grab your shoulder for support from all the laughing).
By the time the outdoor party ended and the grill had cooled down, you lot had vacated inside into the common room. Your belly was full to its maximum capacity, your cheeks hurt from laughing, and you were feeling content as you sank into your favorite armchair. The boys sat huddled on the sofa and on the floor, mostly dozing off as they stared into their phones or nothingness.

*I'll definitely miss this a lot*, you thought sadly. Especially with the upcoming holiday coming up, which meant you would be spending more time in the dorm. The silent, empty, and seven-boys-less dorm.

And then the tranquility was broken by one of the mood makers of the group, his footsteps loud as he scurried onto your side with a grin and a thin white rectangular object on his hand. Suddenly your other dorm mates seemed alert, and you could sense how some of them tried their best to contain their excitement as they watched you.

He giggled and sang your name with that melodic and yet mischievous voice of his, making you sit straighter and watch him in curious expectation.

"Guess what this is!"

".... An envelope?"

"Yes, but what's inside the envelope?" Taehyung wiggled his eyebrows. The excessive behavior urged you to play along with him, but you chose the sarcastic option just for the fun in teasing your friend.

"........ Papers, I would imagine."

Yoongi snorted.

Taehyung pouted and stopped flailing his arms, "You've been hanging out with Yoongi hyung too much."

You chuckled and took the unsealed, pristine white envelope, reaching inside and expecting a letter directed to you. Seven pairs of eyes watched you as you unfolded the paper, your eyes skimming over the printed content.

It does have your name, but it definitely wasn't a letter.

Eyes widened in disbelief and mouth agape, you glanced back and forth at the thin material in your hands and the boys, expecting them to laugh and told you that it was a prank of some sort. But it wasn't, and you knew they were serious because they were looking at you expectantly, as if judging and waiting for your reaction.

"I--This--What is this??" You spluttered.

"What do you mean, 'what', it's a plane ticket, child," Seokjin laughed at the shock in your face.

"You're going with us back home! Surprise!" Hoseok cheered with open arms, a massive smile on his face as he beamed at you endearingly. Touched and with tears brimming in your eyes, your palms covered your lower half of your face as the boys cheered and celebrated at the announcement.

"But-- I-- You guys-- Oh my god!"

"We're going to take you around the city as soon as we land, noona! You'll love it!" Jungkook beamed, fully grinning that adorable smile of his.
You had to choke back tears. You would take a few more days of being with the boys in a foreign country you knew nothing about than being back here, all depressed and lonely after saying goodbye to them at the airport. This way, maybe it wouldn't be so bad-- you could maybe get a little used to Korea, and you'd know where and how to go when you want to visit them, provided the time and money allowed you to, in the future. That's right, the next holiday, maybe you could even gather enough money to go on a surprise visit! Thinking about all these prospects made you giddy. Knowing that the boys valued you just as much how you valued them made you ecstatic.

"Thank you...... You're all just-- you're all so kind to me."

"Nonsense! You're so important to us, so of course we would want to do this!" Jimin smiled, eyes crinkling and winking playfully at you.

Chuckling and with cheeks still hurting from smiling, you were halfway through tucking in the ticket back onto its container when you realized something. Pulling them out again, your eyes skimmed all over the page, scanning for the details you couldn't manage to find. Frowning, you lifted your eyes to the boys, who was still watching you with various expressions.

"What's wrong? Did I get the details of your information wrong?" Namjoon perked from his place on the floor, eyes widened in attention.

"No, but--" you stopped again. Your eyes read over the information on the paper, frown deepening.

_How did Namjoon know your particulars?_

Name and date of birth, you might have told before. But your passport number, expiration date, and all of the other details? You've definitely never told anyone before....

"What's wrong, then?" Jimin asked curiously.

"Um, well," you composed yourself despite the uneasiness in your stomach, "I, um, I realized there's no return ticket," you flipped the page to its back and front, "Oh, I guess I should pay for the return ticket myself, at the very least--"

"What are you talking about?" Yoongi cut, looking as blank as ever, with the kind of face he always had on whenever he was confused,

"You're never returning here, so you don't need one."

You stared at the boys, again, expecting them to laugh the sentence off, but they all stared back at you with the same expecting eyes. No one seemed to think the sentence was odd or awkward or didn't make any sense as you did.

_But that's outrageous._

You were suddenly too aware of the dark look which had overtaken Namjoon and Yoongi's features. They seemed to sense your rejection and how the idea didn't seem to connect with you as it with them. An awkward laugh escaped your lips as you scratched your neck nervously. The bright and happy atmosphere was gone, and you felt a chill running down your back at the sudden change.

Why were they being so weird about this?
"W-Well, I mean, I'm certainly not going to transfer to Korean university, alright? And living over there-- I can't even imagine that! My home is here, this is my life, as boring as it is--"

"You said you were going to stay with us," Taehyung said, staring right at you. When you looked at him, his face was strangely devoid.

Did you? Maybe you did say something of the sort, but you probably didn't mean it like that. Why would they interpret it that way?

"I meant that I will be keeping in touch...," you tried to explain and looked at the older boys for help, but even Seokjin had a frown on his face. Your frown deepened. Seriously, why were they acting like this?

"Guys. Come on. We all have our own lives. You're going back to Korea, and I'm going to stay here, graduat with my degree, go off to work in a office like everybody else, get married, get old, I dunno, that's just how it is"

"Marry? Marry who?" Jungkook's eyes widen, and it would've been as adorable as ever if not for the accompaniment scowl marring his expression, "Noona, you have a boyfriend?"

You didn't even get a chance to answer. The sweet smell of chemicals overtook your senses, halting your senses and sapping your strength. Someone gracefully held your limp body as you dazedly fall backwards, legs feeling like jelly and arms unable to struggle. Before you could really realize what had just happened, your eyes fluttered shut, and a drug enhanced sleep embraced you.

Just where did you go

※※※
sixteen.

Chapter Notes

I have a confession to make.

Every time the hits and kudos and inbox count increases, my heart does this lil flip and splat and squeeze in my chest. You don't understand how this feels. I'm in pain and yet I'm so grateful and giddy to see people cared enough to drop a kudo or a comment. Like seriously you could just drop a '♡' in the comment and I'd still cry from happiness. Acknowledgement, in any form, even if it's small, means so much to writers. Thank you, so so much, for acknowledging this series. I purple y'all ♥

Hope you'll enjoy this chapter and the ones to come!

**WARNING:** Description of panic attack.


Your body felt heavy.

It was the kind of waking up where you felt as if you've slept for years. Your eyelids were glued together, and your limbs felt paralyzed. You could feel your hair tickling your ears, and slowly shifted your head to remove the sensation. A soft gasp and an excited giggle entered your ears and tugged at your memory.

The familiarity of the voice made you feel safe, and yet you knew at the back of your head that something was terribly wrong.

Soft touches brushed through your hair and caressed your scalp. Almost automatically, you sighed and instinctively leaned towards the comforting warmth. A pleased hum followed, and another set of arms circled your waist.

"See, she loves me more~"

"That's not fair, I want to cuddle too..."

You pried your eyes open and stared at the blurry world. Blinking a few times, you finally managed to clear your vision, and only when the angelic face came into your view, realization sunk of how you were lying in bed with your friend.

*You don't just lie in bed with your male gendered friend, no matter how ethereal they looked.*

The hands grabbed your cheeks before you could push yourself away, and your eyes widened in fright and shock and various other emotions when Taehyung leaned in and nuzzled your noses together. Being groggy and confused and stuck between a pair of bodies, you could only gape silently as another familiar voice sighed and nuzzled onto your back, fingers drumming lightly against your waist.
It was then your mind and body caught up with what was happening, and out of instinct you jolted upwards before scrambling to climb out from the bed and falling onto the carpeted floor. The uncomfortable pain from landing on your wrist and knees made you wince, but you stayed stuck to the nearest wall, eyes opened wider than usual, all senses alert.

The two boys stared at you in interest from their lying down place after sitting up simultaneously, all smiles.

Taehyung pouted as he called out your name, an expression you would've found endearing, but now, you found yourself unaffected. "Sorry, did we shock you?"

"We're sorry, but you looked so cute, all sleepy and relaxed!" Jimin tried to bargain, but you were far too confused and taken in by the realization that you were in an unfamiliar place.

"Wha... Where..." You looked around the room, speechless. It was definitely not your dorm room. This room was minimalistic, yet had a sophisticated feel to it. Cozy, with soft carpet that sank your feet and king sized bed which managed to fit three grown adults with no problem. It was the kind of room you've seen in interior magazines and dreamt to have; and here you are now. Rather than being comfortable and wanting to relax on the plush armchair and massive collections of books, the feeling of being trapped ensnared you. Your muddled mind struggled to try and remember what had happened.

You had a small farewell party with the boys. You remembered that part. Taehyung told you they had a surprise for you. Yes, that happened too, and then...

And then?

Your hand clamped over your mouth, your body shaking as the memory came back. The two males continued to smile at you brightly, and you didn't want to believe that they did it-- the group of kind, caring, harmless--

No. No. There had to be an explanation for... for whatever it was happening here.

"Don't be so nervous! Come here, let's cuddle!" Taehyung beamed with open arms.

"No," you found your voice tight and in a higher pitch than usual, "I need to understand what-- what's happening, where are we, what did you do to me-- everything. You need to explain everything!"

"Oh, don't be scared, [F/N]! Come sit down, and we'll tell you whatever you want to know, alright?" Jimin gently tried to assure you, sliding to the floor from his place on the edge of the bed and patting the space between them. You watched the two with much apprehension and shook you head mutely.

The sudden blank expression which had taken over Taehyung's previously excited smile made you flinch and push your back further onto the solid wall behind you.

"Why are you acting like this, [F/N]? I don't like it."

Before this, you couldn't have imagined of being scared of Taehyung. He was sweet, sometimes a tad clueless and childish, and yes, he had mood swings from time to time. But you've never seen him look so menacing. He looked calm, and he wasn't shouting or anything close to that; in fact his voice was lower, softer, but it was as if you've been cut with an ice cold knife.
"Now, now, I'm sure she's just confused, and she's not so used to us being openly affectionate yet, isn't that right, [F/N]?

You didn't even answer out of shock and fear, but it seemed like they took your silence as a yes, because Taehyung's smile settled back on his face.

"I guess that makes sense. I thought [F/N] didn't like me, but that's a ridiculous thought, now, isn't it?"

"Of course, she loves us, don't you, [F/N]?"

You recoiled, wholeheartedly wishing the floor below you would just suddenly open and swallow you whole. Why were they doing this? They were far too clingy, and... love? What kind of fever dream were you having? How was this the Jimin and Taehyung you knew?

"Why am I here? Where is this?!"

"Well, if you remember, we bought you a ticket, and ta-dah! You're now in Korea! And this is our house!"

Your brain processed each word slower than usual in your state of confusion and shock. Eventually however, the pieces started to click together.

They had brought you back to their house in a foreign country you knew almost nothing about, you had no idea how the hell they managed to do it, and all of this happened without your consent.

You felt your breath starting to shorten in panic. In a speed you didn't know you had, you pushed yourself up and sprinted towards the door, cheering inwardly when you found it open, and scurried into the small hallway with numerous doors. Seeing the flight of stairs, you deduced you were on the second floor. Desperately looking for an exit, you climbed down the stairs in record speed, almost tumbling down on the last few steps. The place was massive and spacious, but you managed to locate the living room and scouted for the front door. But before you managed to, you saw a familiar mint blue strands of hair.

Yoongi, who was previously sitting on the sofa doing nothing (something he apparently could do for hours), seemed surprised to see you. Maybe he wasn't part of all this twisted scheme. Yoongi would help you. You knew he would.

"Yoongi!" You managed to call out as you urgently stepped closer to him and pulled his arm, "You have to help me, please, Jimin and Taehyung--"

He noted of your distraught look, and his eyes narrowed in a dangerous glower as he stood up following your urgent tugs, "What did they do?"

"I don't-- They-- I don't get it! They said they brought me here, but I don't understand why and--"

"Hey! Since when is Yoongi hyung [F/N]s favorite?!

You switched your gaze at the two boys in fear. They looked displeased and miffed with your actions. You've never seen Jimin, of all people, scowl in genuine irritation. Expecting help, you turned towards Yoongi.

Only to find him staring down at you, eyes dark but pleased. The grip he had on your hand was gentle, but there was something deadly behind the soft caress of his fingers which you couldn't place.
He glared at the younger males and sighed, "Since the very beginning, obviously. What did you do to scare her this badly? She's trembling."

The two seemed to deflate a bit at the mention of how scared you were, ".... We just cuddled her and told her we brought her to Korea, that's all."

"You're shit in handling women, kids," the grumpy male rolled his eyes and sat back down, tugging your arm, "Come sit. Let's talk properly about this."

You couldn't believe him. He was in this too. Did everyone agree to this? But why? Why were they doing this?

"This... This is kidnapping. What you're doing, it's... it's illegal."

"Of course not, baby. You needn't know of the details, but I assure you, you're here as a legal tourist for now. Take it as your first step to move in here. Come and sit down."

"But you still brought me here without my--"

"Sit. Down."

The cold and commanding tone made you seize up in fear. Yoongi's eyes were deep black abyss, and your instinct urged you to comply. Still shaking, you slowly sat down on the soft sofa and heard the younger boys eagerly shuffled in to sit across the two of you. You kept your gaze on your lap nervously, fearing for what comes next.

"'Atta girl," he praised, voice light and his hand comfortably circling behind your waist, soothingly patting your back, "There's no need to be so tense, no one in this house want to harm you, of all people."

"That's right, petal! We love you too much to do that!" Taehyung chirped, and you would've blushed in any other situation at the pet name and the continuous declaration of love, but you were far too scared and confused. Besides, if they did love you, why would they do something like this?

"You belong with us," Yoongi said, "That much is certain. You're the happiest when you're around us. So we brought you along. Now, why don't you seem happy about it?"

"B-Because! This is ridiculous! I never said I wanted to come with you! I told you! We have our own lives, and--"

"Each and every single one of us wants you in our lives, petal.... There's no way we wouldn't take you along. We've planned this together, came into an agreement, all because we want you here, with us. With me," Taehyung cut your protests, brows furrowed, determined to make you understand, "And you're happy with us! You said so. You said you wanted to stay with us. You want this as much as we do!"

You couldn't help but notice how he was putting words in your mouth. You've never said anything which meant like that. Yes, they had became an irreplaceable group of people in your life. They were your confidants, your best friends, friends you treasured, but not to this extent. No normal people would go this far-- to resort to kidnapping.

They weren't normal.

"We all wanted you," he pushed on, seeing how you were still not smiling, "And you had no place to call home, so we thought we'll be your home. This is your home now, [F/N], don't you
understand?"

You didn't.

Yoongi's hand on your back continued to serve as a notion of how you were trapped here. A reminder, of how you were in their grasp, a hopeless, harmless prey within their territory. They wanted you here, and there you were.

This was their house-- they were free to do anything and you would have no escape. And if you truly were in Korea, it meant you were in a different country which you've never been before. You had no idea about their culture nor language. How are you supposed to ask for help to return back to your own country? Where is your passport and identifications? What are you going to do about clothes? What is your family doing? Are they searching for you? Will they ever find you?

*Just what are you supposed to do now?*

"Oh, [F/N], don't cry...."

You couldn't stop the tears streaming down your cheek and dropping to your lap. Your hands moved to cover your face as you curled in your position, uncontrollable loud sobs escaping your lips. You wanted everything to stop. It was all too much, too overwhelming, and you were downright terrified by this point.

Yoongi straightened up on his seat, one hand holding your shoulder and his other hand smoothing down your back in a line, whispering softly to try and calm you down.

*How did everything turn out like this?*

The sound of door slamming open made you jolt in shock and quiet down instantly. Even through your blurry vision, you recognized the tall brunette, and silently watched in tears as he approached you. You couldn't clearly see, but the male sounded *livid* when he yelled, which made you freeze in your seat.

"Yah! What the hell happened here?!!" His voice was harsh and loud, unlike his usual soft tone and kind demeanor. The contrast made you shake and started sobbing yet again, although this time quieter in fear of angering him further.

"Ah, so loud, Jin hyung! Tone it down!" Jimin's voice was just as loud and full of anger when he saw you reverting back to crying.

"You tone it down! And you, don't touch her!" He hissed, full of venom. In an instantaneous response, you felt Yoongi's hands withdrew from you. This calmed you down a tiny bit, but you were more scared of the older male now-- The Seokjin you knew didn't shout, much less speak in such a commanding tone. *This wasn't Seokjin.*

"I take a nap and this is what I see when I wake up! I told you not to scare her!" He exhaled shakily in his fit of irritation, "I shouldn't have trusted you lot.

"You tone it down! And you, don't touch her!" He hissed, full of venom. In an instantaneous response, you felt Yoongi's hands withdrew from you. This calmed you down a tiny bit, but you were more scared of the older male now-- The Seokjin you knew didn't shout, much less speak in such a commanding tone. *This wasn't Seokjin.*

"I take a nap and this is what I see when I wake up! I told you not to scare her!" He exhaled shakily in his fit of irritation, "I shouldn't have trusted you lot.

You reflexively pulled back when the eldest crouched in front of you. He hushed you gently and started to wipe your tears, his voice switched to his usual, calming tone, "Sssh, don't cry, [F/N]... Come on, you must be hungry and it put you in a bad mood. I'm sure you'll feel better when you're full. Let's get you to calm down first, okay? Come with me to the kitchen! I'll make your favorite hot chocolate. It'll calm you down. And then I'll cook your favorites... I'll cook anything you want, okay? And if I can't, we'll get them delivered. Anything for my sweet [F/N]. Oh, you poor girl, you must be so disoriented, so confused..."
And even though you knew he participated in this whole mess, the soothing kindness in his voice made you trust him more than the other three. You shouldn't, but you did, because you were so desperate to cling to that tiny hope, and Seokjin always, *always* treated you with so much care, so much kindness.

Maybe if it was Seokjin, he might help you to escape. And he was right-- you were starving, you were confused, you were overloaded with information and so many emotions, it was driving you insane by the second. The least you could do was to fill your stomach so you could regain your energy and therefore, think of a plan. If you truly wanted to escape this madness, you needed the extra strength.

You nodded, sobs simmering down to occasional hiccups, and missed the pleased sneer that came across his expression as he glanced at the others. Ignoring the pointed glares from the three boys, he pulled you up and led you towards the kitchen, throwing the other boys a stern reprimanding glare when they made a move to follow.

With no one around, you could feel yourself getting slightly calmer. Seokjin sat you down on one of the stools behind the island counter and stood across the small bar, his hands coming to stroke your hair and wipe your remaining tears. You probably looked like a mess, but he didn't seem to mind at all.

"Aigoo... My poor [F/N]... I'm so sorry they made you sad. I'll quickly make that hot chocolate, okay? Wait here," he gently patted your head and opened the cabinets to grab a mug and a pack of instant chocolate. The powder, along with a little hot water and fresh chocolate milk, went into the medium sized cup as he stirred everything evenly. Seokjin hummed as he went to heat up the content, all the while giving you quick glances and gentle smiles to make sure you were doing alright.

You slowly stopped having hiccups. The tears were drying on your cheeks as you wiped them roughly with the back of your hands. The chiding tuts from Seokjin made you look up in question, and the older male pointed at the pack of tissues on the side of the counter.

"Don't rub your eyes so hard, love. They're already so red... I don't want you to hurt yourself, okay?"

You watched him warily, but nodded obediently before taking a tissue and started to dab your tears dry. Seokjin smiled with the usual gentle curve of lips on his handsome face, and yet it felt wrong, *so wrong*. Everything about this was wrong.

The glass mug clinked against the tabletop as it was presented in front of you. You stared at its content silently. Seeing this, Seokjin brushed your hair behind your ear and leaned closer with a worried frown.

"What's wrong?"

You kept your silence.

"Ah. Are you more hungry than thirsty? Oh, I'm sorry! What do you want to eat? I'll cook anything you want! I've stocked the fridge with everything you like, and I have the brochures for take out places you might like--"

"I want to go back home."

The male stilled for a few seconds before chuckling and taking both of your wrists, thumb circling the inner side of your palm in a soothing manner.
But his grip was tight, and as he spoke, fingers squeezed around your wristlet, the low tone of Jin's voice vibrating in your ears like a haunting piano in the darkest of night.

"I think you should drink your chocolate and calm down, princess. Clearly you're still frazzled and you're not thinking straight. You are with me. You are home."

You stared into the warm brown eyes which was Seokjin's, but you couldn't associate the words coming out from his mouth with the motherly brunette you thought you knew.

"Who--"

"Now, you should drink your chocolate before it gets cold!" His voice returned into the casual cheerful Seokjin, and his hands loosened around your wrists to settle under his chin as he watched you.

Trembling, you cupped the mug and took a desperate sip. The hot liquid burned your tongue, and yet the heartburn from swallowing it felt irrelevant compared to the hollow feeling inside your chest. Being trapped like a bird in a cage was making your head pound-- literally. In fact, you could feel that you were starting to develop a migraine.

Just then, Seokjin lamented about making lunch for everyone and left to look for his apron, muttering about how no one could return anything to its rightful place in this house. Out of the corner of your eyes, he passed by the youngest on the kitchen entrance.

Jungkook's doe like eyes widen when he met your tired look. You knew you probably looked horrible from all the crying, and not to mention the anxiety which had been brewing inside you.

"..... Why are you sad?" He asked in a quiet, nervous voice as he faced you after he took his place beside your seat.

You looked back at him. His clear eyes exuded innocence and worry when he saw the state you were in. The pure emotions pulled you in. Maybe if it's Jungkook, he would help you..... right? You didn't think he would be into this. He was the youngest, maybe he had no choice but to go along with it. He loved his brothers, but surely he knew this was wrong.

"I want to.... go home..."

"Why?" His eyes widened, "Noona, do you hate us? You don't, right?"

"I don't understand why... Why are you guys keeping me here, why would you do all of this," you took a quick peek at the entrance to the kitchen and then back at the younger boy, almost pleading by this point, "Jungkook, please, you understand, right?!"

He inhaled sharply, and you knew right then and there, that he didn't understand and didn't like what you've asked of him.

"No.... No, I don't understand. Why would you want to leave? Why do you care about anything else when you have us with you? Do you not like us? But you like us, noona, you said it yourself! You said you loved us-- You said you loved me! Was that a lie?!" His voice started to rise and you stared at him with wide eyes. It reminded you of when he lashed out at you last time, but this had a worse effect on you, partly because you were already in a bad place yourself.

With his posture straightened, Jungkook looked far less timid than he previously was. With the disappearance of his usually adorable smile and the addition of an angry scowl, you found your body starting to shake. But this time, it wasn't tears just tears that came crashing down on you.
"Were you lying?? When you said you loved to have us around? When you said you liked to see us play games, how you loved it whenever we smiled, how happy and safe we made you feel, were they all lies, noona-- ANSWER ME!!!

You felt your throat constrict and squeeze, as if someone had tightened their grip on your neck. You realized you had forgotten how to breathe, which was weird considering it should come naturally to all normal human beings. The oxygen in your lungs felt nonexistent no matter how much you tried to breathe, and by instinct it caused you to try and suck in as much air as possible.

Despite your struggle, your breath only shortened even more and more. Pricks of pain hit your disheveled senses, and you toppled over the stool onto the floor, the action not even registering in your brain anymore. You were frightened with your own inability to breathe, and with the black spots appearing rapidly in your vision, you could barely hear Jungkook and Seokjin's worried calls.

And then through the loud ringing in your ears, you could scantily heard one voice, which sounded so calm and sure of itself.

"Breathe."

I'm trying, I'm trying, you panicked and answered. Or maybe you didn't, because you were choking and wheezing and you couldn't seem to form anything coherent enough to count as speaking.


You tried to pace your breath between panickedly gasping in air and not choke on your own spit, trying to follow the disembodied voice’s instructions to keep yourself from drowning, even though you were nowhere near water. Your neck burned everytime you tried to breathe, your throat felt dry and scratchy with every intake, but you preserved. The voice kept encouraging you, telling you that you were doing so well, how brave you were for toughing this out.

It felt like hours had passed when you could feel yourself calming down with the help of the voice's guidance. Slowly, your breathing regulated to normal. The spots in your eyes and the ringing in your ears started to clear up.

Namjoon's worried expression came into your previously disoriented view, and you felt his hands grabbing your arms firmly, keeping them a distance away from yourself. Your neck felt raw and stung badly, while to your horror you realized that your nails were splotched in blood. You must have harmed yourself in the middle of that... whatever that was.

While you did calm down, you were still trembling, confused, and very much distraught. The cold wall and the tile of the kitchen against your back and legs didn't help in how uncomfortable you were feeling, and the blond's hands loosened their hold to trace down your arm in a soothing gesture.

"No one is going to hurt you," he said softly, but firm like always, like he knew what he was taking about, and you desperately wished for that to be true, "I promise. No one in this house wants you to be hurt or sad."

"T-Then why are you l-locking me in here...?" Your voice sounded dry and hoarse, like chalk scratching on blackboard. Seokjin instantly crouched down and held out a glass of water with a straw, his eyes glassy and lips in a tight line.

You rejected the caring gesture.

"Because we love you," Namjoon said patiently, as if you were a child who didn't know what love
was. But you knew what love was--

"Imprisonment isn't love! Neither are kidnapping and drugging!" You yelled, frustrated. Out of the corner of your eyes, Jimin looked away, and you briefly wondered if he was the one who was responsible for the latter.

"You might not understand now, but give it time, and you'll realize that this is your home."

You shook your head stubbornly, missing the way Namjoon's eyes narrowed. Just then, the figure beside him shifted, and you found Hoseok's worried gaze settled on you.

He was the last hope you had.

"I think she needs new clothes and immediate treatment, hyung. What if she gets an infection? It might help her to calm down too," he nervously shifted on his toes, giving you a saddened frown, his lips downturned.

"..... You're right. Come on, I'll help to clean and dress your wounds--"

"No," your lips quivered and you switched your gaze to the wine color haired dancer, "I-I want Hobi t-to do it."

