Don't Be Afraid (Of Yourself)

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Summary

When Jimin and Taehyung are taken from their seemingly utopia and dropped alone into a big world of humans, they realize that not all humans are like what they were taught. They come in all shapes, sizes, and intentions.

They've still got a lot on their plate though - being strays in the middle of the capital city as well as still recovering from their unique past is going to be a challenge no matter what - but their new friends are surprisingly good to them. To the hybrids' surprise, they take care of them and treat them as equals despite their sudden appearance at school.

They know that there's always going to be conflict because of what they are and how they are seen as, but with this new opportunity of freedom, Jimin and Taehyung are on a journey. A journey in which they make new friends, learn new things, and find some love along the way.

Notes

oof. i might change that summary -> -> -> (Heyo it's the editor, kookienight I changed the summary so don't get your panties in a twist because it's different - it's still the same story I swear)
Anyway, this is something that I've made with my very helpful Creative/Inspirational Team the one and only kookienight. She's an amazing editor and really encouraged me to actually write this out. She's also made a fic of her own so please give her some love!

Now, this is /really/ slow burn. It's pretty much just the good and bad times with our hybrids Jiminnie and Taehyungie. As you can imagine, it can get pretty bad, but I assure you there's nothing too upsetting or explicit. If anything may be uncomfortable I will put a small warning but please give me some feedback for tags or warnings that need to be added!
New Beginnings

Breathe in,

out,

in…

… out……

...... in……

........ou--

“JEON JUNGKOOK!!”

He snaps up with a sharp inhale, “Wh- what?” He turns his head side to side while blinking his eyes as fast as they can, but all he sees is his classmates snickering. His eyebrows crease because didn't someone just scream bloody murder?

“Jungkook ,” the voice repeats in a more exasperated tone. The teacher's hands are on her hips and she looks angry, at least that’s what he can tell from his blurry sight. “This is the second time you’ve fallen asleep in my class, how do you expect to pass this year when you're already developing this habit?”

“Uh--”

“--Can you repeat to me what I just said to the class?”

“Well--”
“-- Don’t do it again!”

“Okay--?”

“-- Now, ” she takes a deep breath, closing her eyes before painting a cheerful smile for the class. Jungkook only slumps again against his hand, his eyes are already drifting half closed as he doesn’t even try to comprehend his teacher’s words. “As I said before, we have only been in school for a couple weeks but it seems we have a few naughty boys who have decided to postpone the beginning of their education.”

Jungkook loudly groans, earning a dirty glance. He knows what this means. New students. Last year, he was the kid who had to teach all the new students about the section they were learning because he was top in his class. The only reason he's taken to sleeping now is because what do they actually learn in the beginning of school?

The teacher moves on, “They’re also new to the district so I expect you to show the best of this city’s only all-boy high school. Do you think you can do that for me?”

Students respond with “Sure thing,” and “You bet,” and “Anything, ma’am.”

“Good, good. I will bring them in now.”

She sets the meter stick she was holding on her desk and turns for the door, her pencil skirt restricts some movement of the legs but not the visibility of the ehem - cheeks . Ms. Shin is in her mid twenties, a quite attractive woman, and someone no student expects to be one to teach here. This is an all-male high school full of hormonal teenage boys and the effect of just her presence is already being shown when the boys bite their lips, blatantly stare, nudge their friend, and make sexual hand gestures. Each and every one seem oblivious to the fact that she’s a total bitch who uses her looks to her advantage and how it aggravates Jungkook to no end.

With the attention of the entire class now, they watch as she bends forward ever so slightly to reach the handle, twists it firmly, and just opens the goddamn door . Jungkook sighs and rolls his eyes as students crane their necks in front of him to get a better view of the muscles working on her behind. The door eventually finally fucking opens and she steps back for the new students enter.

This is when the class stops. This is when they slowly shrink back into their seats and peel their eyes from the teacher to settle them on the two figures walking in. Even Jungkook straightens his
Jungkook knows what a hybrid is. He's heard of them, like any other kid, teacher, person. But that's it, only heard of them, because they're so rare to see. The most information he has is from rumors around the school of boys talking about how all the rich men buy themselves a sweet girl cat hybrid. But this is different. This is an all-male school and one of these is a wolf.

Ms. Shin closes the door and walks around to stand to the right of the taller of the two, the wolf. It's obvious from the way she looks him up and down that she's intrigued in more ways than one. The hybrid has dark brown hair brushed forward, just on the edge of covering his eyes and falling almost messily down to his jaw closer to his ears.

Jungkook belatedly notices that those ears of his aren't human, but wolf. They end just a little higher than where his human ears starts and stretch two or three inches above his head. They look so natural and are buried so perfectly in his hair, they look like they were taken from a real animal. Between his legs falls a large bushy tail that reaches to the middle of his calves and matches his hair color.

The hybrid beside him seems opposite from his friend, giving off an extremely nervous feel as the other is confident and strong. This shorter one is a black cat hybrid. His cat ears set the same on his head like the other, blending and mixing naturally but just a bit shorter, as he's from a different animal. The tail is like that of an actual cat and slowly moves continuously, nervously, against his back, the tip slightly curling around the front of his shoulder a few centimeters. If it had not been along his back, Jungkook guesses the tail would also fall to the length of his calves but a little farther. While wolf's tail is about the width of his thigh with all the fur, the cat's is the thickness of two or three fingers. What the cat is also doing differently is looking down, playing with the simple gray rings decorating almost half of each hand, his small fingers peeking out over the edges of his long and fluffy cream sweater.

Jungkook thinks this cat hybrid is what he's been taught to expect when he thinks of all hybrids; soft, tentative, adorable, and pretty. It looks as if he's to appeal the “rich men” Jungkook has heard about. The other hybrid seems different in the way that he looks stronger, more handsome than adorable, yet is still appealing to someone who likes “pretty boys.” He might be for a middle aged woman, Jungkook thinks.

Ms. Shin clears her throat softly and faces the class, “I too have never met these handsome young men,” she stresses the word with a breath and all eyes flicker to her for a second. “Would they be so kind to give us the honor of knowing their names?”
The taller one grows a friendly box smile. “Hi, I’m Kim Taehyung,” his voice is an interesting mixture of deep and cute that works surprisingly well with the somewhat intimidating ears and tail. “I’m happy to be here.”

The attention then goes to the cat hybrid, who clasps his hands together tightly, trapping his sweater paws. “Park Jimin,” he says calmly, like he isn't talking to the ground.

Now, the teacher makes her way behind the hybrids while running a hand across their backs to stand next to the one named Jimin, her hand still resting on him. She speaks to him softly, “Raise your head, sweety. Tell us your name one more time, there's no reason to be afraid.”

Park Jimin does as he's told but keeps his eyes tightly shut and his plush lips pursed. Kim Taehyung beside him turns to watch not the other, but the teacher with critical eyes and slightly laid back ears. Jungkook finds the look intriguing.

“Jimin,” the smaller repeats, more stressed now. Jungkook’s eyes follow to watch the way the cat’s tail detaches itself from his back and stays diagonally in the air in an acute angle from where it was previously. “Park Jimin.”

A sharp, obviously irritated inhale through her nose, and Ms. Shin is turning to the class and clapping her hands once to regain attention. “Our new friends will sit together. Seungcheol and Jisoo, move closer to me, they’ll sit in your seats.”

The two quickly pack their supplies and move to the empty desk in the front row before them. Thankfully, Jungkook wasn’t picked and is allowed to stay beside the window. “Jungkook, maybe teaching these boys what we learned so far will keep you awake a little longer, hm?”

“Sure,” Jungkook says. He almost adds, ‘Do you want me to teach them the meaning of life too?’ because now he has to relive freshman year.

“Go ahead, Jimin, Taehyung.”

Somehow, Park Jimin gets to his seat with his head down and his eyes closed. He sits in between Jungkook and Kim Taehyung at the three seat desk in the second row. Jungkook also notes the way both of the hybrids’ tails move from wherever they were before on them to lay across their laps lazily, falling a little off their knees.
Ms. Shin returns to her sitting place on her desk and continues to tell the class about how she always dreamed about being a teacher since she was just a small child. Jungkook takes the opportunity to swiftly pull his phone out of his pocket. The closest person to him is Jimin, who is closing his eyes, so who’s going to see?

He quickly opens his texts and goes to a group chat with his four friends.

[ the sack (5) ]

You

> OMG GUYS I JUST GOT THE NEW STUDENTS

Min Yoongz

> lol don't care

You

> THE NEW KIDS ARE HYBRIDSS

Kim Joon

> pciture

Jung Hobi

> noww

Jungkook bites his lip as his friends encourage him to take a picture of the hybrids. He glances towards them, Jimin has his forehead against his hand, still looking down, and Taehyung is leaning in the same fashion as Jungkook was when he was trying to sleep. One of Taehyung’s ears is flopping to the side as both Jimin’s are in regular upright position. He doesn't know why, but their ears intrigue him most out of the animal appendages.

The best way to go about this picture business, he figures, is to not do it secretly.
“Hey,” he whispers quietly. Hybrids are part animal so they can hear better, right? True or not, Taehyung still lazily looks at him with a perfect eyebrow raised while Jimin flinches. Both of their ears spin to him as well, so he knows he has their attention. “Take a picture with me?”

Taehyung eyes the phone Jungkook wiggles and nods with an assuring smile so he sets the device on his end of the table to capture them all. The wolf brings a hand to Jimin's shoulder and pulls him against his chest roughly, startling him and causing his eyes flutter open to look directly at the camera with his mouth slightly open. Taehyung quickly sticks his to tongue out and crosses his eyes. Jungkook snaps the picture as fast as possible and hides the phone to minimize the risk of Ms. Shin seeing because he knows she's waiting for a reason to get him in big trouble.

It takes a couple seconds for Jungkook to realize what he just saw. It happened so fast he isn't sure he really did. It's impossible, right? But aren't hybrids supposed to be impossible in the first place? Hesitantly, he takes his phone out again and checks the picture. Everything looks normal, both hybrids are wearing comical expressions and Jungkook has a smile. Except, Jungkook did indeed see what he saw.

Jimin’s eyes are completely grey feline eyes. They’re too real, the pupils are slightly blown due to surprise, the silver that thickly surrounds the black is covering the expanse of his entire eye and leaves no white showing. Of course, there is white around his irises, but it’s really only visible when an animal is looking to the side. Jimin is not, he’s staring straight at the camera. Jungkook finds it a little creepy to have the bright irises covering the eye and understands why he was closing them. If hybrids were supposed to have eyes like that, Taehyung would have covered his own human ones.

Still, Jungkook sends the picture to the group chat and receives an immediate reply.

[ the sack (5) ]

Jung Hobi
> WANT

Kim Joon
> same bro same

You
Jimin didn't even open his eyes willingly. I don't think he wants to talk to me now… :(  

Min Yoongz

> Jimin? The one with the eyes? They're kinda cool just talk to him
> to them**

Old Man Jin

> become their friends and let us see them pls??

You

> I don't really think that would be best...

Min Yoongz

> hyung will give you sweets

So Jungkook puts his phone away and prepares to strike up conversation with his new tablemates. But as he looks back up, his eyes immediately meet the teachers. "Jungkook," she says calmly. She's leaning back against her desk and dares to cross her legs the other way when she speaks. "If I asked Taehyung what I said the first day of school, would he be able to answer correctly?"

"No."

"And why is that? You're responsible for teaching them this."

"I didn't want to interrupt you," Jungkook lies without emotion. He's also neglecting to address his teacher respectively, but they've seemed to have this sort of game against each other from the start, since Ms. Shin realized he doesn't drool over her like the rest. Nor is he discreet about his disliking of her like other students are who aren’t interested, who are smart enough to keep their mouth shut. They both take it as a challenge.
She tilts her head back in irritation, “Then pass notes or something. Tell me you can use your head, sweetie.”

Instead of answering, Jungkook keeps fierce and steady eye contact with her as he yanks his bag from the ground and begins to haphazardly unzip it.

“Good.” Like that, she continues her monologue.

Jungkook blindly fishes out a paper and pen to use as instructed. He lays the sheet straight, writes, and slides both items in front of Jimin with a little nudge. It takes a bit but Jimin eventually decides to open his eyes again and read the paper - yet not without covering his eyes like one would from the sun.

*I’m sorry I made you open your eyes then.*

Jimin takes the pen, writes, and slides it back, but keeps his position until he receives it again.

*–It’s okay. It was Taehyung who made me do it. You should really apologize for taking the picture.*

*I’m sorry for that too :( I probably also should have asked if I can keep it but I only sent it to my friends... I just have the 4 though! They only wanted to see you guys in the nicest way possible. I promise they aren’t like other people!!!*

*–What did they say?*

*Nothing bad. But if you’re really concerned, Yoongi-hyung said “they’re kinda cool” about your eyes. And him saying something says something. He’s a senior so he’s all no this and no that*

*–Oh.*

*You know, you guys don’t have to worry about making friends.*

*–We can do that just fine.*
Maybe with hybrids, but we’re all humans here. Not to mention the way your eyes make you stand out even more :\ We can help you with taking care of bullies and shit cuz a lot of fights go down here. You can be like, part of the cool kids you know? We don’t fight

-We?

“we” as in, the guys you’ll meet at lunch when the bell rings :) Trust in me

This time, Jimin moves the paper to Taehyung. He writes a bit, slides it, Jimin circles something, and slides it right back to Jungkook.

-You look like a bunny so... (sure)

They sit quietly for five minutes without any further paper sliding. Near the end of class, Ms. Shin calls out Jimin’s name.

The hybrid was twirling his rings again and is caught off guard. He looks up, wide eyed, pupils blown, and startled. But he doesn’t take his eyes off her even when he realizes his mistake, instead, he squeezes his small hands together and purses his lips in hopes of just riding it out.

“Oh my,” she breathes. Students turn their heads in confusion and gasp, mutters flow throughout the room. “You both are beautiful.”

Jimin blushes heavily from everything he hears around him, pretty sure everyone else can see the red.

“ Weird…”

“Kinda pretty…”

“I don’t think that’s right…”
“Wait, we can’t see! We’re behind him!”

But whatever Ms. Shin was going to say to target Jungkook is drowned out by the bell. A few students stay seated to rudely stare and take not-so-subtle photos little longer and the rest steal glances while walking out. Jungkook waits with the two as everyone slowly files out, the ones from the back taking their time to soak the hybrid in. Once they’re all gone and it’s only the four of them, Jimin tears his eyes away from the teacher and looks at Taehyung.

“That’s one way to introduce myself,” he states after releasing a breath.

“At least you don’t have to close your eyes anymore, huh!” Taehyung just smiles at his friend and hits him playfully.

They stand up and make their way out as Ms. Shin watches intently.

The walk to the cafeteria is actually faster than any of them expected. People slow down, sometimes to a stop, to look the new kids up and down. It ends up paving a way for the three. They all get their lunch with ease and are lead by the human outside the building.

The trek is just under minute but they end up in a probably beautiful corner of the property with flowers, bushes, and many trees on grass that to one hybrid, are all the same color as the trees’ trunks. A rather large picnic table set under a particularly big tree has four students already sitting down. These seem to be Jungkook’s friends.

Approaching the table, Jungkook speaks first to the group, “This is Jimin and Taehyung. I kinda promised them cool friends but you’ll do.”

“Be grateful. We didn’t plan on meeting someone like you either, brat,” an older, grumpy looking boy sneers back. Jimin is gestured to sit to the right of him while the other three laugh at his words, and Taehyung naturally follows his friend. When Jungkook takes his seat across from the hybrids though, the boy with the frown hands Jungkook a lollipop and two round candies, dampening the nervousness Jimin was feeling from sitting next to the seemingly rude boy. Jungkook gives his thanks with a childlike smile, which is interesting considering the almost bad boy vibe they’ve been getting from this Jungkook and his strong eyebrows.

A taller boy with broad shoulders nudges Jungkook in the side almost right after. “Be polite,” he chuckles, almost embarrassed.
“I said thank you!” Jungkook retorts then shrugs and takes a drink of his bottled water. “He should be thanking me anyway.”

“He meant introduce us,” someone from the end of the table says with a large smile.

“Mnh!” Jungkook’s eyes widen in realization before putting the bottle down. Then he faces the two newcomers again and holds the boy next to him with both arms around the waist, preventing him from moving. “This is Seokjin-Hyung.”

“Jin-Hyung is just fine,” he tells them with another friendly chuckle. The boy on Seokjin’s right with dark hair steals a fry or three off his plate but earns a slap on the hand when Seokjin is freed from Jungkook and drops the fries.

He only smiles, revealing dimples, and salutes to the two, “I’m Namjoon. You’ll call me hyung as well. Off but on record, you’re both very cute.”

The boy is pushed around by his friends for saying this but Jimin and Taehyung blush and politely bow their heads to him. Turning to their left, they’re met with the boy who spoke earlier, “Jung Hoseok! You can call me Hobi-Hyung.” When Jung Hoseok brings a peace sign to his eye, it causes the other two to break out in to smiles with the rest. He coos with a quiet, “Cuties.”

The last, grumpy, boy rolls his eyes at his friend with a short scoff before turning to Jimin and Taehyung, “I’m Yoongi but all you can call me is Yoongi-Hyung.”

Jimin’s smile widens and his eyes crinkle a little more at the familiar name that had complimented him earlier. He speaks in small voice, “Jimin,” which makes Yoongi’s lips quirk slightly up. Jimin manages to catch it and prides himself in making a frown lighten.

“Taehyung,” the wolf hybrid says confidently just after. “I guess we’re the youngest?”

“Yeah,” Jungkook shrugs somewhat sadly, “the oldest are Jin-Hyung and Yoongi-Hyung.”

“So you’ll be out of high school by next year?” Jimin asks Yoongi to get some type of conversation going after their introductions.
“Yeah but it won't feel like it,” Yoongi answers with a scrunch of his nose.

“What do you plan on doing after high school?”

“Going to college and getting a better job?” he says, glancing at Jimin in confusion.

Jimin’s eyes widen when he realizes his little slip up and puts his blushing head down with a soft, “Oh yeah…”

It becomes a little awkward then, so Taehyung swallows his food quickly to save his friend. “Hybrids don’t go to college,” he explains easily as if these people weren’t still strangers. Jimin makes a mental note to give another pep talk about stranger danger later. “It takes too much time and it would be a waste anyway.”

“Hold up,” Seokjin counters with his eyebrows furrowed. “Why on both of those reasons?”

But Taehyung already has another mouthful and Jimin must answer the question with a soft, hesitant voice. “Well, humans go to college to get better jobs than what they would have if they don't go right?” He directs the question part to Yoongi, who nods. “But if we go to college, how are we going to get bought? We’re already pulled out of school if we’re taken before finishing. We’ll be too caught up in studies to be available.”

“It takes too much time away from us to be bought. Then who wants a 25 year old hybrid?” Taehyung ends, shrugging nonchalantly.

But Hoseok is still curious, “But like, why would it be a waste?”

Jimin looks at him with a pout, not too annoyed at the questioning but always polite, “Because what would we do with a certificate? We can't get a regular 8 to 5 job, we need to be there for our owners. Those of us who are bought for something like a real relationship are considered rare. One reason being because they’re able to use a college degree like a human. But we don't know what we’re bought for.”

This makes Hoseok quiet for a bit as he mulls it over, eventually shrugging in agreement as his
curiosity is satisfied. Namjoon however, scoots closer with interest, “How do you know this? I’m almost *positive* the government wouldn't just disclose to their product discouraging shit like that. The media only tells humans so much for them to want one, why would they tell hybrids any more?”

Jimin backs down bit, shrugging casually, “We spent a lot of time with the staff. We asked and they told, you know?”

“Let’s talk about something else, yeah?” Seokjin suggests. The boys all hum and go back to their food quietly but the other seems to be intent on making everyone feel welcome. He asks to no one in particular, “So how’s classes?”

“Tiring,” Hoseok answers dramatically.

Yoongi scoffs and ruffles his long hair, “Junior year was hell. I’ll be surprised if you make it out alive.”

“But what about Joon? Why are you picking on me?” He sighs.

“Because it’ll only make him slow down a bit but I think he’ll get through alright. It’s you I’m worried about.”

Jimin unexpectedly giggles at this with his ears facing the ground and his lip between his teeth in attempt to stop the outburst. The way the older teases so easily is something he probably won’t get used to. But when a few eyes dart his way, the ears go flat against his head and his lips quickly close in embarrassment.

Lunch goes smoothly, the seven stay on the topic of school and eventually come around to asking to see schedules. Jimin and Taehyung already knew they would be given every class together, but after comparing schedules, they’re surprised to see it’s only their first class without any of their new acquaintances.

Their last classes of the day are spent with Hoseok and Namjoon, and it actually makes them relax for being so lucky to be somewhat comfortable in their classes. They all also encouraged Jimin to not close his eyes and create a surprise like he did in Ms. Shin’s class, but it didn't really stop the stares from lingering any longer.
When the last bell rings and Jimin and Taehyung are on their way out the main doors, Namjoon runs up ungracefully to insist that they walk them home. The hybrids decline but when the older wraps a loose arm around Taehyung’s shoulder, they realize they don't have much of a choice.

“It’ll just be me, Hobi, and Kook,” Namjoon says, “so you won’t be too embarrassed by walking with us.”

Jimin cocks his head toward him as he opens the main door, “Where are the other hyungs?”

“They’ve got jobs to go to,” he tells him casually.

“Oh.”

Before Namjoon can say anything else, Hoseok and Jungkook come from the sides and greet them. The five walk in silence but it’s difficult to tell whether it’s comfortable or not, especially with the glares they see the boys give other students.

Either way, Hoseok breaks it a minute later with an usually shy, “Hey, can I ask you guys something?” It’s obviously directed to the hybrids.

Jimin nods, “Yeah, go ahead.”

“Do you guys know why everyone’s so freaked out that you’re at our school? Why it's just not going to stop when you leave the building?”

“No, not really,” he admits, pouting only slightly.

Taehyung adds, “We just think it's ‘cause we’re strays. You don't see hybrids without their owners, right?”

“Well that’s kind of true,” Namjoon says. “The whole reason is because you just don't see hybrids at all. And you definitely don't see them without owners around. It's more rare than you think.”
“I’ve actually only seen hybrids on fancy advertisements and commercials on that one channel where they sell super expensive jewelry,” Jungkook nods and shrugs himself.

“Really?” Jimin asks with a tilt of his head. “Why? There are more hybrids where we used to be than there are people in your school. Do you know why people don’t see them?”

Now Jimin and Taehyung are both looking curiously up at Namjoon, who provided the most outrageous information. He glances down at them and says with a sigh, “It’s because you guys are expensive. Like, really expensive. Only filthy rich people can afford hybrids. And then they just hide them too. But I doubt no one buys hybrids due to that, I bet there are many people who own one but just prefer not to share.”

They’re quiet for a bit.

“I don’t know whether to be mad or flattered,” Taehyung laughs nervously, at which Jimin agrees.

“So it’s weird that you two just pop up. And since you’re basically free, you shouldn’t necessarily be alone.”

“But we’re not free,” Taehyung counters innocently. “We cost just as much as everyone else!”

“Tae… You know we cost half as much,” Jimin says to him quietly. “And we really can just be picked up without paying.”

Taehyung sighs in defeat at the truth.

“Wait, you guys cost less?” Hoseok immediately asks.

Namjoon joins, “Yeah, and why did you just pop up?”

It’s at this time in the conversation that Jimin and Taehyung are thankfully they're arriving to their house. It’s a simple thing, one story, a small porch, just pretty and basic. Taehyung silently points out their house and avoids the question. But Taehyung’s stubbornness doesn't stop it from being pressed again as they walk up to the door.
“C’mon,” Hoseok pouts and pokes at their sides, “tell us why.”

Jimin takes a glance at Taehyung and notices he’s ignoring the rest by busying himself with unlocking the door, his ears slightly twitching. It angers Jimin but he doesn't let it show.

“Those answers are the same,” Jimin gives in to their questions. “We cost less because of why we’re here now. That’s why it’s very weird you don't see hybrids, because it happens a lot. But… we see now how we can just be chosen whenever.”

Jimin turns to go through the door Taehyung is holding open for him but is stopped by Namjoon’s voice, “Wait! Let us pick you up before school?”

Hoseok continues in concern, “We don't want you guys getting…”

“You know…” Jungkook adds with some random hand motions that don't really mean anything.

“Thank you, but no thank you,” Jimin declines their overprotectiveness with a smile. “We really appreciate being walked home but we can walk back safely. We’ll see you tomorrow.”

With that, the door shuts.

“Well,” Jungkook sighs. “That went well…”
It's a slow morning for their second day of school. Jimin is the first to wake up this time, a little after five. Usually, it’s Taehyung that wakes first. It’s kind of surprising actually, because with his energetic personality, Jimin would think his friend would sleep like a rock. However, he’s learned Taehyung’s energy doesn’t necessarily stop and he’s actually a pretty light sleeper. Once, he’s let on to Jimin that it’s mostly because he’s afraid of his wolf’s dreams. But Jimin never really knows.

He has the chance and showers first, in minimal lighting of course to not temporarily blind himself after just waking up. He can get around generally fine even if his farsighted vision isn’t too great in the small shower. As much as he hates to do it, he might have to ask Taehyung to alphabetize the bathroom products again, the writing too small and the colors too similar.

Then he gets dressed in his room, certain Taehyung will want to use the shower soon. However, when he comes out fully clothed, he only sees Taehyung on the ground in front of his doorway on his back like a sea star. It seems as if he was only able drag himself out of bed and barely out the door.

Although it is unusual, Jimin figures it’s because Taehyung isn’t yet accustomed to the human school mornings. He’s eventually able to get his friend up and into the bathroom. They’re both hungry but Jimin doesn't want to make anything if Taehyung isn't there to eat with him right away, so he waits patiently for his friend to come out to discuss a meal.

They’ve always pretty much lived together, but they’ve never really lived on their own. It probably doesn't even count as living on their own now when they don't have to pay for anything themselves, but it feels the same when they have to come to an agreement on the little things like chores. Both - thankfully - know how to cook pretty well; it was a requirement in order to know how to care for themselves and the people around them. But as Jimin lays there on their couch, already trying not to fall back asleep, he decides those cooking skills of his will not be put to use this morning.

Just as he hears Taehyung come out of his room, he also hears the front door bell ring. Confused, Jimin glances first at Taehyung, who shrugs. He puts the responsibility of answering the door on him anyway because he’s already standing.

Taehyung makes his way past Jimin, to open the door, being then presented with a rush of cold air,
a fairly dark sky, and a smile on a familiar face. “Um, hello?” Taehyung questions with a tilt of his head.

“Hi,” Seokjin responds cheerfully, like the sun wasn't just coming out. “So I was on my way to school and I just happened to come across your house and thought, ‘Hey, why don't I give them a ride?’”

Taehyung frowns, “You go to school at six fifteen in the morning and on your way you see our house - that you’ve never been to - and decide to pick us up?” he asks quizzically. Jimin snickers from inside.

“Well, you see, I also have Yoongi with me and he has to get to school early for being vice president and all that.”

“So he brought his own car? He’s never been here either.” Seokjin looks back to see that there indeed are two cars parked before the house and he purses his lips and falters in the conversation. “Seokjin-ssi, we appreciate you guys trying to help but we really can walk by ourselves. Not to mention, we haven't had breakfast yet.”

“That’s not the only reason we’re here,” Seokjin admits with a sheepish smile. “Jungkook forgot to tell you what you need for your classes and we thought we could go take you shopping. Hoseok and Namjoon are in the car too so they can tell you about those classes...”

Taehyung puts his head down now. He doesn't want to be the bearer of bad news but they didn't actually need Jungkook to tell them what to buy. Before they went to the new school they were given more than enough supplies for each class. They even have the basics and some of what they might need for next year. It was really unnecessary.

Jimin thankfully comes from behind and puts an arm across Taehyung’s waist with an apologetic look, “We already bought all of our supplies but we’ll be happy to have breakfast with you.”

After the older’s face falls, it relaxes a little at the mention of sharing a meal with them. “And let me pay?”

“Seokjin-ssi--”
“Please? For coming to your door so early and being overbearing. And call me Jin-hyung.”

“We - okay, hyung,” Jimin gives in. “Just, wait a bit out here while we get our bags?”

Seokjin nods and they shut the door softly. Inside, they turn to do what Jimin had promised but Taehyung glares at his friend the entire time.

“Eat with them?” he whispers harshly, following Jimin to get his bag anyway.

“I felt bad!”

“But they could be the guys who kidnap us and that would be why no one sees hybrids!”

“I don't think they would tell us their plan. Besides, it came out to being free food.”

Taehyung sets his concern aside for free food with a sigh. They quickly join the older outside but Seokjin doesn't walk them to the cars, instead he says, “Jungkookie is riding with me. And Hobi and Namjoon are riding with Yoongi. Pick your car.”

They both shrug at each other. Each option is just as good as the other. Except, as Jimin points out, one is crowded with an extra person. Taehyung acknowledges that and seeing how the fur on his tail has not yet fully dried, picks Seokjin’s car with the least people. He wants to avoid accidentally wetting as many people as possible.

So Jimin climbs into the back seat of Yoongi’s truck with Hoseok. He greets them politely immediately, so they fall into an uncomfortable pause right after while waiting for Seokjin to start driving. Jimin is reminded of Taehyung’s worries of being hurt by these five boys, but he thinks he would know if they were a threat earlier on.

Without looking to the back seat, Yoongi speaks to break the awkward silence, “So, uh, are we getting you supplies?”

Jemin answers as Seokjin starts to move after they see Jungkook exit and re-enter the vehicle, “No, sorry. We decided on just going out to eat.”
“Jin-Hyung always treats us,” Namjoon comments thoughtfully. “He’s got this weird instinct to always buy stuff for us.”

“And he won’t back down either,” Hoseok adds. “He’ll give you obvious hints or buy it and put it somewhere you’ll just have to accept it.”

“Like when I was voted president and he left me an entire meal on my bed because I rejected it the whole day. I should have never given him the key,” Namjoon laughs and shakes his head.

“Should I tell him you guys are talking shit about him?” Yoongi mutters as if he’s not talking to anyone directly.

“Hyung, no!” Hoseok reaches to playfully hit his arm from behind.

Although Jimin had only said one sentence, he feels more comfortable in the vehicle after the boys’ light banter. It makes him satisfied that his new acquaintances can speak so freely around him. He was afraid they would ostracize him but the topic they were on was one he had brought up. However, the next thing said is directed toward him when Yoongi teases Jimin, “So, Jimin, did Taehyung not want to ride in my car or...?”

This pulls a light chuckle from Jimin as he replies casually, “No, his tail was just still a little damp. Didn’t want to get too many people wet.”

Yoongi nods, “I see.”

It’s silent again and Jimin wonders how far this place they're going to is. Not that he minds, he doesn't feel as awkward as before and he’s thankful for the way Yoongi tried to include him in small conversation. But something feels a little off in the atmosphere of the car. It feels slightly nervous. Jimin himself isn't nervous at the moment though.

Most animals are able to detect the mood of a close friend or someone else particularly close to ensure everyone in the pack or group is safe. If one animal is afraid, there must be something wrong and they all should start running anyway. The close proximity the four are in at the moment probably triggers this part in the cat in Jimin. Confused, he looks to the side and notices the feeling of nervousness and hesitation come from each of them, but mostly Hoseok.
Jimin also notices how Hoseok’s fingers tap consistently against his thigh, near where Jimin’s tail is lying. The appendage normally just lands where it falls and it happens to be stretched out pretty close to the boy. They also awkwardly just got off the subject of tails. There’s really only one thing that could be on Hoseok’s mind right now.

Jimin smiles at the older’s shy actions, finding it very nice how he didn’t say anything in order to respect his privacy. And because all five of them have been so nice in just one day, he says softly to Hoseok, “You can if you want.”

Yoongi glances back in confusion while Hoseok turns to him, “Hmm?”

Jimin points to his tail, “It’s okay,” he assures. Hoseok looks down and blushes heavily, so Jimin elaborates in the most calm, soft, understanding way possible, “I can pretty much feel your emotions.” Which makes Hoseok purse his lips and widen his eyes. “Mostly just the strong ones though.”

Jimin kindly gestures to his tail once more even as he feels all three of their heart beats increase from the weird statement. The stoplight in front of them continues to glow brown for quite some time, and the awkwardness is practically pouring out of everyone now, especially since the radio isn’t on. Hoseok reaches down and gently touches the closest part of the tail to him, near the end.

Jimin immediately brings it back against himself but gives an embarrassed laugh in the silence and explains quickly, “Sorry - felt like a spider - sorry. You can do it again.”