The addressed boy's eyes lit up in surprise and happiness at your words, but the others who at one point in time had gathered in the room, looked either openly irked or angry at your request. The man in spotlight himself didn't seem to mind, however, since he immediately crouched down and pulled you up with ease. You clung to him, finding your feet unsteady, and he gladly slipped a balancing arm around your waist and throwing your arm around his shoulder along in the process to help you stand and walk.

"Let's go to your room, then!" He chirped, all smiles, and you eyed him cautiously, "Ah, Seokjin hyung, I'll take the water. None of you are allowed upstairs, alright? It's what [F/N] wants."

Please, you pleaded inwardly, please, Hoseok, you know this is madness, I can trust you, right?

When you both reached the silent hallway, you asked him in realization, "I-I have a-- room?"

"Of course! As soon as we decided you're coming along back home, Yoongi hyung relocated in with Seokjin hyung, just so you can have a room for yourself," he smiled sweetly, "You see, Angel, we wanted you to be as comfortable as possible."

And just like that, your last hope shattered. He agreed to the so called 'plan', and you doubted he would be different from the others, who apparently didn't find the concept as twisted as you did. Helpless, you let him half carry you upstairs to your 'room', which might as well you could call a prison.

Had you not became so close with them, this wouldn't have happened....
seventeen.

Chapter Notes

As always, thank you so much for the overwhelming love I received for the previous chapter! I'm glad everyone loved the first climax of the story!! Yes, I do see every single one of your comments and I appreciate them so much! I've really exhausted myself today, so I'll be replying them tomorrow, sorry for that :x

If you want to, you can read an extended author note here (it's about some possible extra contents, kind of?). It'll probably only be posted in wattpad though, because I don't think ao3 is the correct platform for these kind of posts.

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You couldn't get a wink of sleep.

The mattress was soft, and the sheets as smooth as silk. The temperature was perfect for sleeping, the house was quiet, with the crickets outside chirping peacefully in the background. In any other situations you would have slept soundly, but now you were suffocated by the darkness, by the perfect living space of your jail and the knowledge that there were seven dangerous males living under the same roof as you.

Their words kept repeating inside your mind. Every single one of them told you they did this because they love you. You refused to believe them. You wanted to make yourself believe they were genuine; it would certainly make your life easier, but this wasn't love. You didn't want to think of robbing someone from their life and forced imprisonment as love.

A large part of your brain tells you not to trust them anymore. Not after how they nonchalantly brought you here against your will. Who knew what they would do next? This wasn't the time to be selfless. You had to think and act for your own sake now. A huge part of your heart still denied this reality, however. You've lived with the group for two months-- surely the boys you've known and grown to love within that period of time were real, and not just your delusions? The more you thought about it, the more dilemma you felt; it was as if you were trying to grasp water.

Of course you've thought about escaping. Nevertheless, doing it on your own seemed impossible, given the condition of your room. It was right at the end of the hallway on the second floor, meaning you had to pass through some of doors which probably were the boys' rooms, climb down the marbled staircase in dark before reaching the living room, and finally, the exit. You've known enough from your time living with them that Yoongi and Jimin were light sleepers and would wake up no matter how quiet you thought you were being. And even if you were able to pass through them, how would you unlock the front door without waking them up? You hadn't seen any keyholders nor keys for that matter.

The window in your room didn't seem like a feasible option either. You would have tried to climb down the second floor, if not for the bars installed firmly against the exterior. What was supposed to be an instrument meant to keep children safe had turned against your favor and diminished your
chances to escape.

Other than that, there were no other options you knew well enough to take. You were alone, confused, lost, and scared. There was no way you could've slept knowing all the events that had happened in the past twenty four hours you were awake. Honestly, what was the point of getting out of bed? You didn't want to meet your captors.

Maybe if you stubbornly remained cooped on your bed, they would give in to your request.

As you tossed and turned in your bed, the sun rose, inch by inch, ignoring the turmoil inside you. When it had reached its highest point in the sky and you felt its light filter through the curtain, a series of knocks came from the door.

"[F/N], aren't you hungry? I made lunch, and it's your favorite!"

You curled in bed and looped the blanket over your body, willing yourself to suppress your hunger. Normally the thought of eating Seokjin's home cooked meals would make you spring to your feet immediately, but to be really honest, all his actions yesterday.... He seemed like a totally different person.

All of them were acting abnormally.

More knocks entered your ears.

"[F/N], love, you need to eat! We're worried about you-- I'm worrying about you! Please come out, don't be like this...," he actually sounded sad, and you almost believed him for a second. You never did liked upsetting him, out of all of them. Seokjin always cared so much, which in turn made you want to give him back something in return.

But you were in no position to just give them what they wanted...... Actually, perhaps you could drive a bargain? At the very least, if you could go outside, you might have a chance to ask for help. You certainly couldn't do it by yourself, but if someone else was willing to offer a hand....

"I'm not going to eat unless you let me go outside!" You demanded, giving your best shot at sounding very final and absolutely sure with your request.

Seokjin sighed from behind the door, "And what are you going to accomplish by doing that, [F/N]?"

Escape and ask for help, you thought inwardly. But saying that might anger Seokjin, and you had a feeling you didn't want that to happen, so you chose the role of a stubborn kid and yelled louder-- If he could deal with six stubborn boys, he could certainly handle one more, "I want out!"

You heard nothing. Few seconds later, you heard shuffling and retreating footsteps.

..... Well, you tried.

Sighing in disdain, you sat up and looked around your room, about to consider the idea of opening your window and scream out loud for help. No one could stop you. And then maybe the neighbours would notice that something was wrong, call the police, and--

The second series of sudden loud knocks against the wooden door made you jump in surprise.

"[F/N]?"

You recognized Namjoon's voice, but kept your silence.
"Will you promise us to stop acting like this if we let you go outside?"

"Y-Yes!" You answered immediately, in disbelief that your tactic actually worked and excited at the prospect of being let out.

"Alright. I'll unlock the front door for you. Now will you come out and eat? Jin hyung isn't letting anyone eat until you do."

"Oh," you eyed the door, suddenly feeling guilty, "O-Okay, let me, uh, wait," you scrambled to fix your clothes-- a plain shirt from Hoseok's wardrobe and a rather comfy sweatpants.

Namjoon waited patiently until you opened the door. With a dimpled smile on his cheeks, he moved aside as you stepped out from the room before leading you down the hallway, his hand comfortably settled behind your back. You moved a step further to avoid his touch and missed the slight twitch of his smile. He didn't seem that bothered after making such a deal with you, and you wondered just what was going on in his head now.

Wasn't he afraid that you would call out for help?

"We could go shop for your clothes when you feel like it," he addressed the matter casually, knowing your on-and-off mood when it came to shopping for clothes, "Or we could order them online if you prefer to. Anything you want to have in your room, just tell us--"

"Don't want it," you huffed. Hopefully when you acted bratty enough, they would get annoyed with you and let you go. Although that seemed like a slim chance, and you had a feeling some of them wouldn't appreciate the defiance much.

The blond chuckled, more amused than irritated at your disobedience.

"There's my sleeping beauty!" Jin cooed at you as soon as he found you entering the dining area, "Come and sit, all of the dishes today are your favorites! Take as much as you want, okay?"

"Can we eat now?" Jungkook asked, antsy and hopeful as he stared at the food.

"No," Jin replied, firm and cold. You flinched when he smiled at you and took it to himself to guide you towards your seat, right between him and Yoongi, who was watching you silently with that sleepy look on his face. "Eat, princess. You must be so hungry from skipping breakfast! Take your fill; the others can wait!"

You felt seven pair of eyes watching you. Intently.

Arms feeling weak and shaky, you obediently took your food from the center of the table-- it was truly the feast of your favorite dishes, and your stomach grumbled in protest. Still, you didn't feel like you could eat that much with your current mental state. Small portions of food littered your plate, and when you withdrew back to your own seat, you could feel Jin's stare drilling holes to your head as the others started to take their own meals.

"Are you still nervous from the new environment, [F/N]? I suppose that's understandable... But I want you to stuff yourself on dinner, okay? You're a growing girl, you need your nutrients!" This time, Seokjin's tone was lighter and calmer, one you were more used to hearing, and when you looked up at him, you saw him looking at you so affectionately.

"She's still adapting to the change of environment. Right, [F/N]?” Yoongi chimed in, and upon not receiving your confirmation, continued on, "Should we rearrange your room and make it similar to your dorm room?"
Hoseok gave the older male a shocked, open-mouthed look, "'We'? Really?"

Yoongi rolled his eyes and waved at a general direction across him lazily, "Obviously that meant the kids."

"Ooooh, can we decorate [F/N]'s room?" Taehyung chirped excitedly.

"I'll help!" Jimin lit up at the suggestion, the adorable squish of his cheeks vivid against the wide stretch of his smile.

"I'll help too," Jungkook managed to weigh in rather gracelessly even with his cheeks stuffed full of food.

"You're not permitted to put up your game console there just so you have an excuse to spend time in her room, Jungkook-ah," Namjoon said lightly, but with a reprimanding look nonetheless. The younger boy pouted and fiddled with his food.

"Well, anything to make them spend that extra energy," the eldest of the group nodded towards the younger set of boys, who smiled at him endearingly, and turned back to focus his attention to you, "Don't you find the furniture, especially the bed, better than your previous room? I took the utmost care in ordering a high-quality mattress and bed frame! Is it to your liking?"

"W-What? Oh," you felt the reality of the situation weigh back on you. The conversation, their tone of speaking, and the overall atmosphere made you feel as if you were back in the dorm, just having another lunch with the boys you've came to know and love.

If only you could go back in time— the times when you were still so ignorant.

"Maybe we should get someone to get her plushies? You're quite fond of them, right, Angel?" Hoseok suggested, eyeing you worriedly.

"And noona's terrariums!" Jungkook chipped in, smiling that bunny grin as he recounted the memory, "Noona, remember that time you freaked out when I hid it from you? You really treasure them, so we should bring that over too!"

You did remember. You remembered the younger boy hiding all your small little containers of plants, but in the end, surprised you with a new terrarium, which was bigger, prettier, and more extravagant looking. Remembering it made you smile.

Wait, no!

Why were you smiling? you berated yourself. You should be angry! They built this prison for you, and as nice and comfy as it was, for you, it was still a prison nonetheless. You had to escape— You want to escape.

Keeping your silence, you tried your best to swallow all the food in your plate, tuning out the boys' conversation even when they tried to talk to you. As soon as you were done, you looked up at Namjoon in expectation.

He replied with a patient smile and cleared his throat before pushing his chair backwards, announcing calmly, "I'll take [F/N] out for a breath of fresh air."

You saw the disagreeing looks some threw at the blond, but none dared to disobey.

"Come on then," the male offered you his hand, but you ignored his courtesy and glared back at him.
Sighing, he shook his head and led you towards the dining area's exit.

"Be back soon, Jin hyung has desserts!" Hoseok called out cheerily.

"Oh, right, he did say something about having perfected your favorite cake. It's kind of surprising, coming from Jin hyung," Namjoon chuckled as he reached onto a side panel you hadn't noticed before, shifted the cover up, and slid his index finger through the tiny scanner. The door unlocked with a click.

Well, shit, you cursed inwardly. How were you supposed to bypass that?

"Well, here we are," he remarked once you stepped out to the front porch.

Inhaling deeply, you felt your lungs expand, the notion of being free in the open consuming your dark anxiety.

"Satisfied now?"

You turned to him sharply, "What? No! I wanted out. It means out as in the streets!"

"So demanding," Namjoon grinned in amusement, but walked down the porch anyway, unlocking and pushing the tall gate open with ease before opening them up for you, "Go on, then."

Why was he being so compliant? you questioned in awe and befuddlement. Namjoon was smart. You knew this well. Why was he obeying you like this when he was the one who brought you here? Namjoon was the most brilliant person you've ever encountered-- that talent coupled with hard work was a combination you didn't want to face off with. Hell, he wasn't even in your course and he would occasionally help you work on your assignments last time!

"Well?" He tilted his head, "Having second thoughts?"

"No!" You shouted back stubbornly, although your voice cracked in the end. The migraine was coming back, even though you should have felt unchained and free to do as you wanted. Yet you couldn't help to expect that things won't be going as smooth as you wished. If Namjoon had a plan, the question was, could you outwit him?

"Then go on," he reached to tug your arm forward, and you helplessly followed as he walked out past the gate. The only thing you could think of when you passed by the gate was how anxious and unprepared you were for this.

The street was small and foreign.

It was honestly amazing to see how different it was, compared to what you were used to. The houses' layouts, the colors, even the atmosphere felt way different than the dorm and city you've known since forever. You felt tiny, detached, and insignificant within this area.

Gulping, you grabbed your shaky hand with the other to still your tremors, and spotted a woman who must have been around your age walking down the street.

"Excuse me! Hi, please help me, where is the nearest--" you had barely spoken, but she looked startled at your sudden approach, "Ah, I'm sorry if I surprised you, I just--"

"Joesong haeyo, na yunga moteyo," she said with a tight lipped smile, bowed, and continued her stride.
You stood in confusion and embarrassment. You wished you took Korean classes as an elective. *It's fine*, you consoled yourself. Maybe the girl didn't understand you. You could always ask someone else.

True to your hope, you saw an elderly woman who seemed friendly enough trudging down the street across you, a few meters away.

"Excuse me!" You ran towards her, and tried to act out your words, "Please help me, where is the nearest police station?! I've been kidnapped and I need to go back...."

Your voice softened in humiliation. The elder woman took a good look at you, a disapproving frown on her face. Now self conscious, your hand came up to brush and try to detangle your messy hair. You realized that you haven't showered since yesterday, nor changed out from the overly comfy home lounge wear. Your eyes were probably puffy from all the crying and lack of sleep, your hair was undoubtedly a mess, and you definitely didn't look like you were a captive of some sort. You probably just looked like a girl who suffered a heartbreak and spent the whole night crying and eating ice cream.

Couple that with the fact that, to them, you were a foreigner, and even if you were able to speak their language, you probably would just look like a crazy person. The sudden knowledge made you feel vulnerable and your breath seize up. Invisible insects crawled on your skin, which felt far too exposed, and your arms wound around your body. Your breathing shortened, and the bandages around your neck felt like chains squeezing around your windpipe.

Namjoon stepped forward, shielding you and started to talk to the elderly woman instead, a small and polite smile along with humble demeanor exuding off him as they conversed in a language you had almost zero understanding about. The elderly lady glanced at you with a pitying smile, shook her head, patted his arm, and excused herself with a small but friendly wave.

The older male turned back to you and smiled gently.

"Let's go back inside, shall we?"

You felt Namjoon's hand grab around your wrist and tugged, urging you to follow.

"N-No, not yet--"

"What are you going to do, then?" He asked, calm and calculative gaze trained upon your timid and scared form.

"You tried to communicate. You failed. You asked for help. No one did. The neighbors believe you're a part of us and would excuse your 'strange behaviors', as you've witnessed. Are you going to the police? Without proper identification and looking like this? Do you think they would help? Tell me, [F/N]....."

"What can you do?"
Namjoon pushed the front door open easily with his other hand and led you in. Behind you, the door locked itself. The sentence still echoed inside your mind, and when you felt a hand gently rested against your back this time, you made no move to pull away.

"Ah, you're back! Welcome home!" Jimin greeted and stormed to your side, eyes twinkling as he eyed you with a smile full of adoration, as if you were the finest gem he had ever laid his eyes upon.

Your eyes lifted to skim across the room, across all the other five boys staring back at you from their own places throughout the cozy living area, their eyes resembling Jimin's, fond and loving and obsessed. Jin smiled as he lifted your portion of your favorite dessert in his hand and gestured you to come over and take it.

"This is your home," Namjoon's hand trailed up your back soothingly, "You're happy and safe here."

"Why would you ever want to leave?"

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You blinked slowly, eyes hazy from sleep.

"Yah, are you still asleep?" The muffled voice paused and chuckled, "We're soulmates, I swear. I'm coming in, alright?"

The door creaked open, and you groaned, feeling the pounding headache from having slept too long hammering the back of your head. Your arms pulled the blanket up over your head as you tried to recollect your consciousness.

All you did lately was sleeping. The habit just added in to your exhaustion somehow, but still, you slept. The boys didn't seem to mind at all, though. Taehyung kept trying to sneak in for cuddles at night, and so you were quite used to having someone barge into your room by now.

"Geez, c'mon Aurora, your prince came and you're hiding behind your blanket? How am I going to kiss you to wake you up?" Yoongi's teasing tone made your cheeks warm up, but you refused to give him the satisfaction of seeing you flustered. You still haven't forgiven them for doing what they did. You doubt you would ever forgive them, honestly.

You could feel the mattress sinking as he sat down on the edge of your bed.

When he spoke, his voice was gentle and you couldn't help but listen attentively. You've never heard him use such a fond tone.

"I have something for you."

Curious and a tad nervous, you shifted and pulled your blanket down onto your shoulder, before turning to face him.

Only, he wasn't alone.

A familiar looking poodle with dark brown fur stared up at you from his place on top of the bed. You've seen lots of dogs in your life, but you were sure you've seen this one before. A certain dog
cafe's name flashed by your mind, and you couldn't help but gasp in shock.

Yoongi's signature gummy smile appeared when he saw your previously dull eyes widening, the sparkle he so much loved coming back against their beautiful color. The small dog tilted his head at the awed expression on your face, and you felt your heart burst into teeny tiny little pieces at the adorable gesture.

"Remember him?"

"Yes!!" You squealed, all thoughts forgotten except for the small poodle curiously watching you, "Holly, come here! C'mere, pup!"

The small animal sniffed your hand, cautiously at first, and wagged his tail in recognition before smooshing his small head onto your abdomen. You cradled the puppy lovingly, and soon enough he jumped up before starting to lick your face.

Yoongi could feel his heart melt at the sight. He never saw himself as a family oriented man, being always swamped with his work and spending most of his time in his self-converted studio. But he couldn't help to reimagine the precious moment in his head.

An older you holding his child.

He blinked, stowing the imagination at the back of his head, before focusing back at the present. If he wanted you to choose him, first he had to be the one who pulled you out from this slump.

"Do you feel better?"

"What?"

Yoongi's eyes bore through your clueless gaze, and you realized you've ever only seen him this worried whenever he was thinking about his songs. But now he was worried about you.

Yoongi noted the sluggishness in your movement and the bad complexion of your skin. Your health was deteriorating, and he didn't like that one bit. But forcing you to go out from your room to eat and exercise also didn't sit well with him. You had to get better, and he wanted you to realize that you could depend on him, that he was able to keep you safe.

"Of course not," you answered, plain and simple, "You're still keeping me here against my will. I've told you this many times. You guys never listen to me."

"I do listen," the musician climbed onto the bed to properly face you, "How can I make you feel happier, then? Safer?"

"Well, if you've been listening, you should know that," you scoffed. Holly whined, and you looked down at him with a sad smile.

".... I still don't get why you want to go back when you're happier here, with us."

You ignored him, instead opting to scratch the toy poodle's ears. Yoongi observed you carefully. How should he break down the wall you've erected around your heart? What can he do to gain your trust? To prove that he meant it when he said he loved you?
"I used to have depression."

Completely off guard at the sudden change of topic, you froze for a few seconds before looking up at the bright haired male. Today seemed to be a day where you were given the chance to see Yoongi in different expressions. With his eyes downcast, brows furrowed, and his arms tucked in front of his stomach, he looked the most vulnerable you've ever seen him.

The grimace on his expression was still visible when he continued on, his voice so soft you had to strain your ears to actually make out the words he said.

"Being a musician.... It was pretty rough. No one really takes you seriously unless you really have a name in the industry. Or if someone backs you up behind the scene. Doesn't make that much money either. It's a tough world, with a lot of competitions and people dropping out everyday because they realize it's not worth it."

You could never imagine. Being an artist seemed like such a weary occupation in your eyes. Art was subjective. It depended a lot on how many people perceived your creations. It meant that your future was always uncertain. At the same time, you knew how much Yoongi loved music, so you couldn't even begin to understand his struggles.

"Even if I managed to climb up and got more recognitions, it just led to more pressure. More expectations. More deadlines. There's no end to it. It's just.... hard. Exhausting. Lots of times I thought of quitting, but I couldn't."

He glanced at you briefly before fully meeting your eyes this time. You recoiled at the pain clearly reflected on his expression.

"Music was my life. If I can't do music, then what's the point of living anymore?"

"Yoongi--"

"I was in a really dark place. It's like trapped in a tiny room, with all walls, no windows, no doors. Everything seemed bleak and grey and hopeless....," the painful frown in his expression slowly unravelled into a minuscule but vividly fond looking smile, "And then I met the guys."

For the first time since you we brought here, you felt sympathy. A connection. Because this, what he was talking about now, also made sense to you. Your life had been monotone and consisted of routines, tirelessly repeating, a neverending cycle of normalcy, until you met them.

"Me and Namjoon, we've hung around each other that time, but we weren't that close or anything. Yet I could swear Namjoon knew I was on my limit. He always knows something he shouldn't have known. Creep called me out one day, introduced me to Jin hyung," he sighed, visibly relaxing now that he had spoken what he wanted to tell you.

"In the end, he helped me out to enroll in a stupid music programme. I didn't learn much, but the school had a dorm and facilities I could use. Next thing I know, some producer asked me to sign with their label, said he'd pay if I want to further my education, yada yada and then, well," he tilted his head, a soft smile on his lips, "I met you."

His look held so much adoration and love, you had to look away.

"...... Yoongi, why are you telling me this?"

"Because I want you to know. And more than anything, staying with the right people is important, [F/N]. It's one of the things I learnt from back then. Surrounding yourself with people who makes
you happy will do you good in the long run."

"It's not like I was surrounding myself with the wrong people before you guys came," you mumbled.

"But you weren't happy," he said in a matter-of-fact tone, "You were happy with us, weren't you?"

Holly flopped onto his back and looked up at you expectantly. You obliged and started to rub his belly, but kept your silence to the question he just asked. You didn't want to answer, because deep down you knew he was right.

You just didn't want to admit it.

".... Is he staying with us?" You asked, referring to the dark furred pet who was very much enjoying your attention.

"If you want him to."

Of course you wanted to. You've always wanted a dog, and in this house he might be the only creature whose love wasn't as fucked up as the others.

_But did Holly want to?_

Wouldn't keeping him here without caring about what he wanted just mirrored your situation, only this time, you were in the antagonist position? Holly wasn't exactly human, but you knew well enough that dogs were living beings too. They had their own wants and needs, and truthfully you knew almost next to nothing about taking care of a pet dog. You doubted you would be able to. And if by any chance you managed to escape, what would happen to him?

"I'll.... think about it."

That night, Holly skittered around the room, whining fervently as he dug the floor at the corner of your room in panic and distraught.

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nineteen.

Chapter Notes

*walks in to see everything is on fire and people crying and screaming over Holly* Hey gu-- Guys? What. What happened??? Pls. Everything is okay, don't panic!!!

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Jimin sighed as he dragged the towel through his freshly washed hair. His eyes shifted towards the clock on his shared bedroom's wall while his hand grabbed the hair dryer on the counter. His practice today was cut short due to their instructor having to go for his health checkup in the hospital, and for once he was honestly overjoyed.

He had been dying to spend time with you. Ever since you moved in, he had been busy with dance practices after dance practices. Knowing that you were back home, still upset and most definitely lonely, was making him sad too. This seemed to show in his dances as well, he thought in amusement as he remembered the talks he had with his fellow dancers this morning.

"Wow, that transfer programme really did you well, huh?"

"You think so?"

"Your routine feels even more expressive than before. I'm really looking forward to your next performance now."

Even when you were sad and he was worried to death about you, you managed to make him perform his best. He chuckled and refocused into making sure his hair was fluffy and silky smooth. After all, he was going to spend the rest of his day with you!

Few minutes later, Jimin took a peek across the hallway and stared at your door.

If Taehyung could get away with sneaking away to cuddle at you most nights, why couldn't he? You liked him better, anyways... right? Besides, he wanted to cheer you up. After you told Yoongi hyung to return the small poodle, you went back to hiding in your own room, only coming down when one of them managed to drag you downstairs onto the dining room to eat.

He was scared for your health.

Jimin knew how dangerous malnutrition was, and he certainly wouldn't be able to take it if it took hold on you like it did to him. He hadn't seen you around the dining table for far too long. You needed food, and he might have to resort to force-feed you if you refused, as much as it pained him to even just think about it.
He stopped behind your bedroom's door and knocked out of courtesy. You never answered the door anymore, so he waited a few beats before peeking in. The dark room greeted him, and he shimmied inside carefully before squinting his eyes. He could barely see your silhouette, wrapped in your blanket on the massive bed.

"Hey, why is it so dark here?" He scolded halfheartedly before walking towards the windows to open the high quality curtains, tying each ends to their posts before turning to look at you.

You have resorted to turn away so you wouldn't be facing him, and with the blanket thrown over your head.

Jimin hummed in thought. You determinedly ignored him even as you heard his footsteps nearing.

The next second, the pink haired boy tugged away your blanket in one powerful pull.

Giggling, Jimin scooted away from you and hid himself with the soft expanse of cloth, but not before giving you a teasing grin and a playful, "You can't catch me!"

Lunging at the lump which was the boy 'hiding' himself from you, you were about to pry your blanket away from him, but felt his finger poke onto your sides.

You knew this game.

The youngest three had done it a lot, sometimes involving you in even though you were often reluctant to do so. Today was no exception. You didn't want to deal with him. Why couldn't everyone just leave you alone? They had you in their grasp. What more were they asking from you?

As silly and meaningless as it was, the cloth offered you some kind of protection. A safe space. You parried Jimin's arms away and tried to tug at the material. At the very least you had the advantage of vision, while he was blind as a bat.

The dancer yelped as your finger accidentally brushed his ticklish spot, his happy laugh reverberating in your ears. The corner of your lips twitched at hearing the happy sound, but you were still upset more than anything, so you determinedly chased him until the edge of bed in an attempt to get your blanket back.

And then suddenly, Jimin's hand pulled up the blanket surrounding him, your eyes locking to each other in the span of milliseconds.