The tail lays on the seat between them again and the car starts moving once more. This time, Hoseok touches it a bit harder and slides his fingers down about two inches along the fur. But as he lifts his hand, the tail pushes back on his palm, encouraging more. Hoseok plays and pets the tail like he would on a real cat while it constantly moves and slides about his hand.

That only lasts a good fifteen seconds because the oldest then announces that they’ve arrived. Jimin brings his tail back to himself and exits the car quietly. Hoseok mutters a small thank you as they pass but Jimin just says it’s no problem.

As they walk up to the cute café, Jimin falls behind the rest to walk beside Taehyung. He says quietly with a sly smirk, “I can smell Jungkook on you.”
“I let him pet my tail when it dried. He was super siked,” Taehyung tells him proudly.

“I bet you were the one who brought it up.” At that, Taehyung just smiles widely, his ears go flat against his head, and Jimin knows he’s right.

Yoongi side glances the two quietly whispering boys as they’re getting seated. With the amount of whispering they always do, they’ve become pretty good at catching each other’s low voices to the point where it’s almost inaudible to the people around them, almost even to hybrids. Jimin has heard Taehyung’s whispers enough over the years to indirectly train himself to understand it - and vise versa. They’ve started to need to use it recently and it’s helped tremendously. So Jimin only sits beside Yoongi and shrugs the gaze off.

A new thought comes to his mind as the seven quietly file into the large half circle booth. He voices it out, “Do you guys always sit in this order?”

Jimin and Taehyung had unknowingly been courted to sit next to Yoongi again. Seokjin looks around curiously and laughs at their seating, “I guess so.”

“You could sit on this side if Yoongi-Hyung’s heart makes you too cold,” Jungkook offers with a cheeky smile. Yoongi glares and the hybrids swear they feel Jungkook’s heartbeat raise even with his smile.

“I’m okay,” Jimin assures quickly, directing it more to the older than Jungkook.

Not a second later, a waiter approaches the table with a bright smile, “Can I start you off with some drinks?”

They go around the table starting with Jungkook, asking for their beverages. The hybrids immediately notice the way the waiter addresses each of them as “sir” at some point in their exchange and Taehyung whispers something to Jimin, who is already acting on it. Fortunately, Namjoon unintentionally stalls the waiter by rambling about the man’s hair cut and Jimin is able to turn his head down to Yoongi. Lowly, Jimin tells him, “We’ll both have water.”

But before Yoongi can do much more than give a confused look, the waiter is asking him what he’ll drink. “I’ll have an iced coffee,” he says.
Writing it down, the man then asks, “And your hybrids, sir?”

Yoongi glances at the two but sees how they both have their heads down. The waiter is looking expectantly at Yoongi now and he has no choice but to answer with a clipped, “Water.”

“Both of them?”

“Yes.”

“Alright, take your time with the menus. I’ll have those drinks right out for you,” he smiles and leaves.

Jimin and Taehyung raise their profusely blushing heads and meet five pairs of eyes at which they smile sheepishly at. Yoongi frowns and asks, “Would you like to explain why I just ordered your drinks like you’re children? Maybe mention why I suddenly now have two hybrids?”

Taehyung shrugs with a pout, “He wasn't gonna ask us.”

“You couldn't have told us this would happen before we sat down?”

Jimin whines a little with his own pout, embarrassed to put their new friends in such an intimate situation. “But I told you what we’ll drink before he asked you~”

“We forgot they were going to do that,” Taehyung explains guiltily as both pairs of ears fall flat and Jimin’s pupils widen. “And you were just closer, so he thought we were yours.”

Yoongi only huffs and picks up his menu, “You better order something simple. Not some combo deluxe and ask to substitute the bread for lettuce or some shit.”

The rest of the table chuckles with the hybrids but Seokjin quickly counters, “No, we brought you here and we’re paying for you so eat whatever you want. Yoongi will just have to suck it up.”

“Why don't you order for them, hyung?” Yoongi mutters in the same voice as in the car earlier. It’s
probably used for small empty threats and things he doesn’t really mean. Jimin shouldn’t really find his childish banter adorable, but with the way he’s seems to act tough, it’s nicely contradicting.

“Because they’re already yours.”

That ends the conversation in tension while they pick their meals. Jimin and Taehyung admit to each other how bad they feel and decide on ordering the same thing, but Jimin can barely even read the small menu print on his own anyway. After Yoongi is forced into embarrassingly ordering for the two perfectly able teenagers next to him, Jimin pulls at his sleeve and gives a small “Thank you.” He only gets the response of a hum but he can’t feel any tension from him anymore.

But by the time they're served, the seven are comfortable again and have started talking about the upcoming school assembly Yoongi and Namjoon will be hosting. They explain where it will be held, what the seating will be like, even some topics they’ll cover. Namjoon also explains that they're going to be staying after school for the rest of the week. It isn't until they have to pay that the mood goes down when Yoongi mutters something about not tipping.

The hybrids make sure to continue thanking the older as much as possible because the waiter seemed so happy about seeing hybrids that they suspect he told the entire staff about “that kid who owns two hybrids.” While they were walking out, the hostess even winked and told Yoongi to have fun, which made a few customers give disgusted looks.

The seven get to school a little late and have to fast-walk to their first classes. Jimin and Taehyung get in about five minutes after the bell and their teacher is clearly not amused. He asks why they couldn't have walked just a little faster but before they can answer, Yoongi and Namjoon peek their heads in and tell him that they were with them. The teacher just sighs and shakes his head with no other choice but to let them off.

A student dares to say, “You know, I bet they were probably fucki--”

“Kyungil!” the teacher yells, quickly cutting off his rude comment without holding back his anger. “Why don't you go ask when I send you to see the student vice president? This is why you're retaking this sophomore class, Kyungil. This is why !”

The boy angrily stands up, snatches up a small paper the teacher shoves at him, and leaves the class.
Other than that, Jimin and Taehyung get to their classes on time. When it’s lunch, they follow Jungkook to the large table again but the two hybrids eat in silence while the others talk. Once a break in the conversation is presented when they all seem just about finished with eating, Taehyung speaks in concern, “Guys, I really think we should talk about this.”

All eyes turn to them and Hoseok asks, “Talk about what?”

“A-about this morning.”

None of them say anything else and just turn to continue eating what’s left of their lunch. Jimin continues on the topic, “I know it was just Yoongi-Hyung pretending to be our owner but we still feel bad for forcing him into it.”

“So you want us to choose who will be your ‘owner’?” Namjoon guesses using quotation fingers.

“Yeah.” He sees the look on their faces that show they don't want to, so he puts on his best pleading expression of wide eyes and a heavy pout, “It’s gonna happen again if we go out anywhere with anyone.”

“The least we can do is make it comfortable and not so sudden,” Taehyung tells them. “Whoever is pretending is gonna have to stick with it too until we actually get an owner ourselves.”

“Why can’t you just go without an owner?” Namjoon asks curiously. It isn't disrespectful, so they're thankful. “Why can’t you just be strays like you are?”

“Because we can’t do as much as we can when we’re owned if we're strays.”

“Like what?”

“Just, go to certain places, buy certain things, walk in public without the fear of getting kidnapped. The works.”

The five are quiet, contemplating and weighing the decisions. Pretending to be an owner means to be with the hybrid when they want to go somewhere they won't be able to on their own - which is
almost all the time they’re out and about - to step in with the fake title when necessary, and most importantly, to make sure they aren't perceived as something for sale in the wrong situation.

The hybrids know it’s a heavy weight to put on their friends, especially so early in their relationship - within one day? Seriously, they shouldn't be tying them down so early. But they also knew they’d probably have to resort to this at some point to stay on the more professional market longer.

“I’ll be Taehyung’s,” Jungkook offers nonchalantly while looking up at his hyungs around him for confirmation. “We have three classes together and we’re in the same year so we also pass each other in the hallways more often than you guys would. We’ll get closer faster.”

“That’s the same with Jimin though,” Hoseok states. “He’s got the same classes as Taehyung.”

“But I thought Jimin was already Yoongi-Hyung’s?”

They all look at Yoongi. Both he and Jimin are surprised at the default assumption because he was really only supposed to be the “owner” for breakfast. Yoongi looks at Hoseok, Namjoon, and Seokjin and asks them hesitantly, “Do you want him…?”

Namjoon and Seokjin exchange a glance wearing apologetic expressions, and Seokjin says, “Sorry, Yoongs. We want more time to ourselves. It was easy to hang out during summer break but now that school’s started…”

“Hoseok?”

He looks sorry as well, “You know how I am with hybrids. I’m not comfortable with the whole ‘owning’ thing. Not to mention I need to go on my own and find someone before it’s too late.” He gives a small smile to lift the mood at the end but it doesn't necessarily work.

Yoongi looks back at Jimin, who is silently pleading with his large grey cat eyes and pout, his ears even laid back in a way he knows is adorable. Jimin doesn't want to be the stray, not when Taehyung was picked so easily. But when Yoongi immediately went to ask the others if they want him, his chances dropped. So as Yoongi finally shrugs and concludes it won't be so bad, he lets out a heavy sigh at the promise of being relatively safe until they can find a potential owner.

The rest of them give a stiff nod affirmatively but the hybrids can feel the great joy radiating off
each other in waves, getting stronger with each second realization sets in.

Yoongi friendly pats the front of Jimin’s head like he does to any person younger than him. But Jimin is a happy hybrid so he closes his eyes and unconsciously pushes against the hand. Confused, Yoongi only pats his head once more.

Taehyung laughs at Yoongi when Jimin pushes yet again. Taehyung takes the older’s hand in his own, saying “This is how you do it,” and placing it behind Jimin’s left ear but closer to the back of his head. He then guides the hand to pet his friend correctly.

When he is able to pet him alone, a noise and vibration emits from Jimin, causing Yoongi to bring his hand back, scared and confused as if he might have done something wrong.

Hoseok, however, only coos loudly, “Aww! He’s purring!” Quickly, he reaches across Yoongi to scratch between the black cat ears and Jimin happily complies to more pets with a large smile.

Jimin and Taehyung were actually both more afraid for Taehyung not wanting be chosen because the only thing different about Jimin is his eyes. When Taehyung was chosen, the fear immediately went to being for Jimin. They shared their relief when Yoongi accepted because despite the far classes and the difference in school years, now both hybrids are given an example of hope that at least someone is willing to play owner.

Chapter End Notes

catch me on the flippity flip (saturday)
Three weeks pass and finally, everything is normal. There are no more glances, glares, look up-and-downs. At least none that are too obvious or bothering. Jimin and Taehyung are now officially part of the school and are like any other students. They go to classes, do homework, earn good grades, and make friends just like everyone else. It’s extremely satisfying how the two can be themselves without having to cower in the teachers’ or other students’ gazes.

The only thing they don’t do however, is hang out with friends anywhere other than at their house. It’s always the hybrids’ house. Mostly because it’s the only address all seven of them know, but no one is really complaining.

The group has - without words - agreed on not going out in public again after the uncomfortable incident at the café. If a human wants to hang out with the hybrids, or vise versa, they call and ask if they can go over. Usually it would be two people visiting at a time. The friends play video games, watch movies, and talk, the lack of parents making it more fun to the humans as well.

Everything’s been going pretty normal for the hybrids. When realizing that they were leaving the very place they were born and raised, the only thing the both of them wanted was to have a normal human experience and to be treated like they weren’t hybrids. Ironically, becoming the five’s friends was because of being hybrids. But as they think of that now, they’re comfortable with it. Not to mention grateful for having to skip that awkward first introduction.

Since their first few days of arriving at the high school, the hybrids have been treated like they were more than strangers but not yet friends. At this time they’re treated like they’ve been around for longer than the three weeks they actually have.

This friendliness shows when Hoseok asks Jimin and Taehyung to join them for dinner at his house. Apparently, this dinner is a combination of three events: Jungkook’s birthday, Namjoon’s birthday, and Mrs. Jung just wanting to congratulate all the boys on starting off the new school year. Of course, Jimin and Taehyung don’t know the birthdates of their new friends, but they eventually did end up knowing when Jungkook’s rolled around on the first of September.
It was extremely awkward for the hybrids when they got a text from Namjoon right before the end of the class before lunch that stated, ‘Don't feel bad but today is Jungkookie’s birthday and we got him a cake.’ Despite this understanding text, Jimin and Taehyung did feel bad for not knowing and going the whole day without saying anything, whether or not that was a main aspect for the others’ surprise. The four humans had bought a cake and gave it to the youngest during their lunch. Still, the hybrids acted accordingly when the cake was presented and sang the song like they didn't just then figure out it was his birthday.

It makes them feel even worse is when they hear the dinner Hoseok’s family is hosting is for Namjoon’s birthday as well because it's so soon after Jungkook’s and again, no one told them. The only other thing they hear is that they don’t have to bring a present because, ‘You guys still don’t know them well and we don't want you to stress.’ They accept the invitation anyway.

“Remember,” Hoseok tells them, “it’s tonight and we’ll pick you up.”

The hybrids nod affirmatively and Taehyung asks, “What do we wear?”

Hoseok chuckles and shakes his head, “Nothing fancy, just casual. We do this every year and it becomes more comfortable each time. If it makes you feel any better, this will be Jungkookie’s second year.”

“But he’s still known you longer,” Jimin points out. “You and your family.”

Hoseok pats his shoulder as they turn into their last class of the day, “You’ll be fine. After class, we’ll take you home and answer any more questions.”

After a long period, the bell finally rings and the three make their way to the school’s front door. Unfortunately, they don’t get far before they’re coming to an abrupt stop as the two hybrids are ripped from their friend.

They're pushed up against the wall by two other students, one with dark black hair covering Jimin and a brunette on Taehyung. Neither of the students are much taller than Jimin, but they're still intimidating nonetheless. Jimin immediately cowers under the dark haired one in surprise and fear. He glances over at Taehyung and sees that he’s a mixed emotion of confusion and fear. Hoseok tries to pull the offenders back with a shout but it’s no use when he’s held away and earns a hand covering his mouth.
The brunette speaks amusingly to Taehyung with a fake pout, “What’s wrong, puppy? Did we take you from your oh-so-precious owner? You gonna whine?”

The black haired one smirks and presses a forearm against Jimin’s chest to keep him against the wall and prevent him from moving. He adds, “Oh, but wait… They don’t have an owner, Jaeho-Hyung.”

“Does that mean,” he muses, stepping closer to the wolf slyly, “they’re up for the taking?”

Jimin pushes the black haired boy’s torso in attempt to get away, but he’s not strong enough with his slowly panicking state and the boy just slams him to the wall again with a sinister grin, “C’mon, kitten, behave. I won’t make those pretty eyes of yours cry.” He brings a hand up to brush through Jimin’s dark bangs.

Jimin shakes his head in protest but doesn’t speak out. If there’s one thing he learned to always stand by is to never go against a human because they’re always higher. It’s ingrained in him that humans can do whatever they want because hybrids were made for them.

Jimin is only willing to go so far as to merely push the other away again in a moment of confidence. But sadly, his action doesn’t benefit him and only makes the human grab onto his jaw to hold him still, pushing his head back up to the wall with his ears plastered down as fear bubbles in his veins.

Taehyung quickly grows angry and glares daggers at the black haired before he moves to push him off Jimin. However, ‘Jaeho’ takes his arm and holds it to the wall. Taehyung then turns to him and lets out a growl, something Jimin hasn’t heard since the two were manhandled out of their rooms to leave for Seoul. It’s predatory and scares Jimin for multiple reasons. The boys however, only laugh.

The brunette says, “You’ve been a bad boy, growling at me.” He immobilizes the other arm. “Yijeong, shouldn’t we punish them?”

‘Yijeong’ comes closer to Jimin’s face, smiling widely, “I think that’s a very good idea.”

By this time, a crowd has formed and no one but Hoseok looks like they even want to help. Someone is holding the flailing Hoseok back though and they’re pretty much out of options. When
Taehyung growls louder Jimin’s tail wraps tighter around his own leg as he tries to scoot away from his friend while their holds only get tighter.

“Don’t touch us,” Taehyung finally says lowly, making the two laugh again.

“Or what?” Jaeho challenges. “You’re all bark and no bite.”

“You don’t know what you’re talking about, bitch!” Taehyung snaps. “You can’t fucking do this like we’re some toys. Let us go and you won’t get bit,” Yijeong smiles against Jimin’s trembling neck at those words and once Taehyung notices, he yells, “Don’t touch him!”

Taehyung is pushed harder to the wall when he attempts to intervene. “You don’t tell us what to do, puppy.”

Another growl is pulled out of the hybrid right before they hear someone pushing through the crowd. The person just about screams, “Hey! What the hell are you doing?”

“Having fun,” Jaeho says nonchalantly without taking his eyes away from Taehyung.

“Fun?” Hoseok manages to. “Fuck you!”

The new arrival looks over the terrified and livid hybrids in pure horror. “Get off him,” he orders, but wastes no time with ripping the black haired boy from Jimin’s neck, which he had been placing soft kisses on.

Yijeong pulls back with a full scowl, staying close to the shaking hybrid that has his ears flat and tail tightening around his leg. “You’re such an asshole, Minho,” he says, but doesn’t make a move to stop him. He crosses his arms. “Jealous you don’t get one?”

Their savior doesn’t respond, just shoots him a nasty look before turning his attention to Taehyung and the brunette. “Jaeho, stop,” he speaks dangerously low.

“He keeps growling at me,” Jaeho says calmly, almost amused as Taehyung continues to stare him down and resist his hold.
“No shit, Sherlock! And get off me!” Hoseok struggles to be released.

‘Minho’ takes one look at Hoseok’s situation and narrows his eyes at the boy holding him. He stalks toward them slowly, seeming to completely ignore Taehyung now.

The attention goes to Hoseok momentarily and in that split second, Taehyung frees himself and flips the scene around to hold Jaeho to the wall by the neck. He growls once more with a fist raised.

“Tae!” Jimin flings himself at his friend, sidestepping Yijeong’s attempt to bring him back. Hoseok - who is now free - and Minho, no doubt the one who freed him - crowd themselves at the wolf’s sides as well, ready to step in if someone slips up. Jimin tugs Taehyung’s shirt like a pleading child, “Taehyung, calm down. It’s okay now.”

“They had no right to do that,” Taehyung says through clenched teeth.

“And you're just going to make it worse, Tae. Calm down, just breathe.”

Jaeho smirks at this opportunity, “Listen to him, puppy, or you're gonna regret it.”

“Hey!” Both Minho and Hoseok yell at Jaeho in warning, then glance at each other before becoming flustered and looking away. Taehyung just squeezes his fingers at the comment and clenches his raised fist.

Jimin rolls his eyes and sighs, placing his forehead on Taehyung’s shoulder, muttering, “I swear to god if I have to hit you upside the head now of all times...”

Taehyung huffs and drops his hold but maintains eye contact, “Fine.”

“Good boy,” Jaeho dares to get in.

Taehyung lunges with a deep growl but Hoseok quickly and roughly shoves him to the side while Minho pushes Jaeho back to the wall. Hoseok apologizes profusely to crowd for making such a
scene and to Minho for bringing him into it.

When the three end up getting to the others in the parking lot, Taehyung is still a little frustrated but looking more guilty now. They all turn to them, Seokjin standing up from previously leaning against his car as they approach, “What took you so long?”

Hoseok stumbles on his words when the hybrids look expectantly at him, “Uh, we g-got in an accident?”

Jimin and Taehyung shrug, it’s the best the older could do for them. The others however, take the statement in a different way and Yoongi steps forward with concern, “Accident? What kind of accident?”

Hoseok ushers the hybrids to Seokjin and Namjoon’s way to get them to enter that car as he says with a forced shrug, “Nothing really, something small, something small.”

The four don’t say anything but continue to look concerned as they enter the cars. The drive isn’t long but the way Namjoon and Seokjin continuously glance at the quietly frowning Taehyung is enough to make it seem like hours. Taehyung has his head down so he doesn't have to see the looks and make himself more embarrassed.

Jimin notices this and friendly rubs up and down his arm to soothe him with an assuring smile. The wolf seems to appreciate it and begins to show it by going to pet his friend in affection. Before he can get close however, Jimin flinches away, causing Taehyung to frown deeper and retract his hand.

As they arrive at their house, the two give their thanks to their friends up front before exiting the car as always. They also notice Hoseok getting out of Yoongi’s so they stop on the sidewalk so he can approach. The older is wearing an apologetic expression that makes the hybrids put their heads down in shame, sure they know what he will say.

Hoseok pats their shoulders though, and with a low voice, says, “Just calm down, alright? That's all you have to do.”

Jimin feels Taehyung tense even as they both nod at the human. Taehyung's ears are down and his tail moves closer to between his legs so Jimin calmly speaks for the both of them, “You can tell them,” he gestures to the cars for Hoseok, “what really happened. It would be best. Thank you,
Hoseok-Hyung.”

They walk away from the older before he can answer and by the time they shut the front door behind them, the cars have already left.

Immediately, Jimin turns to Taehyung with his own frown. He knows Taehyung is tense, as his body language says more than enough, but he doesn't get a reaction when the wolf turns for his room. So Jimin takes off his backpack and throws it right next to Taehyung to avert the attention to himself.

Taehyung's ears go back as he sneers, “Stop giving me that look.”

“You’re mad at me?” Jimin scoffs while his tail practically vibrates. “I'm not the one who made a scene and threatened to hurt some kid.”

“Do you know what they were planning on doing?” he raises his voice.

“Of course I know!” Jimin puts his hands in the air, “But what position are we in to resist them?”

“We were in school, it’s not real life! There, we have just as much power as any other student. So we can resist some kids.”

“That is no reason to bully a bully, Taehyung,” Jimin pleads, “because now how much better are we than them? Now that you growled at a student and threatened to choke and punch him?”

“They touched us first!” Taehyung yells, stepping closer to the just as angry Jimin, who’s crossing his arms now with twitching cat appendages. He grits out every word, “They held us to a wall, talked about us like we were just things, and called us names. Of course I growled at that, Jimin, that they just laughed and continued. Might I remind you that one guy fucking touched you worse than me and you did nothing,” Jimin huffs and purses his lips, with nothing to say to that.

Taehyung goes on, “They might’ve not been planning on doing something really bad but they deserved my little outburst. That kid who knew them was the only way we were able to actually be free from them. We need him with us, and it helps he’s on good terms with Hoseok.”

Jemin ignores the last comment about having the helpful student ‘with them’ because he knows Taehyung still isn’t fully in the Taehyung Mind and he doesn't really know what's actually coming
out of his mouth. Despite his temper just moments before, Taehyung seems to have calmed down a little, so Jimin makes an effort to do the same. He tells him, “Taehyung, that really may have just been a small outburst but we both know what could happen if you do this again.”

“What? Are you embarrassed of me?” Taehyung quickly accuses.

“No! You know what I mean! You just can't get so angry so quickly, Tae! It’s not good progress.”

“I wasn't just angry,” Taehyung counters with less bite now. “I was protecting my p--”

“Taehyung…” Jimin cuts him off with an exhausted sigh and receives a glare for it. “You're still letting it get to you. I appreciate it and everything but we really can’t have you thinking this way. It's not you and you know letting it get to you in situations like that isn’t good.”

Taehyung shakes his head like he's trying to keep a fly away, flops on their couch, and scrubs his face in annoyance, “It's not that easy, Jimin. I - it's like I need to go over every little thing.”

“I’m not saying I expect you to do it like it’s easy…”

“But I know I could've controlled myself then, Jiminnie,” he stresses. “I was more scared than angry. I could’ve - but when he touched you I just -” Taehyung sighs defeatedly, shaking his head again, and waving his hand seemingly to dismiss the subject now.

Jimin nods in understanding and sympathy, and dares to step forward to pat Taehyung on the head, “Okay now, Tae?”

At that, wolf releases a noise something like a purr and groan to show that yes, he is better now, but no, he didn't just have a fit. It makes Jimin giggle happily and mess up Taehyung’s dark brown hair, moving around his ears, and petting him obnoxiously.

A few hours later, the hybrids have successfully done their homework and dressed for the dinner, trying their best not to look neither too casual nor too formal. There's a knock on the front door and they’re climbing in Yoongi’s and Seokjin’s cars. When Jimin silently enters Yoongi’s, it takes him an awkward moment to understand what the look Hoseok is giving him means and he answers it with a smile, “It’s alright now.”
Hoseok releases a sigh of relief and nods while the car starts moving, “I was just a bit worried.”

Namjoon turns around as much as he can in his seat to face Jimin with a curious pout and a nervously confused look. “Is Taehyung,” he asks slowly, “dangerous?”

This stumps Jimin and makes him stop in surprise to think about how to best answer his question. He sticks his bottom lip out, so Yoongi specifies, “Like, he’s a wolf hybrid, right? We mean, is he going to kill us, dangerous?”

It still makes Jimin think hard. He taps his plush cheek with a short finger and mulls it over slowly, “Not… really?”

“That’s assuring.”

“Like, he’s fine and you don’t need to be afraid or anything like that, but… he really just needs the right type of trigger?” Namjoon shrugs at the answer, obviously not completely getting it as he turns back to face the road. Jimin sighs at the vagueness of his own explanation, “I guess we’ll tell you more sometime.” The rest nod and the car falls silent, until Jimin thinks of a question of his own curiosity, “Hoseok-Hyung, will your cat be there?”

Hoseok furrows his brows, taken aback, “What?”

“Your cat,” Jimin repeats. “Will it be at your house?

“Yes? But um, how do you know I have one?”

Jimin rolls his eyes and friendly hits his arm, “I’m a hybrid! I think I can smell a cat on you. I also know that Jungkookie has a dog.”

“Oh… Well, yeah, it’ll be there.” Hoseok then questions, “Is that okay? Will we have to treat her like we’re introducing her to an actual animal?”
Actual animal? Jimin knows they aren’t treated like they had expected by the five humans, but to hear one of them say they don’t see them as animals? It warms Jimin’s heart.

He shakes his head, “No, she should already be accustomed to me and Tae.”

Hoseok turns his head to stop the conversation despite not really knowing what that means and the car is silent once again because Yoongi rarely turns on the radio. They turn into the sidewalk of a house and get out of the car. Jimin walks up beside Yoongi and belatedly asks if he looks alright, to which Yoongi looks him down quickly, folds in a tag at the bottom of his shirt, and confirms he does.

The seven are barely crowded around the front door when it is swung open by an excited woman. Her heart shaped smile matches her son’s as she hurries them to take off their shoes and follow her inside the cozy home to line up for their greetings. First is Hoseok, who she hugs and kisses on the cheek. Then is Jungkook, to who she says, “Mr. Jeon, we’re so happy you’re able to come again!”

He smiles, “Of course! I was able to get a nice place reserved so my parents won’t miss me too much.”

Another coo and she’s on to Namjoon, who is also smiling and towering over her. She hits Seokjin’s arm beside them with a smirk, “I see you’ve been keeping him well fed.” Seokjin sputters around a hand covering his face but the woman pinches their cheeks and whines, “You’ve gotten so tall. Hoseokie never brings you around when I’m here.”

Hoseok stutters, “M-mom! Th-that’s not true!”

She only laughs it off on her way to Yoongi. He’s smiling just like everyone else, gums and all. The woman tells him, “Oh, Yoongi, I would say you’ve grown as well but it seems you’re taking after your father.”

“Mom!”

Yoongi chuckles, “It’s just more reason to come here for your wonderful cooking Mrs. Jung. You fill your food with your heart and it always has me asking for more.”

“Min Yoongi, you are too much!” she blushes. “With that charm, you’ll get a heart in no time!”
Now, she steps in front of the two hybrids and it's the moment they have all been waiting for. The woman smiles her biggest smile for the two, brings her hands together, and tells them affectionately, “My Hoseok always manages to get good friends and take care of them well. He seems to have gotten nice ones this time too. Don’t look down now, keep those chins high, we need more people to see the blessed beauties man has been honored with creating.”

Despite just being told to keep their heads up, Jimin and Taehyung quickly put them back down at the comment. They both smile and say, “Thank you, Mrs. Jung.” They bow as low as they can, which is only about 45 degrees and introduce themselves.

“You’re so sweet,” she pats their cheeks before turning to address her son. “Hoseokie, you can take them to get more comfortable. Dinner's almost ready.”

Hoseok nods and gestures for them to follow him but Seokjin stays behind to offer to help finish up cooking, which she happily allows. On their way to the living room, Jungkook suddenly hugs Hoseok from behind and says in a teasing voice, “Hoseokie-Hyung-ah!”

The older rolls his eyes and pries the hands off, “Oh my god.”

The teasing goes on when Namjoon joins, ruffling his hair, “Hoseokie.”

“She’s always like that around you guys. I don’t know why she wants to do this to me.”

“Cause you're still just a baby, our Hoseokie,” Yoongi casually pinches his cheeks with a voice an octave higher than usual, which makes both hybrids giggle.

They sit on and around the couch, half on the floor to lean back on their arms and take a break from sitting all day. It leaves Taehyung, Jimin, and Yoongi on the soft couch. As Taehyung hugs a pillow he says, “No offense, hyung, but can we see your cat?”

The humans laugh but Hoseok nods and goes to retrieve the pet anyway. He returns shortly with a large black cat against his chest and the hybrids immediately squeal, Jimin’s hands coming up to cover his face while his tail moves from side to side on the couch. They laugh again at the reaction, confused but amused. Hoseok carefully hands her to Taehyung, “This is Apple, she’s about eight years old. Her eyes are what made my sister want her, none of the other cats in all the other shelters we went to had that color and we’ve never even seen one the internet. It’s why I’m so used to Jimin.”
Taehyung beams while petting her head, intrigued by the way she just looks at him with large grey eyes and licks his fingers occasionally. He comments on his experience as she happily rubs against his chest, “Hybrids are so different! They're like little humans that don't let you pet them unless you know them. It’s so mean. Real cats are way more cute.” They roll their eyes as he goes on, “And she looks exactly like Jiminnie! I like her better though~”

Jimin whines in disapproval at that. He’s actually not really looking at his friend, instead, he’s burying his face in his hands and leaning into Yoongi’s shoulder. Taehyung tells Apple to go to Jimin, which she does, walking across his legs and sitting calmly on Jimin’s stiff lap. Really, she just realized that Taehyung stopped providing her with pets and thought the other boy would. Jimin takes one look and shoves his face in his hands and deeper behind Yoongi. He whispers to him, “It’s like looking in a mirror. It's so weird.”

The older chuckles, letting the others know Jimin is not really scared or unwilling. He grabs the hybrid by the arm and places his hand near Apple’s cheek, who goes to purr against it. Jimin jumps slightly but gets more used to it as time passes and he learns to pet her better.

They then start conversations about separate topics. Namjoon and Hoseok talk about when the first issue of the school’s newspaper of the year will come out, while Jungkook starts to gush to Taehyung about a recent girl group they both seem to enjoy. Jimin has no problem with continuing to pet the pretty cat while Yoongi watches.

Jimin’s eyes slowly turn to slits and the tip of his tail taps unconsciously as he follows every one of the cat’s movements. As Apple falls more into a content lying position in his lap, Jimin quietly comments, “You’re really good with Hoseok-Hyung’s mom, Yoongi-Hyung.”

Yoongi is startled by the sudden conversation, “What?”

“She really seems to like you.”

“Oh. Yeah, I met her first since I’ve known Hoseok pretty long. She's kinda taken the place of like, my aunt or something now.”

“I wish I could introduce you guys to my parents,” Jimin says softly, letting Apple fall asleep in his palm.
“That’s alright. You embarrass yourself for us enough,” Yoongi says calmly, making Jimin giggle. To change the subject before it turns more personal, the older asks, “Do you really look like her?” Jimin eye smiles and nods. Yoongi now turns his attention to Jimin watching the cat sleep peacefully. He thoughtfully mumbles quietly, “Cute.”

Jimin hears it but can’t respond because Seokjin and Mrs. Jung announce that dinner is ready.

The meal they eat is as Yoongi had predicted, delicious and plentiful. They each take their time in praising the cook. During the meal, the hybrids meet Mr. Jung, who is just as pleasant as his wife, and learn that they also have a daughter who is away now for college. They stay on the topic of school at the table and promise the family to pass with the highest grades they can manage.

After eating, they move to the living room again to give the birthday boys their presents. Namjoon and Jungkook got two each, one from their friends collectively and one from the family. Then they have a small cake before bidding their farewells. To the hybrids, it's a wonderful first experience, going to a friend’s house, eating their mother’s cooking.