Before you could react, his arms pulled you into the soft folds of cloth, and the energetic boy's bright grin filled your vision. Your breath hitched in your throat as the fresh scent of soap and shampoo filled your nostrils. The sunlight filtered through the bright colored and thin cloth hit the male's skin, creating a glowing effect. For a moment, you couldn't take your eyes off him. He looked positively angelic, and you wondered how could such kind and beautiful person had such a distorted love.

Maybe it was the lack of activity or your empty stomach, but a dizzy spell hit you suddenly, and you frowned in pain before forcefully pulling away. Jimin watched in worry as you scooted away and out from the blanket. You went back to assume your laying down position, groaning softly at the sensation of your head spinning around even though you were completely still.

"[F/N].... I'll go and take something for you to eat, alright? Do you think you could eat a sandwich?" He asked gently, laying beside you and sweeping your hair away from your face.

"Whatever," you answered, unfocused and struggling to not throw up.
"Okay, I'll get you a sandwich and Seokjin hyung's soup, wait here."

"Jimin, just leave me a--" you tried to stop him, but he was too quick, already out through the door when you were halfway through your protest.

Sighing, you grabbed your second pillow and placed it over your eyes, wishing the sun would magically hide itself somehow. You probably dozed off then, because while you felt feather light and floating, someone suddenly shook you awake, and you did with a jolt.

"I'm sorry [F/N], but you need food than rest right now," Jimin said softly and pushed the tray of food towards you, "Careful, the soup's hot. Are you well enough to eat by yourself? Or should I help you?"

"..... I'll do it myself," you mumbled and eyed the things he brought you. A simple sandwich, a bowl of soup, and another bowl of fruits. With reluctance, you started to eat, completely ignoring the other occupant of the room.

Jimin threw you a saddened look before looking around the room and settled back on you, "You could've kept Holly if you like him here."

The creases between your eyebrows deepened, "....... He doesn't want to be here."

"I'm sure he was just trying to adapt--"

"He was so stressed out after just one night!" Your voice came out a little louder than your normal tone, "I'm not a monster like you. He's happier back in his home."

The feeling of being watched continued to plague you as you spooned the soup into your mouth. It was absolutely uncomfortable and you were sure you would still feel the same no matter how many times they did that. It was one of the main reason you avoided eating with them.

"I'll stop eating if you keep staring."

"Oh, I'm sorry!" The boy gasped and tuned his back towards you. You glanced at him briefly and groaned inwardly-- why did his back had to look so lonely?

Your hand moved to grab the sandwich next. A quick glance onto its contents showed how each and every ingredients were to your liking. Another subtle but still creepy fact. Just how much did they know and researched about you? How did they remember every single one of your preferences and dislikes?

Or..... was this normal and you were the one who was overreacting?

"[F/N]?"

When you turned your head to the side, about to scold Jimin for scaring you with the sudden call of your name, you found yourself facing a familiar giant teddy bear.

"...... Jimin..."

"No no! I'm Chimmy, remember?" He squeaked, face hidden behind the huge toy, his voice an octave higher. You could clearly see his hand controlling the plush giant's hand, and couldn't help yourself from chuckling. The next sentences he spoke, you could literally see his grin in your mind's eye, and the small smile stayed on your lips as you continued to eat the food he prepared.
"Chimmy loves it when [F/N] smiles! [F/N] looks the prettiest when she's happy! Chimmy wants to always see [F/N]'s smile forever!"

Jimin peeked from behind his cuddle friend to observe your form. His gaze especially settled on your exposed neck. Even your wounds seemed to be healing slower than normal, he remarked mentally with a frown.

You can't go on like this. They had to do something.

But what were they supposed to do when you didn't allow them to care for you?

※ ※ ※
twenty.

Chapter Notes

Hey lovelies, just a heads up: The next one or two weeks will be busy weeks for me (mostly because of family events) so there won't be any main chapter posted. I'll try my best to post after one week (15th/16th), but no promises for now. I will still be posting the extra chapters cause they're all set and ready to go, but I don't think I'll have time to beta and post the main chapters. Thanks for your understanding♡

And I know this is kind of a shorter chapter compared to usual, but the timing's just nice and it's somewhat a prelude to the next arc, so... Enjoy nonetheless! :)

Also, if you find loopholes please don't think too much about it, alright? ^^''

※※※

You were exhausted.

You've honestly lost track of time. When did you last attended your classes and slept in your dorm room? How long has it been ever since you were taken in and brought here by the boys? Did it even matter anymore?

You hadn't had any good sleep, your appetite was waning and becoming close to nonexistent by each passing days, and you were just tired of it all. Tired of resisting. Tired of playing the victim. Tired of thinking of how to escape.

Every excuses, every loopholes you found, they would come back with something which shut off your escape route.

Your so called family and school might worry about you? Not anymore apparently. You were announced missing, and for some reason the police suspected it was a suicide, which meant no second or third party were involved, which also meant that it was unlikely for them to track you further. They would've never imagined you were in Korea, being held captive in quite the massive sized house with other seven guys.

Someone might have seen you in the airplane, or by whatever transport you arrived in, right? Most probably not, since you've learned that Seokjin's company had enough funds to spare him a personal jet, a private car, and more to ensure that you entered legally with your new identification documents. You remembered clearly how he used to nag on Jungkook when the younger boy borrowed ten bucks from him. But then again, he was always the one who took care of expenses, so you supposed he was quite well off, but still! You didn't know he had that much money.

Since you were a tourist, of course your stay would be limited, and eventually you would have to exit Korea, right? Not exactly, seeing as you had gained a permanent residence permit you had never applied for, and were registered as a worker in Jin's office. You've heard them remark casually that it would be easy to turn you into a citizen soon enough, as soon as you chose your husband.
Your.
Husband.

What in the fresh hell??

"Well, of course you'll eventually choose one of us," Namjoon raised his eyebrows at your
dumbfounded look, "We're playing nice for your sake, for now. Most of us doesn't fancy sharing
with each other, especially when it comes to you. But we know you're confused and still in the
process of adapting. It's not easy; that we understand-- hence, we'll give you time."

"Don't make me wait too long, though," Yoongi sighed lazily from his spot at the sofa, unbothered
by the sharp glares given to him by the others.

You were just.... exhausted.

Why did you resist again, in the first place? You knew this whole arrangement was fucked up, but
what could you do about it anyway? It was one powerless little girl against seven young adults, all
with different charms and capabilities and power. Was it even worth it to fight them?

Should you just accept your fate and resign to whatever it has in store for you?

"Your appetite is still low?" Seokjin asked, soft and worried as he placed a hand on your forehead, "I
really should call a doctor. You're already looking very pale, and you've lost weight, too...."

"I loved your cheeks.....," Jimin mourned, but added quickly, "I mean, I still love them now! Don't
get me wrong, you're still really pretty, [F/N]...."

"What should we do to make you feel more at ease, Angel?" Hoseok asked, eyes drooped in worry.

You didn't answer. You hadn't bothered trying to communicate with them these days. But the worst
part was that you wanted to. You wanted to go back and enjoy throwing playful banters, watch them
make a fool of themselves just to make the others laugh, wanted to be able to care for them just like
how they cared for you.

Taehyung silently pushed away his half-finished meal and stood from his chair. You stilled when
you felt his presence behind you, fearing the worst. Did you finally annoy him with your continuous
ignorance? You remembered his uncharacteristically blank and silent leer. The side of Taehyung you
wished you never knew. What was he going to--

Gentle fingers picked up strands of your hair. Both anxiety and shock skyrocketed your heartbeat as
he gently smoothed out the tangled parts and parted them into sections, before you felt gentle pulls
and tugs. The sensation was foreign and yet, coupled with the melodic hum of Taehyung's voice,
was somehow soothing. Slowly you felt your muscles relax.

It felt..... nice.

"Ah, your hair is so silky, [F/N]," the art major hummed in delight, "Will you let me style your hair
every morning? I'll learn to do all kind of braids and hair styles! I want to make my petal even
prettier~"

"I'll buy the flower pins! They'll look lovely on your hair, noona!" Jungkook jumped at the idea,
beaming at the image.

For the first time since you've been brought here, you looked up to actually observe the boys.
Namjoon was observing you, a small smile on his expression.

Seokjin's lips curved upwards in a gentle slope as he reached over to refill your half empty glass.

Yoongi's eyes fixated on his food, as stoic as usual until he met your gaze, his eyes softening, grumpy scowl replaced with a tiny smile.

Hoseok beamed across you, bright and sunny like the sun and rainbows combined, heart shaped smile revealing a row of pearly whites.

Jimin's hands cupped around his face, eyes studying you carefully, an apologetic smile thrown your way, and somehow you knew he was apologizing for dragging you down to dinner despite your rejection a few minutes prior.

Taehyung giggled as you felt him take a few strands of your hair before rubbing them between his palms, making them stand up awkwardly-- you've seen him do this to the others, and you couldn't stop the endearing teasing from making your heart melt.

Jungkook was eyeing the boy behind you with a small pout, but it bloomed into his signature rabbit grin when he saw you looking at him, a slight pink dusting his fair cheeks.

Despite everything they did, putting aside the fact that you did resent them for bringing you here by force....

*Why were you starting to feel like this truly was your home?*

※ ※ ※
twenty one.

Chapter Notes

I'm back! I decided to post the chapter earlier than my usual schedule :D

How are y'all doing? I hope you're having / had a great day! Have you hit your water quota for the time of the day? Have you eaten your meals?? Did you get enough rest???

Anyway, I hope I succeeded in making Joonie sound intelligent and manipulative and convincing enough when I'm just a dumb lil goldfish in real life haha

※ ※ ※

Whoever was controlling the weather seemed to took pity on you.

After countless times blocking out the sun from entering your room and wishing the ball of fiery gas would explode from within, the clouds decided to especially gather themselves and summoned heavy rain upon whatever city you were forced to live in. Pelts of water hit your barricaded window, small at first, turning heavy in a matter of few minutes.

It was as if the heavens cried along with you, dragging down your solemn mood further. Cold air bit against your skin, and as you curled in bed with your blanket, you thought you would be spending the whole day in the bed yet again.

Your thoughts was proven wrong when Namjoon knocked on your door and excused himself in.

"How are you doing, babe?"

Sighing, you turned away from him and burrowed your face to your pillow, signaling your desire to be left alone. His company felt intrusive in the safe haven of your room.

"You've been cooping yourself up in here a lot," he hummed casually, "Don't you want to go explore outside? It's a big world out there. You haven't seen anything Korea has to offer."

"Go.... outside?" You gulp, the memories of your humiliating encounters flashing in your mind. The judging looks. The pitying smiles. The foreign words which might have been an insult for all you knew.

"Oh? I thought you wanted to go out," Namjoon's smile stayed, as if he was playing around with your emotions-- playing around with you. "You want to go back. Didn't you?"

"I still do!"

"Really, because you don't sound so sure."

Maybe it was because you were so drained emotionally, or maybe it was your real feelings, but his words struck something in you. The days you were cooped here was like being in a limbo. You
honestly weren't so sure of what you wanted anymore.

"Are you saying... you'd let me... to go outside?"

"The others, most probably not. But I would," he glanced at the window and then back to you, gaze narrowing, "I would, but since you haven't been a good girl... Maybe not for the time being."

"Then why did you bother asking? I'm not playing your stupid mind game!" you snarled and hugged your pillow, turning away from Namjoon and his stupidly calm face, "I just want things to go back to normal! I'm anxious and exhausted and I'm just-- **tired** of it all!"

You had hoped that he would relent and leave you to your devices. Instead, he climbed the bed and sat on the edge, watching your back with a frown, "But we've been taking care of you like we always did, babe. All that's changed was the location and your behavior towards us."

"You forgot the abduction and confinement part."

Namjoon watched you carefully, the gears turning in his brain. He couldn't deny what had happened, and while your reaction was within his predictions, you were more stubborn than he thought. Sticking to morals and normalcy like the model student that you were.

He had to make you see it *their* way, and shoot your arguments down.

"Alright, humor me: We all wish to keep you around because we love you. But you're telling us you don't want to. Why?"

You gritted your teeth and turned fully towards him, emphasizing your sentence with a glare, "Well, maybe I **hate** you guys after all you did, ever think about that?"

Contrary to your expectation, Namjoon's calm facade didn't even twitch in the slightest, "No. If you truly did, you wouldn't have any problem with hurting us and running away. But you don't seem to have any intention to do that."

Oh god, were you getting into a debate with Namjoon? The recollection of your previous exchange right outside the house haunted you, hanging over your confidence. The thrumming of rain against the window and muffled sound of lighting matched your heart rate as they sped up.

"Well, the facts still stands that you brought me here without my consent!"

"Tell me, what's waiting for you back there, [F/N]? An aunt who barely gives you enough allowance to scrape by every month? An university who couldn't care less that you went missing? An empty dorm, exceedingly boring lectures, a dull corporate job in the future?"

All of those, you thought grimly, but instead of complying, took a blind shot at chances, "M-My friends, for example!"

"Oh, really? And where are they now?"

*Where were they?* You had no idea either. Why was no one looking for you? You've always found it strange, but maybe...

Maybe they just didn't care.

*Maybe no one cared about you.*

"We're the only ones who cares, [F/N]. *We care about you, more than anyone else.*"
Why did he have to sound so sincere?

Namjoon smiled when you met his gaze, overwhelmingly gentle and so full of love.

You knew your resolve was crumbling, but you didn't want to give up just yet.

"You... You're keeping me in this... cage! You're not even letting me go outside the house!"

"You say this is a cage, but you seem very comfortable spending your time in it," he prodded, tone not accusatory, and yet you still felt the slight jab of his words.

"This place is becoming your home each day that passes, [F/N], don't deny it. You might think of this room as your jail at first, but now, it's your safe space. And that's perfectly fine! In fact, we're happy that you're settling in."

"The reason we're keeping you contained for now is because we knew you wouldn't know better. We wanted you to sit down and think. You've had a lot of time to do so; haven't you realized how your current situation is a better alternative for you?"

"A better alternative?!" You shook your head, "You're crazy."

"Well, for one, you don't need to pay tuition," he gestured around you, onto the room you've grown accustomed to, but you had a feeling he wasn't just talking about the extravagant space, "You have your own room. You don't need to work nor stress about the future of your career. You're taken care of and you're well fed, all with zero cost."

"I... That..... Well, for that, I thank you. But still doesn't excuse the fact that--"

"You struggled with academics before, stressful papers and thesis and assignments, you weren't sure if it's worth it, not sure if it's your passion, always worrying of how to find a job in the future-- but now, you don't need to care about that anymore. Because we won't demand all those stress to be imposed upon you, [F/N]. We want you happy and safe by our side."

"W-Well," you stuttered, unsure on what to say. How did he even know about that? You never told him anything about all those thoughts inside your head! "Fine, that's also true but--"

"To complete it off, us moving in for the past two months had a positive effect on your overall mental and physical health. Being around us improved you yourself as a person. Us being around you also makes us happier. This arrangement clearly brought positive impacts to both parties. What's wrong with extending it indefinitely?"

You opened your mouth to argue, but Namjoon continued on, eyes studying your expression.

"I know you want to enjoy yourself living with us, just like back then, at the dorm. What's the difference between then and now? We're the same people. I promise you, we can treat you better here. We can spoil you and you can focus on us. It's a win-win situation. Why would you want to go back when we have something better here?"

"You belong with us, [F/N]. We're all yours."

Protest, your mind yelled.

But you had nothing. Namjoon's words made sense. You were happy amongst the boys. They seemed to be happy to have you around, too, which was a feat you still didn't understand how you managed to do.
So what was your problem in the first place?

You didn't know anymore.

"As I said, if you just want to go outside, I, for one, wouldn't mind to let you out. But only when you've proven that you fully understand, that the reason we're doing this is because we want you with us, and we just want you to be happy."

You kept your silence, chewing your bottom lip, the inside of your head a mess.

What was wrong, and what was right?

Namjoon's hand enveloped yours, firm and reassuring, and you looked up to meet his eyes.

"I know what's best for you, [F/N]. Trust me."

The drumming of rain against the house's walls and windows seemed to soften.

"This isn't normal, Namjoon."

"I know. But different doesn't always equal bad," you could feel the blond shift closer to you, "Let us show you how happy we could make you if you let us."

"Alright."

Namjoon's dimpled smile reappeared on his cheeks, and you smiled weakly at seeing the gesture. You've always loved how unique each and every smiles the boys had. They never failed to make you feel warm and giddy inside.

"Well then!" Namjoon stretched his arms and glanced at the door, "Wanna get something to eat? Jin hyung's at the office, so we can't exactly have home cooked meals.... But I could try!"

You looked up in alarm and shook your head rapidly, remembering the loud protests from the boys whenever Namjoon volunteered to help in the kitchen. Not that you've witnessed any incidents, but knowing Namjoon's knack of breaking things, you could imagine thousands of scenarios of 'what could go wrong'.

"No, no no! We can get food delivered, or just settle with leftovers, really!"

"Hey! I've been learning to cook! I can cut onions now! I mean, it'll take me ten minutes, but still...."
"Namjoon.... Just. No."

"I guess we won't be needing the chains and drugs for now...."

※ ※ ※
Assimilating back into opening up to the boys was easy.

With your sleep schedule messed up and body clock out of order due to the irregular sleeping schedule you had been having, you only managed to wake up after the sun rose high in the sky. Still, this didn't seem to deter Seokjin from ensuring that you had a proper brunch. The first day you climbed down willingly and found Namjoon lounging about in the living room, he texted the older male whether there was anything in the fridge for you to eat, and the eldest of the pack had appeared by the doorstep in thirty minutes.

"Trash can. Now," he pointed at the bar of granola on your hand. You stared with wide eyes, like a deer caught in headlights.

"Why are you here-- Namjoon said you were working??"

"I was, but my princess is hungry and today just had to be the day I had to leave early for morning meeting, hence the nonexistence of your breakfast. I'm here to make you a proper food, love, now throw that sugar bar into the trash, hmm?"

You scrunched your face in protest. Sometimes Seokjin would have these kind of days where he would go on a health streak. This meant no excessive sugar, no snacks after six, and a whole lot assortments of vegetables-based food on the dining table. These kind of days were the worst, but no one really complained about it, so you learned to live with it.

"Yes mom," you lamented, eyeing the snack sadly and doing as he said.

Seokjin's lips stretched into a gentle smile, "I really missed you calling me that."

On the other hand, Yoongi had seemed to acquire a new habit whenever he was home in the afternoons and found you lounging around the living room. You suspected he had gotten the idea from Jungkook, but one day he just slumped down beside you and settled his head comfortably on your lap.

"Uhm," you spluttered, not used to the situation, "...... Stressed?"

"Depends," he grumbled, "Are you gonna play with my hair if I said I am?"

You took that as a cue to start running your fingers through his bright locks. The composer sighed contentedly and closed his eyes before falling into his much needed nap. You wondered if this was how it would be if you had a pet cat.

The others were more rowdier when they realized how you were starting to hang around more often. It was as if your presence would cause sudden burst of energy whenever you came in the room. This point was proven when on a particular day, you walked in Jimin and Hoseok playing Just Dance. Laughs and screeches and yells in Korean filled your ears as soon as you exited your room. Being the curious soul that you are (who was also kind of afraid to find what in the world was happening down there), you stalked into the game room.
Hoseok's repeated, high pitched "AAAA" greeted your ears, along with the sight of Jimin trying to hold back his laugh as he moved per the game's instructions. You caught Taehyung's form half laying on the floor with his closed eyes laugh, and of course, Jungkook laughing while hitting the former's shoulder repeatedly (you never experienced it, but Seokjin claimed it hurt like hell, it's just that they were so used to it by now).

The youngest noticed you first, and he waved you in, switching to English, "Noona! Come see this!!"

"Oh, angel--HOW DID THAT COUNT AS A PERFECT JIMINIE DIDN'T EVEN MOVE HIS ASS!!!"

"BUT I DID, HYUNG?!!"

"YOU DIDN'T! THE GAME'S YOUR FAN!!"

"AH, DON'T PUSH ME!!!"

"WELL STOP PUSHING YOUR BUTT TOWARDS ME?!!"

"ARE YOU SAYING I HAVE A BIG BUTT YOU ASS?!?"

"[F/N] TELL JIMIN HE HAS A HUGE BUTT!!"

"JIMINIE HAS A HUGE BUTT!!!"

"TAE SHUT UP!!!"

"JIMINIE HAS A HUGE BUTT!!!"

"I HEARD THAT Kookie!!!"

"WHY ARE WE SCREAMING??!!"

Long story short, all five of you had to sit down through Yoongi's murderous glare, Seokjin's nagging as he sat every single one of you on the floor, legs tucked under your laps, and Namjoon's lecture about appreciating other people's privacy.

"So you see, there is a difference between having fun and being distruptive-- Are you listening?"

Namjoon deadpanned, eyeing the youngest two who were giggling between themselves.

You, Hoseok, and Jimin looked at the mischievous pair, the former two curious, the latter suspicious.

Jungkook's eyes flashed with manic excitement as he whispered, "Jiminnie has a huge butt."

"IT'S HYUNG TO YOU, YOU BRAT!!!"

You couldn't help but laugh.

Your new life might be full of madness, but you think you'll settle in just fine.

※ ※ ※
Hello, I hope everyone is doing fine :)

I am considering taking a break from posting next week. I'm trying to cope with something (it's not something too serious, don't worry haha) so I feel like I need time for myself. It might or might not happen, but I'm just putting this here in case it does happen, so y'all won't be left in the dark.

Hope you'll enjoy / enjoyed the chapter! Stay safe and healthy ♡♡♡

※ ※ ※

You heard Jungkook came in before you could see him.

"I'm home!" He called out. You thought of replying back with some sort of acknowledgement to let him know you were around, but you weren't sure if anyone else was at home, possibly snoozing away, and remembering Namjoon's scolding previously, you stayed silent.

"Noona, are you sleeping?" He called out, and you sensed the slight lilt of nervousness behind his voice.

He found you soon enough to save you from answering however, and his cheeks pulled up, a result of his bunny-grin.

"Hi," you answered. Despite settling in quite well, the phrase 'welcome home' still sounded foreign, "How was.... class?" Actually, now that you thought about it, you had no idea what their schedules were anymore.

"More boring than fun, but it ended early, so I get to see you early, so," he shrugged, rummaged inside his backpack for a moment, and beamed back at you as he stepped nearer to your seat, "I have something for you, noona!"

Half suspicious and half curious, you extended your hands, palms up, and looked at him in befuddlement. For a moment, the pleased smugness caused by your obedience crossed his eyes, but it was gone the moment you blinked.

Jungkook promptly dropped something on your waiting hands.

"Oh?" You flipped over the small object in your hand, inspecting the rounded object and smiling at the memories that came with it, "Where did you get this?"

"Found it in a secondhand shop. They don't sell them anymore in stores," Jungkook said the last part sadly, "Do you know what it is, noona?"

"Sure I do," your memory flashed back to when you were a lot smaller, holding a similar tamagotchi
in your tiny little hands and carrying them everywhere you go, "I'm proud to say that I'm the mother of a very disciplined, independent alien daughter."

"Awww," the male giggled, "That sounds like you, noona. Well, this one is different."

"Different how?" You frowned. The rounded shape was the same, and so was the three buttons on the bottom part of the small rectangular screen.

"Well, why don't you find out?" He hummed, circling the sofa and settling in beside you.

You turned the small gadget on. Instead of an egg however, you were presented with an already developed character, with a design you've never seen before.

Is that.... a bunny?

"Cooky?" You read the name aloud, looked at the male, and then at the screen, then back at Jungkook, this time giggling. "Really? I take care of you in real life enough, now you want me to take care of you in here too?"

"But noona loves to take care of me," he whined, tilting his head and pouting at you. Darn it. He knew you wouldn't be able to resist that adorableness.

Rolling your eyes, you focused back onto the small electronic in your hand and started pressing the buttons to feed (you noticed how the food selection comprised of Jungkook's favorites) and clean (the bunny jumped into a bathtub and started playing with the bubbles) the virtual pet.

"Did you make this or something? I don't remember these activities being so animated."

"Just some simple coding," his shoulders bumped against your arm as he shrugged. You've always known how Jungkook loved games and his choice of major, but still you gave him a surprised look, which turned into a proud smile when your eyes met.

The younger boy beamed at you, and you patted his head, mentally squeeing at how endearing he looked as you praised him. In all honesty, it was cute how he reveled on any sort of approval or recognition from you. You knew he only allowed himself to accept such treatments from few selected people.

It made you feel **special**.

"Okay, does Cooky want to....," you eyed the activity icons, "Exercise, play games, or.... what does that 'heart' mean?"

"Mmm, why don't you find out, noona?" His voice reverberated right next to your ear as he slumped his head on your shoulder, and you shivered at the close proximity. His breath was warm against your neck, and you mentally urged yourself to calm down.

Were you scared? Nervous? Embarrassed?

.... Excited?

"Hm, no," you teased, choosing the barbell icon. The small animated bunny started lifting weights on the two colored screen and you watched petulantly as Jungkook gave you a frown and a weak poke to your sides, accompanied with a saddened, drawled-out whine.

"But noonaaaaaa~"
"Excuse you, I'm playing a game," you giggled, already knowing the little game between the two of you very well. You've missed the sibling-like banter, and was oblivious to the look in Jungkook's expression as he glanced at your smiling face. "You play your games by your own rules. Why can't I do the same?"

"You're mean!"

"What are you gonna do about it?" you playfully stuck your tongue out at the boy, who was oh so tempted to lean closer and press his lips against yours and--

"I'll bite you, noona," he said playfully, but he would prove that he was serious as soon as you declined him yet again.

Unfortunately for him, you chuckled and ruffled his hair, deciding it was enough teasing for now, and pressed the heart option.

You cooed when another bunny with a bow on one of her ears walked into the screen. Cooky pulled out a bouquet of what seemed to be flowers (or carrots -- honestly it was a little hard to see because of the small and pixellated screen), before opening the door for a convertible car which had driven up beside them, letting the female bunny to climb first like a gentleman before climbing in themselves and driving into the sunset.

When the bunny was back on the screen, his happiness meter was maxed.

Noona, I'm so sorry.