By the time they leave the house, it’s just turning 8:00 pm because even though it's Friday, Mr. and Mrs. Jung want them to catch up on all the sleep they’ve lost from throughout the week. Yoongi and Seokjin begin to drive their friends home, stopping at the hybrids’ first because it’s closest. As the two walk up to their door, Taehyung stops Jimin by pulling on his shirt.

He says, almost embarrassed, “Do you think we could bring them in with us?”

Jimin frowns at the way his best friend's tail is between his legs and his ears twitch. He can feel his hesitation rather than see it. “What do you mean? Why?”

“I feel bad for not telling them why I got so mad. I th-thought maybe we could tell them after the dinner but I didn't say anything in the car because I didn't decide yet and I don't know if it's too late because now we look stupid just standing here.”

After Taehyung’s nervous ramble, Jimin only smiles, “Yeah, we can tell them, but only if you really want to.”

Taehyung nods and his tail slightly sways. So Jimin quickly goes to ask if their friends want to join them inside and out of curiosity, they accept. They gather the humans on their couch but have to let Namjoon down to make room while the hybrids take a seat on the floor in front of them.
“So obviously this wasn't to talk about how great the cooking was,” Seokjin teases the way they already know what kind of talk this is.

Taehyung chuckles nervously and Jimin realizes his ears are still down so he speaks, “Yeah well… Tae and I wanted to tell you guys a little secret now that we’ve known you longer. And because you’ve already seen a bit of it.”

Namjoon furrows his brows, “You mean from today? Taehyung just got mad, I would’ve too.”

“Yes and... no,” Jimin tells them hesitantly. “That wasn’t necessarily Taehyung when that happened. Of course Taehyung got mad, but he didn't really choose to act out.”

Frowns are all that Jimin sees. He gives Taehyung a small nudge of encouragement to explain for them, as it is about him. Taehyung looks everywhere but their eyes and says, “I kinda have a problem with my uhh… wolf? We’re hybrids so we’re half man half animal and yeah, this never happens but… it did with me.”

“What exactly does that mean?” Jungkook asks.

“It means… sometimes I’m more wolf than human when I’m human. And it can get pretty bad to the point where the only difference between me and an actual wolf is my body, which my wolf also can control.”

“What do you mean control? How do you be more wolf than you? What is bad?” Seokjin places a hand on Jungkook’s knee to stop him from asking so many concerned questions.

Taehyung becomes overwhelmed and looks at Jimin, who tells them, “Basically, his wolf side isn’t gone like how hybrids are supposed to be, where the animal is just physically part of us. With Tae, he kept some of his wolf's mind. A wolf’s mind that is still wild and undomesticated.”

“Tae used the word control,” Jungkook quickly blurts out.

“Because sometimes the wolf… makes him do things that he doesn't really want to do. That can be anything from him just getting really mad, to thinking like a wolf, to eventually getting the
uncontrollable urge to transform and *be* a wolf.”

This time Namjoon speaks, “You said this has never happened to hybrids but you still know the stages and effects. That means Taehyung went through all this before, right? And what about today?”

“You’re right,” Jimin nods, “Taehyung *has* gone through all of that. And once, after getting that urge to transform, he couldn’t change back for three days. When he did, he said the wolf side was too… *wild* and didn’t *let* him change back. That forced transformation rarely happens though. As for today… I know a little about what areas he met but only Tae can really tell you about it.”

All attention goes to said boy. He scratches the back of his neck and Namjoon quickly tells him he doesn't need to answer but Taehyung insists they know. “I told Jiminnie all this but, when they had us at the wall, I was obviously angry. The wolf didn't really allow me to follow what they said like I would have because I was afraid. I was afraid of what they were planning to do so the wolf got angry, but… not too much. The reason I um, growled was because he touched Jiminnie in a way I didn't like, especially the wolf. It added to it, *pushed* it. Because of that, I didn't walk away like I usually do, I didn't do what they said, I fought back, but doing that was dangerous.”

The humans stay silent now. Jimin continues, “That’s the thing about him thinking like that. Taehyung obviously sees me as his friend, but his wolf… sees me as part of his pack, which is flattering, but then Taehyung treats me like I’m his responsibility or *his*. When he isn’t in full control he speaks differently, he doesn't have rational thoughts, and sometimes, he won't even recognize you.”

Jimin gestures to Namjoon, Yoongi, and Hoseok while he talks to them all, “When I say he isn’t really dangerous, I mean it. I know from past experience that he can get extremely violent, even to his closest friends, but that was a while ago and none of you should worry.

“In conclusion,” Taehyung sighs, “I get pretty violent and possessive when it takes over and there will most likely be a time where you’ll experience me when I’ll completely lose control.”

After a moment of silence, Jungkook shrugs with a small smile, “Don't worry, Tae, we still like you.”

“R-really?”
Yoongi scoffs, “Yeah, of course. Did you think we’d ditch you after you told us?”

“Yes,” Taehyung and Jimin deadpan their fear.

“Well you don't have to worry about that,” Namjoon reaches forward to pat Taehyung on the shoulder with a dimpled smile and Taehyung gives them all a box one.

Jungkook suddenly checks his phone and his own smiles fades as his eyebrows crease, causing Seokjin to ask, “Do you need to go home now?”

He shakes his head, “No, my parents aren’t gonna be home ‘till really late and they don’t want me home alone for that long at night. I need a place to crash.”

“Stay with me,” Yoongi offers. Then he quickly backtracks, “Wait, no, I’ll be alone too and your parents don’t like me. Nevermind.”

Jungkook continues to look conflicted while the hybrids begin to pout. Jimin and Taehyung cross their arms as Taehyung speaks to his best friend, “Didn’t even think of us.”

“How rude,” Jimin nods childishly.

“I can stay here?” Jungkook asks, surprised.

“Of course!” Jimin rolls his grey eyes.

The rest approve and the deal is done when they call his parents to show that no, he did not make up these two friends that live together in their own house and yes, the others also know about them and approve their son’s safety.

Chapter End Notes

uuuhhhh
Chapter 4

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

I guess I'm updating every Friday? I'm not complaining..

Also, most of my knowledge of dyslexia comes from my friend and my teacher sooo

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Saturday. Every Saturday is the same: sleep in, eat late, watch TV, sometimes neglect to shower. At least that’s what it’s like in the hybrids’ home. Saturdays are always their quiet days so they can catch up on all their sleep and laze around. For some people, that’s saved for Sunday. Not the hybrids, who just sleep a lot.

This Saturday morning is still just like any other and Jimin sleeps as long as he wants to. When he does end up not being able to fall back asleep, he only lies there, blinking up at the ceiling. The curtains are letting in just enough light to not hurt his eyes, but also to where he can safely see around his room. Not that he wants to. He just wants to lie there a little while longer.

Slowly, Jimin peeks at the blurry bedside alarm clock to see that it's a reasonable time to get up on a Saturday and calm his stomach growls. Then he wraps himself in a dark blue blanket and is waddling to his door when he squints his eyes at multiple large, blue colored rectangles attached to it.

He realizes there are words on them and he sighs before pulling the papers off the door and walking back to his bed to read the excessively big handwriting his best friend specifically wrote in to make it easier for him see:

Jiminnie! Good Morning! If you haven't noticed, its TaeTae~

Also if you haven't noticed, Im not home! No need to worry my friend, Im safe and out of danger cx Jungkookie is with me.

You're probably wondering why I left right? Well, Jungkookie and I woke up early and decided to go do something fun! Really for me but Jungkookie offered :p We’re out getting my hair dyed Jiminnie! I haven't done that in so long! Do you remenber when it was orange?? :D

wait i mean
Jimin sighs again. He hadn’t realized Taehyung had left nor did he wake when he taped the papers to his door. Though, he isn’t disappointed in his friend for leaving without telling him in person, just a little lonely. Taehyung can leave the house whenever he wants, especially now that they live in a new city. But it was always with Jimin. At least, he thinks, he wrote the cute note. He also smiles slightly when noticing Taehyung’s dyslexia getting better.

He sleepily walks to their dining room, sitting on a bar stool that looks into the kitchen through a half wall. After a little while longer of quietly sitting, he realizes he should make something to eat. Which only ends up being a bowl of cereal with banana slices.

Jimin eats it slowly, submerging himself in the silence of their home. It’s different not having Taehyung around. Of course, he’s used to being in the house without Taehyung in sight or earshot, but that’s only because he always knows Taehyung is there. Right now, there’s no dread of hearing the padding of his feet announcing that he’s come to make lots of noise.

Before they came to Seoul, it was quite like this moment. They lived separately and only saw each other when they visited. However, there was not much to do in their own “dorm” as he used to called it. Taehyung loved to call it his “little studio apartment” because it was only one large room with an additional bathroom. Constantly, Taehyung would pretend the two were human adults that lived in their own flat while just trying to get through the hard days of work before eventually finding their true love, who would whisk them away to their beautiful mansion where they would enjoy the fruits of life until they die.

Obviously, it didn’t come out like that. But Taehyung grew on Jimin and eventually they both were playing pretend and waiting for the day they’ll meet their owner. So because of the lack of things to do in their own “little studio apartment,” they often slept over at the other’s for days before returning. The staff eventually realized this and quickly became frustrated with not being able to know where the hybrids were at all times. They ended up just putting their rooms side by side.

Jimin never really is without his best friend. They rarely had separate friends and they didn’t leave the other’s home if it wasn’t mandatory. They ate together, explored together, cared for each other. Jimin even screamed when he realized they were being taken away from each other. When he thinks about it now, this is the first time in almost a year that one of them left the other not only
willingly, but consciously.

Jimin knows this is an everyday situation. Now that they have friends, they obviously are going to hang out with them. Jimin knows it’s not a big deal, or a deal at all. He knows where his friend is, that he’s safe and will come back within hours. But he just can’t shake this feeling he’s getting because of the silence. He’s never really felt alone since almost a year ago. He hates it. And the memories it brings.

After hand-washing his dishes with shaking hands, Jimin sits back down, pulls the blanket tighter around himself, and dials a number.

[ Calling Yoongi-Hyung ]

“Hello?”

“Hey, hyung!” Jimin replies cheerily despite how much he loathes the way his voice easily fills the house.

“Jimin, why did you call me?” Yoongi gets straight to the point with a groggy voice.

“Oh, you know, just wanted to see what you were doing.”

Yoongi chuckles amusingly, “You’re not a very good liar.” Jimin purses his lips and the older sighs, “You woke me up, make it worth it.”

Jimin pouts at the straightforwardness of the older and whines, “I’m lonely, Yoongi-Hyung~”

“Lonely? You have Taehyung and Jungkook! They should be the ones hanging on to you and claiming they’re lonely.”

“But they’re not here…”

“No? Wh-why?”
“TaeTae said they’re going to get his hair dyed…”

Yoongi releases a breath, “God, you’re such a child… And what do you want me to do?”

Jimin pulls at the stray threads in his blanket while he speaks hesitantly, “I wanna do something fun too.”

“Are you serious?” Yoongi groans loudly, which causes Jimin to bite his lip and shut his eyes. “You’re jealous your friend went ou--”

“Best friend and roommate,” Jimin mutters, only making Yoongi groan again in annoyance despite how much the labels actually mean to Jimin.

“Who cares? You woke me up for this shit?”

He hesitates to reply, speaking slowly now with uncertainty and a little bit of hurt that’s making him want to cry, “Do you… do you not want to? We can do something else m-more fun or if you d-don’t want to at all--”

“No! I mean, yeah! I mean - I’ll do it, Jimin. I’ll take you. I forgot I was your…”

“Only option… It’s fine.”

“I’m sorry, I just… haven’t eaten yet.”

This makes Jimin finally giggle a bit. An idea then pops in his mind, “Oh! Yoongi-Hyung, I’ll cook for you!”

“What? You don’t have to do that, Jimin. I ca--”

“I’m going to cook for you!” Jimin states stubbornly, but with excitement. “How far away are you?
Nevermind, I’ll leave the door unlocked, just knock twice and enter. See you!”

Jimin hangs up in the middle of the older’s “O-okay?” and rushes to dress more properly. He may have tripped on his blanket but the wall catches him to prevent his mood from going down with him.

Pulling on a clean shirt and sweatpants, he’s already mentally locating the needed ingredients for the meal because he knows it’s difficult to read the labels or just go by color. Jimin is ecstatic to cook for Yoongi, he isn’t sure why. Maybe it’s because he gets to show off his cooking skills. Maybe it’s because he’s using them for a hyung. But maybe it’s because he’s anticipating what he’s always been promised, that creating a delicious meal for his owner— in this case, just a normal human— is the most rewarding feeling.

He’s using a traditional breakfast recipe with a more familiar twist so it won’t seem too formal for Yoongi. It’s something he’s perfected when cooking for a hybrid peer. About ten minutes in, he unexpectedly hears two knocks on the front door and a voice calling his name.

“Just come to the dining room!” Jimin answers. Through the half wall that allows him to see into the dining room, Jimin smiles widely when he watches Yoongi take a seat at a stool. “Almost done. Just wait a little longer.”

Yoongi nods and rests his hands in his palms. Jimin eye smiles with his lip between his teeth as he thinks of how he can improve the setting. Opening a drawer, he removes a set of chopsticks and a small wooden stand for them to rest on. As he reaches to place the items on Yoongi’s right, the older frowns, “Why are you--?”

“Let me do this, Yoongi-Hyung?” Jimin cuts him off quietly with an insecure glance. He focuses on perfecting the placement with a napkin, then remembers the egg frying on the pan. Jimin finishes the dish, carefully sets it in front of Yoongi, and even places down a glass of water for him.

Once all this is done and Jimin has perfectly set the table, he realizes he completely disregarded his earlier thought of not making this formal. His expression falters slightly at not making the food good enough to match, but then he sees Yoongi’s confused face and thinks he would have been overwhelmed. Either way, Jimin smiles his most genuine smile and urges the older to eat.

Hesitantly, he takes the chopsticks in hand and begins his first bite, glancing up at Jimin while doing so. Jimin holds his breath as Yoongi chews, then bites his tongue when he swallows and takes another bite, looking even more confused. Yoongi elegantly takes a sip of water after the
second swallow before only then making eye contact with Jimin’s nervous slitted ones. He’s been intently watching the entire time while his fiddling hands are clasped in front of him and his tail is flickering on his back.

“Cayenne pepper?” Yoongi questions.

Jimin’s eyes widen slightly, “Ye-ah.”

Yoongi shrugs and takes another bite casually, “It’s pretty good.”

Jimin just about faints from relief, an even bigger smile spreading across his face now, “Really?”

Yoongi chuckles now, “Of course! It’s actually pretty awesome. How did you learn how to cook like this?”

Jimin blushes, “We have to learn how to impress our owners. We can only be the best.”

Yoongi raises his eyebrows with an embarrassed expression, “Is that why you did this?” He gestures to the napkin, water, and stand.

“Yea - I mean, n-not really. I... you're the first human I’ve cooked for and I really wanted to do my best. N-not ‘cause you're kinda my… right now… I just wanted to um, yeah.”

He shrugs, “I see.” And takes another bite. “Thank you.”

Jimin smiles gratefully and makes his way out of the kitchen to pull up a second stool beside the older. He sits next to him quietly, roaming his eyes over what he can see of the kitchen, making note to clean it later that day so he won't forget tomorrow. Yoongi only glances when Jimin doesn’t speak, but he doesn't notice.

“So,” Yoongi starts through a mouthful, “what color are you thinking of?”

It catches Jimin off guard. He widens his grey eyes at the other, “Y-you mean it? W-we can d-do
“Yeah,” Yoongi furrows his brows and swallows. “I thought you wanted to?”

“Yes!” Jimin exclaims. “Of course!” He excitedly begins touching random parts of his hair, pulling at some as if they were long enough to see. “I thought y-you really didn't want to but now I'm wanting to trim it a-and bleach it and have it match my clothes and - and I’d need help with that though, since I don’t have my gl- hyung this is a difficult decision, I need a lot of help.”

At this time, Yoongi has stopped eating to make sure Jimin isn’t hyperventilating. He isn’t, he’s just really eager and looking back at Yoongi with nothing less in his eyes, waiting for a response. The action is actually quite cute. Yoongi questions, “When was the last time you dyed your hair?”

“N-never! I wasn’t allowed to. Tae could but at the time he was in a different wa-- hyung we have a real crisis at hand here, I need to pick a color.” His expression turns nervous and his ears twitch as hues of every tone and blend fly through his mind. Blond? Purple? Green? Red? They all look the same to him nowadays, but he’s heard of such colors before and thinks he remembers them well enough to figure out what would look good. Dark orange? Strawberry pin--?

“Easy. Grey.”

“What?” Jimin snaps out of his thoughts that threatened to drown him to stare instead, confused at the sudden confidence.

“Grey, silver, whatever,” Yoongi shrugs. “It matches your eyes and goes well with your fur, that's all that matters.”


“Jimin,” Yoongi stops him with a hand on his shoulder. “You’ll look good in silver. Trust me.” Yoongi is being completely honest with Jimin because as much as he enjoys the way he looks now - the almost pitch black hair and ears blending together, black sweatpants, white shirt creating a stark contrast with the sleek black thick tail that’s constantly against his back, and a smile just as bright-- he wouldn't mind seeing a little extra shine in his hair.
Jimin bites his lip, his tail flickering near his chest from the way it’s parallel to his back and curving around to his front. He nods curtly at his seemingly rash decision, “Okay.”

“Grey-t” Yoongi chuckles, immediately earning an unamused look from Jimin. The expression only makes him laugh harder and clutch his stomach.

Less than an hour later, they’re arriving at a fancy looking salon. Jimin had told Yoongi earlier how he wanted to surprise Taehyung, so they left a note on the inside of the front door and Jimin told Yoongi to completely avoid any large red buildings he can see. It took just a bit longer than anticipated to find any place that serviced hybrids as well, so they had to drive where Yoongi wasn't necessarily familiar with. The first salon that was openly hybrid friendly also had a neon sign saying #1 Hybrid Recommended, and it was where they pulled into.

Stepping out of the car, Yoongi gives Jimin an unsure look, “Are you positive you can afford this?”

Earlier, Jimin had told Yoongi that he’s paying not only because he knew Yoongi didn't want to leave his bed in the first place but also because he thought he could be responsible and pay for his own desires. Taehyung told Jimin Jungkook offered to pay for him but Jimin knows his best friend was taught to ask to pay at least half. Jimin also knows that all of this combined is going to take a bigger toll on their card than expected so he replies, “Yeah. As long as Tae and I stay low on the wants after this, we’ll be fine. We know not to take advantage of them.”

A curious look later and Yoongi is opening the salon door for him. Jimin admits, this place’s quality intimidates him. It’s a large open space with pristine white walls, waiting chairs lining the sides, high glimmering counters, and a fair amount of customers. Most of the other people there however, are middle aged with already styled hair looking like they could afford two more cuts if the salon messes up.

At the sound of the bell, all eyes land on the two teenagers walking in for a good three seconds. Jimin’s tail finds its way between his legs instead of it’s usual place along his back, and his arm is suddenly in Yoongi’s elbow. The older initiated the action but is only wearing a calm expression. He smiles when making eye contact with the cashier, who looks more like a receptionist.

Jimin keeps his mouth shut and walks at Yoongi’s pace like he’s been trained to do. The woman smiles at Yoongi as he approaches, “Hello, how may we help you today?”

Yoongi flashes a charming smile, “Hi, I noticed your sign about hybrids? What exactly do you offer?”
“Well…”

Jimin puts his head down while he talks to the nice lady. He’s very grateful Yoongi knows how to speak with higher-ups because if they came in acting like high schoolers, any respect would be lost and they’d undoubtedly be treated completely unfairly. Like this, with Yoongi being student vice president and Jimin remembering his training, they’re treated like adults.

He sighs in relief at how good they’ve been to this point, even it’s been less than five minutes. He’s confident this trip will go smoothly and comfortably if he has anything to do about it - until the sigh brings a familiar animal scent to his senses and he snaps his head up to scan the room. Deadly brown eyes catch his and Jimin is only able to see they belong to a common German Shepherd hybrid before he’s being guided by the arm to empty chairs on the other wall of the rest of the waiting customers.

Yoongi lets go of his arm before they sit in the plush chairs and gives him a frown, “What’s wrong?”

Jimin shakes his head and keeps his tone low, “I saw a hybrid. It’s nothing.”

“Really?” Yoongi brings out his phone, probably to answer a text since he normally would have at least humored Jimin by looking at him while they talk. “I didn’t really have the chance to look around. That means this is a good place though. But do you know them or something?”

Jimin shakes his head honestly, “I’m just afraid he’ll sell us out.”

Yoongi pats his arm casually, “Relax. Be friendly and maybe he won’t. Besides, she said I’m allowed to stay beside you.”

Jimin nods and wipes his palms on his skinny jeans, thankful he didn’t leave the house in those sweatpants or something inappropriate to be seen by all these richer looking people. Despite how much he doesn’t like wearing monotone colors, he has no choice when Taehyung isn’t around to tell him which color is which. “Do I look okay?”

Without turning, Yoongi answers, “You look fine.”
“I’m serious.”

“Yeah me too now smile,” Yoongi says quickly, and there’s a phone with the front camera facing him. Jimin pouts at the lack of explanation but puts a peace sign near his eye with it. “Okay thanks.”

After the picture is taken and he puts the phone away Jimin asks, “What was that for?”

“Jungkook didn't believe I had you with me,” he shrugs, then nods in Jimin’s direction. “What’s with the cuteness?”

Jimin blushes, “I - I’m fitting the role of a teenage hybrid boy with his owner.”

It takes a little staring but Yoongi shrugs again, “That actually makes sense.”

They spend a couple minutes in silence watching customers being called up. No one else enters and Jimin wonders if this fancy place closes early on Saturdays for any reason. He curses himself for not paying closer attention. As the customers around them slowly fade away, Jimin realizes there might just be one hybrid specialist and they’re really just waiting on one person.

Eventually, that one hybrid stands up from his chair and walks beside a pretty woman in her early thirties to the cashier, smiling widely. Yoongi is called by the man who was working on the German Shepherd to pick the color without Jimin, who stood up awkwardly before being told to stay put.

He remains standing while watching the older leave for a second. Before he can sit back down however, he’s faced with the dog hybrid. Jimin briefly wonders if he’s allowed to leave his owner but doesn't think that out loud.

“You don’t smell like him,” the older German Shepherd comments quietly in a curious tone. “He’s not your owner.”

Jimin messes with his rings while refusing to make eye contact, “Yeah…”
“Then how are you here?”

The hybrid seems genuinely confused and not judgemental so Jimin is honest with the seemingly 25 year old stranger, “The only other way we leave without owners.”

His eyes widen in realization, “Oh. I’m sorry.”

“It’s alright,” Jimin gives a small smile. “I’ve obviously found someone who I can trust.”

The older nods and pats Jimin’s head affectionately, “Be careful out there, yeah?”

“Oh,”

And the hybrid leaves with the smiling woman, who fondly ruffles the newly cut hair and presses an affectionate kiss to his smiling lips. Jimin wonders how long he and Taehyung actually have before they’re left completely on their own. How long before one of them finds an owner. How long before one of them is just taken.

“Jiminnie?” Jimin is once again taken out of his thoughts by Yoongi’s smooth voice. He looks at him from across the room and is gestured to follow, to which he does.

He’s guided to sit in a large black chair, becoming startled by a cloth being wrapped around his neck, and another one more tarp-like across his body. Jimin has never actually been to a salon to get his haircut because it was always done by a staff member in a bathroom where he was shirtless in order to not get too itchy. It’s greatly appreciated when Yoongi brings a chair beside his and tells him it’s okay.

The man who is going to cut and dye Jimin’s hair releases a deep and hearty chuckle, “He’s never gotten his hair dyed?” he asks Yoongi, who shakes his head.

“No,” Yoongi smiles. “So I thought why not indulge him?”

This makes Jimin smile wider than he expected. His cheeks bunch up and he only looks down to cover his face since his hands are beneath the fabric. Yoongi didn’t want to take him get his hair
dyed, nor did he care about whether or not he has done so. It’s amusing how the older is still making small talk because of it.

“Seems appropriate,” the man says while examining Jimin’s hair as if it were the brushes to his art. “He’s very well behaved for a hybrid his age. I’ll get the bleach.”

Like that, he leaves the two in an awkward silence. Jimin’s cheeks are probably bright red as he’s looking down and while Yoongi isn’t saying a word, Jimin can feel his stare. The man finally returns and gets to work.

They don’t speak after that and it almost kills Jimin with how long the process is. He must stay in the chair for what seems like an hour, then rinse that off weird stuff off with a high powered shower head that is comfier than should be allowed on the customer. He felt like he was going to fall asleep right then. When that is all done, Jimin is brought back to the chair in front of the mirror.

Yoongi looks at him through the reflection. “See,” he nods. “You look good like that and you’ll look better in silver. Don’t worry.”

Jimin can only smile softly to himself. He can’t lie, he looks good. At the moment, his hair is a more cream color than blonde but it’s beautiful nonetheless as it blends well with the color of his skin tone. The sleek black of his undyed ears create just enough of a contrast to pop out. He loves it so far and can’t wait to see how the grey would look with his eyes since they’re a bit bland and unnoticeable right now.

However, he doesn't voice out how much he likes it because of how uncomfortable he’s been feeling. The hairstylist has been touching Jimin in unnecessary places for longer than needed and it's making him feel nervous. Jimin isn’t really enjoying his first hair dying experience with fingers lingering on his neck too long or hands running through his hair too many times or the times where the hands would stay at his shoulders and when he looks up, he’s locked eyes with the man in his mid forties longer than comfortable.

So Jimin keeps his mouth shut whether or not that’s really the best way to go about this. Yoongi doesn’t say anything more, just nods along with the stylist and takes his time looking at the new hair while the man holds his gaze with Jimin through the mirror instead. After about twenty seconds, the older man leaves saying he’s getting the grey dye and more supplies.

Jimin has had enough of this and decides to complain now. He turns his head to Yoongi, who was already looking in his direction and is now frowning at Jimin’s stern pout, and says, “You’re not
The frown deepens and Jimin lets out a small whine. Surprisingly, no one else is in the salon, not even another staff member, so he lets himself show when Yoongi replies, “What? About what? I said you looked good?”

“Not that, hyung,” Jimin whines hurriedly, wishing Yoongi would just understand.

“Then what?” Yoongi looks completely confused but Jimin only puts his head down, biting his lip. “Jimin, what? What’s wrong?” His voice changes to a more worried tone.

This causes Jimin to glance at the other side of the room where the stylist disappeared. He speaks slowly, “He’s making me uncomfortable, hyung,” Jimin looks at him now. “And you’re not doing anything about it.”

Still, nothing but confusion or worry fill Yoongi, and the older leans closer to hear better, “What do you mean, Jimin? Uncomfortable how?”

“He keeps touching me and looking at me and it-doesn’t feel right. I really don’t like it and you’re just not doing anything.”

“Stop saying that, Jimin. I’m sorry,” he tries to apologize with wide eyes as if he were trying to stop a child from crying. “I didn’t notice. What do you mean by it not feeling right?”

Jimin becomes stubborn and looks him in the eyes, “I don’t know. He’s just too soft and - and always there and - do something, hyung. It’s weird and I’m scared he’ll keep going if you don’t act on it.”

Now Yoongi sighs, “That actually clears it up a bit, but what do you need me to do?”

Jimin chews his plush bottom lip, wondering what is the best way to say this. All he can think of is, “Assert dominance.”

“What?”
“Assert dominance.”

“Jimin - I don’t know how to do that.”

He rolls his shining eyes, “Just be yourself but this time make it known I’m yours.”

“But,” Yoongi huffs and frowns uncertainly, “I’ve never been an owner.”

“And I’ve never had one,” he counters with little to no bite. “Do anything. I’ll go with it.” He then pleads, “Just - please? I don’t like it. Be my owner?”

Chapter End Notes

small cliffhanger? and a lot of new information wow
“Be my owner.”

Yoongi nods affirmatively and sits back in his cushioned chair with a stone hard expression. Jimin purses his lips uncertainly, he doesn’t know if the older already has something in mind, but he hopes he doesn’t have to wait long for something to helpful happen.

When the stylist eventually exits the room he was in on the far side of the salon, he looks a little dark yellow in the face while apologizing for the wait and explaining how they ran out of the correct dye and misplaced the supplies, which is why he was forced to go search for them in the back of the salon.

It’s unusual the stylist is giving so many detailed reasons for his prolonged absence but Jimin isn’t thinking much about it, nor is he maintaining his eye contact when Jimin is stared down with an unreadable expression. As the man turns to organize the items he brought back with him, Yoongi suddenly puts a hand on his chin and looks at Jimin.

“Actually, before we start the second half,” he speaks up, making both heads turn to him, “I think we need a bathroom break.” Yoongi stands, locking eyes with Jimin in a way that doesn’t say Say yes, just go with it but actually Say yes and you’ll like it. He appreciates it. “Do you need to use the restroom, Jiminnie?”

Jimin first glances at the stylist, who’s narrowing his eyes on Yoongi’s smirking face, then nods hurriedly to his friend's fake question. “Y-yeah.”

“Will you remove this then?” Yoongi asks the man casually. The stylist doesn’t answer, only makes his way behind Jimin to untie the fabric around his neck. The moment Jimin is free, he grabs onto Yoongi’s hand to escape the one trailing down his skin.
Yoongi pulls them into the one person bathroom to immediately lock the door behind. He then turns to Jimin with a look that surprisingly mirrors his own. Jimin is a little startled at the older’s attitude change when he goes from confident and teasing to nervous and uncertain, “Was that too rash? Do I need to do more? Did this get the right message across? How--?”

“Hyung, you did fine,” Jimin interrupts his quick thinking. It’s true too, Yoongi helped Jimin get away from that man for longer than he would without him. Not like he would have been in this situation without Yoongi in the first place. Even though Jimin knows what they’re supposedly doing here in the clean and modern looking bathroom, he thanks the older, knowing Yoongi doesn’t intend to do anything other than get him away from the intrusive hair stylist.

“Are you sure?” Yoongi questions his thankfulness.

“Yes,” he assures with a quick nod of his head. “But now we need to look like we did what we didn’t do.”

They get to work pinching their cheeks and running their hands through their hair to create a quick messy look that will fool any observers. Once completed, the two check the streak-free mirror and deem themselves properly flustered. Jimin finds a small flaw in their appearance and grabs a handful of Yoongi’s shirt, pulling at it harshly before letting go. This causes the fabric to look more strained on and messed with than it actually was, which he nods at it proudly.

“What the hell?” Yoongi whisper-yells, glaring because Jimin made him almost fall from the force. Jimin only shrugs and moves to leave through the door. Then he feels a hand on his neck, keeping him from moving farther away. Jimin frowns but turns back to face the older anyway. Instantly, he regrets it when the hand scratches across the back of the skin roughly under the reason being, “He needs to see it.”

All Jimin can do is be grateful Yoongi is actually being protective of him despite not wanting to be here in the first place. Yoongi grabs his small ringed hand and exits the bathroom with an artificial goofy smile while Jimin tries his best to let on he’s in a good mood by keeping his tail straight up and swaying behind them.

Thankfully, Yoongi doesn’t let go of his hand even when they sit back down, forcing the stylist to cover them with the fabric across Jimin’s body. While the man can still see them, Yoongi places their intertwined hands near the inside of Jimin’s thighs, but then moves them somewhere more friend-appropriate when when they’re covered, both of them letting go.
Too soon, Jimin is forced to go squeeze Yoongi’s fingers when he feels the stylist behind him slowly run his fingers on the scratches that still sting. Being the saint he is, this signal causes Yoongi to start moving his fingers against his other ones, avoiding actually touching Jimin as much as possible to make the entire situation less awkward.

The way Yoongi is moving makes the exposed muscles working on his arm look like he’s actually rubbing something other than his thumb and index finger together. Once Jimin realizes what this leads on, he plays along by putting his head down as much as he can through it.

Jimin doesn’t know how long they continue that for but the stylist disappears once again after telling them he has something to attend to since no one else is working in the salon at the moment, and that Jimin’s hair needs to sit. The moment the man turns away, they’re alone in the large salon and Yoongi extracts his hand from underneath the fabric.

“That worked,” Jimin tells him through the mirror with a relieved smile. “He stopped.”

Yoongi sighs tiredly, “Good because I’m not doing that again. My fingers are tingly…”

Jimin laughs at the older when he shakes his hand with the complaint. Then Yoongi turns his attention back to the phone in his other hand, which he had been scrolling through the whole time. It reminds Jimin of his own phone and pulls it out to see the countless text notifications from his best friend.

[ little studio apartment (2) ]

Puppy Tae
> Jiminnie
> Jiminnie
> Jimin
> Jiminnieeee
> Jungkookie showed me the picture :^] r u really in pubic with Yoongi-Hyung??
> PUBLIC OH GOD
> but i would like to know that answer too ;))
> Jiminnie
> Is he treating you well?
> i swear to god if he isnt ill rip his head right off
> sorry but really
> Jiminnie

You
> TAEHYUNGIE HEELLOO!!

Puppy Tae
> JIMINNIE!!!!

You
> im fine u know taetae :\

Puppy Tae
> yeah but u didnt answer

You
> sorry we had some weird owner complications but its fine now

Puppy Tae
> so u ARE in pubic!
> PUBLIC

You
> OH MY GOD
> YES we r in public but no not… ew

Puppy Tae
> well thats good :) r u coming home soon?
You

> i think so. ill see u there :D

Puppy Tae

> caTCH MY KISsES :***

You

> /catches them/ sEE U SOON TAE

Jimin smiles softly to himself at his best friend's antics. He and Taehyung have always been told
their relationship is a bit out there but it never actually stops them from continuing to be this way
toward each other. Jimin also knows he doesn't act as outrageous as his other half when he shows
his affection, but Taehyung knows him well and everything he means.

Suddenly, the phone is taken from his hands, along with the smile from his face. Almost provoked,
he glares at Yoongi in annoyance. Before he can say anything about it, the older speaks calmly
while looking at the screen, “Who are you texting, Jimin?”

The unusual lack of nickname hurts more than he would like to admit but he quickly realizes
Yoongi is only pretending to be short with him. Jimin had not noticed the stylist entrance, and it’s
only when he feels firm, heavy hands on his shoulders that Jimin knows to play along, “A friend.”

Yoongi’s eyebrow raises as slowly scrolls through Jimin’s phone. He hopes the older doesn’t find
anything too embarrassing - like the fact that his entire phone has the text font size up to the
highest setting. “You talk to your friend this way?” Yoongi questions, and Jimin actually blushes
because it’s also real question this time, Yoongi would have asked that anyway under normal
circumstances with the comfortable way he and Taehyung text. But at least it isn’t about the text
size, Jimin assures himself. Yoongi then says, “What did I tell you about texting, Jimin?”

This however, forces Jimin to hold back a sly smile. Yoongi, who has been doing such a great job
so far, is falling behind on his improv and needs help to maintain it. Jimin bites his lip to keep in
his glee but manages to pass it off as a shy act. “T-to tell you first…” Yoongi doesn’t seem to
know how to branch off that and gestures in a way to show wants more, so Jimin makes more of an
effort to come up with something else. “Because… because I’m yours and - and I need to show it
or else I’ll be punished.”
Yoongi chuckles rather awkwardly - enough for it to pass the stylist but also for Jimin to feel his actual nerves - and leans closer to lightly pinch Jimin’s already too hot cheek, “Right.” He hands the phone back, “Be careful with how you text, Jiminnie. We don’t want another incident like last time, do we?”

Jimin shakes his head quickly to continue their fake plot even though his blush is very much real along with his embarrassment. He can not believe Yoongi lead on such a scenario! In all honesty, the older might not have intended it to play out with so many innuendos and only needed something to say, but it doesn't stop Jimin from pouting heavily and mouthing *I hate you* when the stylist’s back turns.

“I’ll be washing his hair now,” the man tells Yoongi soon after, then speaks to Jimin. “Follow me again?”

Jimin nods and does as he had before, letting the stylist rinse out whatever goop he had brushed into his hair. This time, the situation is considerably more awkward after the conversation he and Yoongi had. Jimin’s lips purse and he has no idea where to rest his eyes through the rinsing process, wondering if he should just close them. He decides against it when he realizes he actually doesn't want to feel like he’s being stared at the entire time, and ends up putting his gaze on some uncomfortable spot near a light fixture on the ceiling.

After some time with the only sound being the running water through he hair, Jimin suspiciously feels as if he has been laying in the chair longer than the last time. He is suddenly aware of how many times the stylist has rubbed his fingers across his scalp by now, along his ears and riding up his cheeks. Jimin steals a glance through his blurry vision at this distance, but it stays short, as the older was shamelessly looking at him the whole time. Blushing again, Jimin notices the smile on the man’s face, who whispers with little movement that makes it hard for Jimin to understand with his ears being so close to the water’s spray, “What was the incident, if I may ask?”

Jimin maintains a poker face and keeps his voice steady yet sweet, “You may not.”

He smirks, “Then what’s the punishment?”

Jimin almost stutters but only shows a frown, “Wouldn't you like to know.”

“I would.” A suggestive tug on a handful of hair later and he pats Jimin’s shoulder, speaking louder now, “You can sit back down.”
Jimin purses his lips as does as he's told. Yoongi looks at him in question so he explains quietly, “He pulled my hair and asked about the punishment.”

Yoongi scowls, “This guy…” But by now, Jimin only shrugs. He’s done with whatever the intrusive man has to say anymore. Yoongi moves his chair closer with a small smile and Jimin takes it as said man coming closer. “Always so pretty for me,” Yoongi runs a hand through his wet hair and Jimin makes an exaggerated pout to cover the uncomfortable feeling of being touched so intimately by a friend.

“You’re so embarrassing,” he complains, knowing the oldest of the salon is already listening in. “You always say stuff like that.”

“But it’s true…”

Jimin whines and shakes his head cutely, causing Yoongi to chuckle again and sit back down. The stylist takes the opportunity to turn on the hairdryer and begin drying his hair again. Jimin closes his eyes through this, not wanting to be poked in the eye by traitorous stray strands. A hand finds its way in his own at some point and only then he opens them, seeing Yoongi holding his hand but paying attention to his phone. He understands there was a reason concerning Jimin’s eyes closing, so he keeps them open now.

Soon, the man is grabbing a soft blue brush and styling Jimin’s newly dyed grey locks, being careful not to pull any hurtful knots. After only a few skilled brushes, Yoongi is leaning over and smoothing a thumb over Jimin’s cheek, which almost makes him flinch because it’s an unusual act for Yoongi to do.

“I like it,” Yoongi states. “I like it like this.”

“Do you?” Jimin smiles, making his eyes disappear.

“Yeah. I think we’ll keep it like this, thank you,” Yoongi addresses the hair stylist now, who gives an unreadable look at the praising of his work, nodding silently.

Jimin is once again freed from the long black fabric covering his body, the touch staying longer than before now, traveling as far down his back as possible and even faintly on his tail. Jimin stands quickly, holding onto Yoongi for support.
They’re guided to the large front desk to pay, Jimin putting his arm in Yoongi’s elbow as before. Yoongi takes out his wallet and hands the man Jimin’s card he had Yoongi put in there before they left the car. On their way out, Yoongi wraps an arm around Jimin’s middle, holding both the salon and car door open for him.

It isn’t until they’re back on the main road that Yoongi breaks the silence to ask uncertainly, “So do you like your hair at least?”

Jimin shrugs, “I didn’t get a chance to really see it.” So he pulls open the mirror in the car’s sun shade because his phone camera never makes him look good, and is pleased with his results. “Ooh! I do!”

At this close proximity to the mirror, he can see details of himself just as much as he can of everyone else: faint details and smooth, muted yellow colors. Either way, he loves the way the silver is just light enough to keep the blend he liked when it was bleached, how beautiful it looks against his skin tone - which is now a gross yellow he’ll never get over. What makes it even better is the way it matches his cat eye color perfectly, making the entire look come together in unity. He smiles brightly, extremely glad Yoongi picked a color that didn’t have any green or red hues in it. This made it stand out against his world of browns, yellows, blacks, whites, and blues.

“Good,” Yoongi states, unknowing how much Jimin is grateful he picked such a color he could see. “Because after all that guy’s shit, you deserve to like it. But it’s a nice change. I like it too.”

Jimin’s adoring smile turns cheeky now, nudging him with his elbow, “I figured.”

The older stutters and becomes flustered, “I - I was doing m-my part, Jimin!”

He only laughs, “I know.” After shaking his head, he becomes more serious to address a more meaningful topic that’s been on his mind for a while now, “But seriously, Yoongi-hyung, thank you. I really didn’t like the way he was looking at me. And touching me…”

Yoongi glances at him, reaching over to rub his shoulder friendly, “It’s alright now. I just hope I didn’t make you uncomfortable. I know we haven’t known each other for very long and I don’t seem like the best person to mess around with like you can do with the others but I just want the best for you.” Jimin looks out the window. “I didn’t go too far, did I?”

“No,” Jimin admits softly. “It was weird, I’ll tell you that. So much I’d rather not go through it
again. But… you did what I asked, nothing more, nothing less, and I’m grateful, hyung. I even made random crap up and embarrassed myself too. So no, you didn’t go too far. If anything, I did by asking you to do more than you agreed to that day.”

“That’s not true. I agreed because none of us want you guys getting kidnapped or harassed. My job is to make sure no one you aren’t interested in doesn’t do anything bad. I’m one hundred percent sure you weren’t interested in him. I think I did my part, and I know you did yours.”

“I still feel bad… making you say and do all that to me. We’re friends, I--”

“No,” Yoongi interrupts him, stealing a longer glance at him to make a point despite being in the middle of driving. “I made you do it too, so we’re even. You also made me an awesome breakfast, that can make up for it too.”

Jimin now looks straight at his friend, “Please don’t tell me you made me say the whole puni--”

“No!” Yoongi yells, glancing at him again. “I didn’t! You just… did that on your own.” Jimin groans, hiding his face in his hands and Yoongi laughs loudly. “We should be like, actors or something though, Jiminnie. We did good.”

“I guess,” Jimin whines in denial. “We passed off the bathroom scene pretty awesome.”

“Scene?” Yoongi hits his arm joyfully, “We are actors!”

He rubs his arm with fake hurt, “Be careful with how you play, hyung. We don’t want another incident like last time, do we?”

“Oh my god, Jimin stop!” Yoongi smiles gummily from embarrassment, his cheeks ever so slightly changing to a color Jimin hasn’t been able to distinguish on him. Nevertheless, he finds himself wanting to see it sometime again. “You’re so embarrassing. You always say stuff like that.”

“Ah!” Jimin cringes in his seat with Yoongi as they pull into the hybrids’ house.
They continue to smile walking inside. Jimin locks the door behind them but doesn’t get much
time to turn back with a heavy weight falling on his shoulders.

“Jimin!” The weight yells with excitement.

“Hey, Tae!” Jimin pats what he can of his best friend’s arm enthusiastically in greeting.

“I love your hair so much you don’t even know.”

When he finally turns around to see Taehyung, he’s smiling with light hair. Gasping, Jimin touches
it with fascination, “Oh my god! What color is it?”

“Like you see it!” Taehyung says excitedly. “It’s blond! Well - bleached!”

He’s only seen Taehyung with his hair a color other than his natural brown once, and that was only
for the little snip-its of times he could throughout the dye’s lifespan. So he is thrilled to see his best
friend with such a change.

Like Jimin’s previously, Taehyung’s hair is a nice cream color, but more blond than Jimin’s was. It
complements Taehyung’s darker tanned skin tone much better, Jimin admits out loud, and looks so
different than Taehyung’s brown ears, eyes, and hair. The chocolate brown makes his hair pop out in
a way that perfectly represents Taehyung’s personality. It’s a color that blends Taehyung into the
background more for Jimin, but he can’t seem to care as he praises him to no end and it is
obviously making Taehyung very giddy if the way he’s smiling widely, blushing, and bouncing
has anything to say.

The moment Jimin breaks to breathe, his best friend puts his hands through Jimin’s newly dyed
dark silver hair. “Jiminnie, I really like it! I love how it matches your eyes and how it looks with
your fur and how it’s dark but light at the same time and it’s just such an awesome change,
Jiminnie. In all the years I’ve known you, you’ve never been able to dye your hair like the others
but now you have! It’s so different!”

Quickly, Jimin covers his face from all the compliments with his hands even when Taehyung pulls
him into a tight hug.

“Are you gonna kiss or something?” Jungkook suddenly asks from the couch where he’d been
sitting and watching the dramatic scene with Yoongi. “Because that would be really weird but kind of understandable.”

“We’re not,” Jimin tells the boy, detaching himself from the other hybrid. He pinches Taehyung’s cheek, “I’m just happy to see my best friend.”

Taehyung nods frantically, and he pulls on the hem of his shirt while his tail moves from side to side quickly. Jimin notices and gives him a look of confusion. Through his smile, Taehyung says, “The change is really making me excited, Jimin. I don’t know why~”

The wolf hybrid continues to play with the bottom his shirt, pulling it up and down many times. Yoongi speaks, “Don’t tell me Taehyung seeing you with new hair makes him--”

“No!” Jimin interrupts louder than he expected. He recovers and pets his friend as he talks. “It probably just has to do with unity or something.”

“That doesn’t make any sense,” Taehyung rolls his eyes.

“I know,” he sighs sadly, then looks at the way Taehyung is still bouncing on his feet and shakes his head, smiling a little. “I can’t believe you…”

“Jiminnie!” Taehyung pleads, but is wearing a smile as his hands begin to scratch restlessly at his own stomach.

“Go ahead,” Jimin gives in, raising his hands in defeat. This makes Taehyung practically rip his shirt off over his head, earning a couple startled shouts from the couch. Taehyung forces his cheek against Jimin’s and makes a loud *Muah!* kissing sound before backing away and starting to fumble with his zipper, which Jimin stops, “Oh god! Taehyung, not here!”

He pushes the grinning shirtless hybrid out of his sight in the direction of his room and only then turns to address the clearly shocked friends he forgot about.

“What the *fuck* just happened?” Jungkook questions loudly.
“Is he *stripping*?” Yoongi just about yells in confusion.

Jimin bites his lip nervously, as he doesn’t know the best way to put this to his friends before he can’t explain fast enough. “Don’t get mad,” Jimin says slowly. They shrug in a way that says they just want to know what’s going on. “Taehyung is going to transform.”

“What?!” They scream together.

“Right *now* !?” Jungkook asks.

“As a *wolf* !?” Yoongi questions.

Jimin nods hesitantly, not really expecting this kind of reaction and not knowing how to take it. “I’m sorry?”

“No! We’re just…” Jungkook blurs, confused with his words and moving his hands to make up for what he can’t say. “Wondering why?”

Yoongi adds with sarcastic nonchalance, “And why you didn’t tell us. Oh and maybe why he started taking his clothes off, that too.”

Jimin nods and opens his mouth to answer but his entire body is thrown to the carpeted ground harshly. He hears Yoongi and Jungkook scream and expects something terrible. However, when he opens his eyes and looks up, he only sees a panting - albeit blurry - Taehyung in wolf form above him.

His best friend licks his face multiple times before letting Jimin sit up. On the couch, he sees their two friends holding each other in complete, genuine fear.

“Th-that’s a *wolf* ,” Jungkook stutters out, backing himself into Yoongi.

Yoongi clutches Jungkook’s shirt, trembling, “That’s a huge f-fucking wolf.”
Chapter End Notes

one after another huh? might update tomorrow for that.

and has paragraph spacing always been this big?
Chapter 6

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

a lil backstory for you as well as some Soft times
(lol no there's always a little bad with some good)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jimin belatedly realizes that this may not be the best way to introduce their friends to Taehyung transformed. Although both he and Taehyung are smiling widely - the wolf’s tail wagging side to side, his own happily parallel to his back - their friends, however, were just screaming in fear at the sight.

He guesses he can't really blame them since they’ve never seen a hybrid in their transformed form, much less a wolf. And his best friend is so happy, he isn’t even thinking of going slow and trotting in to let everyone get accustomed to his new body. No, instead, he tackles Jimin to the ground and licks his face like an excited dog seeing its human after years.

This amount of energy is what brings Jimin to having to hold Taehyung back by wrapping his arms around the wolf’s large neck when he tries to approach their friends, who almost fall off the couch.

“T-Taehyung,” Jimin wheezes, desperately trying to bring said wolf back, even though he’s only walking. “We n-need to talk to them f-first.”

Taehyung whines but sits in place, relieving Jimin of his efforts. Jimin takes an exhausted breath and plops to his best friend’s side in front of the couch seating the previously screaming boys.

“Okay,” Jimin sighs, splaying his arms out to show that everything is under control. Then he addresses at his friends calmly and gestures to the wolf, “This is Taehyung. Do you remember Taehyung from two minutes ago? This is him.”

“Yeah!” Jungkook yells directly at him. “But all we see is a wolf! A wolf , Jimin!”

“We’re in the middle of fucking Seoul ,” Yoongi adds with his hands in the air. “When’s the last
time you’ve seen a wolf?”

Jimin shrugs, “Honestly, in the beginning of the year? February, I don’t know. It was some kind of trai--” They groan, reminding Jimin that he has to explain this, “Oh! Yeah, okay. Umm… ask me questions!”

Jungkook immediately raises his hand, cutting Yoongi’s sentence off, “Me first.” He is picked. “Why did Taehyung turn into a wolf?”

“Umm,” Jimin frowns, looking at the still panting Taehyung and shrugging. “I don’t know. He said the color change made him feel so happy the only way to embrace it was to turn.”

“That doesn’t make sense.”

“At least it wasn’t because his wolf told him to.”

“Oh ye--”

“Why the hell didn’t you tell us?” Yoongi questions with anger, his small mouth turning to a small frown while dark eyes glare. “Why didn’t you say, ‘Hey guys, Tae really wants to transform, is that okay?’ maybe then tell us all these answers? Preferably before he transforms, that would’ve been great, Jimin.” Jimin purses his lips, flattens his ears, and snakes his tail into the opening of his crossed legs in embarrassment, causing Taehyung to nose his cheek and fall to rest his head on his lap with a whine. Yoongi realizes what he’s done and shakes his head, sighing, “I don’t mean - I’m just… I’m just a little freaked out, okay? We both are.”

Jimin wipes his cheek, “It’s fine. I wasn’t thinking.” Guilty, he pets his best friend’s large head, “It’s been so long since Tae wanted to transform on his own. Hybrids don’t usually just do it. There’s usually a reason like, being without responsibilities, defense, wanting to escape.

“We’re in a situation now where we don’t have the time to stay transformed for as long as we want. I forgot what it’s like to be a cat especially because I have to make sure Tae doesn’t lose control. He knows how to control it better now but we’ve been too scared to try again without a genuine reason. So when I saw Taehyung pulling on his shirt, I couldn’t say no.”

Jungkook leans in, “Which brings us to our other question. Why was Taehyung so quick to start
stripping?"

Taehyung releases a huff and Jimin giggles a bit, “Back at the - um… many years ago, they decided that since it was so hard for Taehyung to control himself, they trained him to show signs first.”

“So he just get’s naked?”

“No,” Jimin laughs. “They had him take off his shirt to say he’s going to transform at any second and to pull on it to say he’s still in some kind of control. It helps. There were countless times when something would happen and he’d take off his shirt unexpectedly. Back then it was hard for him to just pull on it.”

The oldest furrows his brows in confusion, “So hybrids have to be completely naked to transform, yeah?” Jimin nods. “Why would he need training to take off his clothes if he already wants to transform?”

“Because…” Jimin looks at the ceiling as if it’d help him explain, “Taehyung passed the age where all hybrids controlled themselves, but he was the only one who still couldn’t well. So he was put into a - training. They watched him and tried to understand him, tried so many different things. But whenever Taehyung tried to control himself from transforming, he would fight it so hard he’d eventually faint. It was dangerous. He could literally lose his mind if that continued. So the only healthy way was to just embrace it.”

Despite the monologue, Yoongi shrugs in defeat and seems to speak for Jungkook as well, “Still don’t get it.”

“So Taehyung was already trained not to give in, right?” They nod, but not really understanding.

“All hybrids learned to control it at an early age. That’s to control those urges, to not give in to them. It starts when we’re really young and it’s usually finished when we’re like, twelve.”

“Oh! I see,” Jungkook claps his hands, smiling proudly like he won an award. “He was trained with everyone else to not transform whenever the animal told him to, but he would still have trouble even after twelve. He was trained so well like everyone else that the urge and the resistance would be too much and he’d faint from not transforming! Right?”
“Oh!” Yoongi smiles, patting Jungkook on the shoulder for explaining it so well - at least to him.

Jimin rolls his eyes at the humans, but with a smile, “So, they had to train him to take his shirt off at a specific moment where they could… realize he was going to transform.”

“And...?”

“And take him somewhere he wouldn’t hurt himself or others,” Jimin tells them. “They timed it so well that during the time between taking off his shirt and actually transforming, they learned how to control how he acts transformed, if he’s wild or just confused. That time is important to use to talk so he stays in the right mind. Or else it can get ugly.”

Taehyung whines in his lap, demanding attention because he didn’t want to transform for a lecture. Jungkook glances at the wolf and asks, “So he’s Taehyung right now, right?”

Jimin smiles widely, “Yes. He’s happy Tae right now,” causing said hybrid to sit up, wagging his tail.

Taehyung then stands completely and walks over to Jungkook, laying his head on his thigh. Still hesitant, Jungkook leans closer to Yoongi while he talks to the wolf, “Why are you so big?”

Again, Taehyung huffs through his nose, turning back around to nip gently at Jimin’s shirt in annoyance. His best friend walks behind him until he’s covering his back protectively. Jimin only laughs at this. Taehyung is pretty big: Jimin is sitting up straight but his eyes won’t pass over Taehyung’s back if the wolf was standing in front of him. Then again, Jimin is just short. Taehyung’s head is a good 10 centimeters higher than the part of the couch Jungkook and Yoongi are sitting on. Not only is he tall, Taehyung’s body from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail is about 150 centimeters.

“He’s not a dog,” Jimin giggles. “Well, he’s a hybrid, but he’s a wolf hybrid. Wolves are big. He’s not even an adult yet either, so he’s growing.”

Yoongi’s eyes widen in disbelief, “You mean he’ll get bigger?”

Jimin laughs out loud now, filling their home with his voice. When he settles down, no one else is laughing but it doesn't make him stop smiling, “Yes, hyung. He’ll get bigger. But only a little bit.”
Yoongi sits back with an unreadable look while Jungkook purses his lips and reaches out for the wolf behind Jimin, “Why are you all the way over there, Taehyung?”

“Because you didn't pet him when he wanted you to.”

Jungkook’s eyes widen. “I’m sorry! Will you let me pet you?” The boy climbs down the couch to a crouched position that allows Taehyung to and runs toward him. Jungkook scratches the hybrid’s ears and settles down with him in the middle of the room.

As this happens, Jimin stands up as well to get out of their way. He sits himself on the couch next to Yoongi, watching as Jungkook takes his spot to pet Taehyung with a small satisfied smile on his lips.

“You said you forgot what it’s like to be a cat?” Yoongi asks suddenly, not making eye contact as they watch the two on the ground.

Jimin blushes, “Y-yeah.”

“Well why don’t you transform now? Jungkook and I are here. You’re safe.”

The way Yoongi says it is so carefree Jimin wishes he could do just that. He wishes it could be so easy to mess around with his best friend again, bat at his nose, play with his tail, curl up by his warm stomach and fall asleep there, feeling safe with a wolf protecting him. Jimin just wishes he could do that again. But now he has responsibilities. When they were younger and the wolf took over Taehyung, it was only a pup and wanted nothing more than for Taehyung to play. As the three got older, the wolf wanted to be mature, dominant, powerful. Jimin has to be the one who protects Taehyung now, being assertive and stubborn so Taehyung can stay balanced out. They can’t play like they used to.

Jimin’s silence has Yoongi putting a hand on his thigh, patting there comfortably to say he doesn’t have to answer. But he does, lowly, “I wish I could.” Taehyung looks over at him in Jungkook’s lap. The human doesn’t notice the head movement with how he’s taking advantage of Taehyung not being able to tell him to stop talking. But Taehyung doesn’t seem to mind Jungkook talking to him anyway, it’s almost rare the boy talks this much.

The older retracts his hand now, thinking Jimin wants to end the conversation. But he brings his
legs to his chest and rests his head on his knees, “It’s not Taehyung’s fault. No… It’s just been a while since the transformation was for a good reason.” His voice gets even softer and his tail wraps around his body as much as it can, “I didn't want to take any chances… a-and I still don’t.”

“I understand,” Yoongi assures quietly, but loud enough he can be heard. At this distance, Jimin can feel the genuine sympathy from Yoongi. “You don’t have to tell me.”

“I know it’s soon, though,” he continues. “He’s always learning. Eventually, I’ll feel safe enough to turn. Not that he’s dangerous, I just care for him.” Jimin has a small smile and turns to Yoongi, “He’s cute, yeah?”

Yoongi doesn’t seem to notice, “Yeah.”

The smile fades and Jimin goes back to watching Taehyung and Jungkook mess around. Jungkook is laying on his stomach, facing Taehyung, and has his hands in front of him propped on his elbows. Taehyung's paws are between Jungkook’s hands, which are constantly moving. They’re playing a game where Taehyung tries to catch the boy’s hands with his paws as the hands move away in fear of losing.

Jimin loves how much fun they are having but notices how quiet the room is getting. Before the mood gets too down and he has to suffer through another moment of silence, he asks out loud, “Do you guys wanna watch a movie?”

Jungkook looks up, “What movie?” During this break in concentration, Taehyung takes his chance and captures both of the boy’s hands with his paws. He throws his head back and wags his tail while Jungkook groans quietly.

This makes Yoongi and Jimin laugh and they let Jungkook pick the movie to bring his spirits up. After a few moments of debating, Jimin decides to let Taehyung stay in his wolf form. At first, he was skeptical of letting him stay this way for so long but then noticed how comfortable he looked and decided it was okay for now. Maybe Jimin is enjoying the way his best friend is so peaceful a little too much, but he allows himself himself lay comfortably on the couch while Taehyung is on the ground with Jungkook.

Not even a fourth of the way through the movie, there’s a steady knock at the door. They pause the film and exchange looks. Once they realize none of them are expecting anyone, they remain quiet and leave the work to the oldest, who doesn’t complain much other than wearing a frown. Yoongi stands and disappears to answer the door.
The three hear the door open but not all of them hear what the voices then say. Jimin sits up when Yoongi says dryly, ‘Mrs. Jeon.’

‘Well if it isn’t Min Yoongi.’

Taehyung whines quietly and Jungkook looks at the both of them in confusion but Jimin puts a finger to his own lips, mouthing *Your mom* before straining to catch more of the conversation. Luckily, they’re caught in a silent tension.

‘I thought I saw your car in the driveway but refused to think such a thing would be here. And with my son.’

‘I came to hang out.’

‘Yes well, I don’t really care. Where is my boy?’

‘How do you know this address?’

‘Min Yoongi I am here for my son, not to chit chat with you.’

‘He’s inside. I just want to know how you got here.’

‘Your friend, Jung Hoseok. Are you happy now? Now bring me my son, the owner of this house I spoke to last night, or I’ll get him myself.’

It’s silent for a bit, then Yoongi is walking into the living room with a scowl. “Jimin, go talk to her.”

He stands now, “Why? We’ll just let her talk to Jungkook.”

“Because she’s giving me that face she always does,” the oldest sneers as if Jimin knows what
expression he’s talking about. “And I want to make her life more difficult.”

Jungkook is about to say something back but Jimin cuts him off, “I’ll talk with her only if
Jungkook’s by me. She’s his mother.”

Yoongi huffs and waves him off, “Fine, whatever.”

“Tae get up,” Jimin says, needing Jungkook to stand there with him. But the wolf whines and
makes no move. “Taehyung he needs to talk to his mom.” The wolf blinks at him stubbornly,
causing Jimin to get a little frustrated. “Come with us then. He just needs to talk.”

Jimin doesn’t wait for an answer, thinking his best friend is already contemplating releasing
Jungkook. He makes his way to the front door, seeing a pretty woman standing outside looking -
what he can tell - angry. The moment she sees him however, she smiles nicely.

“Hello,” Jimin greets politely, opening the door wider to speak to her.

“Hi,” she responds with a tone opposite she used on Yoongi. “I take it you’re one of the owners of
this house?”

“Yes. Me and Taehyung. I’m Park Jimin,” he reaches out to shake her hand, which she firmly
takes.

“I guess you already know who I am. Is Jungkook there?”

Jimin nods and looks back, wondering what’s taking them so long. “Taehyung!” he yells, knowing
he’s responsible for holding the boy back. Only a few seconds later, Jungkook is coming towards
them with the wolf by his side. Taehyung scares Mrs. Jeon a little but she manages to keep a smile
on her face.

“Hey, mom,” Jungkook says hesitantly, and Jimin doesn’t know if he knows what this is about.
The boy isn’t scared, just confused.

“Jungkook, why didn’t you answer my calls?” his mother asks with a gentle frown, making
Jungkook’s eyes widen at these words. “I was very worried about you, you know. I had to contact Hoseok to find out where you were.”

“I - I’m sorry, mom. I didn’t know you called,” he pats his pants hurriedly to try and find his phone, but gives up when he comes up empty-handed. “I guess I don’t have my phone on me, it’s probably in Tae’s room. Can you get it?” He asks the last part to the wolf, who starts to back up.

“No, it’s okay,” Jungkook’s mother sighs, stopping Taehyung. “I’m just glad you’re alright, Jungkookie.”

“We’re only watching a movie. Do you need me to come home now?”

This gives Mrs. Jeon a look of uncertainty as she purses her lips in contemplation. She then shakes her head, “No, I can see you’re safe. That’s all that matters. I just want you back before dinner, okay? Have Yoongi drive you.”

Jungkook nods, “Of course, mom.” They hug quickly and say a little goodbye before Jimin is able to shut the door.

The three go back to the living room to meet with Yoongi. Jimin tells him, “Yoongi-Hyung, you have to drive Jungkookie home when he needs to go.” Yoongi groans, causing Jimin to cross his arms, “And Mrs. Jeon is not so bad, I don’t know why you don’t like her.”

Yoongi shrugs with a pout stubbornly, “She just never treated me the same, so I stopped being nice.”

“Why is my life so hard?” Jungkook groans himself, falling back down in front of the TV and making the two laugh.

Jimin feels a tug on the bottom of his shirt. When he looks down, Taehyung is looking back at him with large chocolate eyes. So he nods and sends Taehyung off to his bedroom. “Tae is going to change back.”

“Why?” questions Jungkook from his spot on the ground.
“I don’t know,” Jimin gets situated on the couch next to Yoongi again, resting his head on the arm rest. Turning to the pouting boy, he smiles, already knowing the reason he’s close to sulking, “He’s warm, right?”

Jungkook only hums and goes back to watching the paused movie. It only takes a minute for Taehyung to come out, shirtless and a little hazy. He slowly picks up the shirt from the ground where he took it off and puts it back on. Taehyung stumbles a bit, more falling next to Jungkook than sitting down. Luckily, he’s caught. “Are you okay?” Jungkook’s voice is slightly deeper and his strong eyebrows crease.

“Ye-yeah,” he replies, nodding for measure but still leaning heavily against him. “I just… need to get in the r-right head.”

Jimin mirrors Jungkook’s concerned look, intently watching the way Taehyung moves. “Lie down. We’ll finish the movie, yeah?”

The hybrid nods slowly, licking his lips, and putting all his weight on their friend. Jungkook is a bit confused but allows Taehyung’s weight lower him to the ground and have his stomach become his pillow as Taehyung lays in between in legs. Jungkook resumes the movie then gets more comfortable.

After concluding Taehyung will be okay, Jimin lets out a soft sigh and turns on his side to watch the movie. It’s interesting, consisting of a comfortable amount of plot twists that end up getting explained sometime later, and the characters don’t have many love interests to distract them from the action. Jimin’s kind of movie. But the real plot twist doesn’t happen in the movie, rather when Jimin is squirming a little and he suddenly feels hands just above his hips pulling him farther down the couch.

He lets out a very quiet noise of surprise and looks down at Yoongi, who’s dragging his waist toward himself. “Stop moving, just be comfortable,” the older mutters, placing Jimin’s legs on his thighs.

In this position, Jimin can stretch himself along the length of the couch as much as he wants - or can, since he isn’t tall enough to reach the other end. So he gives a small thanks and moves a bit more to be laying on his stomach. The move is awkward for Jimin as he puts his hips directly on Yoongi’s legs, but the older doesn’t seem to mind. Not to mention he was the one who said to be comfortable. Jimin wiggles once more, making sure his knees are on the other side of Yoongi and crossing his arms underneath his head to watch the rest of the film comfortably until he’s he’s unconsciously purring and tapping the end of his tail on the couch.
The movie ends nicely and in a good suspense. They realize that there’s a sequel and promise to watch it the next time the four are together again. But it’s getting late, and Jimin and Taehyung start to understand that their two friends have to go home. To send them off, the hybrids walk them to the car. Jimin next to Jungkook at the passenger side first to speak with him.