Jungkook's eyes flitted over your neck as you busied yourself with the small platformer mini game he inserted into the small gadget. They weren't bandaged anymore, and the wounds were healing, already forming into scabs.

It seems like I'm the one who always makes you sad or cry.

You absentmindedly reached up to scratch the itch on your recovering skin, and Jungkook gave a warning grunt, catching your wrist and pining them back to your lap. He was given a sheepish grin as a reward and huffed proudly in accomplishment.

It's just, when it comes to you, I can't seem to control myself.

The boy's smile fell when the image of you hurting yourself replayed itself in his mind. His chest clenched as if thousands of needles were stabbing relentlessly onto the deepest part of his heart. He never wished for you to hurt, and he hated how weak it made him feel whenever you were in distress.

But you don't need to worry anymore, noona.

It's now apparent to him that he needs to protect you not just from the others, but from yourself, as
well.

I'll protect you from now on.

As long as I'm still breathing and blood still runs within my veins, nothing will ever hurt you, ever again.

And if I have to be __ you to keep you safe, then so be it.

***
twenty four.

Chapter Notes

Heya. Sorry for the long absence... Work was super busy, I kept falling sick, and I just have no motivation to write whatsoever. Basically, life happened and I was burned out from everything...

Chapters are going to be irregularly updated, but I promise I still intend to finish the story till the very end :)

*Home is where the heart is.*

The young Seokjin didn't understand this.

Home was the big mansion with grand staircase and shiny marbled floor, too massive and cold and lifeless as he waited for his parents to return from their business trips. Home was where his room was, lavishly decorated and fully stoked with the latest game consoles and plasma TVs, but what did those matter when he had no one to share it with? Home was the place filled with lying, two faced adults who wanted to please him just so they would get into their employers' good side, and he was so sick of it all, yet still he craved for their attention because he was so deprived of it.

*Home is where the heart is.*

The young Jin didn't understand this either.

Home was where he was born, after countless nights of desolation and grieving, of tears and muffled sobbing, of countless unanswered questions muffled against their pillows -- 'why does no one care about me?', 'would it have been better if I hadn't been born?', 'I don't want to do this anymore'. Home was where he took control of the first time, after endlessly giving and giving and giving, only to receive betrayal in the end anyway, and as he took back what remained of his broken self, he realized he was the only one who could save Seokjin. *Seokjin, and himself.*

They remembered reading about it sometime later. When Jin had to start preparing to become the heir of the company, he saw the title of the book among the array of shelves in their personal library.

Dissociative identity disorder.

*Of course,* the both of them thought at the same time. *That explains it. Freaks like us would never have a real place we can call home.*

But whenever they gazed into your eyes, whenever you fussled about their wellbeing and scolded them from overdoing themselves, their chest expanded with warmth, love, affection. Seokjin thirsted over your compliments and praises. Jin showered you with gifts and treated you like a princess -- their one and only princess.

*Home is where the heart lies.*

*And you've became their home.*
"Let me take you out shopping," Seokjin asked gently, testing the waters one morning after most of the boys went on their activities.

"You mean a groceries run? Okay, I could help!" You lit up at the prospect of going outside. At the back of your mind, the fleeting thought of being able to run away lingered.

But you remembered Namjoon's words.

Why would you run when you were perfectly happy and taken care of here?

"No, love, that's still around two weeks away. But of course you could come along when the time comes," Seokjin chuckled at your enthusiasm, "I'm talking about you. Don't you have things you want to buy? Decorations for your room? Some clothes your size? Although if you prefer to continue to use ours-- especially mine, I don't mind at all."

"Oh, um," you pondered about your choices. While continuing to wear their clothes was a tad embarrassing, wouldn't asking them to buy you things trouble them further? They were keeping you well fed, they paid for your utility bills, and you had the whole house without spending a dime, how could you possibly ask for more?

You shouldn't.

"Don't feel bad to ask us for more, love. I love to spoil you. The prettiest things for my loveliest girl," he stood from his seat across you and settled on your side, brushing your hair in soothing caresses.

You've been a little on edge around Seokjin ever since witnessing how.... commanding and harsh he could be. But it was hard to doubt him when he treated you so gently like this, as if he was admiring and touching the finest cut of diamonds in the world.

"Well," you started, trying to find the words, "If it's really okay with you, I'd.... I'd like to have my own set of clothes at least, b-but!" you added quickly upon seeing how his eyes sparkled, "Nothing too fancy, just a few sets will do, you know?"

Indulging a little wouldn't hurt.... right?

"Aw, my precious [F/N]," he cooed, "Of course! Let's go shopping and if you have anything that catches your eye, don't hesitate to tell me, alright?"

"Okay," you obediently agreed and was rewarded with a brilliant smile.

It wasn't until he asked you to get ready and told you that he'll fetch you a proper set of clothes you can use outside, that the reality of the situation hit you. You really were going outside.
"Seokjin?"

"Yes, love?"

"You're okay with me... going outside?"

"Hmm? Well, you look like you wanted to. I just want to fulfil my pretty lady's wishes. Although...."

Jin's hand gently caressed your cheek, trailing onto the side and down to your shoulder. His warm eyes darken, and suddenly the kind smile seemed more sinister than caring. You froze, eyes unable to look away from the handsome male as his intense gaze bore onto yours, searching for the slightest change in your whole being.

"You're not thinking to run away or anything of the sort, aren't you, princess?"

You blinked.

You couldn't deny that a small part of you still urged you to escape this madness. You could lose him in the crowd. It would be easy enough to do so. And there would be more people you could seek help from.

Maybe.... Just maybe....

"N-No...."

He stayed silent for a moment before his lips twitch and his grip on your shoulder loosen, but not before his fingers danced in a fleeting featherlight touch across your neck.

"Mm. Alright, princess."

You didn't have to know about all the precautions he had in place to keep you from escaping them.

And the punishments he had in store if you really tried your chance in running away would make sure you never wanted to leave him, ever again.

You felt undeniably out of place.

As excited you were to bask in the direct sunlight and natural breeze of fresh air mixed with engine fumes, it was daunting to be stuck in the middle of such a large crowd, who seemed to be judging every single of your actions. You've known of your dislike of being squashed between large hoards of people since way before all this happened, but not to the point of being this anxious and nauseous.
So you indirectly conveyed your discomfort by clinging onto Seokjin while trying to not hurl in the middle of the road, and you said nothing when you noticed his grip tightening around your wrist, his smile blooming a little wider by your show of vulnerability.

"I'm sorry love, I thought you would like to enjoy the street view, but we should've taken the car, shouldn't we?"

"I think--" you closed your mouth. A group of giggling girls -- young, chic, and perfectly proportioned, you noted with a heavy heart -- passed by you, and you could've sworn they took one glance at you before breaking into a fit of high pitched laughter.

"Y-Yeah w-we should have."

The fact that they were looking at Seokjin and was just smitten by him didn't even cross your mind. When did you become so negative and scared of other people?

As if answering your silent prayers, Seokjin brought you onto a place with lesser crowd. You felt like you could breathe easier now.

.... Until your eyes caught the classy looking people dwelling about and the expensive-sounding brand names reflecting on your widened eyes. You had no idea most of them even existed, but Seokjin pointed out a familiar brand, saying how it was Taehyung's favorite, and you were completely sure.

You so did not belong here.

"Seokjin, I don't think--"

"Sssh, love, you're fine," Seokjin gently patted your head, laid an arm across your back, and sauntered over to a shop with a brand you weren't so sure how to pronounce.

The lady standing by the door stepped up upon seeing the two of you enter the premises, a pleasant smile on her ruby red lips. She asked something in Korean, which Seokjin flawlessly answered, and you tried your best to smile as if you understood what they were saying. The woman nodded politely and turned slightly away from the two of you, motioning towards the collections of clothes before bowing respectfully.

"Alright, do you want to take a look yourself, or should we start with the new collections section?"

You stared at the arrays of lovely clothes. Scratch that -- lovely and most definitely expensive clothing. Your feminine side urged yourself to grab all of them to try on, but you were too afraid to see yourself in the mirror -- would they suit you? Would they even fit you? What if you accidentally ruined the fabric somehow when you tried them on? Could you even pull off the designer clothes look?? Was Seokjin seriously going to buy you--

"How about this one, princess?" Seokjin lifted a lovely top which color reminded you of blooming cherryblossoms in a spring day.

You wondered if this was what it meant to have a sugar daddy.
And then suddenly things spiralled out of your control.

Honestly, everything was going just fine. You had just stopped being a nervous wreck and was starting to actually enjoy trying on one clothing after another, and your companion had been smiling that handsome smile of his as he watched you try on whatever he chose. You felt loved and appreciated. It was a nice feeling. You could get addicted to this.

The both of you had been merrily browsing through one of the racks when you heard someone call out Seokjin's last name in a heavy accent. One moment you saw how the male's eyes widen, something akin to fear flashing in his previously warm gaze, his full lips quivering ever so slightly. And then the next second, his expression changed drastically as he turned around, his back now facing you as he moved to shield you partly with his taller form. You barely caught a glimpse of the cold and calculative calm which had taken over his whole demeanor. It was the look which sent chills down your spine and injected fear into your veins. The look that didn't suit his loving, kind smiles.

*The look which indicated he wasn't Seokjin anymore.*

"George," he said in acknowledgement and a firm shake of hand.

You observed the stranger in curious apprehension. He was certainly not Korean, judging from his blue eyes and English accent. He wasn't young anymore, maybe in his thirties going forty, but the wide grin on his expression and stylish blond hair made him look youthful and energetic. You had the impression that he was the type who would 'work hard and play hard', maybe loose lipped and quite the mood maker in casual chats.

But you had the feeling your companion wasn't up for a casual chat.

"Why, I didn't expect to see you here! And here I was, thinking all your clothes were custom-tailored for yourself, Mr. Young Heir!" 'George' winked, and from Jin you heard a low hum of acknowledgement, which didn't sound very friendly.

And then he made a mistake of meeting your gaze.

"Hello there! Who is this girl, Mr. Seokjin? Your personal assistant? Ah, perhaps your girlfriend? She is quite a beauty!"

You might not have seen his expression clearly, but you felt the temperature drop, and judging from the way the suave looking businessman's pearly smile vanished in record speed, your friend was quite

*furious*

"Do you want to lose your job, George?" you heard the smile in his voice, calm and level and *light*, and yet each words dripped off his tongue like honeyed venom, sweet and deadly at the same time.

"Oh! No, no, I--I didn't mean to--"

"A lot of promising gentlemen had been relentlessly proposing some rather convincing deals these
past few weeks," Jin fearlessly cut the other party's words so casually, as if he was discussing the weather.

"Ah, but I assure you--"

"I wonder.... What would happen if I stopped vouching for your current position in our business arrangement."

He might as well say 'you are insignificant and I could destroy you right now'.

The foreign man was taller, given his bloodline, yet he seemed to shrink under the slightly shorter male. And he made his second mistake.

His horrified gaze switched onto you, and you knew what he meant without him saying anything.

Help.

But you couldn't move.

"Or maybe," the heel of Jin's shoes clink against the marbled flooring, the sound loud in the empty vicinity, as he moved to shield you completely from the other man's eyes, "You would prefer the jail, for all the things you've done to get to your current position. I heard it's the perfect place to reflect on your actions."

The blond paled instantly.

"Please, sir, it was never my intention to insult you nor the lady--"

"I don't care what your intention was. You will speak to me with respect. And you will not speak to her, because you don't deserve to."

"S-Sir. I understand. I ap--"

"Leave. I expect a better behavior the next time we meet."

The male said nothing, bowed as low as he could, and scurried off.

"I should've rented the damn place," Seokjin(?) sighed and turned towards you. The saccharine smile melted into a genuine one when his gaze locked onto yours.

"S-Seok--" You stopped, eyes searching for that soft glaze over his eyes, that crinkle beside his eyes whenever he grins. But you found none.

Even though he was smiling and looking down at you with adoration....

*It just wasn't the same.*

"Who.... are you?"

"Why do we insist on putting names on everything? I'm Seokjin. I'm Jin. Honestly? We're one and the same. *I am, and have always been, Kim Seokjin.*"

He placed soft kisses onto your knuckles, satisfied at the fact that you didn't pull away, even if it was out of bewilderment and fear.

"Now then..."
"... which shop does my princess wish to visit next?"

All their life, they've been giving and giving and giving.


*So just this once, it's fine for him to be selfish and take what he wanted to have, right?*
twenty five.

Chapter Notes

So many references in this chapter. Did you get everything? :) On a more serious note, just what did I just write, guys? Why do I enjoy writing these stuff?? I swear I'm not a psychopath! ✓(' □ ' ; )

I'm always grateful for your support and I hope you're enjoying the chapters so far! The book is on the mid-chapters by now and I hope to see it end with a high note in the far future ♡

※ ※ ※

"Wakey wakey!"

The strong smell and overly loud greeting hit you before you could fully open your eyes. Groaning, you buried your face onto the second pillow beside your head, rolling onto your stomach as you sighed contentedly onto the fluff. By the amount of brightness in the room, you were aware that it was already high noon, but you hadn't had a peaceful sleep last night after all you've experienced, so you desperately wished for sleep to take you back onto its embrace.

But Taehyung always gets what he wants.

"I said wakey wakey pretty lady!!" He giggled and pounced on top of the bed before shaking you. Relentlessly.

Honestly, you almost rolled off the bed.

"Stop it, you meanie!" You fake-cried as you fell onto your back and decided to smack him with a pillow.

The soft material fell from his face, and you froze at the blank expression on his face.

Oh...

Was that too much?

Did you perhaps....

.... anger him?

A mischievous smile split his lips before you found yourself smothered by the very same object you just threw at him. His hands drift onto your ticklish spots and started working against you. High pitched yelps muffled against the pillow and your vision robbed, you somehow managed to locate the boy's cheeks and pulled.

Giggles and screams filled the room as you squirmed and tried to kick him off from above you. But
Taehyung was taller, and he was intent to keep in his current position, because as innocent and carefree as he was acting right now--

--my god, you looked so good beneath him like this.

Your fingers found his nose and pulled. The artist yelped and grabbed your wrist before pulling them away. In the span of time, your other hand flung the abused pillow aside as you tried to kick him off you. Taehyung let another fake pained mewl as he dramatically half-collapsed above your form, his hands falling beside your head as he pouted down at the giggling you.

You were half mad and half sleepy from the ministrations, until you realized how near your faces were and how close the distance between your lips and his were.

Your mind inwardly stopped working as you mesmerizedly stare onto his eyes, which were in turn intensively boring onto yours.

Too close too close too close

Taehyung's tongue ran across his lips bottom lip, his eyes glinting in the way which made you feel all weak on your knees had you were standing, as he leaned even closer,

his breath

hitting your cheeks

and

he bit your nose.

"Payback!" He cheered and rolled off you, sticking out his tongue when you gave him a pair of wide disbelieving eyes.

"Wh--Did--Wha?" You spluttered, not registering what in the world had just transpired. Taehyung winked as he inched farther from you, and you sat up in a daze, bewildered and embarrassed.

Your nose tingled at the strong smell again, and your eyes scanned around the room.

To find buckets of paints pushed onto one side of a wall in a neat little cluster.

"Um. Okay, why? What? ... Why?" You asked, pointing to the objects, brain still laggy from sleep and mind still frazzled.

The boy giggled as he patted your room's plain white wall, "I had an idea and I asked Joon hyung and he said yes so we're going toooo," he made a drum roll sound before spreading his arms out, smiling brightly as if he'd won an award, "Paint a feature wall in your room! Applause please!"

You tilted your head but clapped anyway.

".... What??"
"It'll be fun! Please? Pleeease? Pretty pleeeeeease?"

The male whined, his full lips jutting out in a cute pout. 

.... You couldn't help but wonder how kissing Taehyung would feel like. His lips looked soft and plump and the memory of your overly close proximity seconds ago resurfaced in your mind.

"F-Fine! But let me freshen up first!" Averting your eyes from the handsome boy, you climbed out from your bed and headed straight to the bathroom.

As if he knew what you were thinking of, the painter smirked.

*Hook line and sinker.*

"Are you having fun?" Taehyung asked as you finished sketching the final design of your made up robot character onto the wall.

"Yeah! .... I mean I'm probably also high on paint fumes, but I am having loads of fun!"

At first, you had no idea what you wanted drawn on the wall. Sceneries reminded you of the outside world. Somehow the idea didn't seem that appealing anymore. Plus, you weren't sure if you would be able to paint them nicely. You feared it would just turn out into a typical drawing of an elementary school kid -- two mountains with the sun coming up in the middle of them along with some houses and farms or maybe rivers on the lower land.

So in an attempt to spark your creativity, Taehyung showed you a photo in his phone consisting of a quick sketch of seven characters, which were apparently designed by the boys.

"Designed for what??"

"Jin hyung's company's promotional advertisement targeting young children. They wanted animated characters, and he thought we could help him to come out with something!"

You thought they looked cute, so you agreed to let Taehyung sketch them onto your bedroom's wall. At some point in time when he was sketching the fluffy white alpaca nibbling on donuts, he turned to you and asked you to add in one more character onto the pile, since being idle was 'no fun'.

"But I don't know what to draw!"

"Just draw anything!"
You thought hard as you stared at the white space in front of you.

"....I'm blanking. I need coffee."

"Oh my god, you're morphing into Yoongi hyung," the male gasped in mock despair before his expression switched onto contemplation, "Well, let me give you some ideas then! Pick one that infires you!"

"Okay?"

"Okay, here goes. Calico cats, snow white, tigers, doors, hot air balloons, converse shoes, bombs, seesaws, fire, rain, space robots, smeraldo flowers, apples, wings, airplanes, butterflies, whales--"

"That's a whole lot of random things," you mused with a smile. You thought back of some of your messages with Taehyung and one keyword hit you harder than the others. Kids love space robots, don't they?

And that was how it lead to the present time, with you smiling proudly at the grey-and-white character of your own creation.

You named them Van.

You had no idea why, but it was as if some millions of people telepathically shouted the name inside your mind.

"Are you having fun?"

Taehyung asked yet again around an hour later, still as cheerful, head tilted, strands of his bangs falling near his beautifully long eyelashes as he continued to outline and paint in more small decorations on the white gaps on the wall. You had been helping him with filling in the spaces with random things too, and honestly by now your wrist was hurting. How in the world can he do this all day?

Still, you were having a good time, so you agreed wholeheartedly with a cheery 'yep'.

You were going to sleep with the strong paint small clogging up your nose every time you breathe, but as you stared at the various characters decorating one of your room's wall, you felt an overriding sense of accomplishment.

His gaze continued to stay on you, so you looked back at him and smiled back, a little unnerved at its intensity.
Taehyung's hand slowed down against the wall, "So do I make you the happiest?"

At the unusual question, you had to take a step back and recollect your thoughts. That was kind of hard to say. You've witnessed how each of the boys had enabled you to feel happiness, each in their own way, so having to point out who made you the most elated? How do you measure joy? Was this him being unexpectedly deep and philosophical again?

You shrugged and decided to go with the general answer, "I mean, everyone--"

"Bzzzt! Wrong answer, [F/N]!"

Your smile slipped away from your lips.

The boy in front of you was still smiling, but you couldn't help to shiver at the emptiness in his eyes. How could something so beautiful brought such chilling bubbles of fear in the pit of your stomach?

"Um, but there's no correct or wrong answer here, ri--"

"The correct answer is, 'Yes, you make me the happiest, Taehyung'," he said patiently, like a father teaching a child how to pronounce words they didn't know.

Your eyes flicker between his slowly diminishing smile and the slim pencil he had been using to outline the characters, firmly gripped between his fingers. You didn't know why, but you feared the thin and slightly blunt tip it had.

"But I--"

Half of the pencil snapped right before your eyes and hit the floor with an overly loud thump in the now silent and chilly room. You had no idea where the broken pieces of instrument landed however, seeing as your eyes were locked onto Taehyung's blank stare. Small beads of blood formed on his fingers as the wood splinters sank onto his skin. In other situations you would've worried about the wound, but right now you were more concerned about yourself.

His expression reminded you of the first day you woke up beside him and Jimin, when you continued to reject his advances.

Paralyzed with shock and fear, you barely remembered to breathe as the male's lips opened.

"Let's try that again," your captor said softly, but the sound filled your ringing ears in the disturbingly silent room,

"Do I make you the happiest, [F/N]?"

*Answer it correctly, [F/N]*

Who knows what he'll do if you don't?

"Y-Yes, you make me the h-happiest, Taehyung!"

The art major blinked slowly, seemingly not satisfied by your answer.

"Say that again."

"You... make me the happiest, Taehyung..."

He sighed softly, eyes attentively watching every fumble and hesitation in your words.
"Hmmm?"

Seeing how his expression didn't change, you stepped forward out of panic and tried your best to smile at him, even though you could feel your lips quiver at being around such a close proximity with this Taehyung. For a good measure, your hand pressed softly against his sternum, knowing how much the male favored skinship.

"You make me the happiest, Taehyung! Really!"

That seemed to do it.

His eyes softened, he grabbed your hand and placed your palm against his cheek, and you nearly collapsed in relief at the familiar sight of wide rectangular grin.

"Ah, petal! Being with you makes me the happiest man alive, too!"

You're mine, [F/N]. Forever and always. You'll always be mine, just like how I'm always yours. You won't be happy with anyone else. You only need me. Your happiness should only exist with me.

They say words have power, right?

They say when you say it enough times, what you keep wishing for will come true, right?

They say the universe will align everything if you keep acting as if you have it in your grasp, right?

So I'll keep saying it. Over and over and over.

[F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine.
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[F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine. [F/N] is mine.
twenty six.

Chapter Notes

I know this is pretty short.... But worry not Hobi stans, there will be one extra Hoseok centric (well, kind of) chapter in the future :) 

※ ※ ※

You were in the middle of tidying up your bedhead onto an acceptable style one afternoon, when your ears picked up a series of knocks from the door of your bedroom.

You waited for the door knob to turn and reveal one of the boys.

..... But the slab of wood stayed still.

Now that was strange.

By now you have completely disregarded the concept of privacy. Most of the time, the boys would just waltz in, regardless of daytime or nighttime, and you would consider yourself lucky if you were given any sort of intrusion warning from your frequent visitors. Taehyung especially, had seemed to develop a habit of sneaking into your bed late at night without you noticing, resulting in you waking up with a certain artist spooning you from behind. It was pretty cute but also kind of creepy, honestly.

Only Namjoon, Hoseok, and Seokjin had the mindfulness to actually knock these days, so you suspected it was one of them.

Springing to your feet, you grabbed the dark colored knob and swung them open, expecting one of the boys to greet you, only to find...

.... no one.

Were you going mad? After who-knows-how-many-days of being cooped inside the house? Have you started hallucinating out of boredom?

Your feet brushed against something on the floor, and you jumped back in surprise, eyes zeroed to the culprits -- a small pink sticky note with an arrow pointing forward, and a yellow colored one with the words, 'wake up, angel!' along with a simple drawing of a sun.

"Hoseok?" You called out curiously.

Silence.

"Hobi??" You called out again, slightly louder, just to be sure.

Another silence.
Now that was really strange.

Where was everyone?

You picked up the two tiny papers and shut the door behind your back. The arrow was pointing down the hallway, so you followed, tracing your steps and looking around for clues.

The second and third yellow colored note caught your gaze. Based on their placement on the wall right by the stairs and the intricate railing, you were supposed to go downstairs. You did so slowly, ears alert and eyes searching.

"Hobi?"

The absence of an answer led you to look around a tad more, and it was a good thing that you did, because other notes containing arrows pointed your way onto the backyard through the glass windows.

You caught the cheerful dancer waving at you from across the glass panels.

Your lips stretched upwards into a happy curve, an automatic reaction whenever seeing Hoseok grin so brightly. Reaching the sliding glass panel in no time, you pushed them aside and stepped onto the well maintained small garden, careful to not walk directly on the grass as you threaded through the cobblestones path towards where the male was sitting down. Hoseok was seated on the wooden floor of the raised platform where you guessed was the place the boys would normally use to grill their food outside, judging from the stationary barbecue pit on the side. He had cleared a space by pushing the small tables and chairs towards one side, laid a massive mat on their place, and set up a lovely picnic space for the two of you.

"What's all this?" You asked, still with a smile, observing the effort he had clearly put into setting these up. He even had a picnic basket, a travel pitcher probably full of ice cold sprite, and to top it off, a clear vase full of colourful flowers.

You almost wished you had a phone so you could Instagram the precious sight.

"Ta-dah! Did I surprise you?" Hoseok beamed, spreading his arms to indicate the whole setup.

"Yes! I didn't expect you to do this, and it was so silent so I thought no one was in the house..."

The male's smile dimmed at your expression, and he cooed sympathetically, "Aw, are you lonely, [F/N]? I'll talk to Namjoon, see if you can get a phone so you can call us anytime you feel lonely!"

A phone! You struggled to control your excitement at the prospect of owning a gadget which could both entertain you, and quite possibly let you keep in touch with the outside world.

"That would be lovely, Hobi..."

"I told you, whatever you need, you can ask me! Now, come and sit down, angel! I'm sure you're hungry!"

You obliged, seating yourself on the opposite side from Hoseok and letting him pamper you.
This time, you were in the middle of enjoying the store bought sandwich Hoseok had prepared for you (it wasn't as fresh as Seokjin's home made ones, but hey, it's the thought that matters, right?) when you were, yet again, interrupted.

The doorbell rang.

Lips upturned in a small frown at the interference from a potential visitor, the dancer rose from his seat, throwing an apologetic smile at you, "I'm sorry, Angel. I'll get that, you wait here, okay?"

You nodded and peered through the glass to see his back disappearing behind the wall as he made his way towards the front door hallway.

Hoseok returned a short while later, a brown bag in his hold. Instead of rejoining you however, you saw him going onto the kitchen. It was the first time you witnessed the boys having visitors, and your curiosity was at its peak.

You contemplated on following him and maybe getting some ice cubes to add to your drink, but before you could so much stood on your legs, Hoseok had made his way back towards you.

"Who was that?" you asked with interest as soon as he was close enough.

"No one important," Hoseok brushed the topic away lightly with a smile before sitting down, but instead of settling across you, he chose to place himself right beside where you were seated.