“Hey, Kook,” Jimin gets his attention before the boy can get in the car. Like the good kid he is, he stops and waits for Jimin to speak. “I just want to thank you for being with Taehyung this whole day and making sure he’s alright.”

Jungkook frowns but nods, “Yeah, it’s really no problem. But we were just hanging out, he wasn’t in danger or anything.”

“I know but it means a lot that my best friend is happy,” Jimin tells him. “When he’s… transformed, he’s very vulnerable but you just went with it and that really comforted him. You did it all without thinking about it and I’m so--”

“Jiminnie!” Taehyung yells from their doorway, cutting off Jimin’s sentence, who just smiles and shakes his head. “Stop talking and let him go home!”

Jimin waves him off with one hand and clasps the taller boy’s shoulder with his other one, “Just thank you, Jungkook.”

Then he leaves before Jungkook can answer, letting them drive away.

Chapter End Notes

spoiler alert, there are over 30 chapters heh
so i might update more than once a week just out of anticipation
Chapter 7

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

[ the sack (7) ]

Yoongi-Hyung
> heyyy kidssss

Namjoon-Hyung
> heyyyyyyyy friendssss

Hobi-Hyung
> i'm no kid

Jin-Hyung
> and i'm not any of your friends

Jeon Jungkookie
> and ITS liKE 5 AM

Yoongi-Hyung
> we just want to talk no need for yelling

Hobi-Hyung
> FIVE AM

Namjoon-Hyung
> woah there champ let's be men

Jin-Hyung
> 5 am

Yoongi-Hyung
> aren't we missing some kids?

Jeon Jungkookie
> they're probably asleep like we all should be at ya know 0516

Namjoon-Hyung
> looks like we have to resort to plan b huh yoongi-hyung?

Hobi-Hyung
> ??

Yoongi-Hyung
> guess so

Namjoon-Hyung
> wosnjd
> aowhbxid

Yoongi-Hyung
> seisgkxj
> dmeicnf

Namjoon-Hyung
> vdjeidnjd

**Yoongi-Hyung**
> uajeirndk

**Jeon Jungkookie**
> oh god stop

**Namjoon-Hyung**
> ojxvl

**Yoongi-Hyung**
> ejqfw

**Jeon Jungkookie**
> pls no

**Yoongi-Hyung**
> ubszmr

**Puppy Tae**
> STOP

**You**
> NO MORE

**Namjoon-Hyung**
> there they are!
Puppy Tae
> what's this?

Jin-Hyung
> we're asking the same thing

Yoongi-Hyung
> now that everyone's here we can start

Jin-Hyung
> just say it

Namjoon-Hyung
> we kinda maybe have a president slash vice pres thing we gotta do in like 15 - 20 min

Yoongi-Hyung
> and it's kinda super boring at school alone

Namjoon-Hyung
> we got like the keys to enter thru an office at the back

Yoongi-Hyung
> we're just gonna work but it'd be cool if ya know

Namjoon-Hyung
> you guys maybe came too

> guys..........
Jin-Hyung
> guys????

Yoongi-Hyung
> i think you put them to sleep

Namjoon-Hyung
> SIGH

You
> it was worth a try

Puppy Tae
> taetae and i will join you

Namjoon-Hyung
> you have me and jiminnie

Puppy Tae
> really?

Puppy Tae
> yeah we’re up anyway and the rest seem to be sleeping

Namjoon-Hyung
> SWEET

Jin-Hyung
> i would go and bring breakfast too but i have the other car and i need to drive hobi and kookie
Yoongi-Hyung
> its ok jinnie hyung
> we’ll pay for their breakfast on the way

You
> thank you hyungs~

Namjoon-Hyung
> contrary to popular belief, the mornings make our yoongi hyung soft

Jin-Hyung
> aw >///<

Yoongi-Hyung
> shut up

The hybrids are actually ready to go by the time the two pick them up. It’s that time of the year where the nights are longer and it’ll continue to be as dark as it is at five thirty in the morning now for much longer than usual. Not that any of them mind, the air isn’t too cold and the streets aren’t too dark so there is a more comforting glow to it.

It’s a bit of a surprise to themselves that they’re actually agreeing to go to school at this hour, how they each automatically texted the other to tell him they wanted to. But maybe it’s because they’ve finally found friends who they’re willing to be around without each other. Earlier, when they’ve had friends other than each other, they wouldn’t want to hang out with them alone. It was never a safety thing, just a little more comforting to stay together. But now, with their new friends, they both seem comfortable enough to leave the other’s side. Also, they’ve never really been outside this early in the day to enjoy the dark sky before sunup.

So the two file into Yoongi’s car with smiles instead of scowls, greeting the humans with good mornings. They sit back and enjoy watching the countless little street lights whizz past them as they drive to the school building through empty, quiet roads.

“So what kind of work do you need to do?” Taehyung asks.
“We honestly don’t know,” Yoongi shrugs casually. “Something the staff wanted us to look over.”

Jimin giggles at the older in disbelief, “You don’t know? Why are we here then?”

Namjoon answers, “Well it may take forever and I don’t know, maybe you have good music taste. Believe us, it’s boring as hell when it’s just me and Yoongi hyung.”

And according to Namjoon, the two do have good music taste. The four actually spend a good half hour together eating pancakes they picked up from a fast food drive though on the way there while browsing and exploring songs they all seemed to listen to. Jimin likes a little more ballad than the others, soft singing of love but usually with a nice rhythmic beat they all can appreciate. Taehyung is also more into the slow, deep singing but makes up for that with his enthusiasm with rapping the humans are interested in. Their appreciation for each other’s music makes the atmosphere in the small office for the student president more comfortable.

However, after messing around with the music for a bit with the hybrids, Namjoon and Yoongi have to actually get to work, so they quietly read over their papers at the center desk with small smiles while the hybrids play a car game on Taehyung’s phone while lounging on the old couch off to the side.

About twenty minutes pass by of competitive racing and writing on papers in a warm room filled with upbeat music until Yoongi and Namjoon’s quiet commenting falls silent for longer than usual, then hesitantly continuing in quick whispers. It’s Jimin’s turn on the virtual road when Taehyung notices their friends’ frowns and hushed voices, whispering something to Jimin about it and causing him to glance up and confirm that they do look a little conflicted.

He pauses the game and asks the humans, “What’s the matter?”

Namjoon attempts to shrug nonchalantly while Yoongi immediately shoves a paper underneath one of the many piles before them. “Nothing. Just some absurd suggestions.”

“Suggestions?” Taehyung frowns at the vague answer, but becomes interested in the new information. “I didn’t know you guys did that sort of stuff. What kind of things do they let you decide?”

“Small things for other students. Mostly clubs and stuff. Sometimes punishments,” Yoongi says.
Jimin chuckles, “They let you like, watch them in the time out corner?”

Namjoon shakes his head, smiling at Jimin’s words, “No. Don’t you ever see kids told to come to us when being disrespectful?”

They nod, “Not all the time though. What do you do?”

“That talk to them,” he shrugs. “The administration believes that because we’re also students, we can understand bad kids’ reasoning and not shame them too much. Maybe they’ll understand they’re wrong if other students tell them in a more teenage way.”

Jimin gives an impressed nod with his eyebrows raised, “Does it work?”

“Sometimes. Other times they don’t take us seriously. It doesn’t really matter to us though if it does or not.”

“You said clubs? I think it’s cool this school has clubs. We didn’t have any where we were. Well, none that were for our interests. I mean - like, s-sports and things we're into. I - m-mean - nevermind.”

He finishes lamely to see the two humans looking at him in curiosity. “Yeah, there are clubs for things like drawing and some fandoms. We put them up if enough people suggest it,” Yoongi says, ignoring Jimin’s word trip.

“That’s cool,” Taehyung smiles. “So all club suggestions pass through you two?”

Namjoon answers proudly, “Yes. They’re either brought up by the staff or students and we decide on how to bring it to the other. We don’t get a lot of suggestions from students though, it’s mostly staff. But the staff brings up some pretty absurd suggestions.”

Jimin catches on quickly and frowns, “Like that one?” He points to the pile of papers Yoongi had loudly hid the one in.
Yoongi glares at Namjoon as the younger stutters, “Y-eah. Like that one.”

Despite the humans’ apprehension to talk about it, Taehyung bounds over to the receiving side of the desk and kneels before it, resting his chin on the wood rather cutely. “What’s it say?”

“Nothing,” Yoongi states, bringing the pile towards himself and in the process, making Taehyung pout.

Jimin does the same with a tilt of his head, wondering either what the humans seem to want to keep from them or what the hybrids have done to not gain enough of their trust. A nasty feeling settles in Jimin’s stomach without him knowing. “Why won’t you tell us, hyungs?”

Taehyung doesn’t seem too worried about it and his eyes sparkle with mischief instead, “Is it dirty?”

“No!” Namjoon responds in disgust, but the wolf keeps a smirk and his tail wags slightly at the challenge.

“Is it bloody?”

“N--!”

“Or both?”

“No, Taehyung.”

“How about girls?”

“God dammit, Tae! It’s about you guys!” Yoongi gives in almost angrily. Both hybrids now suddenly have expressions of despair.

“Y-you guys?” Taehyung repeats hesitantly in his quick 180 of a mood change, unbelieving of what he just heard.
“Like, hybrids?” Jimin asks. “A… hybrid club?”

Yoongi rubs his face, irritated. Jimin shrinks in the couch ever so slightly at the sight of his friend feeling distressed. “Yeah, a hybrid appreciation or equality club. Where you, I don’t know, talk to hybrids? Get to know them or something.”

Namjoon waves it off, “It’s just the school being all big and embracing the fact that they’re the only school with hybrids. How they’re all pro this and that. We’re not passing it.”

“Yeah, nevermind the fact we’re not even allowed to be equal,” Taehyung sneers, suddenly angry and letting his ears fall back. “Why would they even try to appreciate what’s been thrown away?”

Jimin notices this and sighs, fiddling with the sleeves of his sky blue jacket, “Taehyung…”

“No!” He snaps at him, tail and ears flickering. Jimin turns off the music solemnly. “It’s fucked up using us when we didn’t have a choice in the beginning. No one sees us as equals, they’re just hiding it around us but talking about us behind our backs.”

“That’s not true,” Yoongi tries to reason with the threatened hybrid. “There are people who think of you the same as others. It… may not be everyone, but you’re just a surprise.”

“That’s why we were in that situation Friday? Because we’re treated the same? Because we should be appreciated? Recognized for all the wonderful achievements we’ve had the opportu--?”

“We’re not passing the club, Taehyung!” Namjoon almost yells at the wolf. Jimin whines quietly into his hands, wondering what he should do in a situation where his older human friend is frustrated. Taehyung, doesn’t listen. He’s always been like this when faced with a topic he feels strongly on, especially when he’s debating with someone he doesn’t necessarily look to as a threat.

“They’re bullshit for even bring it up! For taking advantage of you befriending us. For pretending everyone doesn’t see us as toys. For thinking of using the ones who have to be in their bed every night for their own p--”

He’s interrupted by a sharp pull at the back of his shirt collar, making him fall hard to the ground
on his back with the breath knocked out of him while Jimin swiftly sits on his stomach. He ignores the low growl and anger flowing through the air. “You really don't stop talking, do you?”

“I hate you,” Taehyung grunts breathlessly, trying push Jimin off himself.

Jimin only glares right back at him, unknowingly making his eyes slowly turn to tense slits, “They aren’t doing it so you don’t have to be like this.” He nods to himself with a cross of his arms. “And there actually are people who care about us, Tae. You just didn't want to look for them.”

“Yeah? And who would they be?”

“That kid who helped us Friday for one. And also Jungkookie, Seokjinnie-Hyung, Hoseokie-Hyung, Nam--”

Taehyung hits the hand Jimin was counting people off on with a frustrated scowl, “I get it.” Then he looks away guiltily, and in a smaller voice says, “I’m sorry…”

This makes Jimin give a small smile and ruffle his best friend’s newly dyed blonde hair that’s still fairly soft and healthy after being bleached. Yoongi speaks up curiously, “About Friday, who exactly helped you two? Hoseok only told us it was some guy who knew the assholes. Did they ever say a name?”

Jimin turns to him and frowns, searching his mind for any recollection of the moment by tapping a finger on his cheek. He doesn't remember the guy actually saying his name at any time, but the tormentors had once. “It was… Minhyo? And the other guys were… Jaehyo? And Lijeon? I can’t remember much.”

It takes a while for either of the humans to understand, but Namjoon finally lights up, “Oh, Minho! He’s pretty popular. And the others must be Jaeho and Yijeong. They’re in the same click.”

“Yes! Those were their names. Yijeong was especially mean to me…” Jimin looks down at his ring covered fingers hiding beneath his sweater as memories of the boy come to light. He knows Taehyung feels his sorrow and is grateful for the comforting scratching on his nape.

Namjoon nods knowingly with sympathetic eyes, “They get into trouble often but Minho-Hyung doesn't. He’s a good guy so you’re lucky he was there. You won’t be on bad terms with him.”
Yoongi snorts, nudging Namjoon with his elbow and wiggles his eyebrows suggestively, “Not to mention Hoseok’s crush on him too.”

They start laughing as if Yoongi had told a well delivered witty joke, but it brings bewilderment to the hybrids. Jimin and Taehyung scramble to kneel at their end of the desk with together curiously. Taehyung prods, “Hoseok-Hyung had a crush on him?”

“No,” Namjoon wipes a tear of laughter, “He still has one.”

“The biggest crush,” Yoongi smiles, very much amused. “I’ve never seen him so whipped, it’s kind of funny.”

“He’ll like, duck his head when Minho-Hyung is around and stutter a bunch when talking to him but then like, stare at him for the longest time when he’s talking to him. He gets so flustered and embarrassed!”

Jimin tilts his head, “That’s weird, we never noticed that.”

“They don’t have as many classes together this year as they did last year. But I guess that just strengthens his attraction, the feeling of seeing him after a long day,” Namjoon speaks as if he’s narrating a drama.

Jimin knows Taehyung is thinking hard about how to use this information for his advantage, so when the wolf says, “So if Hoseok-Hyung likes him, does that mean--?” Jimin immediately keeps him quiet with a shove on the arm.

“Does this Minho-Hyung know his feelings? Does he feel the same way?” Jimin asks calmly, interested in the relationship of one of their new friends. Maybe he can help!

Yoongi shrugs, not paying mind to Jimin’s action to stop Taehyung’s sentence, “We’re not sure. He’s always nicer to Hoseok than us, but not in a mean way. He smiles and waves at him in the halls, but never really shows he’s bothered by Hoseok like Hoseok is by him.”

“Yeah. He probably just knows,” Namjoon sighs.
Jimin rests his head between his hands with his elbows on the chest high desk, making his cheeks squish in between his small palms. “Well, I hope he isn’t leading Hoseokie-Hyung on. He seems like a nice guy and Hoseokie-Hyung deserves someone bright like him.”

“We thi--”

“Oh! You boys brought company,” a voice suddenly says, causing all heads and ears to immediately turn towards the door.

“Mr. Ahn,” Namjoon says, standing with Yoongi and coming around the table to greet the handsome man. The hybrids however, stay on the ground and just crawl to the side of the room together, watching their human friends bow formally to the other, older human. “We didn’t expect you.”

“I just wanted to drop by, see how your work is,” the man smiles minimally. “Have you gotten it all done?”

“Yes, we were just talking now,” Yoongi supplies.

“I see,” Mr. Ahn looks at the kneeling hybrids on the ground now. He only makes eye contact with one of them for a second before both of the hybrids’ heads go down in submission. Jimin links his arm with his best friend's, whether for protection or grounding, he doesn’t know. Mr. Ahn is a man in his mid thirties wearing a fitted pinstripe suit that looks too fancy for him to be just a teacher, especially with the large sparkling watch and detailed cufflinks. The obvious amount of money this good looking man has is honestly more than a little intimidating for the hybrids. Even his scent is strong and dominant, rich with cologne and something sultry. They’ve seen photos of men like him, even met a few when their friends come around to say their last farewells.

After a short awkward silence, Yoongi regains the man’s attention, “I don’t think you’ve met them, have you, Mr. Ahn? They won’t have you until their Senior year.”

It works, Mr. Ahn looks back at Yoongi politely for the Junior to quickly and subtly nudge Jimin with his shoe to tell them to stand up while he maintains eye contact. “No, I can’t say I’ve had the pleasure,” Mr. Ahn responds in his smooth, deep voice that brings a shiver down the hybrids’ spines.
The two stand on shaky legs, still linked at the arm, but now Jimin is leaning heavily on Namjoon. They don’t look the man in the eye, keeping their gaze behind Mr. Ahn because they both get the prominent feeling he knows exactly how a hybrid should act. They even have their tails between their legs in another act of submission.

This time, Namjoon speaks for them, wrapping an arm around Jimin’s shoulder casually, “This is Jimin. Park Jimin.” Only then does Jimin make eye contact, but briefly because he gives a respectful bow. Namjoon then pats what he can reach of Taehyung’s shoulder, “And that’s Kim Taehyung. As you know, they’re both Sophomores.”

Taehyung repeats Jimin’s actions and it makes the man give a sly smile. The hybrids relax slightly at the pleased expression. He addresses no one in particular, “You four are good friends?”

“You can say that,” Yoongi shrugs. It’s true, the seven are good friends, but there’s still a small difference with Jungkook and Yoongi’s duties that give them more responsibility to get closer to them.

Jimin and Taehyung nod along with the man, the older’s stylishly gelled hair never moving a millimeter. He asks, “How long, may I ask, have you been friends? Namjoon, aren’t you a junior?”

Namjoon chuckles, “Yeah, uh, they met our friend Jungkook in their very first class and we all just started hanging out.”

Mr. Ahn smiles approvingly, “It’s always good to have a group of friends. Not only do you create strong bonds, but you also find even more people than you would on your own. But you should always choose well, you don’t anyone to do anything behind your back. Do I know anyone from your group?”

“I’m not sure,” Namjoon frowns. “We have younger friends. Jeon Jungkook, Jimin, and Taehyung are sophomores. Jung Hoseok is also a junior and then there’s Yoongi-Hyung and Jin as seniors.”

Mr. Ahn furrows his perfectly sculpted eyebrows, “You said *Jin* is a senior? Are you older?”

Yoongi almost bursts out laughing when Namjoon blushes and puts his head down. “He means *Kim Seokjin*,” Yoongi tells the man. “Seokjin-Hyung is actually two years older than him because he started school a little late. Namjoon can just call him whatever he wants because they’ve been dating long enough.”
This mildly surprises Mr. Ahn, his almond shaped eyes widen just slightly at Namjoon, “I didn’t know you were in a relationship.” Namjoon just waves it off and continues to blush. “You just have to be careful about being friends to lovers. It leaves a tension in the air if you break up that will never sit right.”

“Ah, we don't need to worry about that,” Yoongi friendly pats Namjoon’s shoulder. “They’ll be fine.”

“Good,” the man cracks a charming smile and if either hybrid feels their heart beats quicken, they don’t mention it later. “Now, you said you finished your work? I’m guessing you’ve touched the new club suggestion?”

Jimin is sure Namjoon feels him twitch at the words. It seems to snap Namjoon out of his thoughts of Seokjin because he looks back at Mr. Ahn with a more nervous voice, “Yeah, we decided against it.”

“Oh?” the older asks, bringing forth a tone of condescension and intimidation. It makes Jimin tighten his hold on his best friend’s arm as he glances up at Mr. Ahn’s dark eyes narrowing on Namjoon.

“A-at least for the time being,” Namjoon manages to say under the stare. “You see, Jimin and Taehyung recently got in a sort of incident with some disrespectful students.”

“We really don’t think more attention is best this early in the year anyway,” Yoongi adds. “Not with people still treating them so differently.”

It’s silent for a second, then Mr. Ahn says, “I see… Were you hurt?”

This confuses the four students for a moment. Neither Namjoon nor Yoongi would be hurt in an incident concerning the hybrids, especially if the man knew they weren't present at the event. So it comes to them belatedly that Mr. Ahn is, suddenly, trying to hold a conversation with the hybrids themself.

Jimin jumps a bit at that realization and feels Taehyung do the same. He immediately looks at the other hybrid because he doesn’t want to answer. His best friend recovers from panic quickly and makes eye contact with the man for longer than a second to answer, “N-no.”
Mr. Ahn nods in understanding. “Was it a violent incident?”

“Uh…” Taehyung starts. He looks at Jimin, not knowing what this older human’s motive is. But he can’t really ponder much on it because the gaze tells him to answer right away. “Yeah, a little. We—we’re fine now though. Just some pushes here and there.”

Jimin smiles at the subtlety of the wolf, approving his answer. The entire time, the teacher did not take his seemingly concerned eyes off Taehyung’s, making it a bit awkward but mostly just confusing. After his own nod, Mr. Ahn says, “At least it wasn’t too bad. Always remember that you can go to your new friends or, if you have difficulty finding a trusting adult, you can find me in room sixty-nine.”

The hybrids nod quickly in confirmation that they will confront him in a situation of need. It seems to please the man because he beams to them all and says, “Have a good day,” before leaving gracefully.

The room stays quiet after the door shuts. It’s not the hybrids, as Jimin whispers to Taehyung that they should sit back down again at the couch pushed by the wall. Taehyung lets Jimin lead when he turns to do just that, but he’s stopped by Namjoon and Yoongi’s scowls.

Jimin purses his lips, nervous grey eyes flickering between both of the humans, ears back in slight fear, and he keeps his tail between his knees. Something is obviously bothering them, but he doesn’t know what. They seemed just fine when talking with the teacher, but now they’ve taken to the expressions when Taehyung had acted up earlier. After a few tense seconds of glancing between the humans, Jimin just puts his head down and walks backwards until he’s behind his best friend, their fingers now intertwined. Taehyung isn’t looking at the humans either, but he doesn’t have his head down to appear the stronger between the two.

One of them sighs. Yoongi? It causes the hybrids to flinch either way, afraid of what they’ve unknowingly done in such a short amount of time for their moods to change. In contrast to their earlier scowls and to the hybrids’ hyperactive mind, Namjoon speaks softly, almost concerned to them, “Why do you guys keep acting like that?”

Jimin genuinely frowns at the flooring. “Like what?” he asks in his most steady tone.

“You get all… small,” Namjoon sighs. “You never do that with us, so I guess that’s a good thing?”
Yoongi chimes in quietly as well, and it just makes the hybrids more on edge. “You two did it at the café that one day and Jimin, you did it at the salon.”

Now Jimin understands. They’re asking why they put their head down, why they don’t speak, why they do whatever they’re told, why they’re honest when asked any question. But he doesn’t know why it bothers them. They’re the humans, shouldn’t they be proud? Proud of how obedient Jimin and Taehyung are being? Maybe they’re not doing it enough with them and they had made the wrong decision in being so friendly early in their relationship. Jimin briefly whispers this suggestion to Taehyung, who doesn’t disagree.

So neither of the hybrids reply, waiting for an actual question and not taking their chances at enraging their friends by unnecessarily speaking. However, this does the opposite to what they imagined. Namjoon groans, they jump, and Yoongi sighs again.

The Junior steps closer and Taehyung moves to his right to cover more of Jimin. It makes Namjoon stop, “Why are you doing it to us now?”

“W-we thought,” Jimin says from behind Taehyung, “you wanted us to? You s-said it just now?”

“No, you idiots,” Yoongi sounds disappointed and Jimin sucks in a breath, feeling his own and Taehyung’s fear rush through his body now. “We said it’s a good thing you don’t treat us like that because we don’t like it.”

“B-but--”

“No buts, Jimin. We don’t like it. We’re asking why you do it.”

He’s quiet, conflicted. “Why wouldn’t we?”

“You know what?” Namjoon says while putting his hands up. The hybrids look at his annoyed expression and expect the worst. “Let’s all just sit down. Right here on the ground, all four of us. Like this, see? We’re not mad, just sit down.”

Confused by where they suddenly stand in their relationship, they do as they’re told. The hybrids
and the humans sit cross-legged across from each other in short silence. Jimin intently watches each of their facial expressions to know how to act as Namjoon speaks again, “Now, just tell us why you do it. Or why you don’t think you shouldn’t.”

Taehyung answers calmly, “We’re hybrids, hyungs.”

This seems to catch both of the humans of off guard. Their eyebrows raise and they look at each other speechless. Jimin doesn’t know how to deal with this kind if reaction so he continues Taehyung’s explanation in hopes of pleasing them with information, “It’s what we do, what we’re supposed to, what we’re… taught to do. It’s being a hybrid.”

“Then why haven’t you done it to us?” Yoongi squints at them in surprise.

Taehyung looks him in the eye with a thoroughly conflicted expression, “Y-you just said to stop. Do you--?”

“No, Taehyung,” the Senior groans, and the hybrids are back to square one in understanding. “Why were you not in the first place?”

Jimin thinks Yoongi is asking why they weren't strictly obedient and bowed each time they met in the beginning. This question only confuses him more, making him think they did wrong by automatically assuming the class ranks of the humans. “We’re sorry, hyungs. W-we just thought we could treat you guys like our hybrid f-friends back home even though you’re humans because we’re all y-young. But… now we don't know how to act.”

This surprises the humans in the way that though they finally got their answer but they apparently weren't expecting it to be so humble. “Um…” Namjoon tries to respond. He shares an unreadable look with Yoongi, then addresses the hybrids again, “So you don’t act weird around us because we’re the same age group as you? And you act weird around anyone other than us because they’re older?”

“Yeah, but we’re not acting weird, Namjoon-Hyung. We’re doing what we’re supposed to do.”

“Nope. You're acting weird.”

He pouts, wanting to argue but knowing he shouldn't with a human, especially since they’ve been

More collected now, Taehyung gathers the courage to correct him, “In public you mean.”

“Okay. Why then?”

“Y-you’re our friends,” he explains yet again. The humans don’t seem to be getting their morals and Jimin wonders just how different they’ve been brought up. “We don’t need to be hybrids around you. But in public… we can't act like that. We’re taught to be the face of hybrids, show everyone who’s looking that they should buy one too. You guys aren't people we need to impress.”

“Well thanks,” Namjoon teases with an eye roll. But the hybrids don’t smile with him, looking more serious than ever.

“Okay, whatever. Just know we don’t like it,” Yoongi says. Again, they nod obediently and he sighs, shaking his head. “We weren’t in public a few minutes ago, though. Why did you act weird with Mr. Ahn?”

This makes them a bit embarrassed. Jimin looks down and puts his hands in his crossed legs with his tail at the thought of the handsome and mysterious man who definitely won’t be getting out of his head at night. A few embarrassing emotions flow from Taehyung as well that tell him they’re on the same page. In a small voice he says, “He’s… scary? He looks like he’s got a lot of money.”

“And the way he looked at us was...” Taehyung adds while shaking his head, “like he expected us to treat him highly. We bet he has a hybrid of his own.”

Yoongi snorts, slapping his knee disbelievingly, “Mr. Ahn?! A teacher? Here? How do you even get that out of just looking at him?”

Very serious, the wolf replies honestly, “Well, we were trained to spot a rich man or woman to impress them and hope to get bought. It’s a whole class.”

The smiles slowly slip off the humans’ faces from the far fetched suggestion and are replaced with wonder, “I didn’t expect a real answer. Is that tr--”
“Good morning, South Korea!!” Hoseok yells, bursting through the door with his open arms and bright heart shaped smile. Behind him are Seokjin and Jungkook waving with their own morning smiles.

“Goddammit, Hoseok!” Namjoon groans, making said sunshine deflate as he lets the rest file in the room. “We were having a serious conversation.”

“Oh…” he slowly bows slightly in apology but Namjoon waves it off saying it’s alright.

Yoongi only rolls his eyes and turns to the hybrids one last time, “We understand now, but just don’t do it to the five of us okay? We don’t like it.”

Taehyung bring a hand to his eyebrow with a rectangle smile as a salute. Jimin looks at him and mirrors the action as they say together, “Yes, sir!”

“Oh my god, your hair!!” Hoseok immediately yells in excitement again.

Chapter End Notes

too heavy? idk

Introducing the mysterious Mr. Eggplant though, I love him
Chapter 8

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

Some Warnings,
mentions and descriptions of sex and pornography (nothing explicit!)
panic attack
language

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It was amazing. It was extremely entertaining. It was like watching two animals fight in their natural habitat. One, young and leanly built. The other, older and fragile looking. It started off friendly enough, full of passive aggression as they danced around with subtle warnings to the other not to overstep boundaries. Then, in a flash, the younger seemed to have enough and made itself larger, taller, standing to its full height. Almost immediately after, the other does the same, seemingly in defense.

Now, a stand off. A game of silence and determination, both of the animals waiting for the other to make a wrong move so it can dive in and finish the job, winning. Their audience of almost two dozen stay quiet, watching with interest at who will back down first.

Despite the difference in their statures, the lean one much taller than the doll-like other, it should be the younger that backs down first, having just about no chance of winning considering the way the older is more arrogant and holds more power and authority. However, the stronger one does not back down.

“I didn’t do it,” it speaks, angry and determined of its position, guarding it.

The older only shows signs of amusement. With a soft voice that can still be heard from four yards away, it says, “There’s no one else who’s this immature, sweetheart. No one els--”

“I said I didn’t do it!” the younger roars, making the other laugh in the silence of the audience. The humiliation only spurs it on as it tenses its broad frame, “I don’t care what you think of me, it’s one thing saying I’m some lazy jerk but it’s a whole other accusing me of something like this! I didn’t do it.”
“Now you’re putting words in my mouth,” the older shakes its head innocently, as if the argument was of no real importance now, just a game now. “Just another reason to have you punished.”

It slams its hands on the nearest object, creating a loud bang before staring at the other with intensity and complete confidence, “Punish me for that then! Punish me for something you know I did wrong, not this! I would never do this!”

The older hums, examining the objects that caused distress among two already tense beasts. That action disgusts the other, showing it by giving the smaller an odd look. Slowly, it speaks, finding more interest in the object before itself, “Yet I still find that hard to believe, looking at these again. I know you have the skill to create this. You take a class, do you not?”

This catches the younger off guard, it backs off a bit, stutters, but manages to stand strong and respond, “I - I do, but--”

“You also, no doubt, do your absolute best to keep me on edge,” the doll like animal interrupts, turning the items around in its small hands. “You always try to show me how dominant you can be.”

“You’re reading it wrong, you arrogant slu--!”

“How else am I supposed to see this, honey?”

The stronger huffs heavily, thoroughly annoyed with the other’s stubbornness, “I act like that because I obviously do not like you in any way. Yeah I purposely get you mad, but it’s for fun. I’d never go this low and I’d never even think of doing anything remotely similar to what that shows.”

It smirks devilishly with a shrug, using a sweet tone, “Well… isn’t that a shame.”

The younger is stunned. Bewildered. Absolutely and utterly flabbergasted. It’s taken very much off guard, staring at the older, dumb. It definitely did not expect to be presented with this sort of information that leads on such an assumption.

Once it’s clear the younger now has nothing to say at these words, the pretty looking beast only shrugs again, “I guess I have nothing else to pin on you. It seems the one who did this will walk freely. You’ll have no punishment since you more than admitted to not having anything to do with
It takes its time answering, still processing what the older had really said before. Then it slowly backs down to its previous seated position, showing no sign of continuing to argue. “Y-yeah…”

“Good,” the older continues to smirk. The thrill of making the stronger turn weak with a few well timed words tunes out the anger of not knowing who the real culprit is.

A bell rings.

It’s time for lunch.

The class quickly stands with their belongings and books it right out of the room. Jungkook, however, grabs his bag in moderate speed, his eyebrows still furrowed in confusion as his mind races a mile a minute. Even with the hybrids urging him to pass Ms. Shin faster, he slows to stare at the woman in disbelief, wondering if she really meant what she indirectly said.

His eyes flicker to the pages on her desk, getting a better view of them now that they're not being waved in front of him in accusation of being their creator. He didn't draw those. Honestly. He only got so defensive because he simply does not understand why she would automatically assume it was him that did.

These drawings were obviously made by someone with a great skill in the art department. Good enough of a skill that Jungkook really does not have. Furthermore, would never draw Ms. Shin in all these different angles. In all these sexual positions with an anonymous male. The viewer knows it’s with a male because of the only other body part shown than the entirety of Ms. Shin’s body in each of the detailed positions with the male organ. What is that one? The what? Is that one labeled The Eiffel Tower? Are those two males? And Ms. Shin is where? In the mi--?!

Jungkook is quite roughly shoved into the hallway.