The much shorter distance made you feel somewhat nervous, but you persisted on as the boy took a swig of his iced soda, "Oh. What did they give you?"

"Nothing important," again, he swept your question away as if it was irrelevant, "Eat your food, Angel. I want your belly full, okay? Is your drink watered down from the ice cubes? Should I get you a new glass?"

A little irked at the continuous avoidance from your questions, you stood up with your drink and shook your head stubbornly before he could protest, "I'll get some ice cubes-- and I'll do it myself, it's fine."

The sunny dispositioned male only raised his eyebrows at your rejection, chuckled, and nodded in confirmation. You huffed and climbed down the small platform before slipping through the glass door onto the cooling indoor space of the house.

You wondered why you were so irritated at Hoseok's abstract answers. Maybe it was because he was always so willing to do everything you asked for. Well, you doubt he would assist you if you had asked for his help to run away or something along the line, but other than that, he had always been so accommodating. If he was willing to ask Namjoon to get you a phone, maybe....

Maybe you could.... use him....?

The splash of your drink as the ice cubes dispensed onto the mug felt cold against your skin and snapped you out of your thought.

*No, no, how could you think like that?*

Hoseok was too nice, you can't just *use* him! You treasured him, and he truly seemed like he trusted you... You can't just....
With a sigh, you grabbed a tissue, dabbed clean the spills on your hand and the fridge exterior, and had just thrown the thin sheet onto the bin when the familiar brown bag caught your gaze.

The desire of wanting to know more getting the best of you, you briefly glanced towards the kitchen entrance, and angled yourself to take a peek at the contents of the bag inside the trash bin. A small box with clear plastic cover. Inside, although the content had seemed to be deformed, looked like some kind of... cake?

But really, you couldn't be sure.

It didn't make sense either. Why would a perfectly intact cake found itself inside the bin? Just who had visited earlier? Why were you not allowed to know--

"What are you up to, Angel?"

Your whole body reacted with a jolt at the sudden question. Eyes widened and heart beating a mile a minute, you flashed the male a smile as your brain tried desperately to form an excuse.

You had a feeling telling him honestly wouldn't have a nice aftermath.

"I-I was just, uhm, lost in thought!"

Hoseok's smile stayed.

You had no idea if he was playing along or he truly did believe you.

"Oh?"

"I was.... contemplating..... on whether I, uhm, want a dessert after this!" You shifted your weight on your other leg, "Now that I thought about it, I'm kind of craving for strawberry shortcakes...."

"I had a matcha cake prepared, but if [F/N] wants a strawberry shortcake, then she gets a strawberry shortcake!" Hoseok beamed, patted your head lightly, and escorted you out back towards the garden to continue your picnic.

You exhaled in relief inwardly.
We had a visitor

This better be important
I told you I have an important meeting today

He saw [F/N] when you guys took her out from the house

That's a 'welcome to the neighborhood' gift
I knew you shouldn't have taken her outside

Look what happened

When Taehyung gets home, describe him and see if he knows he guy
We'll take care of it
Don't do anything rash

Egghead
We'll take care of it

Don't do anything rash

Read that twice

Don't do anything rash

Now he knows [F/N] is staying with us

And he'll think of [F/N] when he pass by our house

Host. store I suppose he probably thinks [F/N] is so pretty and that's why they gave that gift

Who wouldn't be attracted to such a sweet girl

Hyung

I can't

Eomma

Jung Hoseok

You're not allowed to exit the house until one of us gets back home

Yoongi
"Are you texting the guys?"

"Mhm."

"About what?"

Hoseok smiled down at you, your head settled comfortably on his lap as you entertained yourself with Jungkook’s Nintendo Switch, the cooling air conditioner had long since cooled the both of you down from being out in the garden.
His beautiful, sweet little angel.

So oblivious, so pure...

The only light in this dark, ugly world.

"Nothing important you need to care about, my angel."

※ ※ ※
I'm not sure if this is also the case for ao3, but it's the current situation in Wattpad, so I'm just going to put this here too.

I am a little concerned to know that a lot of my reader seems to be really young, and I've seen comments saying they're getting panic attacks as they read. Please do take note that I've marked the book as Mature. Please please please stop reading if you're sensitive to the trigger warnings. I'm not joking. Your mental health must come first. The book is just going to get darker and psychotic as it goes on (because that's the kind of book this is), and I'd rather lose readers than getting more views at the cost of your wellbeing.

Please. Take care of yourself.

And to add to that: no, I don't condone or support the kind of relationships going on in this book in real life. I hope all of my readers understand that. Please seek help if you're in an unhealthy and borderline abusive relationship. I've clearly stated 'Unhealthy Relationships' on the warning right in the story's summary. It's not just there for show -- I really mean it.

Stay safe and take care, okay? Remember, this story is just purely for entertainment ♡

※ ※ ※

You had been watching the TV as the newscaster talked about how the overall depression rate all around the world was unfortunately increasing, when you came to the realization that you were, if you had to describe it with a word:

Content.

Your eyes travelled down at the fluffy blanket around you. Courtesy of Yoongi, who had passed by and just wrapped the soft material on your starting-to-freeze body. The warm thermos of tea leaning against your blanketed thigh, given by Hoseok before he went for his practice today. Then, at the book you had been reading; a series from Namjoon's personal favorite collection he had happily leant to you.

A prickling at the back of your neck made you look up and caught Jimin's eyes, which widened in surprise and quickly looked down to his magazine as he giggled softly at being caught staring.

It was apparent now that you had the time and leisure to observe them.

You've seen their eyes. The way they looked at you. You've witnessed their gestures. The irrefutable fact of how they treated you with great care and how they would always be mindful of your needs. They truly never lied when they told you how precious you were to them. You could feel their
affection, and you knew they loved you.

Most probably a whole lot more and in a different way than how you loved them.

Honestly, you couldn't deny the fluttering butterflies in your chest at their sincerity whenever they interacted with you. And you also couldn't seem to fight back against the growing fondness in your chest, despite knowing that your relationship with them wasn't exactly normal and most probably unhealthy.

Sure, there were times when their actions scared you, but they never got too hostile to the point of actually hurting people, at least physically. So all was fine and dandy, right?

You felt.... *needed*. And boy was it a pleasant feeling.

But....

"Noona, here!"

Snapped out of your thought, you looked up to meet Jungkook grinning down at you from behind your seat. Smiling, you turned around and eyed his outstretched hand.

A phone.

"It's for you," he clarified, gesturing for you to take it.

Dumbfounded, you accepted the gadget and studied the brand new smartphone Jungkook had just given to you.

Was this really happening? Did Hoseok really talk to Namjoon and managed to get you your own personal phone?

"It's a brand new LG G7," the youngster said as he sat next to you, watching as you powered on the slim electronic, "It has a messaging and a call function-- but you can only send and dial our numbers, of course. The basic apps are all there, too. Also a few popular gaming apps I thought you'd like to play. I deleted off the Play Store though, but if you want anything installed, you can tell me! As long as Namjoon hyung says it's okay, I'll install it for you! Isn't it great, noona?"

Ah, so there was a catch.

But that's fine, right? You're doing fine. You don't want to escape. *You are content.*

"Thank you, Jungkookie!" you smiled up at the black haired boy, and he replied with his signature bunny grin.

*So cute.*

".... You didn't put anything funny in there, did you?"

You turned to the boy sitting across you, surprised at the unamused and slightly accusing tone he had taken.

Not minding your surprised look, Jimin eyed the younger boy in suspicion. Taehyung's gaze switched from his mobile screen and followed the contemporary dancer's gaze, his own eyes narrowing as his game was left forgotten.
"What? I didn't!" Jungkook scoffed, falling back onto the sofa as he folded his arms in front of his chest, "Besides, what kind of 'funny things' I could've put in there?"

"Like unblocking only your phone number for incoming and outgoing calls," Taehyung decided to chirp in, "Or remotely turning on the camera when you want to."

"What? You've got to be kidding me...... Hyung, do you not trust me?"

Your newly acquired phone suddenly rang, the loud tone cutting through the heavy atmosphere. Jimin's name flashed on the screen, and you watched in confusion as the caller who was sitting just across you observed your phone, his own gadget sitting on his hand.

"...... Huh. I guess you really didn't," the pink haired male shrugged and dismissed the call.

Jungkook rolled his eyes.

Taehyung silently observed the interaction.

You had absolutely no idea what to do. The three of them always got along nicely. Small banters, you've seen lots of times. But this kind of standoff was a first.

"Princess, could you call my phone, please? I seem to have misplaced it!" Jin's appearance saved you from having to think of an interruption.

Overtly glad at being given something to do to escape the uncomfortable silence, you thought nothing of it and nodded in confirmation, opening the Contact app and halfway onto tapping 'Kim Seokjin', when Jungkook spoke, voice clearly annoyed.

"Why not ask Taehyung?"

"Because I said so."

"Do you all really not tr--"

"Go on," Jin urged, palms resting at the back of the sofa you were sitting on.

You tapped his contact name.

A ringtone which belonged to Seokjin's filled the room. The brunette reached behind onto his back pocket and smiled as he withdrew his phone.

"Oh, I'm sorry, it was in my other pocket," Jin lifted the gadget to his ear and leaned down onto your sitting level, all the while watching the screen of your phone intently, "Hmm. Everything looks good. Alright then."

Seokjin peered over the small group including you, wearing his gentle motherly smile, "Any request for tonight's dinner?"

That spurred immediate reactions from Jimin and Taehyung in the form of bright smiles, as if the uncomfortable tension was just a mere daydream.

"Kimchi jjigae!"

"Japchae!"

"Better yet, both!"
"Taetae agrees!"

"I suppose I could make those," the eldest in the house hummed in contemplation, "Jungkook, [F/N]?

"Huh? Oh, um. Anything is fine, really," you fidgeted on your seat and turned to the male sitting beside you.

The youngest tongued the inside of his cheek in blatant irritation and stood up, before storming towards the direction of the stairs.

You looked between each of them in confusion and worry.

*What was going on?*

Before you knew it,

\[ \frac{1}{2} \]

your little haven was crumbling

*[***]*
"Angel, do you want to join us in the studio?"

"..... You have a studio?"

Your interest piqued, you sat up from your laying down position on the comfy sofa, peering up at the two males. For a moment your eyes strayed onto their features made visible by the sportswear they were wearing.

Good lord, now you really know why everyone called Jungkook 'muscle pig' and how Hoseok did all those impossibly awesome dance moves.

You met the latter's gaze and as if he knew of your thoughts, he winked.

"Why don't you come and find out?"

".... I guess I have nothing to do, so I might as well," you shrugged and fumbled with dismantling your limbs from the blanket wrapped around your body. Thankfully you had decided on a lazy day today, meaning you had chosen a baggy shirt (probably Seokjin's seeing how large it was) and a comfy shorts which barely peeked out down the soft white cotton of your top.

The two stared at you in silence.

"........ Should I change?"

"What? No, no," Jungkook squeaked, clearing his throat as he looked away and grabbed his older friend's shoulder, pushing him towards the direction of the staircases.

"It's down there," Hoseok said as you joined them, pointing towards the dark stairs that spiraled down, "... in the basement."

"You have a proper basement area?" You asked in surprise as they flicked the light switch on so you wouldn't trip and fell down the stairs.
The air wasn't as stuffy as you imagined, much to your surprise, and the two flanked in front of you and behind you as everyone descended.

"Yeah! It's for the dance studio with a gym and a small shower attached. We use them to practice and exercise, but Jungkookie uses it the most."

"I told you, I exercise to release pent up stress.... You should join me sometime, hyung."

"Oh, it's fine. If it's stress relief, I have my own way to de-stress."

"I bet it's dancing," you laughed, followed by a soft chuckle from Hoseok. The small hallway was well lit save for one corner, where a particular door was locked shut, visibly locked by a dangling metallic latch.

"What's that door?" You asked curiously as the boys led you towards the door on the other corner, where most probably the studio and home gym were.

Hoseok grunted and placed his hand on your back as he gently led you away from your object of interest. Jungkook took the other side, smiling as he met your interested gaze, "Oh, that's the old studio. We turned it into storage room. It's pretty cluttered and dusty in there, so you shouldn't go in, noona."

"Last time Seokjinnie hyung went in to look for this glassware collection, he saw some cockroaches and spiders and ran away screaming."

"That was hilarious."

"That does sound hilarious. Poor Seokjin though. I bet none of you actually tried to console him...."

"Hey, we helped him to overcome his fears!"

You gave them both a skeptical look, "Oh, really."

"...... Let's just say the younger three bought fake spiders and roaches to throw at Seokjin hyung. The chaos lasted for a whole week."

Jungkook swerved out of the way from a reprimanding slap to his back by you and somehow managed to open the door with a flourish and a curtsy bow, "After you~"

Adorable dork.

While it was but a small studio compared to the previous ones you've visited for Hoseok and Jimin's practices back then, you still gaped in awe when you saw the panes of mirrors fully lining the three sides of the walls. There was more than enough space for one person to move freely, and on the back side, lined some intimidating gym equipments. Barbells stacked neatly on a metal rack, two mats and a pair of audio speakers tucked neatly in one corner, and the shiny wooden floor that squeaked in friction against your shoes.
Hoseok hummed idly as he scrolled through his phone, finding a song to use for his usual warmups. You stood by Jungkook, feeling a little out of place as the male beside you started stretching.

"I think you two already know, but just in case you didn’t, I have two left foot when it comes to dancing."

"You’ll be fine, angel!"

And surprisingly, you were.

Most likely it was because how Hoseok was considerate enough to keep the movements simple for you, but still, you were proud of yourself. Jungkook's advices and boisterously loud encouragements also kept you going, and by the time the second warmup song ended, you were at the very least more confident in yourself than when you first started.

"Well that was fun." you dabbed your forehead with a small towel, staring at the two males who hadn't seemed to break a sweat. How??

"We're just getting started, though!" Hoseok chimed excitedly, "Do you want to try and learn one of my choreography?"

"Who, me?" you asked back in shock, glancing between the two, "Jungkook might be able to follow, but not me! Your dances aren't exactly made for beginners...."

"I could simplify the moves for you!"

"I'll teach you until you get the hang of it, noona!"

The two glanced at each other for a moment, and you thought you felt the small sparks of fire in their gaze, but it was gone the moment you blinked. A little unnerved, you decided to go along with the flow. You didn't want to make them upset, afterall.

"I'll be in your hands, then... But please be patient with me?" You timidly spared each of them a small smile, half excited and half afraid of what will come next.

"Rest assured. We'll teach you how and where exactly you need to move your body, [F/N]."

Staying true to their words, you first handedly experienced how tolerant they were when it came to your noodle like limb movements. They were very forgiving on your mistakes and lenient with your inability to fluidly ease in into the music, despite them demonstrating repeatedly how to do it.

Hoseok had to literally repeat the same set of movements around twenty times before you got it down, and even then, it felt bland when you compare them from the mirror. The boys' movements had a purpose, had a personality engraved onto each motion. Yours just looked rigid and timid. Plus, the fact that you're not really into seeing yourself in mirrors in the first place didn't help your case either.

When you told this to the two, they only laughed and shrugged as if it wasn't a big deal.

"You'll get used to it, noona! Back when I helped you stretch and in the warmups, you were doing well. I'm sure it's just because you're not used to dancing, so you haven't found your confidence."

"Jungkook's right, you know. Everyone has to start somewhere! I'm sure you'll be a great dancer if
you train more. You *are* quite... flexible."

Something in Hoseok's eyes when he said that made your cheeks felt hot.

Still, you were learning. At the very least you had the flow of actions memorized in your head, so you knew what was going next. It's just that sometimes your body couldn't seem to keep up with you, much to your frustration.

The body waves were your greatest enemy.

"Just imagine it going up, up, up," the dancer said for probably the fifth time while pointing at his feet, up his hips and all the way up to his shoulder -- one smooth wave you couldn't seem to perform without awkwardly curling up in shame and dissatisfaction.

"I can't do it!" you half groaned. Forget body wave, you felt like you were a fish doing a sad flop after being stranded on land.

"Here," Jungkook finally stepped in after he was done giggling at your poor attempts, kneeling by your side and to your surprise, started to position your legs onto their place, "This leg goes there. And your waist like this--"

He was now standing right behind you, hands on your hips to angle them, and then trailing up to your waist where he made his adjustments, up to your shoulders.

"You start here, and from this position, you go like this for the bottom part," he nudged your legs with his own in one movement.

You felt his hands on your body, but your soul seemed to have left your mortal shell, your senses overly stimulated by the closeness and the voice coming from right behind you. Face burning, your eyes widen when Jungkook's hand pressed against your abdomen, tucking them backwards, and you felt your heart thrumming loudly against its confined space.

*You could feel the heat radiating from his body, right behind you*

*You could feel his breath fanning your hair, right behind your ear*

*You could feel his hips, molded right behind yours guiding your movements*

*He's*

*so enticingly*

*close*

"Alright Jungkook, that's enough."

A surprised yelp left you out of reflex when a hand suddenly grabbed your wrist and pulled you away from the male. Hoseok stood tall before you, a deep frown creased between his brows and his lips downturned.

Clearly, he was upset.

The black haired boy replied the display of aggression with a scowl and a defiant glare.
"What? What did I do?"

"You're being rude and touching her too much."

"I don't see noona protesting. Besides, it's not like I did it with ill intent."

"She's obviously too nice to reprimand you, so I'm doing it for her sake."

It was your turn to frown, albeit out of worry, at the uncontrollable spark of flames which seemed to erupt in Jungkook's mind as he spoke next, voice raised and his body language screaming irate anger.

"Why does everyone have a problem with me? I'm not a child! I haven't done anything wrong!"

"It's crystal clear how uncomfortable [F/N] was, being forced to be in that situation! You have to try and be more assertive."

"Don't you tell me what to do when you can't even control your--"

"Guys!" You panickedly intercept, afraid on how the situation was turning out into, "Let's all calm down!"

"Yeah Jungkook-ah, calm down," Hoseok said in succession to your statement, but it seemed to have the opposite effect, for the youngster had resorted to throw a sharp look at him, before storming away out from the studio.

You looked between the slowly closing door and the dancer's annoyed scowl.

"Should I--"

"Leave him for now, he needs to cool off," Hoseok sighed while giving you an apologetic look, "That kid has anger management issues."

You remembered the time where the younger male lashed back against you. While he did display tendencies to get angry and sulky easier than the others, you knew it was always a result of his stacked up stress. And he seemed to have a shorter meterage than the others.

"Maybe he's.... Is he stressed about something?"

"Most probably, but I say that applies to everyone else, too."

His statement made you shift on your legs and your frown deepen. Maybe Hoseok also noticed?

"You know, I think everyone is quite.... tense, these days. Do you know what's happening?"

"Hmm? Oh, you don't need to worry about it, angel. I'm sure everything will be resolved, one way or another," he chuckled darkly.

You felt a shiver trickle down your spine.

Cautiously, you decided to ask with a gentle tone, hoping he wouldn't find your question intrusive or accusatory.

"Hoseok.... Are you doing alright?"

"Angel," he crooned, the bright smile returning to his expression as he patted your head, ".... Don't
worry about me! I'll manage."

"If you say so.... Just promise me you'll take it easy, relax and destress, okay?"

"Your wish is my command."

"Destress....."

※※※
twenty nine.

Chapter Notes

I just want to say thank you again to everyone reading this story, a bigger thank you to those of you who dropped kudos, and a supermassive thank you for those who drop comments♡ They make me so, so happy!(*´∇｀*)

I hope you enjoy the fluff!

.... enjoy while it last c:

※ ※ ※

You remember how the first time you started to settle in your new home, you would instantly jolt awake whenever someone opened your door late at night.

Every time, it would be Taehyung coming in to climb onto your bed. You never knew what was the reason behind this behavior. Whenever you tried to question him or lecture him on the matter, he would divert the topic ever so fluidly, and you got the hint: he didn't want to talk about it. And so, you stopped.

You were kind of used to it now, though. Some nights you would feel him snuggle up next to you, and other times you wouldn't even realize he was there until you woke up in the morning or mother nature calls. He would always shush you gently whenever you were roused from your sleep in the middle of the night and tried to lull you back into your slumber with his humming, the low vibration pushing your consciousness back into the land of the dreams. Other times, he would get his phone to play soft classical music as he spooned you from behind, and while it was hard getting used to it at first, but the warmth behind you was too comforting.

Tonight however, for some reason, even though you hadn't woken up for quite some time, you did.

And instead of Taehyung’s soft snores or melodic hums or the slow tinkle of classical instruments, all you heard was his uneven breathing.

Senses immediately alert, you brought yourself up on the side of the bed and stared at the figure stumbling to close the door, eyes wide and heart speeding.

"T-Taehyung....?"

Your heart sped up, your imaginative mind immediately assuming the worst scenarios possible. The black figure clambered a few steps forward, reaching your bed. Your fingers clenched against your comforter, as if you could count on the flimsy material to shield you.

Before you could so much react, in one sudden motion, Taehyung let out a strained sob before dropping to his knees on the floor in front of you.

It was then you noticed throughout the dimmed night light how his whole body seemed to shake. His
palms pressed against his face, where you could barely hear the ragged breathing and soft whimpers, muffled against his skin. Your fear flipped onto worry and heart clenching sympathy, and you found yourself reaching out to the poor, trembling boy.

His eyes looked up at you when your hands touched his shoulders, fresh tears welling up and escaping down his face and palm.

And in a broken voice, he whispered, pleaded, begged,

"Don't leave me...."

You tried to comprehend, tried to think back of what kind of conversation did you last have with him. How did it get to this? Was it something you did?

"Tae--"

"Please don't leave me....."

You never knew someone could sound so weak and lost.

"I-I won't," you said the first thing you could thought of to comfort him. What else could you have said? He sounded so sad, and the sight of a sad Taehyung made your stomach churn in discomfort.

Perhaps the tenseness lately had been affecting him and manifested in this way?

"Taehyung, did you have a nightmare?" You tried to prod in hope to search for a solution which might succeed in your quest to calm him.

"I d-don't know," he said, shaking his head rapidly, his soft hair fluttering, "B-B-But it felt so r-real and I-I don't-- I don't know anymore, [F/N]!"

You jolted in shock when he whimpered and hugged your waist, burying his teary face onto your sides. Taehyung had always been one of the ones who loved skinship, so you weren't much surprised at the course of his action. The contrast between how vulnerable he was now compared to his usually carefree and aloof attitude was what made you feel like you want to cocoon him in hugs and comforting words.

Suddenly a thought struck you and you wonder if he had the same reason for sneaking away onto your bed almost every night.

"Is this a.... recurring thing?"

He didn't answer, but his hold on you tightened.

"Is that why you've been sneaking in to my room?"

You didn't miss the short movement of his head resembling a nod. Heartbroken and at loss of words, you waited patiently for his sobs to subside, gently stroking his hair amidst his crying. If Yoongi thought it was relaxing, surely it would help the poor boy too?

A few deep breaths later, you heard him whisper softly, and you strained your ear to hear him.

"I don't understand....."

"What do you not understand, Tae? Tell me?" You prompted. Being a listener was something you were good at. Maybe he just needed someone to lend their ears.
"I thought I w-was happy... Everyone's here with me. You're here with me. So w-why am I h-having these night terrors again?"

"Well--"

"What?" You leaned down with a frown.

Taehyung stayed silent. Your frown deepened at the bad chills creeping down your back and you were halfway through opening your lips to ask him to repeat his words, but at the same moment, the door clicked open softly.

Your hand stopped their ministrations and you squinted at another figure who peeked his head in and silently entered your room, their movement fluid and precise before their hushed whisper reached your ears.

"What's going on? Why aren't you sleeping, [F/N]--" Jimin halted in his steps, "Taehyung? What are you doing here?"

"He had a nightmare," you answered gently for the still slightly trembling male.

"Oh," if it was daytime you would've seen the recognition in Jimin's eyes. But it wasn't, and you could only make out the outline of his smile, "So does that mean you'll hug me if I have nightmares too?"

"I suppose I would--" You stopped in surprise at the sudden tightening of Taehyung's arms, "What is it, Taehyung?"

The tear tracks glinted under the soft light on his cheeks as the artist looked up at you, "I want [F/N] to cuddle me."

"..... Would that really help with your nightmares?"

"It will!" The younger male intercepted loudly before the other could scoff, "It will, I promise, please? Please?"

"Okay," you sighed. You were tired, and Taehyung could be extremely stubborn if he wanted to. It wasn't even dawn and you were definitely not in the mood to entertain him in a debate of how personal privacy works.

Jimin shook his head and ruffled his friend's hair, "I'm sorry you have to babysit this manchild."

You could only laugh in response. Taehyung on the other hand, seemed to not find it amusing as he turned towards his same aged friend with a scowl.

"Go away, Jimin...."

"Well, wait a minute now. It's not fair, if [F/N] has to cuddle you, then who's going to cuddle her?"

Your eyes widened, "N-No, I'm fine--"

"Nah-ah-uh, no buts! It's only fair when I get to cuddle you!" He declared proudly as if he had uttered the solution to end violence by all shapes and means.

You could have sworn you heard Taehyung growl, but you were too embarrassed at the prospect of
what was doomed to happen. Granted you had been sandwiched between the two before, but you hadn't been conscious and you managed to somehow escape the situation.

Thinking back, that was quite creepy.

"I don't think the bed is big enough to--"

Jimin pouted and gave you his infamous puppy eyes which was blinding even in the lowly lit room, "Of course it's big enough, [F/N]! .... Do you not want to cuddle with me?"

"That's not what I-- Ugh, you know what, fine. But just for this time."

"Well, what are we waiting for, then?" The shorter boy giggled and circled to the other side of the bed before climbing up the mattress and laid sideways, patting the spot in front of him with a grin.

Taehyung reluctantly released you from his hold, although as soon as you were tucked in, he immediately snuggled onto you, the three of you forming a comfy little cuddle train which fit just nicely on your bed. You sighed and closed your eyes, letting the warmth and two sets of steady heartbeats to lull your body to relax and rest.

At least this time no one quarrelled.

"You're such a nuisance."