The three walk in silence for some time on their way to their destination, Jimin holding onto the younger’s arm as if he were a toddler hugging his parent’s leg. It’s a habit he developed since being around so many humans, grabbing ahold of whichever of the hybrids’ five friends is closest to make him feel more secure. No one seems to mind, even when he had done it the first time to Seokjin in a crowd, who had only raised an eyebrow and continued walking. They shrug him off when they’re too hot or not in a good mood but other than that, it’s become normal. Jungkook isn’t
in the best mind to push him away, so Jimin thinks it’s the perfect time to grab at his arm with a purr, hoping to soothe his human friend’s nerves in the process.

Taehyung decides to sling an arm around Jungkook shoulders causally with a defeated shrug, “I mean, I gotta give the guy props. He has talent. It looked realistic. You know, all the drool, positions, sizes, and proportions.”

“All the little details that matter to make a piece whole,” Jimin admittedly agrees with his best friend with sophisticated nodding as if they are discussing professional art.

But Jungkook is frowning and looks down between the hybrids. “Do you think,” he asks them, hesitating before he speaks, “she meant it?”

“Meant what?”

“I said I’d never even think about doing that with her. A-and she said it’s a shame. Does she…?”

“Have the hots for you?” Taehyung finishes the boy’s thought on the dot like it’s the most obvious thing in the world. “Absolutely.” He nods confidently.

Jungkook immediately stares at the wolf in disbelief and disgust, “How--?”

“We can smell it,” Jimin answers for the both of them with a smile, seemingly proud of his keen sense of smell. “We smelled her get heated when you walked by and looked at the pictures more. It was pretty gross.” The boy shivers and Jimin raises an eyebrow, smirking, “Do you like her?”

The hybrids already know the answer, but it’s fun to see Jungkook get flustered and a little startled at the question. “No!” he frowns. “She’s so fucking stupid and cocky.”

“Yeah,” Jimin nods casually with a smile, “Did you see The Eiffel Tower?”

“Pretty cocky,” Taehyung draws out and laughs with Jimin at their pun like they’re not making fun about a drawn porno.
Jungkook pulls his arm away from Jimin’s laughing figure to cross his arms with an irritated huff that’s not meant to be cute, but Jimin hears Taehyung’s breath hitch and he almost coos at the human with a hard exterior. “I’m gay anyway.”

Then the hybrids slow their pace, confusion and something like contemplation written on their faces. “You’re gay?” Jimin asks slowly, as if he didn’t hear correctly. It doesn’t make any difference, but it’s interesting to hear out loud in an environment where they’ve seen has hostile.

Jungkook purses his lips with slight insecurity as he glances at the two. They’ are each looking at him differently and he doesn’t seem to know how to respond to either of them, “Yeah? I thought you two knew. Or at least would be alright with it since Namjoon-hyung and Jin-hyung don’t seem to bother you.”

This kind of shakes them out of whatever trance the two were in. Jimin and Taehyung shrug nonchalantly as they begin walking beside the human again, Jimin curling around his arm and Taehyung wrapping his own arm around Jungkook’s shoulders to fiddle with his pierced ears, a habit the wolf had picked up for the same reason as Jimin. Jungkook takes it all in stride, but with curiosity at their previous reactions. As they continue their pace, Taehyung tells the other reassuringly, “Yeah we’re fine with that. Homophobia is actually nonexistent in the hybrid world. We’ve only seen it out here. And we kind of thought Namjoon-Hyung and Seokjin-Hyung were dating pretty early on, it wasn’t until a few days ago that it was confirmed.”

“Their relationship and Hoseok-hyung’s crush on that Minho,” Jimin adds for no real reason other than to explain how they’ve learned a lot about their friends recently.

Hearing the hybrids become more comfortable speaking, Jungkook does the same, “It’s not too dangerous in this school, so you shouldn’t encounter much. And the five of us are into guys in one way or another. Yoongi-hyung too.” He looks down slightly to address Jimin, “What about you two?”

Jimin smiles suspiciously with his own shrug, “You can say we were under the okay-with-men category.”

“Alright?” Jungkook frowns at the vague answer, looking ahead as they cross the field to their lunch picnic table their hyungs have claimed for them for years.

The conversation ends as they part to sit down at the table. Seokjin decided to treat them all for
some reason and bought a little more than enough food for the seven of them. The three immediately begin thanking their eldest at the mere sight of the amount. Jungkook’s fading light blush from the slightly uncomfortable conversation is still visible, making the three already at the table smile and put their burgers down.

“Awe!” Namjoon teases, his dimples showing, “What has our Jungkook all flustered?”

This startles said boy, as he doesn’t expect his friend to be interested in or notice the blush, even more when Yoongi reaches across the table to pinch his cheek briefly in the small moment in time where he isn’t immune to the younger’s cuteness, “You’re red in the face, Jungkookie!”

The hybrids snort at the boy when Jungkook’s face regains the blush from embarrassment again, not knowing what to tell his hyungs. So he just purses his lips and waves Seokjin’s hands off from poking his cheek. Taehyung grabs a burger for himself and Jimin, then tosses one to Jungkook as he explains for the humans, “He was accused of drawing porn of Mrs. Shin. Then she started hitting on him.”

A short chuckle comes from Seokjin, whereas loud barks of laughter emit from Namjoon and Yoongi. They slap their knees and the table, causing a handful of students walking past look their way in fear of something breaking or someone getting hurt. It isn’t until they’ve all settled down and the three youngest peacefully begin their burgers that Jimin realizes someone is missing from their group.

Swallowing, Jimin nudges Yoongi with an inquiring elbow, “Yoongi-Hyung, where’s Hoseokie-Hyung?”

Yoongi glances to the empty air beside him where Hoseok is supposed to be sitting and shrugs. “Probably in the bathroom,” Yoongi makes out through a mouthful.

“I’m sure it doesn’t take this long to use the bathroom,” Jimin mutters with a little attitude, only slightly because of the absence of a friend.

It’s quiet but Yoongi is sitting right next to him and hears it clearly. “Don’t talk to me like that,” he tells him with a sudden glare, not quite angry, but enough intimidation to make Jimin move a little toward his best friend.

Taehyung however, isn’t so sympathetic when he whispers to him about Hoseok’s absence as the
rest of the table continues conversation. Jimin rolls his eyes at the concern, “Don’t worry about it, Tae Tae.”

“You did.”

“Yeah but the others aren’t worried. So he’s fine.”

“I want to know where he is.”

“He’s in the bathroom,” Jimin lies.

“Then why hasn’t he come back?”

“He’s shitting, I don’t know. Why do you care?” he says before stuffing another bite into his mouth.

The question is meant to end the conversation there. But Taehyung narrows his eyes at Jimin in seriousness and concern. With a stern gaze, he whispers, “Why wouldn’t I?”

Taehyung’s reason for intensive questioning hits Jimin now, understanding that Taehyung is seeing more than just a friend taking his time in the john. He sighs, but indulges the wolf, knowing Taehyung can’t help it, “He can hold his own. Hoseok-Hyung is very friendly and capable, no one has any reason to take him away.”

The hybrid pouts as he tries to understand Jimin’s thought process of possible safety. Jimin knows Taehyung is just being protective of their friend and the wolf inside him is worried about Taehyung’s ‘pack.’ But despite Jimin’s assurance, he shakes his head, dismissing his best friend's help. “There’s not really anyone he’d talk to. No one he knows enough to smell like them.”

“That doesn’t say anything,” Jimin grits out, getting annoyed with his stubbornness.

“It says he might be in tr--”
“You’re being irrational, Taehyung,” Jimin interrupts out loud now as he ignores his delicious burger for Taehyung. The other does the same to confront Jimin more seriously.

Jimin’s outburst has all heads fall quiet and turn his way. Jungkook frowns, “He… didn’t say anything?”

Jimin shoots a glare at the boy who doesn't play into this conversation, “He did. He’s worrying about things that don’t matter.”

“It matters!” Taehyung counters, the protest half a hurt whine, half threatened. “He could be--”

“Taehyung!” Jimin yells, causing the table to jump. They’ve never witnessed him raise his voice or be anything other than shy and reserved. But Jimin doesn’t care about how he’s seen right now, only cares about the state of mind Taehyung is dropping into - one that can be dangerous for them all. At a time like this, he needs to become assertive and just as stubborn as Taehyung to make sure he doesn’t get carried away. He huffs heavily and looks Taehyung in the eye, actually a bit calmer now that he can get the hybrid’s attention. “If it makes you feel better, we can walk and see but you have to stay calm, okay?” Jimin gives in to his best friend’s unreasonable but uncontrollable urge, asking if he’d be okay to look around the school for him.

The wolf’s frown falls into a neutral expression, unfazed by Jimin’s submission to his wants and deciding to follow his own thoughts. “You go,” he speaks sternly with authority clear in his voice and posture as he turns as best he can to face Jimin. “I can’t risk leaving more.”

Jimin however, only stares Taehyung in disbelief and devastation. He’s telling Jimin to go out and find Hoseok because he can’t leave the others and risk them being vulnerable without their ‘leader.’ Jimin’s had to learn all he can to understand the wolf’s train of thought, that right now he needs to protect the pack, that he needs to find his missing member, that he also must take certain measures in order to make sure all of that happens. Even if that means staying and protecting the majority while he sends someone else to find the member of the pack that’s in possible danger.

In reality, he is just being asked to find Hoseok in the building and bring him to the lunch table. But knowing Taehyung and his long fight with the wolf inside, the request means so much more. Taehyung can’t help but see this through the wolf’s eyes, as a constant fight of survival of the fittest. So he just sent Jimin away on his own.

He won’t admit it, but Jimin feels like crying. His face falls and he searches the wolf’s blurry face for any sign of self doubt on the decision because he knows he is no longer speaking to his best friend, only the wolf that has taken over in the blink of an eye. He only wishes he noticed when it
had taken over to avoid this. “Tae…” he says quietly, but not enough the humans can’t hear. “Do I not matter?”

Namjoon puts his hands in the air in shock, “What is happening?”

But the hybrids don’t pay him mind, as Jimin wonders if he’s really seen as someone who the wolf is willing to leave. It keeps replaying it in his head, Taehyung sees Hoseok in danger, he’s at risk for trying to save him himself, so to protect the rest, he sends Jimin.

“Of course you do,” the wolf frowns with no real emotion now that Taehyung has probably lost all control. The tone he uses is steady, almost condescending. “Because you can do it. You can take care of yourself too.”

“Th—that’s it?” Jimin still can’t believe Taehyung left so quickly, became a different person without anyone knowing to keep him from falling deeper.“I only matter because I can benefit you? Because I can possibly keep a member of your pack safe?”

Yoongi almost chokes beside him, “His what?”

But again, this moment means more than their friends know, and the wolf only moves to cup Jimin’s face affectionately. “Yes.” But his hands are cold due to the weather of September, feeling too unlike his best friend’s.

“I… I can’t believe you’re saying this so easily,” Jimin whispers sadly, because he isn’t mad. He can’t be hateful at the way Taehyung is obviously no longer in control of his thoughts, of his decisions and words. In reality, he’s more mad at the wolf inside his best friend.

But right now, he’s saddened, and somewhat anxious, at the way it so easily takes over Taehyung. It had used his best friend’s actual concern to trick Taehyung into thinking this is worse than it is, then causing the wolf to steadily take over since Taehyung doesn’t see any other way to know where Hoseok is than to assume he is in danger. It’s such a small dispute, but it shows how easily the wolf can make Taehyung give in without an ounce of fight, without Taehyung even knowing and being able to warn someone or ask for help.

The newly blond haired wolf tilts his head in confusion, “Why? I genuinely think you can take care of yourself and get the job done.”
Jimin would have been almost entirely better with ‘I genuinely think you can take care of yourself,’ but Taehyung only sees a tool right now. His breath hitches, “Why can’t you trust the rest to stay safe? Why can’t you go on your own and leave us?”

“But Tae!” Jimin whines, almost child-like. He takes a shaky breath and pulls away from the large, cold hands around his cheeks to grab at Yoongi’s arm behind him and pull the Senior into the wolf’s view. ‘Look at him. Look at Namjoon-hyung, Seokjin-hyung. Jungkook, not so much. But you don’t have to worry about us.’

Yoongi tugs his arm away from Jimin’s weak grip. “What are you talking about and why are you bringing us into this?” he asks surprisingly calmly. Maybe it’s because Taehyung doesn’t seem fazed by anything and Jimin doesn’t look as devastated as he really is.

The wolf doesn’t look at their friends, he only sighs, then lowers his voice until only Jimin can hear him, “I understand and I agree. But there are people who I worry about more than you.”

Jemin doesn’t know what to say to this. His best friend just told him he’s not necessarily the first person he thinks of keeping safe. After all these years of friendship and the wolf inside still can’t understand who Jimin really is to Taehyung.

Something breaks inside Jimin, something small, he knows, but it breaks. He thinks it’s his respect for the wolf. All this time he thought they co-existed and when Taehyung would lose control, he only thought of Jimin as a pack member. Now, as the ‘pack’ went from two members to seven, the wolf seems to see the veterans of it differently. For better or worse, he doesn’t know, but he doesn’t think he wants to.

A hitch in his breath, sounding more of a gasp, and Jimin hides his face in his hands, shaking his head. His body trembles, his tail curls itself around him, his ears fall down, and his breathing becomes too uneven as he’s suddenly pulled into an embrace by someone behind him.

“What the hell, Taehyung?” The person who is shielding Jimin yells more in confusion than anger. It’s Yoongi. He feels more than he hears the older’s heartbeat quicken.

“What did you say?” Jimin also feels Namjoon stand as they all begin to become hostile toward Taehyung, his absolute best friend.
The only person who doesn’t seem as mad is Jungkook, he asks the wolf calmly what the dispute was about. He responds with, “I told him the truth.”

This only spurs on more accusations, more questions. Jimin is heaving abnormally at all the noise, the anger and hostility that reminds him of too much, it concerns Yoongi enough to tilt Jimin’s head up from his chest and look in his confused eyes. He lowers his voice when seeing Jimin’s dry but undoubtedly distressed face, “Are you even crying?”

Jimin gasps more, his eyes screwing shut through the burn of his lungs, “I-I can’-t c-r-y, hyun-g.”

“What?” Yoongi frowns while also trying to coax Jimin to calm down by rubbing his flattened ears comfortably. “I don’t understand.”

“M-my eyes, hy-hyung!” Jimin whines through his slight hyperventilation.

“But cats have tear ducts too. I know they don’t shed tears for emotional reasons, but they can still tear up. I don’t understand why you can’t.”

Yoongi seems to be trying to understand why Jimin can’t cry and not trying to comfort him on why he would want to. So Jimin moans sadly in a way a cat would meow sadly to regain attention. “Hyung! I j-just can’t! It ha-has somethi-ng to do wi-th the mu-tation.”

This seems to satisfy Yoongi’s curiosity for now as he brings Jimin closer so he can continue to ‘cry.’ He now rubs his vibrating back and Jimin notices the rest have stopped arguing, more tense and on edge. Through his deep breaths, Jimin finds a familiar scent and he turns his head only to see the exact cause of his distress.

Hoseok stands next to two tall boys. One seems familiar and the other is a complete stranger, but they all wear confused and surprised expression as they look upon the scene.

Jimin groans.

Chapter End Notes
Cliffhanger again! That also means double update. Catch you later!
Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Too many mixed emotions and a rapid heart rate is all he’s feeling right now. He doesn't really
know or even understand why everything around him is moving so fast, a blur he doesn’t think
about too much. All he wants is to follow his instincts, instincts that have always been there but
that he’s always done his best to shut out.

Shutting out the little voice in the back of his head usually just makes him disappointed with
himself for some reason afterward, like he’d only hurt himself.

However, he does know that his so called “instincts” are never to be trusted. Well, he knows from
past experience. Too many times has he gone along with them only end up coming out feeling
incredibly guilty - and only sometimes, somewhat content.

This weird urge or way of thinking has never been something he could explain in detail to people
other than the staff, who told him what it was early into the struggle. Any time he needed, they
also gave suggestions and advice on how to deal with it when it suddenly takes over, consuming
almost every part of his being until he can’t remember his own words even as they still slip from
his lips. He exactly doesn't know how to feel about it when that unexpected event occurs. Often,
he’s relieved. Maybe because he’s letting go something deep inside him. But most times, he’s
scared for the same reason. It’s rare he’s ever felt relieved, calm, or in the right mind.

Normal is the best he can label how he’s been feeling up until a few seconds ago. Now, he
understands that he had unknowingly given in to the wolf inside of him that’s always trying to take
over, yet again. He hasn’t been in control yet it had felt so normal.

It wasn’t until a clash of smells and an object literally stopping him in his tracks that Taehyung
realized this. However, he can’t try to stop and think about when exactly he lost control or what he
did or said while he had because he’s only a little sane now and it’s trying to take over again,
leaving no room for thought. The cauldron of emotions flow over him as he stands there, breathing
heavily and glaring daggers at a boy around his age.

He blinks rapidly and shakes his head in hopes of clearing it as he suddenly comes to. A few tense
seconds later he gathers enough willpower to look down at his torso where a tan arm is wrapped
around it, preventing him from moving any further. It doesn't occur to him how hard he’s still
subconsciously pressing up against the force.
Taehyung breathes out a sigh and follows with furrowed brows to where the arm and smell is coming from. Slowly, he sets his eyes on frightened grey ones with pupils almost to a thin line. Jimin, his waking mind registers. The hybrid is only halfway sitting on the bench, reaching out to stop Taehyung with a strong arm.

The crease in his forehead smooths out when seeing the other hybrid, so he takes his time to focus on him. Staring quietly in his best friend's shining, reflecting eyes calms him now just like it's always done. His breathing slows and so does his heart rate, letting him take refreshing breaths of air. He realizes Jimin is stopping him from doing something very wrong. Clearing his mind doesn’t work well in the end when a scent invades his lungs and causes him to feel a clawing sensation in his stomach and a pressure behind his eyes that makes him lightheaded, all signs he knows is his inner wolf trying to re-emerge.

He gasps slightly and his eyes snap to the boy he was glaring at before, who which the other smell came from. The hold around his middle tightens, thankfully reminding him to think about his actions. As he stays still with clenching fists, Taehyung tries to understand the waves of emotions. In the corner of his eye he sees Jimin stand and walk until he’s only a foot away, his hand still on his side. The hand grounds him in some way, letting Taehyung breathe easier through the tense air.

He cocks his head to the side, still staring at the scared boy in front of him. “I’m…” his deep voice cuts through the silence, “mad at you?”

There’s a pause before Hoseok, he realizes, answers. “Wh-why?”

This obliviousness makes Taehyung narrow his eyes and lay back his ears to step forward against his hold, something negative coming over him that wants him to snap at the older. He grits out the reply in disbelief, “Why?”

His steps forward are slow, thanks to Jimin’s strength, but it doesn’t stop the others around him from picking up their defense. Hoseok backs up ever so slightly while Jimin whispers his name in warning. It isn’t enough to stop him when Taehyung scowls and spits out each word quickly, “Why? Because you’re being irresponsible and self--”

“Taehyung!”

Taehyung growls at the call, immediately baring his white teeth at the person who spoke. Jimin. This time, he seems angry, and the bright eyes make him feel ashamed. His face falls to one more
guilty as he briefly gets lost in the unique, sparkling irises that have always given him sense of place.

He lowers his head, trying his best to ignore the burning in his stomach that tells him to not submit and punish. Like he always does when this happens, Taehyung resumes breathing slowly, focusing on the smells that seem to bring the most familiarity. Raising his head now, Taehyung whispers, “I… I’m sorry…”

Everyone seems to release their own breath, but the air stays lined with hesitation. Barely, he registers Jimin shaking his head with a finger pressed to his lips, directing the motion to Hoseok, who breaks his eye contact with Taehyung to look at it. What it means, he doesn’t focus on.

Taehyung takes a few more shaky breaths as another smell gets stronger as it moves closer to him. Unlike when he recognized Hoseok’s, this person’s scent also brings him comfort and safety, coaxing him to continue speaking calmly because it promises he’s being taken care of. His eyes dart to the taller boys beside Hoseok, one looking slightly familiar, and the other a stranger. They wear fearful and defensive expressions. “Who’s this?” he manages to question through a dry throat.

Both strangers’ eyes widen at the sudden attention but the air lightens more. Jimin even sighs and rubs lightly at his side. A new pair of hands is placed on him, but he doesn’t flinch because it’s from the calming, earthy scent that just makes him warm. Jimin’s and the new person’s hands gently turn Taehyung to the right, walking him slowly to the picnic table as he’s calming down.

“Minho-Hyung and Jonghyun-Hyung,” Hoseok answers, now almost free of fear. “They came to check on you two.” A smile can be heard through his voice when he says a name that makes Taehyung stop in confusion as too many smells and memories flood him again from this trigger, his wolf seeming to recognize the name.

“Minho?” he breathes out, questioning the ground as if it holds the answer to his scrambled mind.

The hands pause their nudging and Jimin speaks uncertainly, “Y-yeah. From Friday? He helped us, remember?”

Taehyung’s breathing almost completely freezes as images and feelings from the days before now flood his mind.

He remembers feeling outraged at a couple of boys who thought they could tell him and his best
friend what to do. Then an older boy coming through the crowd and helping them, putting the rude ones in place. He remembers how grateful he felt to have someone that can help.

He remembers the way he was stopped by that boy named Minho from hurting someone. He also remembers the blush Minho and Hoseok shared when they said the same thing together and locked eyes for a moment. Then the conversation he had days before about their seemingly one sided love. He looks back at it now and realizes that both of their hearts had beat faster, how they did when Hoseok said Minho’s name just now.

Taehyung is being thrown into a realization he knows is purely from the wolf, that he can either increase his pack size or form an alliance with this Minho - and possibly this Jonghyun? - that can fend off the attackers from before. He even remembers wanting to know if he was able to form a bond with the stranger using Hoseok and his relationship, thinking to form an alliance from the get go when he had an argument with Jimin. He remembers the feeling of joy that took over the wolf that night at the mere thought. He feels the wolf’s satisfaction increase now as it realizes it can become reality, the boy in question just yards away. The sudden feelings his body is getting from events associated with Minho and his name makes Taehyung dizzy.

But through his forced numbness of attempting to block out the emotion, a scent is presented when a hand lightly taps at his cheek. This brings in new images it’s associated with. He sees toothy smiles and dark brown hair and newly blond hair. He sees a rare soft sleeping face before it turns to a surprised one. He smells cooked food and the harsh chemicals of dye and the soothing fragrance of something suspiciously feminine that almost comes out completely from underneath the natural intoxicating musk. He feels happiness, safety, and tranquility. He feels warm body heat and balance.

All these emotions from two opposite areas inside him, but coming forth at once. It makes him unstable. Which memories were brought up by the wolf? Which were by himself? All at the same time he wants to be more powerful, and he wants to form friendships that make others happy. Taehyung thinks he means it when he says there are people who he cares about more than Jimin. It’s this one person who he wants to protect because of the way their natural dominance outweighs the one inside him. He wants to feel happy with this soothing scent, but he also wants to use it to be stronger.

Taehyung tries his best to separate the wolf’s thoughts from his own, tries to fight back. He breathes heavily, quickly, it’s too much. The scents that fill his lungs only confuse him more, what do they mean to the wolf? To himself?

He feels hands on his body, his face. He hears shouting from behind the white noise. He sees blurry figures of brown and silver. This seems familiar. It’s the inability to win against the wolf inside him. It hasn’t happened for a year.
He panics and he feels his right thigh tingle. What is he putting his best friend through again?

He breathes in the scents, focuses on the hands, tries to look somewhere clear but he can't make sense of it. He never can.

He smells nothing, feels nothing, he sees black.

Jimin doesn’t actually know what to do in the event of his best friend having a panic attack slash fainting episode. So when he experiences the boy begin hyperventilating and not responding to anyone’s calls, he knows he’s in a pickle. Within fifteen seconds, Taehyung is limp in his and Jungkook’s arms.

No one really does anything for a good three seconds either, just stunned at the way the situation has escalated. Jungkook looks up at Jimin with his mouth open, sputtering out illegible words. The rest of the humans gather around as quick as possible to see if it’s real. They start to loudly question Jimin what exactly happened and what caused this.

Jimin can only stare blankly at his best friend, disbelieving that Taehyung has went unconscious after all this time. Ignoring the rest, Jimin lowers the hybrid to the ground slowly with the help of Jungkook.

“Holy fuck is he dead ?!” Seokjin just about yells in pure fear, silencing everyone else’s rambling.

Yoongi roughly pushes the older on the arm with an annoyed expression, “No, dumbass, he just fainted. He does that, right?”

The attention goes to Yoongi now, interested in what he means by saying the statement so casually. Namjoon speaks, disbelieving Taehyung would just up and fall unconscious, “He does that? He just does it?”

“No, not really,” Yoongi frowns in reply. He squats beside Jimin while observing the wolf hybrid as well in contemplation. “Jimin said Taehyung used to faint when he had these real big fights with
his inner wolf or something. This looks more like a panic attack to me though, but I don't know.”

Jimin nods slowly in confirmation, remembering that this had happened before and he shouldn't start freaking out like it’s a first time scenarios. Jungkook licks his lips and questions Jimin worriedly in a voice that lets on he’s just about as scared as Jimin, “S-so that means you can take care of him, right? He’s done it before so you know what to do? Y-you can…?”

He takes a big breath and nods again, more quickly this time to seem more collected than he really is, “Y-yeah I think I d--”

“Think?” Seokjin interrupts angrily. “You just said he’s done this before!”

Namjoon tries to calm the older down but Jimin’s ears are already flat against his head from the outburst. Fear washes over him as they expect him to know exactly what to do. He bites his lip and his tail flickers nervously all while he purrs stressfully. Every time Taehyung has fainted - or had a panic attack - he was quickly rushed away from anyone and everyone, including Jimin. Most times, he wouldn’t even go down before the wolf hybrid was dragged away, leaving Jimin oblivious to what the episode and treatment actually is.

He can hear Seokjin and Namjoon arguing over the best way to get Jimin to start actually doing something and Hoseok and his friends asking Jungkook what happened before they arrived, but Jimin isn’t really paying attention, he’s trying to remember what little information he got out of some staff after the years he’s pestered them to talk.

Through deep thought, Jimin still feels a hand on his lowly vibrating shoulder and a soft voice say, “Hey.”

His eyes have been slowly sharpening to watching for any movement of his best friend, he even backed up a bit to adjust for his farsightedness, but they now snap up to Yoongi’s sympathetic face, who continues speaking understandingly, “It’s alright if you don’t know what to do.” Jimin’s lips purse at that but Yoongi only scoots closer. “I’m no hybrid expert either and I think the best thing to do is take him home first. We’re already drawing too much attention.”

Jimin nods once again, releasing a breath he didn’t know he was holding to look around and see that they have formed some sort of crowd of confused and scared students. “W-will you drive us?” Jimin manages to ask Yoongi through tight vocal cords.
The older’s face falls and he looks away, “No. Namjoon and I have things to do. A-and Seokjin-Hyung can’t either because he has that club thing until three.”

Jimin’s expression becomes defeated, “So we’ll have to… ask a student? Maybe a teacher or the nurse?”

Instead of speaking, Yoongi shakes his head and stands, catching everyone’s attention, both friends and strangers. “We need to get them home. Who has a car and can give them a ride?”

The small crowd mumbles together but Jimin only focuses on the way Hoseok and Minho nudge their friend to make him step forward. “I can do it,” Jonghyun offers.

Yoongi eyes him, then Jimin, then Hoseok with a scowl, “I don’t even know him, Hoseok.”

Hoseok, offended, huffs and replies with, “But you were still gonna ask some other random student?” Yoongi frowns. “Trust me. He’s safe.”

Jonghyun gets a quick once over by their other friends before they turn to Jimin, who nods hurriedly. Yoongi finally says, “Alright. Let’s help get Taehyung to the car.”

After many, many years of dealing with Taehyung in his wolf form, the wolf taking over Taehyung’s mind, and just roughhousing with his friend, Jimin has gained some muscle. It’s not much but it's always been enough to stop the other from walking, running, or struggling. From experience, he is also able to swipe Taehyung off his feet and carry him bridal style for quite a distance.

He’d learned how from the countless times they’d prank someone and run, Taehyung usually tripping over his own feet in excitement and needing Jimin to quickly carry him away before they’re caught. From the times Taehyung would fall asleep in Jimin’s room even though every staff had complained more than once that staying over four nights in a row is not just a visit and Jimin has had to carry the hybrid to his own room across the building or next door.

So taking the unconscious boy from point A to B now is no big deal. However, it still surprises the humans when Jimin nestles his arms under Taehyung’s knees and back and swiftly stands. He readjusts the body once more so Taehyung’s head is leaning against Jimin’s shoulder instead of hanging limply like his tail before he turns to the rest expectantly.
They’re in awe at the action. “Do you pick him up often?” Seokjin questions, eyebrows furrowed while the others’ mouths are agape.

Jimin only gives a face of unamusement, “We’ve known each other since we were born, I’ve thrown him around more than once.” He turns his attention to Jonghyun now with urgency, “Can we go? I don’t want to find out what happens when he wakes up here.”

The taller boy nods quickly in response then looks back at Hoseok and Minho, patting Hoseok’s shoulder, “I’ll be back right after.”

The three share some sort of worried look that may result in a blush on Hoseok’s end but Jonghyun leaves them quickly to walk Jimin to his vehicle. Jimin bites his lip as they finally get past the now larger group of students blocking their way because they have to walk across the grass, through the school building, and in front of the entrance to the car. He’s not worried about dropping the hybrid, he’s worried about the way onlookers see them.

Thankfully, there’s no one near enough to the three that they are stopped. The real problem is inside, where the majority of the students group to escape the cold of the oncoming autumn. Jimin takes a deep breath as he walks through the doors being held open for him. At first, no one sees them, the loud conversations aren’t interrupted and Jimin makes quick work of the distraction, moving through the crowds as quick as possible.

Then a few people silencing become them all and next thing he knows, he’s walking through an eerily quiet hallway full of staring people. Jimin puts his head down and does his best to continue on his way but no one is really moving, which forces Jonghyun to go in front Jimin and physically make a pathway for the hybrids.

Voices start up quickly, asking Jimin questions as to what happened and if they should call for a teacher. Some boys even make rude comments, but he only shakes his head at everyone, hoping that will answer all of their questions.

They’re almost out of the crowd when a student is heard from the outskirts, “MR. AHN! MR. AHN COME HERE! THE HYBRIDS!”

Jonghyun and Jimin lock eyes, both definitely not wanting the attention of a teacher in this situation. They just barely shake off the last student following them when a man taller than Jonghyun stops the boy. Mr. Ahn is now the only person blocking the school doors while a crowd of boys stay behind the three.
The man’s handsome face is contorted in a look of confusion as he looks at Jimin holding an unconscious Taehyung. “What’s going on here?” he asks with his voice low and full of authority.

A boy, probably the one who had yelled for help, hurries to the teacher’s side. He’s more scared than anyone else in the area. “He - he just came in and w-was holding the hybrid like he was d-dead or something and we - we all kinda freaked out but he isn’t - isn’t telling anyone what’s wrong. Can - can you help him, Mister?”

Mr. Ahn nods along with the words and puts a hand on the boy’s shoulder, “Thank you. I’ll take it from here. Everyone can go along with their business now.”

With that, the four are left almost alone, Jimin shifting his weight from side to side because they really need to get home and he doesn’t know how long Taehyung will be like this. Jonghyun beside him is doing the same, wanting to move as quick as possible.

However, Mr. Ahn stays as cool as a cucumber when he makes eye contact with Jimin. “Now. What is the matter? I assume he is not actually dead?”

Jimin shakes his head. Even through his urgency, he remembers how he should act with man like Mr. Ahn. “No, sir. He just fainted.”

“Oh,” his eyebrows quirk up, an unreadable expression flashing across his face, “Does he need to go to the nurse? It’s the other way, you know.”

“No, sir, it’s not like that. We need to go home. It’s very important that we do, Mr. Ahn.”

The elder steps closer with his lips in a frown, a hand extending toward the hybrid in Jimin’s arms. Jimin almost backs away, but thinks better of upsetting the man. The back of his hand presses against Taehyung’s forehead as if he’s still checking for a fever despite Jimin’s words.

Oddly, Taehyung’s head turns away from Jimin’s chest and takes in a deep sigh. The other three stand still, wondering if he is coming to. He doesn’t really, his lips part and he breathes in a shaky breath before falling limp against Jimin again. They sigh defeatedly.
Mr. Ahn stands to his full height and straightens his tie, “I’ve had a few experiences with hybrids that have fainted.” Jimin’s frown deepens and his tail continues to flicker at its place near his calves as his and Taehyung’s suspicion of the man owning hybrids comes to light. “They usually have symptoms similar to a fever but not quite. It’s a hybrid’s… how do I put this…?”