"Tsk. Like you can talk."
He prides himself as a loyal man. He's always been devoted to the things and people he loves: the boys (although that's kind of wavering ever since they started slobbering all over you -- *for fuck's sake, can't they see he's the only one who can properly take care of his sweet Angel?*), dancing, Supreme, his fashion style, and most of all, *you*.

*Oh, you.*

You with your angelic smiles and laughs and beautiful voice. The endearing expressions and gestures you make whenever you were around him. Your selfless sacrifices, the tender caress of your fingers when they came in contact with his skin, and the way the sun creates a divine glow over your form in the afternoon. Even the panicked expression you wore when you were in a predicament was so lovable. He could just imagine how precious you would look when you're backed onto a corner with no escape, completely at his mercy and all his to take as he showers you with kisses after kisses, bites and loving touches--

*You.*

He wishes to give you everything you ask for. It has firmly became one of his goals in life. You're his queen, and he is all yours to command. He'll gladly play both the role of your doting king and loyal knight, because while he's the only one worthy to stand by your side, he has to take the utmost care in ensuring your safety.

*He doesn't mind soaking his hands in blood. Oh, he doesn't mind at all.*

His eyes stared blankly through the mangled flesh and pool of blood all over the dark concrete.

*Dull. Empty. Lifeless.*

The screams had long since died, extinguished along with the battered body's soul, yet he still remembers the way the metal sank onto meat and dragged along the filth's muscles. How the dark red blood gushed out after a swift slice into a vein, the sinner's painful gurgle as his vital liquid spilled out from his mouth, the sickening cracks following the harsh dislocation of certain joints. The weight of the knife and the pliers and the scissors and all of his beloved tools felt so *right *in his hand, like the missing pieces of the puzzle to his slowly crumbling away sanity.
His amused chuckle bubbled up from his throat, soon filling the room with a laughter which would have sounded less maniacal, if not for the horribly maimed corpse chained to the chair.

He

could

Never

get

enough.

He is the sun.

But they say the brightest lights have the darkest shadows.

And he knows full well what kind of horrid monstrosity lurks in his shadow.
The heavily soundproofed door creaked open as Hoseok exited the room. Three heads turned in succession.

"Had fun?" Jin asked, blank and stern and cold as the wine red haired male nodded and removed the studded mask covering half of his face, the manic excitement still leaving its trace in his eyes and reflected in the shortness of his shallow breathing.

"Just so you know, I'm on cleaning duty and I hoped you wouldn't be so messy, but I guess it was pointless to hope."

"Who's the guy?" Jimin asked, looking at the older boys in curious innocence, although the way he caressed his weapon as he threw the question betrayed the otherwise innocuous picture.

He had to take a few deep, calming breaths, to be able to answer, "One of our neighbour who saw and asked about [F/N]--"

"Oh, that nuisance. Well, why didn't you tell us?" The pink haired dancer frowned, "I would've wanted to land a swing or two....," Jimin glared at the older male, kicking his bat in apprehension.

If he cared enough to give you a 'welcome to the neighbourhood' cake, he was a threat, wasn't he?

"No way. Remember who had to clean up after you kids made a mess last time? Hmm?" Hoseok brushed his bangs and clicked his tongue when he felt the coagulated blood and remains sticking on the strands, "Ah, did I overdo it again?"

"It's been a long time, you probably just lost control," Yoongi watched his friend with a masked worry, "Go shower and rinse out all those gunks."

"And clean the bathroom afterwards!" Jin called out to the dancer's retreating back and rolled his eyes when he only received a lazy wave, "I don't know why I still tolerate you lot."

"Because we love you and you both love us!" Jimin cupped his face and beamed brightly. Jin stared back at the younger boy, positively murderous.

"..... Hmph. This is why I like Seokjin hyung more. Who was it exactly, anyway? Won't people notice if they're missing?" Jimin decided to ignore the eldest's blank gaze with a huff and turned to Yoongi, "And where's Namjoon hyung? He knows we're doing this, right?"

The mint haired boy shrugged. The eldest of the three sighed and took it to himself to answer the question.

"He's getting us some more sodium hydroxide for cleaning up the body."

"The magic liquid thing?"

"Sodium...? Oh, me and Tae call it the vanishing liquid!"

Jin sighed yet again, mumbling under his breath.

Childish brats.
***
thirty one.

Chapter Notes

Writing this chapter hurts

How are you all today? I hope you had a great day, or, if you've just started or is in the middle of the day, I hope it's getting better as the hours tick by! I'm so sorry I haven't been replying to comments, work has been unfair to me and just busy, then there's also socializing which drains me a lot these days. I just log in to literally publish the stories and then I would be off doing something else.

I hope you'll enjoy the chapter! :)

※ ※ ※

Today, like any other day, Yoongi was catnapping.

You weren't sure if it was an actual word, but you thought it was quite fitting; the way he stretched across the sofa, one arm dangling off the side, his head settled on your lap demanding for gentle brushes of your fingers.

Honestly if he suddenly sprouted cat ears and a tail one day, you wouldn't be surprised.

Your ears picked up sounds from the kitchen which sounded like a generic ringtone, but it was gone in a few seconds, replaced by a low murmur of Seokjin's voice and followed by a soft click of door being shut. You relaxed back onto the chair, careful to not shift Yoongi as he slept.

Like just another day, not all of the boys were in. Seokjin had taken a day off and was diligently working in the kitchen, restocking side dishes and vacuuming the whole house since the early morning. Namjoon had been trying to help, and he was instructed to take care of outdoor works which involved his infamous specialty: destroying things -- which in this particular case, wilted crops and stubborn weeds. As for Yoongi, well, he had just came out from his room in the late afternoon, grumpier than usual with dark circles under his eyes and him yawning every few minutes, so you figured he needed a nap. True enough, as soon as you sat down on the couch with a book, he crawled beside you and blissfully claimed you as his pillow.

Maybe that explained how quiet the house was.

You missed the peaceful silence. Whenever a lot of them gathered in one room these days, an indescribable tension seemed to hung in the air. You didn't really hear much of playful banters anymore; every laugh seemed strained and every expression masked.

You wonder why.

Oh, you know why.

The composer grunted and yawned as he rubbed his eyes sleepily, readjusting his place on your lap.
When he found an angle he was satisfied with, your fingers went back to play with his brightly dyed strands of hair. Still as surprisingly silky as ever, you mused in curious amazement.

"You're comfier now," voice groggy with sleep, he remarked bluntly.

"...... I'm going to need more context on that."

Yoongi inhaled deeply and shifted again before he grabbed one of your hand to bring it closer to his chest. Seemingly satisfied, he sighed in contentment and continued, "Your thighs. Super comfy."

You froze, and for some reason you felt a little awkward just sitting there.

"You're saying I'm.... uhm.... fatter?"

The male merely opened one eye and chuckled, "I'm saying you're perfect."

You couldn't help but smile at how Yoongi had said it so lightly, with as much conviction as one would say how the sky was a beautiful blue on a sunny day. He'd meant every word he said.

And that was enough reassurance for your self-esteem.

You heard footsteps after the sound of a door creaking open and slammed shut. The hair at the back of your neck rose. The male lounging across the sofa didn't seem to care much, unlike your distraught self.

Seokjin passed by the hallway, apron folded on his arms, his phone clutched on his hand and an obvious tiredness on his expression. He met your gaze and you tried to smile, hoping it would lighten the suddenly heavy atmosphere. And for a few seconds you thought it did -- he smiled back, exhausted but grateful.

But then his gaze switched to Yoongi, and he sighed.

"Yoongi."

"Mm."

"Go help Namjoon, will you?"

The sleepy boy groaned softly and made no move from his position.

Personally, you felt the both of them would do with some rest.

But before you could say as much as a syllable, Seokjin had continued on, and this time, with impatience laced thick in his tone, "Yah, Min Yoongi. Make yourself useful and help Namjoon with the chores in the backyard, would you?"

"In the backyard? No thanks."

You stiffened at the change in Seokjin's demeanor, and his tone switched from the motherly scolding into a cold assertive demand. It sounded as deadly as much as it's attractive.

"Wait, no, [F/N], focus!"

"It wasn't an offer, that was an order."

"Order," the musician snorted, "Who's speaking now? Jin? Get off your high horse. You're jealous?
Suck it up."

You could visibly see Jin's eyes darken with dissatisfaction at the defiance in the younger male's tone.

He was too used to be respected. He was the oldest for fuck's sake. He provided for each and every one of them, and this was the respect he got?

And how dare that lazyass sleeps on your lap and gets to hold your hand?

_He is my friend_

_He is a disrespectful brat, that's what he is_

_Jin, stop_

"Jin--" you started, but the eldest paid no attention, instead he was taking an attacking stance, and you couldn't seem to utter a word as the barrages of arguments started.

"What do you contribute in this house, Yoongi?"

"Excuse me? I, for one, help to pay rent, unlike the other freeloaders we're keeping here. What's your problem?"

"Oh, you pay rent! Well, this house is mine, you rude brat! I clean and cook for you lot! If you hadn't noticed, I also have to work twelve hours a day, and I can't even take one stupid day off without people clamoring for my attention! All I ask is for you to be respectful and get your useless ass moving to help!"

"G-Guys, come on, let's not--" your plead seemed to die out under the blazing heat which had consumed the previously tranquil ambience.

Yoongi sat up in record speed and stood in front of you, smirking lazily with his arms folded in front of his chest.

"You're the eldest but look at you behaving like a child."

"Oh, I'm the child!?"

"Yes, you are! If you wanted [F/N]'s attention then why don't you do it, fair and square?" The shorter male cocked his head to the side, "What are you so afraid of, Jin?"

You could see the slightest twitch in the eldest's expression at the question. But insecurity was his other half's trait. Jin was always in control, and he shot back as confidently as he could be, though shaken as he was.

"I'm not afraid of anything."

"Oh, then why don't you stop the perfect Prince Charming act and try harder? You're so insecure, aren't you? Afraid if she'll be disgusted if you get too close? Afraid if she'll realize she could just use you and throw you away, like that girl you used to fancy, what's her name?"

"You're wrong!" he yelled firmly, but you could saw his armor crumble, noticed the chip in his resolutely calm look of his eyes, now flooding with pain and hurt and betrayal.

_How could he?
Seokjin swallowed, eyes brimming with unshed tears and a newfound hatred, "What about you, then?"

Yoongi's eyebrows rose in question.

"What about me? Sorry, but I've shown [F/N] all my cards. Our bond is based on trust, and not deception or fake, made up fairy tales."

"Completely honest? Really. You tell her everything?"

"Sure, she knows of my lowest points and my insecurities--"

"Did you? Have you honestly told her how you've been feeling lately?"

Yoongi's confident smirk dropped into an angry scowl, "I'm doing fine, and besides, I've changed!"

"You think you've changed, but you know what, you didn't! I've met people like you countless times! People who spits fire and acts like they're tough shit, when in fact--"

"Shut up, Jin."

"You're weak! You still are, and will always be! And because you're weak, you try to cover your weakness with your I-don't-give-a-shit attitude! You think we don't know? You think you could fool me? You're pathetic."

"You better stop before I--"

"How does it feel so slip back into that dark place, sugar? How do you feel now, fully knowing that this time, no one's going to be there to pull you back out?"

You inhaled sharply when the teal haired male stepped forward, his fist raised in the air.

*Enough.*

"STOP!!"

The two stilled, momentarily frozen at the loud yell coming from you.

You felt like you were suffocating, being in here. Wasn't everything fine before? How did things get to this? Weren't things supposed to be fine?

"Stop! Just.... Stop this! Please! Why would you.... Why are you attacking each other like this?! I don't get it! Why are you all being so hostile against each other?!!"

The two of them looked away from you, and you didn't know if they were ashamed of their actions or they were being stubborn. But you knew with a certainty that you didn't want to be here anymore, being in between the crossfire.

"I-I'm going to help Namjoon. I want you two to settle this when I come back--*without* hostility whatsoever!" You added in quickly, trying to sound as stern as you could with your shaken state.

They nodded.
You threw them one last glare before you headed to where Namjoon was.

Away from this madness.

He heard you before you could announce your arrival.

The sound of the sliding door opening made him turn his head backwards, a "sorry I'm not yet done" almost leaving his lips until he saw that it was you who was approaching him meekly. He smiled, thinking you must had wanted to check on him or something of the sort, but this was proven wrong when he saw your downturned expression.

Namjoon's smile dropped at the fear etched on your whole body language. Miraculously, without tripping on nothing or accidentally inflicting unwanted pain to anyone he managed to pull off his work gloves and jog towards you within three seconds.

"What happened?" He asked gently, comforting hand settled on your cheek.

You felt your lips quiver as the memory replayed itself in your brain, "Jin and Yoongi were fighting. I just... I didn't like it. I don't want to be in the middle of it."

But you are in the middle of it.

"I'm sorry they made you uncomfortable," Namjoon chose to comfort you for now, but you shook your head, guilt eating your heart.

"No, it's...."

It's fine?

It's not anyone's fault?

It's my fault in the first place?

You fell silent.

Namjoon saw the conflict in your eyes and used his other hand to press against your other cheek, tilting your gaze up to meet his own.

"....... You know it's because we love you, right?"

Your eyes moved away from him in panic. The sincerity in his eyes terrified you. You had been refusing to admit it, but you knew.... You knew you were in the center of this, somehow.

Somehow, by doing absolutely nothing, you managed to make everything worse.

Or maybe it's because you weren't doing anything?
"I just... I... I don't get it. How could you... me?"

The concept of love was so confusing to the current you.

Your aunt who used to sent you small allowances every month. You thought it was love.

Your friends whom you hadn't really talked to lately messaging you happy birthdays whenever it was your special day. You thought surely, it was love.

Them quarreling over their supposedly 'love' for you.

Is this also, love?

"I don't want to see you guys fighting! It's just... that's not right... You shouldn't do that just because of me."

"I suppose they just can't help it."

Why?

Because every single one of them loves you equally?

"...... How much?"

"Hmmm?"

"How much do you love me?"

Namjoon gazed at you silently, eyes studying the way you seemed to quiver under his stare.

Oh.

You were afraid.

.....

How....

delectable.

"I--"

"[F/N], Namjoon, snacks are ready!" Seokjin called out, pouting when he saw you standing under the sun without any protection whatsoever, "Love, you need to put sunscreen! What are you doing out there in the sun? Come and get back in the house, please!"

You threw him a stubborn look, and you could see Yoongi sighing and scratching his cheek right beside the taller male.

"We sorted it out, okay? I'm sorry you had to see that. I promise, we're good now."

"Really?"

The two looked at each other and then back at you before nodding simultaneously.

".... Alright then," you gave them both a small smile, happy that they've worked out their problems and turned back at Namjoon who was watching the interactions with an unreadable smile, "Let's go
in then?"

"I'll follow you in a bit, just finishing up here!" He said, pointing to small group of dying plants left on the small garden corner.

You nodded, waved him goodbye for now, and entered the house followed by Seokjin and Yoongi.

You just didn't want to accept the reality right now.

Because when you do, you would have to make a choice.

And you had a feeling no matter what, everything were going to go down in flames.

"Oh baby," Namjoon chuckled under his breath as he uprooted the last wilting crops out of the ground with more force than needed, his previously warm brown eyes darkening with clouds of bloodlust.

"I love you so much I'd kill all of them for you had you wished me to."

※ ※ ※
Chapter Notes

Happy new year! ♡

※ ※ ※

Stifling.

If you had to describe how the house felt for the past few weeks, you would use the word *stifling*. As if there were some poison mist hangin in the air, suffocating and weighing down the mood despite everyone acting like 'normal'. It choked you and wrapped you in a blanket of discomfort, knowing that something might explode anytime soon, and you would become the witness.

Ever since seeing Yoongi and Seokjin's.... *disagreement*, you had been trying to step back and just *think*. Clearly this whole tension was created because of a reason.

And you feared that in the middle of that reason might have been you, all along.

Just as Namjoon confirmed.

But you couldn't seem to wrap your head around it -- seven people. Gorgeous, unique, successful, charming men. What were you compared to them? Just what was it that made them find you interesting? What made them so *infatuated* they would risk breaking the law, just to bring you here and keep you around?

You couldn't understand.

The other day, Jimin, of all people, had snapped at Hoseok for 'always hogging you and touching you so familiarly'. Jimin. The sweet cute mochi. He had raised his voice and looked completely furious.

Hoseok was just painting your nails after a random comment from you saying how you missed visiting the nail salon.

Another day, Taehyung had developed a weird habit of tagging along with you, everywhere. And by that, it meant *everywhere*. If Namjoon hadn't came by to literally drag him by his collar, he would've insisted to be inside the bathroom while you showered. You had no idea what happened, but you didn't see him until the day after, and this time he was avoiding you like a plague. The next day, he was back to the normal Taehyung. Well, as normal as Tehyung could be.

You had had too many bizarre events occurring, you've lost the line between what was normal and what wasn't.

Maybe you could ask Jungkook to add in a journal app to your phone. You felt too helpless and confused, and you definitely needed a place to organize your thoughts, some sort of an outlet somewhere before you fell into the overly-stressed state like the others.
"[F/N]?

You blinked and smiled back at the beaming Jimin. Only then you realized he had been holding your hand, and you were brought back to the present.

Right. Dining table. We were waiting for dessert to be served. A rare occasion considering how busy Seokjin were these days.

You felt pinpricks of eyes looking at you, but you had gotten used to it lately. Someone was always looking at you out of all seven of them. And yes, it was uncomfortable, but you had to get used to it. You didn't want to cause more friction.

"Sorry, did you say something?" You asked inbetween soft chatters around the table.

"Really? I've been playing with your fingers for ten minutes and you haven't been paying attention to me?" The pink haired male pouted, plump lips jutted out and an endearing droop of his eyes staring directly at you.

"I-I'm sorry.... I was just thinking, uhm, about a book. Namjoon lent to me. Yeah."

Jimin's facade dropped and morphed into an annoyed frown, "Even though I'm holding you like this....."

"I'm sorry I was distracted," you squeezed his hand, not realizing the sharp glares the action invited to your intertwined hands, "I'll listen properly this time! You were saying?"

Instantly, he flashed you a happy grin and placed your hand on top of the table alongside his, like comparing between two pictures. Although his fingers might be shorter than the others, his hand was still slightly bigger than yours, and you were always inwardly jealous of how soft they were.

"I said, it's so cute how our hands fit together! And your fingers! Ah, your hand is so smooth and pretty, [F/N]! I want to hold them forever like--"

Jimin's grip slipped away from you in split second as he yanked his hands away from the table.

You felt your chair screech and would've fallen down to the floor if not for Jungkook who had steadied you. The room was now deathly quiet, and you felt dread in your stomach at the sudden drop into bone chilling temperature. A loud thud was another thing you heard, but you were too shocked and confused to comprehend what had happened.

Until you saw the knife lodged onto the wooden table.

And the hand which was firmly gripping the handle.

"Jin," the younger surprisingly hissed, no honorifics attached, and you inhaled sharply as you saw the fire in both of their eyes.

"Jiminie," there it was, the artificial smile -- you held your breath, eyes wide, heart pounding.

"Do you want to die?"

"Do you? Hyungnim?"

Oh no

no no no no
"Are you both crazy?" Jungkook said emptily from beside you, and momentarily you hoped he would stop the fight when it was only beginning. But did things ever go as planned whenever you were in a deep shit?

The answer is, unsurprisingly:

No.

"Noona could've gotten hurt!!" He was straight up yelling, and honestly, his grip on your shoulder was almost bruising, but you couldn't feel the pain, for your fear had outweighed it.

"What if the knife sliced her hand?! What if she had fallen, what if I didn't get to her in time?! Why do none of you ever think about what you do, why do you always put her in danger?! And you all say *I'm* the immature and unreliable one! *I'm* the one who's always at fault!! Well, newsflash! Age doesn't equal maturity and I think I know best how to take care of noona!"

"Jungkook-ah, calm down," Taehyung grabbed onto the younger's hand, only to have his grip thrown back with an enraged slap and a glare. A low growl resounded from his throat, anger flaring on his soft brown eyes, "That's it you punk--"

"Oh, will you brats cut it out!" Yoongi snarled, irate, "You lot aren't the only one trying to cope with all this shit!"

No n on ono no

Soon enough, everyone was yelling.

Thousands of words stayed at the tip of your tongue, refusing to be vocalized as you were forced to watch the painful scene.

Years of brotherhood, broken.

*Because of you.*

*Because of your indecisiveness.*

*Because of your naivety.*

*Because you're so content of being the damsel in distress.*

"Yah, Jeon Jungkook, you're hurting her, stop that immediately!!" Hoseok finally took notice of how hard the youngest's grip on your shoulder was and had resorted to standing up, eyes narrowed and stern.

Your nails dug onto your skin. You had never seen Hoseok of all people, get this furious.

"*I'm* hurting her?! I've always been trying to protect her from you psychos!"

"You little brat, take a fucking look in the mirror! You're the most destructive one out of all of us!"

"Better than being a completely fucking emotionless doll like a certain someone!"

"Ah, will everyone just stop yapping!!"

"Well, who was it that started this by flinging a damn knife, I wonder!"
"It wouldn't have happened if all of you just behaved and stop touching her as you pleased!!"

"Fuck off, [F/N] didn't have any problem with it, so you shouldn't either!"

"You ever thought that was her being amiable, you inconsiderate selfish sh--"

Namjoon's hand slammed against the dining table in a loud bang.

Adrenaline and fear pumping in your veins, you watched as the boys' attention turned to the blonde as the tablewares rattled against the polished wood. His eyes held a certain calmness you were oh so used to. Like pouring iced water over blazing fire. Suddenly the fiery tension dissipated, replaced by a tense silence as everyone waited with bated breath.

Honestly, without him, you were pretty sure the boys would've started killing each other a long time ago.

Your arms wind around your stomach as you tried to calm down and distance away from that mental image, mind reeling.

"Look. Can you all see how uncomfortable and scared [F/N] is?"

Six pair of eyes turned onto you. With a shiver down your spine, you locked your gaze on the floor and waited, lips tightly pressed shut.

Jungkook's grip retreated from your shoulder.

"Now. Can we all go back to being civilized and settle down? If you want to fight, then do it where [F/N] can't see you. Honestly, I don't care. But remember that [F/N] will. You're welcome to disappoint her. I won't."

The silence was ironically deafening. You had no idea how long you kept staring at the floor.

"[F/N]--"

"R-Room," you gasped out and timidly looked up at Namjoon. He nodded in understanding and went to your side, respectfully still keeping his distance.

For better or worse, you bolted onto his side.

"No one's going anywhere. I'm just making sure [F/N] gets into her room safely. We're not done here."

You never heard any replies, but you figured they must've indicated some sort of affirmation, for Namjoon had started walking towards the staircases. You followed, but climbed up faster, not wanting to be nearby any of them right now.

Every single one of them are insane.

You reached the hallway faster than Namjoon, although his long legs managed to make him trail behind you as you sprint-walked through the rows of doors until you reached in front of your bedroom door.

"G-Good n--"
"[F/N]."

You jolted and froze on your feet for a few seconds, contemplating on just winging it, pretend you didn't hear him and slam the door on his face. Against your better judgement however, you timidly turned back to Namjoon, who was just silently watching you.

He looked..... tired.

".... Do you think we're playing around, [F/N]?

"W-What do you mean? I don't--"

"If, perhaps, you're thinking that we aren't seriously invested in you -- head over heels, for you, then I want you to know that you're wrong. If you're thinking about why or how did we get into loving you, well, I suppose we just love a whole lot of your self which you couldn't seem to love yourself. And in the first place, if we're not interested in you, why do we have the need to keep you around like this? Why do we endure all this pain from your ignorance, for you?"

You stayed quiet. What was there to say when he was being so sincere and honest? And he was probably right. Namjoon have always been right.

"It hurts, [F/N]. Every single one of us loves you this much, but you're not taking it seriously."

No, you certainly didn't. It felt too much. You would rather forge ignorance than acknowledge and deal with this whole thing called love.

"It's unfair of you, don't you think?"

You felt your heart tighten with guilt in your chest.

Namjoon watched as your expression fell, sighed, and gave you a weak smile.

"Well, just think about it. Here," he offered you a door key.

You took it, watching him suspiciously as his eyes narrowed and he put his finger in front of his lips.

"So no dangerous monsters can get you when you sleep tonight."

"Good night."
And so you found yourself asking the same question from back at the first day you woke up in this madhouse.

*Just what were you supposed to do?*

※※※
thirty three.

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the late update! I've been preoccupied with some things the last few days...
*sigh* I hope all my dear readers are doing well ♡

Have a good week ahead, everyone!

***

Home? 4G

09:25 PM

Seokjin

Hey

Everyone will be out the whole day today

Namjoon suggested we try to cool our heads off

I'm really sorry

About yesterday

I didn't mean to scare you
You know what? We were all in the wrong for blowing up like that.

I was wrong for letting Jin getting out of control.

Jin was wrong for being unable to keep his emotions in check.

We're so sorry.
control
Jin was wrong for being unable to keep his emotions in check
We're so sorry
There's food in the fridge you can heat up
Please eat them
I promise everything will be back to normal when we return

Today 09:18PM

I love you
We all do

I just feel |

© kkkkkkatrin / cath

Your fingers hovered over your keyboard as you nipped on your bottom lip in nervous anxiety.

"I promise everything will be back to normal when we return"

"I love you"

"We all do"

Your mind was a muddled mess. Should you really trust them? A part of you wanted to. Just pretend
that everything was fine, and focus on the fact that you were well cared for. But it was as if reality had slapped you after the fiasco yesterday -- what the *hell* were you doing, being content in this cage?

Half of you suspected that this utopia they have built for you laid on top of a pile of unsteady rocks and fine sand. It's slipping away even as you thought of this and you weren't sure when it would plunge into the dark ocean. But you knew that by the time it does fall from its pedestal, you want to be since long gone.

So it was time to choose.

You unlocked your bedroom's door and peeked out, silently watching and trying to feel if there were any presences in the house. Seokjin might not have lied to you, but you had to make sure no one was there while you try to regain your thoughts and possibly snoop around.

Yeah, they probably wouldn't like that very much.

You left the door open in case you had to bolt straight back into it. Trying your best to not make any noise, you tiptoed down the hallway and down the stairs before making your way into the kitchen.

Food always comes first.

True to his words, you found the food Seokjin had set away for you. In a practiced motion, you hauled them out from the fridge and placed the container in the microwave, before setting the electronic to heat up your sustenance. Your stomach growled loudly as the food revolved inside the appliance, and you wondered: would you miss Seokjin's cooking were you to choose to deviate away from him?

You dreaded the thought. There were so many things you couldn't imagine doing without the boys. It showed how much you've evolved -- or perhaps *regressed* was the better word? -- over the course of settling down in this house. Even the most basic chores, you were so used to getting them done with at least one of them.

Laundry days with Taehyung. Dishwashing chores with Namjoon. Vacuuming with Jimin. Watering the gardens with Hoseok. Mopping the floors with Jungkook. Dusting the shelves with Yoongi. Helping Seokjin with dinner. Eating with all of them at the dining table. Just hanging out and spending time with them felt like a habit you had become addicted to. You were an avid smoker addicted to the cigarettes you knew would kill you someday, but still you craved for more.

Maybe it's high time you stopped.

The beeping from the microwave snapped you out from your thoughts. It swung open as you pulled, allowing you to promptly bring your food onto the island counter. You remembered how they had made a mess when all of you tried to bake a cake in this kitchen. Flour all over every flat surface, chocolate chips strewn around, and the look in Hoseok's face as he realized he had just walked onto Yoongi while carrying the nearly finished cake.

You snorted at the remembrance and started to eat.
With your belly full and your mind hurrying you to do anything but sitting still, you resorted to pace around the living room in search for answers. You've tried sitting down on the sofa and start thinking just what is it that you wanted to do, but the area was so frequently used by you and the boys, you couldn't stand being there.

And you were almost frantic to just do something. Anything.

You pressed your forehead against the glass panel facing the backyard in an attempt to think up of some brilliant idea which could resolve the sticky situation you were in. How can you make everyone happy and satisfied? How can you ensure everything goes back to normal? How?

But most importantly, what is it that you want?

Around ten minutes passed with you frozen in the same position, but no perfect solution came to your mind.

With a frustrated groan, you unlatched yourself from the pane and walked off towards the front door hallway. You stared holes onto the wooden door, willing it to combust into flames. If only.

Your gaze switched over to the side, where the fingerprint scanner sat innocently below the light switches. You wished you studied forensics or something before, so you could do those things in the criminal shows where they were able to dust someone's fingerprints and used it to--

........ Was it just you, or did one of the light switches looked... off?

Frowning, you glanced around despite knowing the house was empty, and stepped forward to examine the object.

At first glance, it looked like a totally normal switch, rectangular and beige colored, its body slightly bulging out from the wall where it was installed, completely identical to the other one beside it. The only reason it looked off was because the front side didn't seem to align properly with the rest of the body.

Also, now that you've thought about it, which light did this switch control again?

You flicked the instrument and found no visible change in your environment.

Strange.

Heart thumping loudly, you bit your lip and instinctively tried to move the part which looked wrong. It slid up when you experimentally pushed it, and under the supposedly electrical socket,

.... you found a digital keypad.

Oh.
You glanced at the locked door, then back at the object of interest. There were no visible instructions for you to refer to and you had no proof whatsoever, but you were pretty sure the keypad had a connection to the lock in the door.

Wait...

If this was here, then-- then....

_I can escape?_

You found yourself frozen on your feet at the thought. But wait, you still didn't know what the passcode was. Should you just try? Maybe you could guess, but there were a whole lot of possible combinations, given all ten numbers on the glass pad. You had a suspicion there might be an alert system set in place when you reached a maximum threshold of wrong passcode inputs, too. How could you possibly--

_Rewind that. Glass pad?_

You tilted your head to different angles, and your heart jumped when you saw the reflected finger prints. They were very faint, possibly because they didn't use it often, and for a moment you cheered inwardly at your brain's creativity and berated yourself for not thinking of an alternative for the lock system in the first place. Of course there would be a second way to open the lock, especially if it involved fingerprints. Even phones and computers had this mechanism. Hell, your old darned phone had this function.

Ah well. No use crying over spilt milk.

You eyed the prints and found four digits. 0, 1, 3, and 6. At least that narrowed the possibilities, right? Should you just try? Nothing will happen just because you pressed the combinations wrongly a few times, right?

Feeling a tad queasy, your finger tapped the numbers from the lowest to highest.

_Please._

You were rewarded with a beep which sounded like you had entered the wrong code. Nervous, you straightened up and looked around.

_Please._

Maybe it was a date? A past anniversary perhaps? You kept racking your brain to find a combination which worked.

Zero, six, one, three.

_Please._

The door clicked open.

You almost hyperventilated from shock and disbelief.

You unlocked the front door. The traditional old gate would easily be unlocked. You knew where they kept the money to pay the deliverymen, from all the takeouts they would order in. All that was left was to go to the nearest taxi stand and ask the driver to take you to the embassy of your country.

No one could stop you.
And then you would be free.
You could go back home.
Home.

"This is your home."
"You're happy and safe here."
"Why would you ever want to leave?"

You shook your head rapidly.

You want to leave.... right?

You might have gotten a little accustomed to all this. You might have felt that you had been given a chance at a better life. You might have become accustomed to live with them--

But deep down, you still wanted to leave, right?

Have you really grown comfortable here? Cooped in this house, your freedom taken away from you, cut off from the outside world? Being fully dependent and cared by seven loving and yet dangerously unstable males? Are you truly happy here, are you content?

Your only chance escaping was right in front of you.

But will you take it?

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What do you do?

run. → 「 thirty four. 」
stay. → 「 thirty five. 」

═══════ ⋆ ⋆ ─────────
You shook your head at the absurdness of your thoughts. Who were you kidding? This place was a madhouse.

You refused to be imprisoned here any longer.

Consequences? Traps? This was a one-in-a-million chance, and you were going to take it.

You pushed open the door. The outside air greeted you and you welcomed it in delight. You savored looking at the sky, heart thrumming in joy as you stepped onto the cobblestones. The gate unlatched easily enough, and you were greeted by the empty street as you wrenched it open.

A wide grin settled on your lips.

You knew you had made the right choice.

Your legs moved before you could control them. For now, it was best to just create a distance from the house, right? Your pace sped up upon this thought, and you felt your heart soar at the feeling of being unrestrained, like a bird flying out from its cage.

*Freedom.*
Your shoulder accidentally bumped onto a nearby pedestrian, and you mumbled an apology as you kept your head low, not wanting to take any risk of being recognized by the neighbours.

But then

you heard *him* calling your name.

*Run*, your instinct commanded.

Eyes widened in fear and heartbeat accelerating rapidly, you could barely step forward, about to break into a sprint, when a vice-like grip firmly enclosed your wrist, effectively holding you in place.

You looked up to see the male whom could have been the love of your life, if not for the crazed gleam in his usually bright eyes.

Your whole body trembled under his gaze.

================================================================================

"Namjoon...."  →  「forty five.」

"Jin...."  →  「thirty nine.」

"Yoongi...."  →  「forty nine.」

"Hobi...."  →  「forty seven.」

"Jimin...."  →  「forty four.」

"Tae...."  →  「forty.」

"Jungkook...."  →  「forty one.」

================================================================================
What do you do?

run. | [[ stay. ]]
thirty six. [[ stay || knj. ]]

Chapter Notes

I know. I haven't been updating much... ( ∀ ` ; )

My weekends have been super busy with socializing and running errands and house chores, I barely have time to myself, hence I haven't been writing as much. As I'm writing this, I'm petsitting a sweet little bunny who kept asking for pets and scratches (I mean not that I'm complaining, he's too darned cute slskjdflksjdf), and I finally have time to just relax because of the Chinese New Year holiday, so I thought of beta-ing and posting this chapter!

I wonder which chapter everyone's most interested in seeing out of all 1⃣ ⃣ ⃣ ⃣ ? ;)

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Life was a series of routine.

"Welcome home," your husband greeted, looking up from his seat and folding away the newspaper he was reading, before stowing it away on the coffee table. He stood and opened his arms, smiling his adorable dimpled smile.

You laughed briefly at how childish he was being, every single time. As soon as your shoes were off, you sauntered over to him, tackling the taller male onto a hug. His eyes met yours as he felt your arms wrap around his frame and placed a loving peck on his lips. A deep chuckle reverberated down his throat as you felt him tug your body forward, both of you collapsing on the sofa, still safely wrapped in each other's arms.

Giggling, you reached over to your bag, and Namjoon's hand gently accepted the gadget you just handed him in a practiced motion.

He kept his arms around your shoulder just as you kept your head nestled safely on his shoulder while he inhaled your scent, mixing with the hand picked perfume he personally mixed for you, his other hand expertly unlocking your phone. The lock screen image of the two of you flashed by his view, and a different set of couple photo greeted him on your home screen. Both of you grinned upon the memories.

The private wedding. The honeymoon.

It seemed like a dream, now that you thought back about it. But it was indubitably real, and the proof laid in the photos and the trinkets you've brought each other. Perhaps when you've gathered enough vacation days, you could beg your husband to take you to another adventure.

Namjoon's finger tapped on the call history, his smile widening upon seeing you haven't gotten nor made any calls today as well.

"That's twenty three days in a row, babe. I'm so proud of you."
"Are you?" you beamed up at him, happy to hear the words of encouragement. He replied with a loving kiss onto your forehead, and you felt tiny sparks explode inside your chest.

"Of course. You're doing so well. How can I not be?"

"I'll try to keep it up this time, if it makes you that happy!"

"That means a lot, babygirl. Maybe thirty days and you'll get a present."

"You spoil me, Joonie!"

He placed another loving kiss on you, his hand drawing circles on your shoulder as you nuzzled closer onto his side. You hummed in response, letting him know verbally that you appreciated the gesture, and you felt him smile.

Gosh, you love him so much.

Next was the messages. Two advertisements. He noted the sender names in his head. He would make sure to find out how they had gotten hold of your number too, later.

One was from your ex-coworker, and he related the name on the screen with a middle aged woman whom he had deemed 'safe' and you had befriended. The content seemed simple enough: she had asked whether you wanted to get coffee, and you had replied with a negative, since Namjoon had promised you a feast for dinner tonight and you wanted to make as much room as possible. She teased back on how lovey dovey the both of you were, and how she envied you -- the fire in her own relationship with her husband had long since died out.

Having been reading along your messages as he was, you looked up at your own spouse, and he looked down upon sensing your gaze. You were pretty much used to the intensity of his stare by now; it was reserved for you, and you alone, so you indulged and spoiled yourself with it. The fact that he was more than happy to give you all his attention also helped your adaptation tremendously.

"Will we ever get to that point, Joonie?"

Namjoon set aside the phone in favor of tucking your strands of hair away from your face and moved to caressing your cheek.

"I don't think so. We're not like others, babe. I thought you know that."

Your eyelids fluttered in doubt for several milliseconds, but you nodded nonetheless. The two of you were happy, and you certainly couldn't imagine your infatuation with each other dying out anytime soon.

"I know, it's just...."

"We're different," he said firmly and lightly combed past your strands of hair, "Don't you trust my words?"

At the question, your eyebrows shot upwards before you felt yourself relaxing back onto his hold. Namjoon smiled in reply of your next answer, and his hold around your shoulder tighten protectively.

"I trust you wholeheartedly with my life, Joon, I thought you knew that by now."

"That's my good girl."
Life was a series of routine.

Routines Namjoon had kindly laid out and set for you, in order to ensure your wellbeing and happiness.

You fully understand most people would say that your relationship was unhealthy. That he was being far too controlling and possessive.

That it wasn't 'normal'.

But for some reason you've never felt like it bothered you. He never made you upset and he didn't control your choices. You felt comfortable being with him, so of course you would naturally try to make him happy, just like how he always tries his best to ensure yours. Some would say he was manipulating you without you knowing.

You didn't understand their point of view.

After all, Namjoon always knows what's best for you, doesn't he?

So this is fine.

Because nothing else matters if you have each other.
He's nothing special.

He was reminded of the fact once again, when he received the evaluation from his latest performance. The evaluating words mockingly stared back at him, seemingly cruel and degrading, cleverly hidden behind formalities and roundabout sugarcoating.

"... furthermore it shows that the participant had lacked care of their fitness level, as seen...."

How many times had he skipped gym sessions in favor of going back home?

"You're a fucking disappointment."

He just wanted to see you.

"..... is advised to pour more creativity into their routines, seeing as the movements felt too familiar and repetitive....."

He did slip in some sets he had done previously before the exchange, thinking how he had improved since then.

"Of course you didn't."

He just wanted to be able to prove how you made him better.

"..... lack of enthusiasm and passion.... routines unsuitable for men.... looks down on the standard of our arts department...."

"..... concluded that the performance was below average."

Jimin folded the paper and stowed it in his bag, his expression neutral. Was he sad? Not really. Was he frustrated? Not really. Was he disappointed?

"..... No."

Disappointment was the hollow gap eating him alive when you didn't pay him enough attention in favor of the other boys. Frustration was the burning ice sliding down his throat when he couldn't see you because of stupid make-up lectures he was forced to take by the school's standard. Sadness was the cold shiver on his skin and the sting in his eyes when he saw your wholehearted rejection despite him only wanting to stay by your side.

Compared to that, this felt like a puppy's playful nibbling.
Besides, he knew he was nothing. He had no expectation of the outcome, therefore, he had nothing to feel disappointed for.

It was just a class and probably the future of his career.

He should be panicking right now, but he couldn't seem to feel that gripping anxiety in his chest. He thought back on the prickling anger, the frustration and anxiety balling up into an ugly lump burning in his chest, whenever he saw you interact with the others with that lovely smile on your face.

..... Yeah, this was nothing like that.

"How'd it go?"

Jimin sighed and presented the saddened pout he had practiced thousands of times, "No good."

"Ah, that sucks," his make-believe sadness made his friend frown and earned him a sympathetic pat on his back. "Hey, it's alright. That instructor is pretty known for his biased judgements. Why don't we get some lunch out? My treat!"

Well, he would rather go back and spend the rest of his day with you, but he wasn't exactly allowed to....

"I guess we could--" he stopped in his track as the special ringtone he never thought he would've ever heard reached his ears.

In a rush of sudden joyfulness, he grinned at your name flashing on the screen of his phone. The ice cold walls around his heart seemed to have melted away upon the thought of you actually calling him. He had completely thought he had messed up by scaring you last night, but no, you wanted to talk to him instead!

Had you perhaps finally realize how much he adores you? How the universe didn't seem big enough to compare how obsessed he was with the thought of you?

"Sorry, I really have to take this," he said with crinkling eyes, unaware of how stunned his friend was at seeing how bright his demeanor had changed into.

Jimin squished himself onto a lone corner and placed the electronic onto his ears, thirsting to hear your lovely voice, "Hey, how are you doing?"

"H-Hey," you said through the receiver, and he longed to hear your voice in a better quality. Preferably right next to his ears. Maybe he could ask if you would let him come back home? Namjoon had forbid everyone to do so while they 'cool off their heads', but surely if it was your wish, no one could protest.

"It's rare that you're calling me! I mean, not that I don't like it or anything, because I love hearing your voice and all. Although I'd rather be able to talk with you directly, and I've been wanting to apologize for--"

"Jimin...."

"Yes, [F/N]?" He piped at once, suddenly afraid that he had passed a line. He couldn't help but gush out his feelings, all the mushy sparkles and bright rainbows and molten lava of obsession.

"Can you... come and get me?"
"Oh," his happiness deflated, "I'm... not supposed to take you anywhere unless--"

"Jimin, please. I don't care about anyone else. I just need you."

And just like that, fireworks exploded behind his eyes. The feeling of euphoria consumed him entirely, and he relished in the warmth and lightness and erratic fluttering in his chest. To hell with butterflies -- you gave him a whole zoo of animals stampeding in his stomach, making his whole body vibrate with elation.

"Do.... Do you really mean that?" he asked. Perhaps this was merely a dream. Him, of all people. You chose him? He had been trying to steel himself to be prepared to do whatever it takes to keep you for himself, but for you to choose him out of his own volition?

"I know it's unfair to you, but I just-- I just want everything to stop. And-- and you're all I need, Jimin."

You needed him.

He was enough.

He thought of the other six. They were one source of his happiness, the ones who found him and made him feel like he was worth something. And for a moment he was content. He felt like he mattered.

But...

"So please, please, just take me away from here...."

Around them, he felt normal.

But you? You made him feel like he could be something more. You never failed to bring the best in him, with your magic smiles and gentle words. You made him want to trade everything he had in possession if it meant you and him would belong to each other. You introduced him to the syrupy tinge of ecstasy, the sharp tang of animosity, the overwhelmingly bittersweet taste of falling in love.

And you, this oh-so-very special girl of theirs, had chosen him.

So it was his turn to choose.

"Okay."
You can confidently say that your boyfriend, also known by the name of Park Jimin, was the most endearing thing that walked the Earth's surface.

Despite the empty shell he believed himself was, you loved him for his kindness, his nurturing side and his childishness. You loved both his masculinity and femininity; you embraced him whether he was at his lowest, and you allowed him to express himself without being affected by society's judgmental views. You loved the way he smiled and giggled, how his cheeks puffed up and his eyes curved into crescent moons whenever you threw him air kisses.

Every single part of him which he confessed he wished was shaped differently, you adored and worshipped.

It just made him unable to control himself even more whenever he sensed the slightest bit of danger.

The emotions you kept feeding him with seemed to just spiral out of control. He would be full of love, and then jealously, and then anger, and then he would crave for that blissful dopamine sparking up his nerves as he counted the number of bones he managed to break. Then he would feel empty, you'd fill him back with love, and the devil's circle continued.

He was playing a dangerous game, but he loved his new life.

Jimin sighed, throwing the bloodied weapon into the closet you never open and peered into the darkness. He knew you were asleep, so in an effort to not disturb you too much, he navigated the small flat from memory and successfully reached your room.

The sight of you safe, peacefully resting, and hugging his pillow was too precious.

He climbed onto bed with you. He smiled, his previous anger simmering down when your arms wound around him in a welcoming embrace even though you were still half asleep.

"Jiminnie...?" You mumbled, dazed and clearly not fully conscious, but you knew what he was doing. You never told him to stop, so he kept with his little excursions. And he was glad you let him do what he needed to do.

He's just helping you taking out the trashes.

"Who is it this time...?" your sleepy voice asked from the top of his head as he burrowed himself onto the blankets and made himself comfortable in your arms.

His thought flashed back to cracks and thumps of.... ah, who was he again?

........ Oh well. Whoever he was, he dared to flirt with you, so he had to be eliminated.

"Does it matter, love?"

Jimin gave you a loving kiss on your neck as he nuzzled closer to your chest.
"I love you."

You let your beloved's arms wrap around you a tad tighter.

Now, he's the only one who can touch you.

Now, he can cuddle you to his heart's content.

Now, he can hold your hand in peace.

Now, there are no more nuisances.
thirty eight. [[ stay | myg. ]] 

Chapter Notes

I! Finally! Have! Time! To! Publish! This!

I wonder if my readers could tell how much I enjoy writing for Yoongi haha

I'm sitting down at a cafe in the airport as I'm writing this and I'm so excited cause I'll be flying back home for a holiday slash dentist appointment! Hopefully I'll have even more time to write now!!

Kudos and comments are what keeps me going♡

PS. Yoongi stans and especially those who are into mafia!AU, you can check out my new book 'restart.' if you want to! :D

,"I'm home."

Yoongi stared at the hallway in the middle of taking off his shoes, waiting. Maybe it was the rather long day at work and the fact that he was in some sort of a slump with his music, but when he didn't hear the hurrying footsteps and your cheerful voice greeting him, it was as if his panic switch flicked. It was a routine you never failed to do ever since the both of you officially dated, and it was one of his favorite moments upon coming back home.

Uncaringly, his bag slid off his shoulder as he bolted towards the living room, heart thumping in his chest and a billion scenarios running wild in his already muddled head, but one hit him harder than the rest:

Did you leave?

He nearly missed the movement at the corner of his eyes while he passed by the kitchen, but fortunately he didn't. The fog cleared up slightly when he saw the back of your familiar figure, his coldness tampered by the domestic sight of you dancing mildly while arranging some kind of food in a muffin tray.

His eyes found the earphones plugged into your ears, and his heavy heart lightened. You hadn't left. You were safe and sound. You didn't leave him.

Yoongi tiptoed towards your side and wrapped his arm around your midsection, while placing his
head on your shoulder, knowing how much you loved his occasional attention-seeking behavior. True enough, your eyes widened slightly, and he thought he saw fear flashing before your eyes, but it was replaced with a loving gaze as your eyes landed on him. You quickly unplugged your earphones and stowed them away on the counter along with your phone before placing your arms on top of his.

"Hey! You're-- really early!" You said after glancing at the clock on the wall.

He closed his eyes and sighed, "Meeting didn't go as well as I wanted it to."

"Oh no," you said sympathetically, but then there it was -- the lilt of fear in your voice. Subtle, but it was there.

He was just being paranoid..... right?

Your boyfriend looked away and tried to change the subject, not wanting to sullen your mood, "What're you making?"

"Just a simple recipe I found in Pinterest!" You seemed glad at the switch of topic, and started to ramble off the ingredients you had placed in the tray. He followed your explanation absentmindedly, but his attention was stolen by the phone on the side of the bakeware.

"Mhm," he gave a noncommittal grunt and grabbed your earphones, oblivious to the panic in your eyes as soon as his fingers touched the accessory, "What were you listening to?"

As soon as his ears picked up the first few seconds of the song, he felt the first bubble of anger brew in his chest.

"What's this?" he asked, facing you fully, the previous affection completely gone from his demeanor as he held up the piece of plastic, "Who are you listening to?"

"Yoongi.... It's--It's nothing, I promise," you said softly, trying to assuage his silent anger.

"Is it boring?" he seethed, all the rejections and criticisms that haunted him crashing down at him like a hurricane, taking his rationality away from him as he lashed out, "My songs, are they not good enough anymore? Not worth listening to? Is that it?"

"No, no! They're still my favorites, I swear! You know I love them as much as you do--"

But he didn't hear it. Whatever you said afterwards, he couldn't care less. The familiar coldness seeped back under his skin, and he could almost hear the walls rising, obstructing, caging him in.

"Just shut up."
The few months since you confessed your real feelings to him, it felt like a dream. It was almost a crime, how content and happy he was getting by, with you by his side. You had been caring, extremely understanding, and occasionally got on his nerves, but it was all part of your charm, and he kept coming back for more.

He was the happiest he had ever been in his entire life.

So what the fuck was he doing, pushing his only source of joy away?

At the same time, his exhaustion from work was crushing him, and the whirlwind of emotions was getting out of control. His head felt heavy, and the silence around him just seemed to amplify everything.

There were too many threads of thoughts running at once inside his brain, and everything was too loud, loud, loud.

_I love her so much it hurts. What a worthless genius composer, I can't even make a single track that satisfies my fans. Which also reminds me, I need to pay the bills soon; what the fuck am I going to do if the company decides to terminate the contract? I can't trust them anymore. It feels like I can't trust anyone anymore. I'm so sorry [F/N], I really didn't mean anything I said. I'm so sorry I lashed out. I'm the worst boyfriend there is and I keep pushing away things I love -- what is wrong with me? If I don't apologize soon, will I lose her? Will she leave me? Is that why she didn't want to listen to my voice anymore, were she tired of me? Shit, the rent, I forgot about the fucking rent, was it overdue? I need to check the calendar. I should've opted to just buy a goddamn house. Should I just use my savings to-- no. No, it's too dangerous. If we ever need to run.... No. Ah, I need to go to the bathroom. Stupid bloody human needs. Why couldn't I just be born a rock? But then again, I won't be able to be by her side if I were.... Maybe I should go and apologize-- no, even better, maybe I should buy her a gift and apologize, that sounds lovely, right? She'll forgive me, right? Wait, calendar? There's going to be a music award soon, wasn't there? Great, more events to remind him how shit of an artist I am--_

god

shut

up

shut up

shut up shut up shut u p shutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutup

Everything

was

too

much.

Right then, his shoulder decided it was the right time to slam onto the doorframe.
Yoongi hissed, clicking his tongue and closing his eyes as pain shot through his senses, overwhelming everything. His hand grabbed the throbbing part of his body as profanities filled his previously overly loud mind, now filled with one single thing: pain.

-- Ah.

His eyes snapped open in nostalgic realization.

Pain.

Numbness.

Quiet.

Gaze straying to the mirrored cabinet just above his sink, he swallowed a lump in his throat.

It's as if the blades whispered to him from its box he had hidden so far behind the shelf, directly into his mind; the familiar devil's tone haunting his nightmares.

It's too much, isn't it?

You know you have a way to make it stop.

You know you can take the pain away.

It was far too easy to succumb. So effortless to slide the mirror away and just throw everything else into the sink as his finger wrapped around the small metal box. He stared at the small compartment, eyes widened and hand moving in autopilot as he popped the lid open and--

"Yoongi...?"

His hand stopped in midair. So far, yet so close. The blades tantalizingly glinted under the bathroom's light.

I just want it to stop, it's too tiring and loud and everything keeps moving on without me even though all I want to do is just to take a break. She'll understand, right? Just a little. Just a few. Just enough to make everything feel--

Your voice was coming closer now, and he didn't dare to move from his place.

"Hey, I saw all the revision notes in your bag, and I, um, I thought you might be stressed and I just want to ap--", you stopped in your tracks, and he glanced towards you, standing right between the damned doorframe, eyes narrowing, "What's that?"

help

me

He couldn't answer you for a few beats, but when he finally did, he said it loud and clear.

"Please take it away from me."

He saw your confused gaze and bit his lips. The cool metal against his skin was too comforting, too nostalgic and too tempting to let go. You took a tad more seconds to process, but the realization sank in soon enough, and he cringed at the grim suspicion in your expression.
"Yoongi, are you--"

"Please."

You finally moved at his plea, reaching out to pry the dangerously sharp object from his trembling hand along with its container, slamming the lid shut before you pocketed the item. You carefully studied his downturned expression, nearly tearing up at the vulnerability and exhaustion he had no more energy to mask.