Jimin understands where he’s getting to and takes a step back, disgust threatening to show. But he keeps a straight face and a steady voice before the man can continue, “He doesn’t have them. Not all of us do. Thirty percent of hybrids don’t have heats.”

“Really?” The man sounds genuine in his curiosity. “I didn’t know that. Mine do and I just thought they all did. My apologies. Do you know the reason some don’t?”

Jimin eyes him briefly at the sudden confirmation that he is a hybrid owner but does his best to not show it. Not only did he admit to owning a hybrid, but he implied he has multiple. If Mr. Ahn is aware of the information he uncovered, he doesn’t express it. “Yes, but I’m sorry, Mr. Ahn, we really need to go home.”

“Of course. Maybe we can discuss this another time. Is Jonghyun here taking you?”

Said boy nods affirmatively, “My car is just outside. I’ll be right back.”

“Alright then,” he smiles. “Make sure they get home safely.”

The moment the man moves, Jonghyun immediately goes to open the front door for Jimin and Taehyung. Jimin doesn’t look back as he quickly follows Jonghyun to his car.

Chapter End Notes

Haters will say it's a filler. Maybe it is, maybe it isn't, but some of these things had to be addressed. You also get to see a little of that shinee ensemble that'll come up at some point later. I might try to update again tomorrow but no promises... u_u
Chapter 10
Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

I'm late! I'm late! I'm (a little) late!

The spontaneous ride home from school is only slightly awkward. After finally strapping the limp Taehyung in Jonghyun’s back seat, Jimin and the Senior don’t speak other than Jimin’s occasional directions. This is their first time properly meeting after the incident Friday but they’re both too on edge to casually make conversation; Jonghyun having an unconscious hybrid in the back of his car, and Jimin worried sick over what his best friend is going through and how he can help.

It isn’t until they’re turning into the their simple street that Jonghyun speaks insecurely, “So, it wasn’t really me and Minho-Hyung who made him have a panic attack, right? I’m sorry if it was. We should’ve told one of your and Hoseok’s friends that we were coming. We didn’t mean to scare him.”

Jimin, surprised at the assumption, shakes his head quickly. “No, of course not,” he says. “No one knew that was going to happen, he’s never done it in Seoul before so we thought it all was pretty much over with. His bad mood started with me so if anyone, it was my fault.”

“Either way,” Jonghyun sighs but continues without changing his uncertain tone, “What else can I do?”

They look at each other now, as Jonghyun pulls into the driveway. The older seems genuinely worried and ready to help, and Jimin gives a grateful smile for it. He doesn’t know what he can do, much less what someone else can, someone who’s had no interaction with hybrids either. “This is more than enough, Jonghyun-Hyung. I can’t even imagine what we would be doing if we dealt with this at school or with some stranger.”

A sudden charming smile breaks out on his face, confusing Jimin but not thinking anything of it. The conversation ends there and they move to get inside the house. Taking Taehyung out of the car turns out to be harder than putting him in now that the large hybrid is starting to move, occasionally lowly groaning and turning his head.

It seems to only gets worse as they stand by their front door, Jimin directing Jonghyun through his
bag for the keys while he struggles to keep the restless hybrid safe from hitting himself or falling. Taehyung’s breathing is getting heavier and he slowly pulls at Jimin’s shirt weakly, more kneading it than anything.

“Are you sure you don’t need me to get anything?” The older asks again as he follows Jimin in, eyeing the distress on Taehyung’s face.

“No thank you, hyung.” Jimin huffs after setting Taehyung on the ground with his back leaning against their couch. Jonghyun had helpfully made sure Taehyung didn’t knock his head on anything on the way in but Jimin is positive that to give the most help to Taehyung, he has to do something with the least amount of people around possible. “You already did so much for us,” he walks Jonghyun out the door politely. “He should be better by the time school ends. You can come by if you want and bring some of our friends around then too.”

Jonghyun nods, his teeth worrying his lip, the only physical sign of how worried he is. Jimin really does appreciate it, he just doesn’t want to stress anyone else out because of this accident. It was Jimin’s fault, he should’ve tried to ease Taehyung out of that mindset instead of thinking about the seemingly meaningless words he said. Now, they’re making countless humans worried and putting Taehyung in possible pain.

“Okay,” Jonghyun gives in. “And know that will lend you a ride if you need one anytime. Call Hoseok and he’ll tell me alright?”

Jimin bows quickly but respectfully, “I will. Thank you.”

With that, Jimin closes the door and focuses his attention on the restless boy in the living room. When Jimin gets back to him, it’s like Taehyung is having a nightmare that he can’t wake up from, one he’s trying his best to run from.

The first thing Jimin does is kneel down and run his hands through the hybrid’s hair; then he gently lays him with his back on the ground, free from the risk of hitting anything or falling. Taehyung’s head turns from side to side wearing a distressed expression through it all. Jimin grabs his face and strokes his cheeks, whispering in his calmest voice, “You’re okay, Taehyung. Just breathe, calm down, TaeTae. You can do it…”

This makes the hybrid release a noise something like a growl and a groan. It startles Jimin and he backs up slightly, only then seeing the way Taehyung’s arms move restlessly about his torso, scratching and pulling what he can. He wonders what exactly he’s trying to do. Without thinking, Jimin carefully removes the shirt from his friend and grabs his wrists, placing his large palms on
the now exposed stomach.

Hopefully, Taehyung will register he doesn't have a shirt on, the object that is usually the main prevention of him giving in to his wolf urges, and will feel more at ease. He doesn’t actually know how it would, but this is his first time being in this situation so he does his best. Jimin also doesn’t know if letting Taehyung transform is the best option, but he only wants his best friend to come out of his thoughts right now.

It seems to do something, Taehyung growls and runs his hands up his chest and to his neck. For no real reason other than feeling offended after trying to help, Jimin gently growls back. This also causes a reaction, the boy’s eyes scrunch like he’s just looked at the sun, despite not opening them at all.

“Minnie?” Taehyung mumbles.

Jimin’s eyes widen and he grabs his cheeks again. “T-tae! Open your eyes, Taehyung, talk to me.”

Large hands scramble around Jimin’s own body, searching for stability from his mind. “My head hurts, Jimin,” Taehyung shakes his head slowly with his bottom lip bitten on and face screwed up.

“O-okay,” Jimin nods even if Taehyung can’t see the action and continues to stroke his hair to bring as much comfort to him as possible. “Then just focus on my voice alright? Tell me how you feel. What do you remember?”

“I - I’m aching… hurting,” he weakly tells him instead of answering Jimin’s question, but Jimin knows, he can feel it coming off him. “I wanna… be…”

“Do you wanna transform, Tae? I don't know if that’s okay though. I k-know I took o--”

He nods hurriedly and grasps harder at Jimin’s shirt, seeming to forget his headache to show his passion of the subject. “Wanna be a…”

“Taeh--”
“It’s - it’s like,” Taehyung pulls on Jimin’s shirt with a heavy sigh, “angry with me... I ne--”

“No, TaeTae,” Jimin hesitantly interrupts, making the boy groan loudly and impatiently. He pushes Taehyung’s sounds and emotions to the back of his mind so he can focus on getting as much information as he can on what happened and how might be the best way to help and prevent it. “Let’s not think about that right now. Tell me what you remember.”

His sigh is shaky, painful, and defeated, but he answers anyway with his eyes tightly closed and his fists now grasping around Jimin’s arms. “L-lunch...”

“Good. What happened?”

“Hyung... got it mad.”

“Keep going, Taehyung. You can’t just say a sentence.”


“Woke up?” Jimin frowns, wondering when exactly Taehyung lost control. Jimin had first stopped him when he was going after Hoseok, before he seemed to notice anyone else. What does he mean? “That’s it? You don’t remember talking to Hoseok-Hyung?”

“I do. I mean I ignored it - the wolf - for a bit when you...” he says with a huff of impatience. Taehyung’s words become rushed now while his eyes screw tighter to get them out, “It wanted me to get mad at you b-but you stopped it and so did someone else and then I--”

“Someone else stopped y--?”

“And then I got a bunch of m-memories from them and Minho-Hyung too and - and - and I just left. M-my head hurts, just trust me, please let me change!” Taehyung pleads. He sounds as if he’s stubbornly holding back against something and Jimin only grows more concerned as he notices a streak of wet down the side of his best friend’s face.

Taehyung pushes at Jimin’s chest, probably to move him off so he could undress himself and
transform on his own, but the force doesn’t last long because Taehyung’s breathing becomes labored and slows to something more exhausted. Jimin purses his lips and whines to himself at the prominent lack of physical strength his best friend is showing.

He gives in. “A-alright. I’ll even let you do it here so you don’t have to move much.” He stands up, “I’ll go in the bedroom--”

“No,” Taehyung says while blindly reaching out for his leg weakly.

“Wha--?”

“Can’t... Help me ta’e off my pan’s.”

Which isn’t really as uncomfortable as he thought it would be. Jimin efficiently unzips and unbuttons the top before struggling to take off his friend’s jeans all while Taehyung stays limp and still, as if all energy has left his body in a matter of moments. He doesn’t actually mind helping take off his best friend’s pants, socks, and shoes, as long as it helps his well being. Taehyung was just about crying in pain, so Jimin will do whatever he needs to help.

The moment Taehyung’s bottoms have detached from his body, Jimin stands back up to take his leave - until he hears a rough, “’min, p’ease...” that has him running a hand through his hair, wondering just how close Taehyung is to unconsciousness that he can barely move or speak. Taehyung makes out one last word concerning his attire and Jimin whines to himself when he returns to his side anyway. First, he takes a deep breath while shutting his eyes; then he quickly pulls the fabric down and chucks it at any wall before going for his room.

For a long moment, Jimin doesn’t hear anything after he’s shut his bedroom door, which he takes as a good sign of Taehyung getting some time to himself before probably caving in to the animal part of him. Then, faintly, he hears a bit rustling on the carpet, a familiar soft grind of something like rocks being twisted against each other, and an even quieter exhale that ends it all.

Deeming it safe to leave, Jimin comes out of his room to turn into their living room where his friend is. Jimin’s ears are laid back and his tail is between his legs; he’s afraid of how Taehyung might act in this form after going through such an aggressive fight with the wolf itself. But as he actually rounds the corner, Jimin relaxes when he sees the large animal laying quietly on the ground, a sight he hasn’t seen for far too long.
Tentatively, he tip toes to Taehyung’s head and kneels down next to him, tail flowing calmly now. He notices how the hybrid’s eyes are still closed and a brief flash if worry runs through him, even if he can’t feel any distress coming from the boy anymore. “Taehyung,” Jimin calls softly. “Taehyung, you need to give me a sign that you’re alright now. Are you feeling okay?”

With a huff, the head bigger than Jimin’s raises and leans into him only to lick a gross short streak of saliva on his chin. It makes Jimin smile nevertheless, but he still needs to know more. “Tae, what is it that you need now? Do you just need sleep?” Taehyung releases some sort of approving noise that makes Jimin smile again. “Alright. Are you sure you’re in control now?”

The response is a grunt and a heavy, furry head on Jimin’s lap. He takes it as a yes, allowing himself to pat at the head affectionately. Each time Taehyung would have a fainting slash panic attack episode, Jimin wouldn't see him until the day after. Though, he would thankfully be returned to his room early in the morning, where Jimin was always impatiently waiting for him. It isn’t until now that he realizes how tired Taehyung had been all those times after the episode, which was probably why the staff would set him on his bed before sunrise.

Even though Taehyung has never come back to Jimin as a wolf and he hadn’t thought it would help, Jimin still lets his best friend do what feels best for him now; besides, Taehyung had said to trust him. Before Taehyung falls asleep, Jimin briefly explains that he’s going to clean up and that the other shouldn’t move more than he has to.

After neatly folding Taehyung’s clothes - even his offending undergarment - Jimin decides to pass the time until Taehyung wakes up by laying on the floor beside him and watching a movie.

Of course, he’s worrying about Taehyung’s physical and mental health and can’t seem to focus on anything else. This is the first time Jimin has gone through one of these episodes with him, and he’s not entirely sure this is all that Taehyung needs to recover, he’s usually gone for at least four hours and he would think the staff did more than watch him sleep. Did he need to do some type of exercise with Taehyung? Make sure he knows his name, birth date, how to walk?

It’s interesting how quick everything is seems to be getting better. The only explanation Jimin can think of is that this isn’t an episode like the others years ago, this one is calmer and it means his best friend is getting better at dealing with the wolf inside him. Jimin turns to the wolf sleeping beside him and lets himself smile at the thought.

Unknowingly, Jimin had fallen asleep while watching the movie. The TV screen is now quietly replaying the menu with the soft theme music in the house’s silence. He only yawns, he’s seen it before countless times anyway. In the middle of stretching, Jimin suddenly realizes that what had woken him up was the front door bell ringing.
It rings again, causing him to spring from the floor to answer it.

What he also notices is the form beside him, a very naked wolf hybrid in human form sleeping peacefully on his side, dyed hair sticking out in every which way. Jimin yelps and covers his eyes from seeing any more than what he’s comfortable with. Briefly, he wonders exactly when Taehyung had transformed back into his human form.

Two more impatient rings at the doorbell encourage Jimin to stop worrying about Taehyung and stand up. Before opening the door, he looks back to see if Taehyung’s naked body is visible, thankfully not. He then opens it to reveal three familiar and concerned faces, Minho, Hoseok, and Jungkook.

They all release a breath when Jimin opens the door. “Geez, what took you so long?” Jungkook questions impatiently while rolling his eyes, it earns him a slap on the arm from Hoseok but Jimin doesn’t mind, he can feel the anxiety coming off of them all.

“S-sorry, I fell asleep,” Jimin rubs at the sleep in his grey eyes.

A small smile tugs at Jungkook’s lips as he perks up and says, “So he’s alright?”

Jimin leans against the door frame and taps at his cheek, “I think so. I’ve never really dealt with this before though. I just did what he told me - when he could speak.”

Hoseok nods and takes a step forward with an eyebrow raised, “So can we come in or?”

“What? Oh! Yeah!” The moment the word leaves his mouth however, he’s reminded of Taehyung’s… lack of clothes. So he quickly put himself in front of Jungkook before he can walk any further. “Wait! No! I mean no! You can’t.”

“Why not?” Minho asks, concern laced in his deep voice.

Jimin looks back, making sure once more that Taehyung cannot be seen. The hybrids aren’t exactly prudes, nor are they nudists, but they’re taught to be comfortable with their bodies enough to make the occasional slip up where one would show more skin than is appropriate with anyone else. Jimin
has seen Taehyung naked many times and vis-versa, and they’ve even seen other hybrids naked too. However, humans seem to like their privacy and seeing Taehyung naked for longer than what it takes for Jimin to cover him up may be too much for them.

“He’s, uhh… how do I say this?”

“W-what’s wrong?” Jungkook’s eyes widen in both fear and… anger? Impatience. “Why can’t we see him?”

“Don’t worry!” Jimin quickly tells him to eliminate any incorrect quick thinking. “He’s fine. He’s just… sleeping.” The others frown in confusion, making Jimin sigh. “He’s not… wearing clothes… at the moment.”

“Oh…”

“At all,” Jimin blushes, then smiles sweetly in a way that makes his eyes disappear. “Can you stay out here for a minute? Thank you.”

He closes the door before any of them can answer. Walking back into the living room, he grabs a small quilt from near the door with him as he comes closer to his friend, who he finds hasn’t moved a muscle. Jimin wonders if that’s good or bad.

With a nudge, Jimin covers Taehyung from the hips down as he speaks to him, “Taehyung, I’m gonna need you to get something on. Pants, underwear, it doesn’t matter.”

The boy’s response is no more than the sound of a weak groan, but it helps Jimin to know he’s a little conscious. He pushes again at Taehyung’s side with more force, “Tae, say something.”

“Uhhgn… tired….”

“But we have visitors,” Jimin tells him with a sigh. “Minho-Hyung, Hoseok-Hyung, and Jungkookie.”

“Ahhhuunng…”
It isn’t a word, but Jimin gets the hint that Taehyung doesn’t care and still just wants to sleep. So he groans himself and crosses his arms, “Fine! You don’t have to get any clothes on but you have to sleep in your bed.”

There’s a beat of silence. Then a quiet, “Carry me…”

Another sigh, “Fine.” Jimin readjusts the quilt so it won’t fall during the trek, then swiftly gathers the boy in his arms while coming to a standing position, staggering a bit at the weight he must carry so soon after waking up. Taehyung doesn’t seem to care he’s naked, only letting himself fall pliant in Jimin arms as he’s taken to his bed.

With difficulty, Jimin pulls the black and white striped blanket out from under Taehyung then over the quilt, up to the middle of the chest. The boy hums contently, muttering a small, “Thanks, Minnie,” before going completely still, not like he was moving much to begin with.

Jimin purses his lips and gently scratches Taehyung’s head. He still doesn’t really know what Taehyung needs, but he’ll do whatever he asks to help, even it means completely undressing him and carrying him bare across their home, possibly touching something he never wants to think about again. It’s really the least he can do for his best friend who’s been trying his best his whole life to protect himself and the ones he loves.

When he finally lets the other three inside, they’re impatient to know where Taehyung is now and what took so long to get him dressed. He tells them to make themselves at home and sit first, and when they do, he says calmly, “He’s fine. He’s in his room now.”

“So he’s up?” Jungkook questions. “Why can’t we see him?”

Jimin shakes his head sadly, “He hasn’t really been up since we brought him here. Even then it was for two minutes.” Everyone slumps slightly into the cushions and their faces fall. “B-but I don’t think he’ll mind you seeing him. Well - he’s not awake so it’s not too fun.”

A small quirk of Jungkook’s lips returns but he doesn’t make a move to continue the conversation, so Jimin turns his attention to Minho and Hoseok, who are just as concerned as the younger, “He’s fine. Really.”

The two don’t smile especially widely, but they do nod appreciatively and relax noticeably.
Hoseok crosses his arms curiously and asks, “What happened though? Jungkook and I weren’t here.”

Minho agrees with a short nod, looking between Jungkook and Jimin now. “Hoseok, Jonghyun, and I only came in when he was mad. And please tell us what happened when Jonghyun dropped you off.”

The humans stare at Jimin expectantly, but he doesn’t necessarily want to talk about everything. He’s tired too, from carrying Taehyung across the school campus, their yard, their home, dealing with onlookers, stressing about what he should do and what triggered it. Of course, he had a long hour and a half nap, but he then had to strategically carry a naked and uncooperative Taehyung to his room, which drained him.

However, Jimin still decides to tell them. He sits cross legged in front of the couch, much like when he and Taehyung had spoken to the other five about the wolf. He starts with that.

Calmly, Jimin begins to explain how Taehyung had pretty quickly and painlessly been taken over by the wolf’s conscious, that the absence of Hoseok first triggered the animal to have some kind of freak out. Then Taehyung had directed his words to Jimin, speaking in the wolf’s morals; he doesn’t tell specifically what Taehyung was saying to him, only that even though Taehyung probably didn't understand what he said, it still hurt Jimin.

That was when the humans saw him acting out of control. He tells them how Jimin himself has always been something that brings Taehyung back to reality, but he had told him there was someone else who did the same. They ask who it was, but not even Jimin knows. Once Taehyung went unconscious for still wholly unknown reasons, they took him home.

Now, Jimin describes the short amount of time Taehyung was awake, how he said his head hurt and his eyes couldn’t open. Then how he made sure Taehyung remembered what happened before he went out again. Hesitantly, Jimin tells them that Taehyung had to transform for a bit, which barely lasted two hours before Jimin woke up to see the boy naked. He says he wrapped him in a quilt and put him to bed, where he’s was lying now.

The humans sigh when Jimin finishes. Minho smiles at Jimin dazzlingly, “Thank you for telling us. You don’t know how worried everyone was, and still are.”

“It was really chaotic,” Hoseok nods quickly and tells Jimin, “Once you guys left, everyone was talking.”
“A-about what?” Jimin asks uncertainly. “Who was talking?”

“Pretty much every kid saw you guys walking down the hall, some of them even overheard your conversation with Mr. Ahn. Then rumors started to spread like wildfire.”

“Like?” he asks tentatively, wondering if he really wants to know what kinds of rumors teenage boys made up.

“Like of how he fainted. Some sexual stuff, but also about it being from bullying, or some kind of mess up and he failed as a hybrid or something. That was the most accurate I would guess though.”

Jungkook adds, “Kids were also asking the six of us. They thought we would know. But we didn't say anything… We thought it would be better for Taehyung to explain when he comes back to school. I mean… he will right?”

Jimin nods quickly, “Of course. I just don’t know how long he’s gonna be asleep for now.”

“Okay,” Jungkook nods as well, though still looks concerned.

There’s a small silence, then Hoseok speaks up, “I think we should go now. We can tell the others what’s up and we’ll leave you to take care of him.”

They stand, but Jungkook does so slowly, “I wanna stay, hyung.”

“Stay?”

He looks at Jimin with big eyes and Jimin can’t tell if they’re hard or soft. “I want to wait until Tae wakes up. I c-can, right?”

Hoseok turns to Jimin for confirmation too, who shrugs, “Yeah, that’s fine. It might be a pretty long time though.”
“I don’t care.”

Hoseok pats Jungkook on the shoulder and moves past him with Minho in front. Minho looks back at Jimin once more.

“Call if you need anything.”
At first, Jimin was hesitant to let Jungkook into Taehyung’s room. There was no real reason to let him go either, other than he doesn’t know why Jungkook is so on edge even though he’s already told him enough times that Taehyung is completely fine.

But the more he’s forced to tell him that, the more Jimin begins doubting himself. Maybe Jungkook has a good reason to stay concerned for so long and he should do the same. Self-doubt and the human’s unnervingly high heart rate convinces him to let him in. Seriously, Jimin shouldn’t be able to feel the worry on him from this distance.

So barely an hour after the others have left, Jimin takes the lead and keeps his ears and tail down as if it would help to not disturb Taehyung too much. He opens the door slowly before creeping in with Jungkook in tow. Once he quietly shuts the door again, Jimin nudges the boy closer to Taehyung’s bed instead of letting him stare from the door.

Flustered, Jungkook jumps slightly but goes to kneel at the side of the bed where Taehyung’s head is. Since Jimin put him there, Taehyung has curled into a fetal position with the blanket pulled up enough to cover his face, his vanilla hair standing out against the sheets’ black and white theme - the wolf hybrid chose it so Jimin could see it better in his world of yellow and blue.

Jimin seats himself on the part of Taehyung’s mattress he isn’t using and notices the also lonely expression on the human as he looks at the place where Taehyung’s face disappears. Jimin rubs his shoulder, “He’s fine.”

“I know…” Jungkook mumbles, not taking his eyes away from Taehyung. “I’m just worried about how he’ll do tomorrow at school… Everyone’s gonna be on him.”

Jimin sighs and looks down, he hasn’t thought about that. As much as Taehyung loves to flaunt his colorful personality, he hates most unnecessary attention. Taehyung has always been a little shy and flustered when put on the spot, which means he might have a hard time when he goes back to
school after almost everyone’s seen him unconscious.

He frowns and runs a hand through Taehyung’s hair, scratching his scalp and gently massaging his soft chocolate ears for a few silent minutes. Suddenly, they hear a deep hum that comes from the blankets, making the two hold their breath. Jimin rakes his fingers through the yellow locks again, hoping to elicit another response from his best friend.

They get one when Taehyung exhales lowly and his head emerges from the blanket as he stretches his legs from beneath himself. Though he’s squinting, Taehyung finds Jimin’s grey eyes. “Jimin?” His deep voice breaks the tense air.

“Yeah,” Jimin releases his breath before smiling, not noticing Jungkook’s scowl. “How do you feel?”

“Mmm, fine. Normal I guess, all that good stuff.” Taehyung yawns slowly and just barely opens his eyes. “I gotta tell you something, Jiminnie.”

Jimin’s head tilts to the the side, his ears perked as he wonders what else he can do, “What is it?”

Before Taehyung tells him though, he tiredly sits up to face Jimin eye to eye. Then he smiles lazily and leans in to push his forehead against his, grabbing him strongly by the neck. Taehyung says through his smile, “You’re the best friend I’ve ever had.” Jimin scoffs and rolls his eyes. Taehyung chuckles, a childlike sound despite the depth of his words, “I’m serious, Jimin. Thank you for taking care of me. I… know I didn’t cooperate and I seemed really lazy but,” he looks into his eyes with sincerity, “I actually couldn’t do anything. You did so well helping me, Jimin. Thank you.”

“I’m not exactly a hybrid doctor now though because all I had to do was drag your dead ass to bed,” Jimin tells him playfully, a larger smile breaking out on his face. Though he can’t see his best friend’s reaction well this close, he knows he’s smiling cheekily at his words. “I’m glad I’m finally getting the recognition I deserve after doing that for years.”

Taehyung pushes him away, laughing and shaking his head, “Here I am, actually trying to be serious.”

They laugh together. “But thanks,” Jimin mutters, then punches his arm lightly, “Punk.”
“Hey, Taehyung?” a small but stern voice perks up, stealing the attention.

Taehyung whips his head to his right, an even larger box smile gracing his face now as he notices the human still kneeling on the floor for the first time. “Jungkookie!” Taehyung just about yells, quickly reaching out to hug him like a toddler seeing a puppy.

Jimin notices the way Jungkook’s emotions are a mix of irritation and guilt, how he almost backs away completely from Taehyung’s arms. Jungkook lets the hybrid bring him into a hug, but keeps a concerned look on. Taehyung sees it and moves back enough to give them room to talk and let him touch Jungkook’s ears. He frowns in something like shame, “What’s wrong? I’m fine now. I - I’m sorry if I made you worried. All of you.”

Jungkook’s eyebrows crease and he shakes his head, earrings never moving between the hybrid’s fiddling fingers, “No, it’s not that - I mean it is and we’re all really glad you’re okay but…”

“But?” Taehyung asks worriedly. Jimin watches the human curiously with his best friend, wondering what else could be on his mind that’s making him so uneasy and unpredictable.

“But what are…” he pushes Taehyung’s hand off and slowly moves the blanket away from the hybrid’s body. Taehyung immediately recovers himself, as he is still naked, but Jungkook stares at him sternly with a small scowl and makes a point to only uncover his thigh. Without breaking eye contact, he speaks rather calmly, “these.”

Confused, Taehyung looks down, only then understanding what the human is referring to and chuckling nervously, “Nothing, Jungkookie. They’re old.”

He tries to cover the tip of the Scar Iceberg with his blankets but Jungkook is stubborn. He grabs him by the wrist to stop him from moving. “No,” he says. “How old.”

The tone is edging on the line between a question and a command. It has Taehyung's face falling and he begins to beg quickly and quietly, “Don’t worry about it, please. They’re really old. I - I got them when I was a kid.”

“Don’t lie to me, Tae,” Jungkook’s even voice borders on threatening, causing the wolf hybrid to pout with his ears flat. Jungkook’s lips purse and he looks irritated but Jimin can’t detect the emotion, only slowly rising anger and the ever present concern.
Jimin decides to step in anyway to keep anything from being lashed out at Taehyung in his vulnerable state. “It’s fine, Jungkook. He’s had them for y-years.”

Jungkook directs his hard gaze on Jimin, long past letting go of Taehyung’s wrist and now restlessly tapping his fingers on the bed. “When.” He questions, not yet showing his anger but leaving his words clipped. “How did he get them.”

“It - it’s not really your place to know,” Jimin tries to be assertive to the human, but he knows he’s failing, always had at that. “He got them w-when he was young and that’s it. I didn’t even know him.”

“It’s hard to lie when your eyes are like that, Jimin. I can see them change. What actually happened?”

Jimin glances worriedly at Taehyung, whose eyes are glassy. He can already feel the rising heartbeat, the heavier breathing. Feeling like he has to nip the argument at the bud, Jimin quickly takes Jungkook’s face in his hands before he can stop himself, “Nothing happened, Jungkook. Please stop.”

He shakes his head away with a glare of something like disbelief, obviously not buying into his words and done messing around. Jungkook looks directly at Taehyung again, who has his head down and ears back, holding his tail in his hands with his thigh still uncovered in the criss-cross position he’s sitting in. “Taehyung,” he says simply, almost condescending. “Where did you get them?”

The wolf hybrid whines low in his throat, but it’s heard clearly in the silent bedroom. Jimin quickly puts hand on Taehyung’s exposed knee for comfort, indirectly telling him he doesn’t have to answer.

“Taehyung.” Jungkook raises his voice now from low urging to a clear command. He backs away from Taehyung’s bed to cross his arms with a look of disappointment. It has Jimin narrowing his eyes, wondering what he might be up to. “Scars from falling off a tree when you’re five look different than scars from metal like knives and ra--”

“He didn’t do it to himself!” Jimin quickly counters angrily to stop Jungkook from going any further. He was allowing Jungkook to have this dispute with Taehyung and not interfering because the argument is not directly about him but the human has drifted too far. Taehyung is allowed to deal with Jungkook’s words how he wants, but Jimin will not tolerate Jungkook accusing Taehyung of harming himself.
“Then what?” Jungkook shrugs impatiently, tense muscles showing the veins of his neck, a general side of Jungkook Jimin has rarely seen. “Someone else did?”

Jimin’s grip on his friend tightens and he leans in to Jungkook’s spot on the ground to look at him directly with anger. “He doesn’t want to talk about it.” His dark pupils sharpen and follow the human’s every move, from his steady eyes to his pursed lips.

Jungkook sees Taehyung’s shaking state and unlike Jimin would think, it only makes the human more irritated. He huffs and scowls and says, “Why the fuck would someone do that? Hurt someone else like that.”

Taehyung’s breath hitches and Jimin stutters with restless eyes, “I - I…” Jungkook continues to steadily glare to get an answer, which only makes Jimin want to say anything to end the conversation. “I don’t know either.”

“You’re lying, Jimin.” He replies quickly. “You’re hiding it.”

“J-Jungkookie please,” Taehyung says out through tears, bringing the attention to himself once again. “Don’t r-remind me about it.”

“T-Taehyung I’m just worried,” Jungkook tries to explain; but his voice can’t stay soft and keeps an underlying frustration that contradicts his pleading expression. “I want to know you’re safe but now you’re telling me some asshole hurt you?”

Taehyung suddenly sobs out loudly now, shaking his head quickly, “Don’t c-call him that!”

“Well what happened?” The only response is another wail, so Jungkook huffs and kneels closer to the front of the bed at Taehyung’s side. With a eerily neutral voice and expression, he touches one of the thin silver streaks visible, “Was it that much of a traumatic experience where you defend him but still hate the memories?”

Taehyung flinches at the cold finger dragging its way from the outer side of his thigh down to the point where his leg meets the mattress and the silver scar disappears from sight. Both hybrids are so thankful Jungkook can see some of the only ones that came out that far.
Jimin, who doesn’t know what he should do in the silence, speaks up quietly when noticing that Jungkook has calmed down enough to let someone explain just a bit. “It... happened almost two years ago. It was a terrible time for him. I would think you could respect that, Jungkook. That he doesn’t want to remember it.”

An almost dirty look is shot at him before Jungkook is sighing at Taehyung’s trembling form. He somehow seems more hostile now that he isn’t outwardly scowling. “You said you were young. That you guys didn't even meet… You’re lying about a lot. I was worried you hurt yourself, Tae. But I don’t know if it’s worse when you’re defending some fucker who--”

Taehyung suddenly growls out a weird sound through his tears that actually frightens all three of them. He turns his face to the wall as he takes deep, calming breaths. It’s quiet for a bit. Then he mutters, “I… I don’t want to think about it, Jungkook. A-and I don’t want you talking about him like that. He… he didn’t do wrong. It was--”


Another growl, this time with Taehyung looking straight at Jungkook with a threatened expression. They maintain the eye contact as Taehyung continues speaking. “Talking about this brings up something inside me that I can’t fight again. I - I can’t tell which thoughts are my own. Please stop bringing it up.” Near the end, Taehyung’s voice wavers and his expression softens.

Jungkook scowls yet again in irritation, “Fine.” He stiffly stands and makes to leave. “Just get dressed.”

The door closes, leaving the two stressed hybrids alone. Jimin immediately brings his best friend in for an embrace, rubbing his back and massaging his shoulders to give as much assurance as he can. “It’s okay,” he tells him even if he doesn’t exactly believe that himself. “You did the right thing though. Don’t think about it and get dressed. You can go yell at him when you’re ready.”