"I've got you, love."

"You're--You're staying, right?"

It was much, much later when he finally spoke to you, and you had to struggle to keep yourself from breaking down yourself. He needed you firm. He needed a pillar he could lean on. And you would gladly become his castle, fully equipped with a goddamned army of knights and a fire breathing dragon if you had to.

"I'm staying," you said, continuing to run your fingers through his bright locks, where the blacks had started to grow in.

"I can't-- do this. Alone," he inhaled shakily, "Jin hyung was right. I'm so f-fucking weak. I need you. To be with me. P-Please?"

You nodded and pulled him into a hug, pressing your lips onto the top of his head in hope to calm him further. What he needed right now was a protector, a ray of reassurance.

You had seen seven boys throw away all reasoning and humanity in order to love you.

*Surely you could do it for Min Yoongi?*
"I'm not going anywhere, Yoongi. I promise."

"I'll hold you on that promise, [F/N]."
thirty nine. [[ run | ksj. ]]

[[ run. ]] | stay.

knj. | [[ ksj. ]] | myg. | jhs. | pjm. | kth. | jjk.

"Even after everything..... You still don't want us?"

Ah

I've

had

enough
There are many steps and cautions one must be aware of when preparing a meal.

Firstly, one must take care to ensure the cookwares and utensils used to create the dishes are of great quality. After all, no good food would come out of having to be scraped out of a cheap frying pan, and while it might sound pretentious to some, a great presentation does give that extra appeal and aids in rousing one's appetite. Secondly, ingredients. Fresh and grown in the perfect conditions, tended meticulously to ensure its quality and of course, away from dangerous substances. Only the best will suffice for his princess, and it's not as if he's hurting in cash to splurge for endeavors which would help to ensure their health. Thirdly, technique—this is pretty much his forte, from all the years cooking for his previous clique. Sometimes he misses their antics and overly loud laughs from the living room while he was working away in the kitchen, but now he had you to return back to every day from work, and it's a fair exchange, he convinces himself. And lastly, the most vital step:

A few drops of your special medicine.

Seokjin hummed merrily as he brought the last of his dishes over to the dining table he shared with you. When the last empty space had been filled with yet another pot of good food, he leaned down habitually to place a loving kiss to your temple, which elicited a smile from you and a reply peck to his cheek.

He loves to sit beside you on meals. This was the reason he bought a rectangular dining table instead of a square one, which was supposedly utilized for more than two people. Breakfasts, lunches, and dinners are the most important times for him since they were the only occasions he could see you nowadays. Work had been unforgiving, and the other matters he needed to take care of required his
constant attention.

Really, how does society expect one person to do all these things and still be healthy mentally?

"How's work?" You asked as you served your lover his portion of the meal, making sure to pile up more meat seeing as he had been working late frequently. Sometimes you wished he wasn't the heir of a huge company, so he would have more time with you, but then again, if it wasn't for his wealth, you might not have been here in the first place.

"Busy like always," he said with a childish pout.

"I'm glad you're taking a day off. You do seem tired these days," your worried eyes met his, and he smiled gratefully at the apparent love.

"I can't just leave my darling spouse by her lonesome all the time, now, can't I?"

"Oh, you," your elbow nudged his arm playfully, but your eyes soften when you were done with serving the two of you, "You don't need to worry so much, you know? I can handle myself just fine."

He knew you were. The house chores and the variety of hobbies you kept trying out one after another took most of your time whenever you were awake. His personal tablet was a dedicated gadget he could use to observe you from whenever he was, be it in his office or even in the meeting, if he had time to spare. Seeing you on the screen always re-energized him, and he could be at peace knowing you were safe and enjoying yourself inside the castle he built for his precious princess.

"How's it going with your newfound hobby?"

"I quite like it, actually!"

Seokjin smiled. Every single time, your answer would be the same when it came to the specific activity. It was a shame you couldn't remember your gifts to him from your previous adventures in the area, but still Jin made sure they treasured every single one.

Everything was fine, just like how it should be.

You were right where he wanted you to be, and he was satisfied with that. Now all he needed to do was to make sure you were living your dreams, being loved and spoiled and free of your past. A perfect life is what you deserved, and he would gladly give it to you on a silver platter decorated with the finest roses.

Your eyes fluttered as you grimaced suddenly, and he leaned closer to you in response. With a pained groan, your hand rubbed your right temple in distress in an attempt to soothe the pain. Seokjin's hand smoothed down your back tenderly, and as usual, his touch helped, even just a little bit.

"What's the matter, dear?"

"The usual... These headaches, they're so annoying...."

"My poor princess.... Should I call our doctor for a check up?" He frowned, clearly worried as he moved onto stroking the top of your head affectionately, "They said the after effect of your accident shouldn't last this long...."

"It's fine! It'll get worse whenever I go see a doctor... Just eating your food will make me feel better,
like always, Seokjin," you giggled and inhaled the tantalizing smell of the feast placed in front of you, "If I didn't know any better, I would've thought you had put some kind of drug in these."

Your beloved chuckled as you picked up your utensils, "I might just do it as a last measure if you leave me~"

His eyes followed your spoon as you elbowed him playfully for the second time and your lips closed around his specially made dish. He smiled when you threw another compliment at the delicious taste spoiling your tongue.

He stared at his own plate of food.

It's fine to forget, Seokjin.

....

It's alright, leave it to me.

....

This is all for her sake.

I know.
"A perfect fairy tale, just for our princess..... Now, you won't leave us ever again, right?"
Chapter Notes

Forgive me for the late / sparse replies of your comments! I swear I've been reading them all -- it's just that I've been working from home and I'm trying to spend time with my family before I have to go back to SG ;w;

Oh, I've also renamed the ending chapters so that yall can easily find them!

Kudos and comments are, as always, so much appreciated♡

---

Luxury was the silky smooth fabric of his tie slipping past his fingers as he adjusted them for the lenses desperately aimed at his and his masterpiece.

Pride was the exhilaration when praises after praises rained down upon him as more and more people swarmed in to view his paintings.

Saccharine was the words falling out from his fans and the exhibition's sponsors as they talked about how valuable and unique his work was.

He simply stood beside the piece of art with a stunning smile. The media went crazy, flashes of cameras going off as the photographers thirst to capture his profile: a painter who was as unique and beautiful as his paintings. Among the works displayed, his art stood up the most, and no one could seem to describe why.

And yet everyone would ask the same thing, over and over again: "How did you manage to come up with such a enchanting painting?"

His answer was always the same:

"Because I have my muse with me."
The velvety material slithered down the cushion as he threw them away along with his suit. His fingers fiddled with the cuffs of his shirt, pulling them open and up his arms. He walked down the usual route in his house as he hummed merrily, his head filled with the thoughts of you.

His feet tapped softly against the polished wooden floors as he descended. Flipping his palm upwards, the brunette unclasped his bracelet before taking one of the small decoration-like object hanging on its chain and pressed them against the sensor. His other hand grabbed the door handle and pushed, a smile already stretching his lips.

"I'm home, petal!" Taehyung called out to the dark room.

The light seeped in from the open door and his grin grew when saw your silhouette. His hand found the light switch and flicked it on. The brightness flickered before fully turning on, and in the dim light, he stepped into the room.

Paintings and drawings of you filled the walls and the ceilings. Canvases, sketchbook papers, napkins, every surface imaginable where he could draw on, memories and photos containing the two of you, they were hung and plastered all around.

And at the center of it all sat you, his greatest masterpiece.

Truly, his paintings and sculptures pales in comparison of your eternal beauty.

He sighed in content as he admired you, the shadows enhancing your features and the light flawlessly bouncing off your skin, so pleasing to the eyes. A swell of jealousy rose up as he thought of other people being able to take a mere glance of you. If the mere sight of your blood could entrance everyone else, then what would they do when they lay their eyes on you?

They would take you away from him.

Over my dead body.

Taehyung blinked rapidly as he caught himself in his train of thoughts and smiled brightly at you.

"Oh, I'm sorry, [F/N]! I got lost in my head again! It's been a long day-- well, a fun day, but a long day nonetheless! And you have to hear this! They say my work is absolutely subliminal and they're offering me to have my own exhibition next year!" He gushed, playing with your fingers as he rambled animatedly.

The painter closed his eyes and kissed your hand gently, eyes soft as he stared up into your eyes, "It's all because of you, you know? You give me so much inspirations, just by being here. Whenever I feel down or sad or uncreative, drawing you just resets my state of mind. Did you secretly perform magic to me, hmm?"

He chuckled, "Well, I wouldn't be surprised if you did. I'm so smitten with you, it's crazy. And having a witch as a girlfriend sounds pretty cool, don't you think?"

"A lot of girls keep trying to ask me out, you know? I keep telling them I have someone I'm devoted to, but they can't seem to take a hint. You're so much prettier than any of them, raindrop! Both inside and outside! I'm so lucky I can keep you all for myself now. Please don't ever be jealous, because no one can ever enthralls me as you do! .... What's that? You understand? I'm so glad! My lovely girlfriend is so understanding and I'm so lucky~"
"--Ah. You're right, I've been rambling too much, haven't I? I didn't even taken a shower before coming in.... Thank you for reminding me! You're so caring, my petal," he smiled up at you after glancing at the smartwatch on his wrist. He pressed one last kiss to your cold lips and brushed back your hair neatly before stepping back towards the doorway.

Taehyung eyed your unmoving form as he pulled the door close from outside the room. His glazed eyes fondly appreciated the stillness, and his heart rejoiced at the fact that you would be waiting for him when he returned.

"We'll talk again later, okay, petal?"

The light flickered off.

And the door
shut
close.

You're his. You're his only happiness, therefore you have to belong to him, and he's determined to keep it that way.

Forever,

until he joins you in death's embrace.
forty one. [[ run \ jjk. ]] 

Chapter Notes

I hope people are still reading this *nervous sweating*

═══════ ⋄ ◦ ❀ ◦ ⋄ ════════

[[ run. ]] | stay.
knj. | ksj. | myg. | jhs. | pjm. | kth. | [[ jjk. ]]

═══════ ⋄ ◦ ❀ ◦ ⋄ ════════

Your head felt like it was splitting into a hundred pieces, and those hundred pieces were screaming at you right inside your mind as they split into another hundred.

_Damn it._

The deep groan leaving your throat was such a contradictory noise against the bright chirrups of birds outside your room. Not that you would knew about it, being deprived of a window in your prison. Your body twisted as it tried to scramble up despite your sluggishness, and you dazedly stared at the blank concrete wall. Despite the nonexistence of sun rays filtering through your 'room', you knew it was probably morning. You could never sleep soundly ever since _he_ brought you to.... to wherever this was.

You had cried yourself to sleep every single time, but last night was the worst yet so far. You had exploded almost quite literally, shouting profanities and wishing death upon your captor from the complete isolation and unwanted love you were forced to have and take.

It didn't even move your heart when you saw him cry this time. Why should you care if they never cared about what you wanted? You should've been doing this since the start. There were no reasoning with them; it was stupid to hope that things would change back to normal. You had to have the courage to break free and escape, and you realized it far too late.

_Escape._

Today is the day.

Today, you're pulling yourself out from the stupid rope and climbing into the goddamn vent if you had to.

You knew it was a stupid idea. Wrenching yourself out from the tight rope would probably hurt like hell. You had no idea when Jungkook would come in the room. There were barely any furniture you could actually move around to climb on and aid your escape.

_I don't care._
What's the worst that could happen? Death? Better than being trapped here with a damned psychopath.

Before you could control yourself, you were already trying to yank off the ropes on your hand. By a miracle granted by whoever it was controlling this world, you managed to slip your hand off the knot without breaking any bones. Maybe it was the adrenaline, but the raw skin on your wrist didn't seem to hurt as much, so you decided to get to work immediately.

The dresser looked like something you could push. It was afterall almost empty despite the size. You tested with a push. It moved, but the sound was horribly loud against the floor. Heart pumping, you stared at the door with wide eyes, half expecting Jungkook to storm in.

The wooden panel stayed shut.

Sighing in relief, you resumed pushing, until the furniture lined with the opening of the vent.

This was a stupid idea.

You climbed up onto the dresser and exhaled nervously before standing up to your full height. Fortunately for you, the object you were standing on was quite stable. With a newfound burst of confidence, you raised your arms and traced around the air vent's rusted cover. You couldn't believe your luck when they gave out as you pulled them off, leaving you full access to climb in.

It's going to be so dusty and dirty and who knows what creatures lurks in there-- you stopped your thoughts and braced yourself for the worst.

Here goes nothing.

"--Noona, I brought you breakfast!"

Heart jumping to your throat, you scrambled to pull yourself up into the dark opening, but Jungkook with his regular exercises and quick reflexes managed to grab your ankle before it was out of his reach.

Your vision whirled as your body hit the floor. You might have heard a crack as your arm tried to cushion your falling body, but the adrenaline in your veins and the urgency of the situation made you blind to the fact. Breath knocked out of your lungs, you struggled to squirm out from Jungkook's hold, but despite your efforts he was pining you down far too easily.

No no no no nononono

Pained and frustrated cries left your throat as you felt him overpower your feeble attempts to move away from your captor. Within seconds, he managed to climb on top of you and clasped a handcuff on both your wrists, managing to held them down to the floor with one hand and effectively diminishing your chance to escape. Your right arm which had cushioned your fall started to throb and you gritted your teeth in pain.

Jungkook stared at you blankly as your struggles weakened after a while, before he snapped out of his thoughts and looked back at your trashing legs.

".... You don't need those legs, do you, [F/N]?

For a second, you stopped all movements, shocked at the question, "W-What?"
The sharp prick of a syringe made you hiss out in pain, and Jungkook sounded far too cheerful when he whispered praises for you to comfort your pain. The sedative was as effective as ever, and you felt your muscles relax, your energy leaving you completely in the hand of a madman.

More profanities and sounds of distress escaped through your lips, but instead of listening and breaking down like the day before, the younger male looked around, completely shutting out your words. Jungkook reached over to the spilled over tray of fruits he brought you for your lunch and withdrew his hand, his body still straddling you down onto the hardwood floor. He experimentally loosened his grip on you, and upon getting no more struggling, he lifted himself off your form and gently flipped you onto your stomach.

Your breathing sped up as you desperately tried to force your neck to crane down to observe him. You could see his back and it was driving you crazy, how you didn't know what to expect. His hand traced down your calves and stopped near your ankles.

"Don't touch me! Don't you d-dare--"

"This is going to hurt, but I'm doing this because I love you, okay?" He gently said, and still he dared to sound so sad about it.

"Jung--"

At first, you felt a quick pressure dragging across your skin.

And then you found your nerves assaulted by horrible horrible pain.

Through your screams, you barely heard gentle shushes and sympathetic crooning, but another slicing sensation on your other limb drowned the male's voice, your own volume covering his.

This can't be real this can't be real this can't--

Jungkook waited patiently until your vocal chords refused to vibrate and made a decent sound. Still crying, you trembled as you looked down, despair weighing your stomach, your mind continuing to refuse what had just happened.

And then you saw it.

Two clean wounds cutting through your legs' achilles tendon.

Fuck

Fuck

Fuck
Your eyes met his as you hiccuped, your brain slowly starting to process the reality presented by your senses -- the sight of sliced flesh, the smell of blood, unresponsive muscles--

Jungkook's usually gentle expression twisted into a mad smile as he watched the realization and dread finally sinking in your being.

You could always try to leave.

But he will find you,

and he will Break you.

Again.

And again,

And again,

until

you

give in.

"Now that you're all, you'll have to stay with me, right, noona?"
forty two. [[ stay | jhs. ]]

Chapter Notes

Hiya.

The good news: I'm not dead.

The bad news: I can't really write as much as I used to due to IRL stuff, so there won't be any regular update schedule in place.

.... But hey, here I am. I'm sorry to keep yall waiting. All I could promise you devoted readers is that I won't be abandoning this series, mainly because I've had the endings all planned out and it would be a shame to not get them done. Thank you for sticking around!

---

run. | [[ stay. ]]  

knj. | ksj. | myg. | [[ jhs. ]] | pjm. | kth. | jjk.

---

Fifty five.  
Fifty six.  
Fifty seven.  
Fifty eight.  
Fifty nine.  
Zero.

The rhythmic ticks of the clock and the occasional clicks of digital keyboard filled your mind as you stared at the muted television. . This is.....

.... boring.

"Hobiii," you called out your boyfriend's name with a lazy whine, "I'm bored..."

Your dearest turned towards you with widened eyes. However simple the adjective was, it seemed like the word affected him greatly, and the look in his face made you coo mentally. He looked so lost and confused, and all that just by having you utter what you were feeling at the moment.

These moments when you could clearly see how eager he was to keep you happy and content -- they never failed to amuse you greatly.
"I'm bored," you repeated.

"Angel," he re-composed himself and put away from his phone. You inwardly cheered at a job well done. Attention, at last. "I brought you that membership so you can watch all the shows and dramas you wanted, didn't I?"

"Mmhm, but I got bored of them," you said honestly. Spending your whole day staying in has taken quite a toll on you, and the irony of it kind of make you feel guilty.

You had been the one who suggested to stay in when Hoseok had kindly asked what did you want to do once you managed to have your own place. It felt awesome at first, totally having nothing to do, just house chores and experimental cooking every now and then, watching shows and movies you've missed, reading all the books you've ever wanted to read, listening to music as long as you wished. Whatever you wanted, Hoseok provided. It was a life anyone would have had dreamed about at least once in their lifetime.

But soon enough, everything felt dull. Things didn't feel as fun as it used to. What was originally your definition of happiness was now bland and meaningless. You still loved your boyfriend, but with dance classes and performances he said he had to attend to, he was out most of weekdays, and unlike before, you had no one else to keep yourself company.

So really, he was the only source of your happiness currently, and you were in the mood to tease him; to see him flustered instead of his usual smiles and rainbows.

"I see," he actually sounded unsure and nervous, and his eyes darted around in inspiration, "Have you been looking through Instagram? Is there anything you want to try out? Any hobbies you might want to get into?"

You shook your head and shrugged, "Don't feel like it."

"Do you want to go shopping? We can go right now, if you want? Didn't you say you wanted to try on that cute top when we passed by Dior last time?" He's fully invested in you right now, and you gratefully soaked the attention.

"Mmm... Don't feel like going out."

He smiled, but you didn't miss the nervous look in his eyes, "Then tell me what you want, angel."

"I don't know, really," you grimaced at the truth in your words, but added on at the sight of Hoseok's smile slowly slipping from his facade, "Maybe we can cuddle the day away? Please? You've been away so much, and I've missed you!"

"I'm sorry for that," he said sincerely with a sigh and stood up, taking your hands as he led you towards the bedroom, "It's just that I've been busy with classes and work. It's all for our sake, I hope you understand that."

"I totally understand," you crooned, climbed onto the soft cushioning and finding your place easily. You've always wondered how on earth could your bodies manage to just fit together like a pair of couple necklace pendant. "You know, you could always bring me along."

You could feel him tense at the suggestion, "I don't think that's a good idea, angel."

"Why not? I'll tag along with you, so you could always see me. And I'm sure I would love watching you work! What is your work anyway? Something along the lines of performing, right?"
"Performance is a way to put it," he chuckled, "I just don't think you'll.... like it."

"What do you mean? I love watching your performances! Have I ever told you I didn't? No, never! Come on, please? I'll be good!" You pleaded, knowing that Hoseok will eventually end up obeying you. He was such a sweetheart to you, and it did feel like you were taking advantage of his soft spot for you, but hey, you were his girlfriend and this was your dynamic!

The wine-red haired male placed a loving kiss to the top of your head and tightened his hold on your back, "Really? You'll be good and watch me? You won't get bored of me?"

"Me, getting bored of you? Hobi, please, don't underestimate your girlfriend," you looked up at him and smiled as you found his loving gaze, "I chose you, remember?"

"You did," he whispered back, eyes drooping, "I'm the luckiest man alive."

"So?"

"..... So, I'll give my angel what she wants."

※ ※ ※

It was raining when you got out from the flat.

Hoseok had insisted for you to wear a hoodie, comfortable attire with running shoes, and not sparing you even a second to dress up for him. He didn't need you to, he said. You appreciated the sentiment, but you wanted to look pretty for him. But seeing how insistent he was, you gave up dressing up for tonight; maybe once he realized how underdressed you would be compared to other patrons of his show, he would agree to it next time.

And it was probably a bad idea to dress up with all this rain in the first place.

Your man was also dressed in a similar style as you, but you assumed he was going to change once you got to the venue. Or perhaps the theme tonight was street dance, in which case his casual attire would've made sense.

He ordered a premium sleek Mercedes over Uber, and like a creature of habit, made sure you were settled in comfortably before going in himself. Ever the gentleman, he asked the driver to adjust the thermostat so you wouldn't freeze to death, and you spent the rest of the ride comfortably leaning onto him, your ears graced with his constant heartbeat coupled with the soft pitter patter of the rain outside.

What a beautiful night.

The car stopped, and you reluctantly unlatched yourself from Hoseok momentarily to step out onto the streets.

The establishment before you seemed like a pub, of some kind. Less rowdy than a club, packed full of people, with a curtained stage in the front, away from the bar. You had no time to ask any questions since your companion brought you immediately to the bartender: a middle aged man with friendly smile wiping a wine glass. He nodded at the both of you and asked a question in Korean, which you presumed was him asking what would you like to drink.
"Sunshine Daydream," Hoseok said with a secretive smile, "With extra grenadine syrup, please. Served in twenty minutes."

The bartender nodded and went back to wiping his glass. Without waiting for further ado, you were led towards an archway, passing the bathrooms and into a door that said 'Staff Only'. Hoseok opened it easily and pulled you in, switching your hand holding into a full half-hug, his arm circling your back.

"Hobi--"

"Sssh," he warned softly, and you obeyed, even though you had no idea why you should be silent. He hummed at your obedience and walked the both of you along the room and down the stairs. This seemed far too secluded to be a waiting room, you thought with confusion. But then again, what do you know? Maybe it's just a safety precaution.

A stranger stood by a door at the end of the basement's small hallway. His stoic expression lightened upon seeing your boyfriend, and he stood up to welcome the both of you. As they conversed in Korean, you somehow managed to recognize a few words of friendly greetings and small talks from all the Korean shows you had been binge-watching like crazy. The other male turned his attention towards you, and you could feel the arms around your waist tighten protectively. You leaned closer to him and threw a polite smile at his friend.

Briefly, you heard the Korean word for 'girlfriend' and grinned to yourself. Hoseok always sounded so proud whenever he said the word, and you couldn't be more than happier to hear it. The two exchanged some more pleasantries, and after getting a set of keys from his friend, he waved the two of you off before returning to his chair.

There were steel doors behind the guarded entrance you just passed in, and you did not like the suspicious stains on the floor. A creepy atmosphere lingered in the air, and truth be told, it was as if you were thrust into a horror movie.

You were just about to voice this out to Hobi, but he turned towards you and wrapped your hands between his before smiling down at you. The words died down in your throat.

"I just want to say thank you for being here. I appreciate your curiosity and honestly, I've dreamt of this for so long. For you to see me completely. I just-- I just want you to know I will never let you go, ever, so you better be prepared for this, alright?"

You found a shiver racking down your spine, as if it was a premonition of danger, but all you could see was your sweet boyfriend, smiling down at you so lovingly. He's done so much for you. The least you could do is to squash down your paranoia and go along with this, if it would make him this happy.

"Okay," you said out loud, partly to convince yourself that you were being stupid for overthinking things.

He kissed your forehead and inserted one of the key into one of the nearest door, holding it open for you to come in first.

And like a stupid sacrificial lamb, you went into the pitch black room.

Before the light entered your eyes, you knew something was mist definitely wrong. There was a rotten, metallic scent in the air; one that made you nearly gag. The moment the light turned on, it got worse.
Way worse.

"Oh. Well, that's a shame. I thought he would survive another day."

The door locked behind you, but you couldn't hear it for the fact that you had started vomiting your lunch. Hoseok seemed like he was prepared for this to happen, grabbing the nearby bin and holding it in place as you retch and cry and your head spins and--

The corpse, though malformed, was wearing an expression of at peace after finally embracing death. It continued to stare at the both of you lifelessly as your skin crawled with disgust and your heart burned with grief. Your boyfriend-- no-- the monster whom you thought was your sweet, loving, future spouse, continued to rub your back soothingly. How was it possible to be so deep in love, you had turned a blind eye into all the things you should have been questioning?

Of course.

Of course he would gladly dirty his hand if it meant he could surround you with diamonds and the finest wines.

Of course he would always come back late on certain nights, faintly smelling like metal and with an obviously improved mood even though he had left with a foul temperament in the morning.

Of course he would always hid himself whenever he had a phone call from 'work', and the one time you curiously tried to eavesdrop he had gotten furious, he nearly broke the front door as he stormed out to 'cool off'.

"I'm sorry, angel, is it too much? I guess you're not used to see these kind of things, huh...."

"Wh-Why.... Why?" Your voice trembled, weak and hoarse, "D-Does this-- whatever this is.... Does it pays well? Are you.... Are you doing this because of m-me?"

That has to be it, right? There was no way your endearing boyfriend did this voluntarily. It was because he loved you so much, and you were selfish. You were selfish and he only wanted to fulfil your wishes.

"I suppose this pays well, yes..... But 'because of you'? What are you talking about, [F/N]?

"It's mainly just what I do for fun and let off steam, you see."

You have to get the hell out of here.

"Ah, maybe I can bring you over when a new body is brought in! It's just that sometimes they would struggle harder, so things gets messy, and I didn't want any blood to get on you....."

Why in the world did you think choosing to stay with a kidnapper was a good idea in the first place? Stupid stupid stupid stu--

"Did I manage to entertain you, angel?"

Your body slammed against the door, one hand furiously pushing down the handle and the other desperately unlocking the sliding lock.
But

it's

*futile*

"Where are you going, [F/N]?

You had just realized the dark blood splatters decorating the floor, cold and sticky and *sickening*, but no matter how hard you tried to pull away, his vice-like grip on you could only seem to tighten.

"I told you I will ne\_\_\_ver let you go.... Didn't I?"

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