When Jimin pulls back, he sees how Taehyung’s eyes reflect his guilt from growling at Jungkook. Jimin can only frown, not knowing what else to do but accept the short nod. As he’s walking out, he looks back once more to make sure Taehyung is alright. It doesn’t really look like it.

The moment Jimin catches sight of the human, he clenches his fists and catches up to him angrily while his tail is lowering to point at the ground. Jungkook stands to level him, his lips in a firm line of determination and eyes steady on Jimin’s sharpened ones. Jimin takes a good moment to stare at him as his tail vibrates with frustration. He can’t believe the very first friend the hybrids had made would so easily speak to them like this, accuse them and dismiss their own decisions. Jimin told
Jungkook not to talk about it, Taehyung had too, but he just had to prod.

“Would you mind telling me what your point is? Why do you continue to push on an obviously sensitive point in his life?”

“It just doesn’t make sense why he would protect the guy who put him through pain that,” Jungkook surprisingly explains clearly. He thankfully doesn’t seem to be as aggressive as Jimin now that he isn’t in the same room as the heart of the problem.

“It doesn’t matter why he wants to defend him, Jungkook!” Jimin stresses anyway. “Taehyung went through a terrible time! And continuing to ask - no, demand information about it is not something you do. He can’t get over it, and I don’t think he ever will.”

“Well what was it?” Jungkook throws his hands in the air as he tries to look for answers. “I’d be more understanding if I knew. And if it’s so bad why don’t we see him suffering from some kind of PTSD? I’m not even sure it was traumatic.”

Jimin growls in irritation and steps closer to the human. “PTSD or not, it changed his life and the way he deals with it is by shutting it out completely! He doesn’t want to talk about that point in his life. He doesn’t even want to remember it.”

Jungkook rolls his eyes and his annoyance spikes and so does Jimin’s hostility. “You keep saying that! Why doesn’t he want to? I ju--”

“It doesn’t matter, Jungkook! If you can’t respect him, I will personally make sure you never talk to him again.”

“That’s crap,” Jungkook counters with a scoff. “You can’t keep people away like that. He’s just as much my friend as he is yours.”

Jimin snaps. More like, slaps. Specifically Jungkook’s face. He backhands the human with as much power he can muster. Jungkook is still facing down when Jimin sneers,

“I dare you to say that again. Say you’ve been through as much as I have caring for him. That you’ve been there when he’s sick, when he’s sad, when he’s not even himself. Say you’ve been with him since you were born because you both were pretty much mistakes. Tell me how much
you suffered each time the closest thing you had to family was ripped away from you. Say you’ve been through almost killing each other, but staying because you’re each the only person who cares for the other.”

Jungkook keeps his head down to where Jimin can’t see his expression. But Jimin has known him long enough to feel that he’s startled, insecure, and guilty. A complete opposite of what he was feeling earlier, aggression and disapproval.

The human takes a moment before whispering, “I’m sorry. I… I didn’t mean it like that. I just… don’t know how to deal with people not - I don’t know... not s-standing up for themselves?” Jungkook flinches when he says this. But Jimin doesn’t make a move, so he continues, “I would be so mad if someone hurt me like that and I would have to keep the marks of being the victim of that. I just don’t know why someone wouldn’t get furious when they’re reminded of it.”

Jimin takes a shaky breath to relax himself as he speaks relatively calmly in response to the sudden confession. He’s not necessarily sure what to make of it right now. “I’m not going to say it’s okay because it’s not. You can’t ever bring it up again. A-and never compare yourself to me.”

He nods slowly in understanding before speaking again. “Do I st-still get to see him? I swear I won’t do it again.”

Jimin purses his lips for just a moment of contemplation. He wasn’t sure how he would have stopped the human from doing what he wanted, but he was going to try his best anyway. Now that things have cooled down, he allows himself to drop it. “I guess you can.”

Just then, Taehyung tip toes in, clad in his dark brown and black checkered pajama pants and a hole ridden white long sleeve. Jimin had heard him come out of his room earlier and stay close enough to listen but it isn’t until now that they turn to him as he says in his deep, broken voice, “I was gonna yell at him for saying the same thing but I guess I don’t have to now that you slapped him.”

Jimin only shrugs and moves out of the way for Jungkook to address the other hybrid better. He’s looking at the wolf in remorse. “I’m so sorry, Taehyung,” he says with sincerity both hybrids are sure to feel. “I-I let my anger get the better of me and I pushed you to tell about something personal. I - I’m so - will you forgive me?”

A small smile quirks the corner of Taehyung’s lips but he remains blank otherwise, “As long as you promise to never do it again.”
“Of course, Tae.”

“Then maybe I’ll tell you about it someday.” Taehyung then sighs deeply and looks at Jimin’s shining eyes. “But I think you should go now, Jungkook. We’ll see you tomorrow.”

For a moment Jungkook seems disbelieving, maybe a little betrayed. But he quickly closes his mouth and nods in agreement before walking himself out the door silently.

Jimin gives a proud smile to Taehyung, “You did the right thing. He can’t go thinking he can just demand answers.”

Taehyung purses his lips contemplatively, still looking where Jungkook disappeared as he nods for confirmation. “Do you think he has a ride home?”

Jimin’s eyes widen for a bit, then he relaxes himself. “Of course. His mom seems like a woman who would drop everything to pick him up right away.”

“O-okay, good.”

“Now let’s stop talking about Jungkook,” Jimin pulls Taehyung over to their couch where they can sit comfortably. “Let’s watch some TV.”

The hybrid lets himself be seated on the couch, accepting the remote Jimin hands to him. Then, he pouts up at Jimin. “You know what’s weird?”

“Hmm?”

“You were the one who just told me not to hit back but here you are, bitch slapping humans.”

Jimin blushed at this, “It was for a good cause.”
“I guess it was,” he shrugs and hugs a pillow tightly. They sit quietly for a bit, waiting for Taehyung to speak or turn on the television. It takes a moment, but he continues, “Do you know what else is weird?”

“What?”

Taehyung looks at his friend in confusion. “I can’t get his smell out of my head. I think I recognize it.”

Jimin tilts his head. “What do you mean? We’ve known them for more than a month.”

“I mean I recognize it from earlier today. While I was out of it… I think I smelled him.”

“Well he was the only one other than Mr. Ahn that touched you,” Jimin explains. “He helped me try to calm you down. But when you went unconscious I held you myself.”

Taehyung thinks deeply on this, his face contorted into one of concentration. Then, like a switch, his eyes widen, “It was him!”

“Who?”

“Jungkook!”

“I know but what did he do?”

“He was the other person that stopped me!” Taehyung seems to be disbelieving such a thing could happen. In shock, he continues to explain what he remembers, “Other than you, he’s the one who made it go down. I told you that earlier.”

“How weird,” Jimin’s response is more calm as he thinks about the information for a moment as well. “What if your wolf got used to him from being so close to him on Saturday? You two were laying together and he took care of you. Maybe it’s starting to see him like me since Yoongi-Hyung didn’t interact with your wolf that day.”
He nods, almost amazed, “That’s really cool. It’s good I know someone else who can calm me down.”

Jimin smiles widely and ruffles Taehyung’s hair in agreement.

They stay silent, deciding to just sit together for a good half hour before Taehyung speaks up again quietly, “Hey, Jiminnie?”

“Yeah?”

“I… remember what I said to you. Just a little of it,” he mumbles insecurely.

“Oh… I doesn’t matter. It wasn’t you,” Jimin assures him.

Taehyung makes a disapproving sound, “It makes my tongue loose. I say things without a care.” Jimin stays quiet, unsure what to think of this. “When… when I said there are people I worry about more than you. I meant it. But not in a bad way.”

“I-it’s fine, Taehy--”

“No. You should know.”

“… Okay.”

“At the time… I saw everyone in danger. I needed to help them all but I… I just wasn’t strong enough. I had to help Hoseok-Hyung and keep the others safe, but I wasn’t enough to do both. So when I told you to go on your own because I needed to protect the rest, I remember thinking of it as you being just as strong as me. You’re so strong, Jimin, that I trusted you to get Hoseok-Hyung back with both of you in one piece. But I see now that you didn’t see it that way.

“You told me the others were strong too. You said ‘Jungkook, not so much,’” he laughs tiredly. “And I said, ‘I agree.’ I needed you to go and get Hoseok-Hyung because I needed to protect
Jungkook - the one I saw as the weakest at the time. But I guess he proved me wrong an hour ago. My point is: you’re so strong, Jimin… Thank you for helping me.”

“Of course, Tae… I’ll always help you.”

“L-let’s not talk about this anymore, okay?” Taehyung quickly tries to change the subject, not wanting to talk about himself. “Tell me about other stuff.”

The rest of the day goes by without another mention of Jungkook. For a moment they touch the subject, but only when Taehyung realizes Jimin said Mr. Ahn touched him, which threw Jimin into an over-exaggerated but very thorough summary of what the encounter consisted of.

When Jimin got to the part where Mr. Ahn revealed his hybrids had heats and he was checking Taehyung for one, Taehyung just about gagged and announced he needed to wash with bleach. They laughed until they realized that they go to school with a totally perverted but weirdly handsome and wealthy man.

They went to bed smiling that night. Then Jimin gets a text that makes it slip right off.

[ little studio apartment (2) ]

Puppy Tae
> hey you know i’m sorry right
> about the thing
> you know?

You
> i know tae
> and i know you’re sorry

Puppy Tae
> i never meant to do that jimin
> or leave you in the first place

You

> i know taehyung dont worry about it
> but it wasn’t your fault and i had no choice

Puppy Tae

> i should have known better and given you a choice.
> i’m so sorry for leaving you
> and for so long

You

> but we’re here now and that’s what’s important. we didn’t lose each other

Puppy Tae

> i guess

You

> don’t worry about it anymore and just go back to sleep ok?

Puppy Tae

> ok. you do too
> and remember i’m sorry
> good night

You

> I always do. good night tae
As suspected, the moment the hybrids walk through the school doors, everyone as far as the eye can see slow to a stop in their conversations to watch as they shuffle down the hall with their six friends. For the most part, Jimin frowns and plays with his rings absently while Taehyung keeps his head down through the embarrassing silence.

Taehyung grows annoyed with the hesitant stares, so he huffs and stops walking in the middle of the hall, making the everyone around him stop do the same in confusion. He only throws his arms in the air and yells, “Gather around!”

It really doesn’t take much time for boys to form a large circle around the smaller one of Jimin and the humans. The students and Taehyung’s friends have on expressions of interest and confusion.

“I AM OKAY!” is all Taehyung screams before immediately turning around and making his way through the shocked crowd as if he hadn’t just yelled at everyone.

Namjoon quickly addresses the disappointed crowd with his inside voice, “I apologize for him.” When he and others catch up with Taehyung, Namjoon clasps his shoulder and pulls him close, “That was really lame.”

Taehyung merely shrugs. “Humans are annoying.”

This makes Hoseok behind them gasp and grab at his heart with fake bewilderment. “I am hurt.”

Hoseok’s display has Minho ruffling his hair and Taehyung giving a boxed smile over his shoulder to the older humans, “Not you hyungs.”

Hoseok smiles back and pinches his cheek affectionately. Seokjin speaks teasingly without knowing what his words mean, “Just the hyungs? What about your friend Jungkook?”

Jimin sees the way Jungkook slightly tenses and puts his head down to avoid any attention or participation in the conversation. Taehyung blanks his face and turns away from the boy without much more than a muttered, “He’s alright.”

His silence after is quickly made awkward, even more when Yoongi casually brings Jungkook to his side by a hand on his shoulder and continues the topic with furrowed brows, “What’s wrong though? Hobi said you stayed for a bit yesterday but now you’re not acting the same.”

Jimin follows his friend and doesn’t look at Jungkook either, continuing to walk quietly between Taehyung and the curious Senior. Jungkook crossed a line in the friendship they’ve created and he doesn’t think he can stand the boy right now, especially since he’s making his best friend so
unresponsive. He doesn't have to look up to know Jungkook is trying to take Yoongi’s hands off him as he mumbles stubbornly, “I’m fine.”

“No. You’re not,” he says dismissively in a way that shows he’s not going to buy anything the boy says until he hears the truth.

“Hyung, I’m fine,” Jungkook raises his voice to one more noticeable and irritated.

“What’s this?”

“Noth--”

“You have a bruise on your cheekbone.”

At this, Jimin’s ears fall flat and he moves closer to Taehyung to make sure he isn’t associated with the find. Luckily, Jungkook doesn’t tell the truth and keeps his tone sharp when responding, “I fell off my bed last night. It happens.”

“I--”

Jimin tugs on the bottom of Yoongi’s shirt to keep him from saying anymore. He seems to understand the message and even shrugs his arm of Jungkook with a dissatisfied grunt. Jimin had probably just made Yoongi more annoyed with him now, maybe also letting on he might have something to do with Jungkook’s suspicious bruise.

The air between the six humans and two hybrids is tense after Taehyung’s obvious distress with their youngest friend and Yoongi and Jungkook’s curt argument. The feeling is more than Jimin is comfortable with, so he slows his walking and pulls on Taehyung’s arm.

“Tae, can I talk to you alone?” he asks him rather innocently.

Taehyung doesn’t seem to understand until he actually locks eyes with Jimin’s pleading ones. “Yeah, of course,” Taehyung plays along and lets himself be lead away, looking back just once to see their friends understanding that they won’t be seeing them again anytime soon. The two are not questioned and are able to go down the nearly empty hall in peace.

Other students loitering around quietly are the same as the rest of the school, wanting to know how Taehyung is doing and what had happened earlier. Instead of just ignoring them as he has been doing, Jimin encourages Taehyung to answer their questions and concerns under the reason that they’re going to tell other people anyway, so it’s better to have them spread the truth.

Taehyung isn’t really up for the idea of talking about what he went through with strangers, but the questions he’s asked are obviously vague and not meant to be intruding, so he answers them as he pleases.

“How long were you out?”

“It was on and off. The longest time was almost two hours.”

“Did you feel it coming on?”

“A little, I felt some pressure in my head.”

After speaking with a small group of students, they are left with about ten more minutes before the bell rings and they have to walk to the other side of the building for their first class. They really
have no reason to be over here in the Seniors’ hall. Upon reaching the end of it, the two decide to just squat in the corner.

After sitting in a comfortable silence for some time, Jimin speaks up quietly, “So are we ever gonna forgive Jungkook?”

Taehyung’s mood goes from calm to irritated instantly and he shrugs stubbornly with a hard frown.

“Well we can’t just ignore him,” Jimin faces his best friend, who purposely doesn’t meet his eyes. “The least we can do is just apologize.”

“I’m not apologizing for shit.”

Jimin sighs at this because Taehyung himself really didn’t do anything wrong. He clasps his hands together self-consciously, “I guess. I was the one who slapped him.”

“Bitch slapped,” Taehyung reminds with a small smile.

“Yeah,” he chuckles at the term, then shakes his head to get back to the matter at hand, “Anyway… I’ll stay mad at him as long you do. He had no right to push your buttons like that. As long as it still affects you, I’ll be by your side.”

“You don’t have to do that, Jimin,” Taehyung looks at him with guilt and affection. “When you get over it, get over it. Tell him you're sorry then treat him like normal. I... just don’t want to talk to him for a while.”

Jimin nods shortly to show he will do as he said, but it’s with uncertain pursed lips. “What should we do about the hyungs?” he asks now.

Again, Taehyung only shrugs and turns away, “Tell them nothing bad happened.”

“But something bad did happen. And on top of that, he yelled at you.”

“Then I don’t know, Jiminnie,” Taehyung frowns defeatedly at the thought of their friends dealing with the three’s argument. Jimin and Taehyung don’t want to drag their other friends in this nor do they want them to worry so much when it doesn’t affect them.

Jimin sighs again in the same defeated tone and leans in to ruffle his hair, “I guess we should just do nothing. Don’t tell them anything and we’ll fix it with Jungkook on the side.”

He nods slowly at the words with Jimin’s hands still in his hair, making Jimin scratch his head and eventually behind his ears while Taehyung closes his eyes. He hums contently as they sit there like that, forgetting for a little while that they’re surrounded by a new, confusing environment.

However, all good things must come to an end and they startle apart when the door closest to them opens loudly. The man who exits the room is none other than Mr. Ahn as Jimin and Taehyung belatedly realize the room number they’re seated by is 69, a Senior class.

Mr. Ahn doesn’t notice the hybrids, only lets the door close as he stands there and scribbles something important on his clipboard. They hold their breath only a meter away to stay undetected. Unfortunately, they don’t stay hidden for long before Taehyung sneezes loudly in the long, quiet hallway. The sound almost resembles an older man’s sneeze mixed with the strength of an elephant’s trumpet as it lowly vibrates through the empty hall. Jimin has grown used to it by now but no one else really has, especially not Mr. Ahn.
When the man doesn’t do as most people would, which is jump and look around fearfully, Jimin’s confusion spikes. Mr. Ahn instead only furrows his sculpted black eyebrows and turns in the direction of the noise calmly, where Jimin is patting Taehyung’s back with slight concern and blessing him.

It seems as if Mr. Ahn had been around loud enough noise like gunfire to not be surprised by a regular dad sneeze, Jimin mused by himself, entertaining the sudden idea that this teacher is a part of the mafia. The amused smile quickly fades because that connection would actually explain a lot about this man.

“Oh,” Mr. Ahn brings the attention to himself as he approaches the two sitting on the tile ground in the corner of two walls. He speaks carefully, a slight downward pull at the edges of his lips, “Taehyung, are you alright?”

Both boys look up in surprise. Jimin stares at the man’s body and Taehyung’s wide eyes lock onto the dark almond ones. “Y-yes, I’m - I’m fine, thank you.”

His concern doesn’t waver as Mr. Ahn squats down with strong thighs that noticeably strain against the fabric of his slim fitting black suit. The tightness brings attention to the shape and curve of the man’s equally well built lower body, which Jimin can’t seem to look away from. No matter how perverted and mysterious this teacher may be, Jimin would be lying if he didn’t appreciate his lean figure. He is suddenly thankful to be farsighted rather than nearsighted, to be able to see him relatively well most of the time.

“Are you sure you don’t have a fever, Taehyung?” Much like the day before, Mr. Ahn moves a hand near Taehyung’s face to check for a high temperature.

The wolf hybrid keeps his face of astonishment on and his ears to attention as he sits like a deer in headlights. He lets the teacher convince himself Taehyung is ill while Jimin fails to look away from the man’s strong, veined hands. The back of Mr. Ahn’s hand delicately comes in contact with Taehyung’s forehead through his vanilla bangs, then he moves it to each of Taehyung’s slowly darkening cheeks.

This close, both hybrids are just about drowning in the man’s scent. It’s a powerful mix of his natural musk, a sharp scent of cologne, and something so distinctly expensive. Clean, yet heavy. If they concentrate a bit, they can pick out a scent that’s strikingly familiar.

“Your skin is pretty heated,” Mr. Ahn comments after checking his forehead once more, his own creased in contemplation. “Do you need to see the nurse?”

Though he actually can’t see the red in his cheeks, Jimin knows what Taehyung’s reason for a hot face is; he’s embarrassed, nervous, and a bit flustered by the situation he’s in with the older man. He can feel these emotions flowing off his best friend like a waterfall at the fast pace of his heartbeat, and Jimin begins to wonder just what Mr. Ahn is doing. Is he actually concerned for Taehyung’s health? Or is there more to why he continuously insists on speaking with the hybrids - specifically the wolf.

With all this going on, Taehyung almost manages to keep his voice completely steady and calm while replying to the teacher only a foot away from his face. “N-o. I mean - I don’t need to, sir. M-my body heat’s just higher than m-most humans’.”

“Mmm,” Mr. Ahn hums in understanding and nods his head with his eyebrows still furrowed. He brings a hand up to hold his angular chin as he recalls a memory, “That is true. I remember that was one of the first things I noticed when getting mine.”
Taehyung’s eyes widen comically as he gets a first hand confirmation of the man owning a hybrid, Jimin’s breath hitches, and they both turn very red. The faint familiar scent they had picked up on the man, was in fact, of hybrids. Before Taehyung can reply, Mr. Ahn breaks his concerned expression to smile charmingly at the two, gentle laughter lines showing in a gracefully mature way. What exactly he’s smiling at is difficult to tell.

“Now that I’ve seen you are not, in fact, dead,” Mr. Ahn stands swiftly and boldly but does not move much farther away from the hybrids when he looks down at them. “I should let you go on to your class. The bell will be ringing in just a minute now.”

Jimin and Taehyung nod frantically up at him, trying not to focus too much on where they would be facing if they looked any lower.

Mr. Ahn breaks out into a full, stunning grin and moves aside, letting the hybrids stand themselves and quickly start down the hall just as the bell rings.

The majority of their first period consists of commenting on their encounter and ignoring just about everyone else. First, Taehyung rambles about how strange it was for someone to check his temperature with such a light touch, how affectionate the man was being. Then, Jimin joins in to talk about how he was barely noticed, but was greatful so he could “analyze” the situation for anything threatening.

They don’t stop talking about Mr. Ahn until they get to their next class, where they’re just ending the topic of how handsome he is, and just beginning the topic of how many hybrids the man may have. Taehyung doesn’t get to go into much detail about how he might have some type of canine before they’re both shut up upon laying their eyes on the one and only human they were avoiding in the first place. Jungkook.

Once seeing how easily the hybrids warmed up to the class when they were able to talk with Jungkook, this teacher decided to assign their seats next to the boy. Actually, every teacher had them sit next to their new friends to get them comfortable. It was such a blessing for the first few days at the school when they were getting accustomed to everything. Then it was a more of a bonus after, so they can talk with their friends each class - always paying attention to the lecture of course.

However, now it’s not so nice when Jimin and Taehyung realize they must sit on either side of Jungkook for the entirety of the period. But they suck it up and take their seats quietly, pointedly staring at the teacher and waiting for class to start.

Jimin notices how Jungkook doesn’t have an expression he’d think he’d have on. He thought Jungkook would seem guilty or lonely like he was the day before when Taehyung told him to leave their home. But in reality, he’s more straight faced and bored, almost looking like a stranger. Jimin not only feels intimidated and guilty, but he also can’t tell if the human wants some time to think about what happened or wants to sweep it all under the rug. The scent coming off the boy is just as confusing, letting on that he’s going through some inner turmoil.

Jimin decides to initiate conversation himself when they’re left to do work individually. About half an hour in to class, once Jimin is done with his assignment and he’s sure Jungkook is the same, Jimin joins the room’s low murmur of voices. “Hey...” he speaks quietly, hesitantly, “I’m sorry.”

Without much else, Jungkook only nods curtly and continues to stare ahead. Jimin thinks he sees a crease of tension on his forehead, but his eyesight is not at its best.

“I’m serious, Jungkook,” Jimin tells him as sincere as possible, looking straight at the side of the
boy’s somewhat blurred face. “I shouldn’t have --” Jimin sighs at himself and frowns. “I shouldn’t have done that. You’re my friend and - and I’m not even allowed to touch you without your permission. So I’m apologizing.”

Jungkook shakes his head shortly. “It’s fine. I’m fine,” he replies calmly. “I shouldn’t have opened my mouth and I had it coming. I’ll accept your apology or whatever though… I just --” Jungkook comes to a loss of words and he shakes his head.

“What?” Jimin encourages softly, feeling embarrassment and unease flowing off the human and wishing he hadn’t been the part of the reason to cause it.

“I just thought… I could…” Jungkook mumbles almost inaudibly and refuses to make eye contact. “Maybe… protect him… or something.”

Jimin nods slowly with a careful expression to show he’s willing to understand. Even if Jungkook doesn’t look over, it seems to help because he continues a little clearer, “I know… I said I’m not used to people not cursing other people out when they do bad shit to them. Not standing up for themselves or whatever. So when I saw them… and how he didn’t like them… I just… hoped that in some way I could… help or something.”

“Even though you had thought he did it to himself?” Jimin asks hesitantly. It doesn’t make much sense to Jimin how Jungkook thought he could have helped someone who harmed himself, especially with the attitude he was using. He can’t expect Taehyung to trust him with help when he seems to be angry or disappointed with him.

“Yeah, I kinda…” Jungkook shrugs, “thought I could figure out… why? But I didn’t really… go about it the right way. Then you said he didn’t do it and I got… mad? That he was more afraid of the memories than of who did it. I still just wanted to help though.” Jungkook then quickly dismisses his own explanation. “I don’t know, Jimin. I’m fine.”

Jimin purses his lips because he really didn’t expect this kind of heartfelt answer. Primarily, he thought Jungkook was just trying to put his nose in other people’s business. But in reality, all he wanted to do was help. In his own way; which has been proved to be quite obviously not the right way. Jimin realizes that Jungkook has a stable, playful personality, but underneath that is someone who is just extremely passionate about sticking up for himself and those he cares about.

It’s a good quality, but Jimin definitely does not regret slapping him. Not only did it bring some sense into him, but Jungkook was also running his mouth too much in places he had no say in and needed to be put to a stop. If Jimin hadn’t hit him, Taehyung definitely would have since he was the one the questions were directed to that brought back awful memories.

But now, even though he’s sitting right next to Jungkook, Taehyung stays still upon hearing the boy’s explanation. Jimin doesn’t know what to think of this either because Taehyung can obviously hear what Jungkook is saying about him and himself but he isn’t doing anything in response. He doesn’t speak up, his expression remains blank, and even his ears don’t give anything away. The only emotion Jimin is able to feel is confusion.

Jimin can only smile softly in acceptance at Jungkook and pat his shoulder tenderly for being so honest and sincere before they have to turn back to pay attention to the teacher.

Classes pass by slower than Jimin had ever felt them pass before. Due to seemingly unwanted company, his best friend has become almost mute these past couple of hours, even when he’s just beside Jimin. Jungkook is in each of their classes until lunch and everything about it makes Jimin miserable. He finds himself watching the clock longingly so the hybrids can part ways with the
human and Jimin can finally get more than a few phrases out of his best friend.

He doesn’t know what Taehyung is thinking about, but it’s distracting him from being his usual self. Only a few hours have gone by but Jimin is already missing him, who barely even looks Jungkook’s way. Jungkook isn’t being much better company when he doesn’t change his eerily calm tone or engage in more than a school related conversation with Jimin.

Eventually, the lunch bell rings and Jimin is able grab his best friend by the arm and quickly drag him into the hallway before Jungkook can even finish packing his bags. Taehyung surprisingly lets it happen smoothly and they walk the opposite way from where they usually go without disruption. Disinterested students flow around them on their own way to the cafeteria or outside as the two turn into the bathroom.

Jimin puts Taehyung’s back to the wall and faces him with his arms crossed, “I don’t like you not talking and I don’t like how Jungkook’s the reason.”

For a second, Jimin thinks Taehyung is just going to shrug and brush his behavior off, telling Jimin he’s not affected by Jungkook. But he doesn’t. His lip trembles and he shuts his eyes tightly as he leans in to Jimin until he can rest his forehead on his shoulder. Taehyung takes a deep breath and shakes his head in despair.

“I don’t know what to do, Jimin,” Taehyung breathes out through his emotional exhaustion. “I hate him for talking to me like that and pushing so hard but...”

“But?” Jimin rubs his shoulder blades carefully, which helps him relax more than he knows.

“He just wanted to help and he’s shit at expressing that so it probably came out worse than he intended.”

“He still yelled at you.”

“I know!” Taehyung whines against the shirt as he feels conflicted from all the facts. “And I hate him for that! He needs to learn how to control himself...”

Jimin nods with a small smile, knowing Taehyung can feel him agreeing.

“But what do I do, Jimin?” he asks now solemnly. Taehyung doesn’t know how he should act towards the human after hearing he was only trying to help in his own way. He wants to just look at that part of the situation but the fact that Jungkook was so hostile and stubborn towards him still makes his blood boil.

Jimin only sighs, “Do you want to hit him?”

“...Yeah,” he finally admits.

“Do you want to hug him?”

“For what?”

“For wanting to protect you, as he called it.”

Taehyung awkwardly shrugs from his position, “Maybe pat him on the back for that.” It’s true he wants to show his gratitude for Jungkook’s efforts, but he doesn’t want to be too nice.

“That’s good. Do you want to apologize?” Jimin asks.
"I don’t need to apologize."

“You’re ignoring him.”

Taehyung huffs and says, “He’s ignoring me.”

“He’s respecting your space,” he points out.

This makes Taehyung groan because Jimin is usually right about these things. “I should apologize…”

“Good,” Jimin smiles proudly.

“But I still want to hit him for being such a asshole.” All the emotions Taehyung is feeling toward the boy are confusing. In his mind, he feels bad for wanting to make sure he doesn’t talk to him like that again since Jungkook seemed so sincere when explaining himself. He can’t bring himself to hate a human who was only trying to help.

“So why don’t you do it all?” Jimin suggests casually, already knowing what Taehyung wants. “Hit him, tell him you’re sorry for ignoring him today, and thank him for wanting to help.”

Taehyung smiles at the compromise, “Let’s do that.”

The two calmly walk to the picnic table at the other side of the school until the group is in sight and Taehyung becomes uncertain with his decision to confront Jungkook. He pulls on Jimin’s shirt slightly, “Jiminnie, I don’t really know if I actually want to see him again. He’s rude… Look at him just sitting there like nothing happened.”

Jimin only brushes the hand away, shaking his head, “That’s why you’re going to hit him. Either punch him or slap him, whatever you want. You can do it anywhere, his face, stomach, arm, foot. Do what feels right, he deserves it.”

He nods hesitantly. He should be alright with that kind of freedom to do whatever comes to mind because he just knows once he’s in front of Jungkook, all of his plans are going to go out the window due to nervousness. When the hybrids are close enough for their friends to notice them, everyone but Jungkook turns to acknowledge their presence with a short wave or small smile before going back to their food.

However, Taehyung and Jimin don’t take their seat next to Yoongi like they usually would, and it makes the rest confused. Namjoon is the first to say something and he draws out his question, “You gonna sit down?”

Taehyung doesn’t turn to him as he shakes his head in reply, only continuing to stare at Jungkook, who doesn’t meet his eyes. This makes him frustrated because with all this pent up anger he has, why isn’t the boy letting him unleash it on him right now? He speaks up sternly, “Jungkook stand up.”

The tone of his voice makes the group freeze and look between the two. Taehyung’s voice shows signs of anger and annoyance, so it’s not surprising when the boy does as he’s told and makes his way to in front of the hybrids, slowly bringing his head up to face Taehyung head on. Jungkook isn’t afraid, he notes, he’s standing still like he knows what’s coming for him and he accepts it, lips pulled to a straight line and eyebrows only slightly creased before he breathes in a deep sigh through his nose that relaxes his body.

Taehyung however, is definitely not as collected as the other. He doesn’t know which emotions to
start acting upon first nor which he can show to Jungkook. The anger? The appreciation? The weird gratefulness he has when he realizes it's the calmness Jungkook is showing now that makes his wolf calm?

He scowls harder in frustration and decides to do something about the strongest feeling he has, which is to quickly bring the palm of his hand across the opposite cheek Jimin had hit the day before, making Jungkook’s face turn toward their friends, who immediately shout for an explanation.

Jimin does his best to tell them it’s not a big deal and they should leave them alone for a minute to get it sorted out themselves.

After a few long, silent seconds, Jungkook faces Taehyung again with an expression of understanding, relief, and almost endearment. These emotions are not only showing on the human’s face, but they’re strong enough Taehyung can feel them underlying the air between their bodies. It only makes Taehyung more confused about how he feels about the situation he is in. First, he can’t believe he just slapped Jungkook, which makes him feel extreme guilt and slight fear. Second, he also feels the brief urge to put him in his place again and wipe that relaxed look off his face. But he also knows he should say everything he needs to despite feeling insecure and confused.

Taehyung stutters as he blurts words out, “I - I can’t - ” He grows out a greatly distressed sound because with the forgiving and adoring way Jungkook is looking at him, he just can’t satisfy the wolf inside him and punish the human more. Something about that look tells him as long as he’s with the boy, there’s no reason to feel hostile because Jungkook is being strong for him. “I’m sorry f-for ignoring you but - and - I appreciate you just trying to help me.”

A perplexed furrow now instantly forms on Jungkook’s forehead, unknowing how to act since he had been slapped, then thanked. But Taehyung doesn’t let him ponder his words for long because Jungkook receives another hit to the same spot. It completely catches him off guard and he releases a pained curse.

“But you’re fucking terrible at doing that!” Taehyung yells with renowned fire, especially at the way he had felt Jungkook’s anger rise for that split second. “I hate you for talking to me like that and if you ever do it again I -- !”

Thankfully, Jimin decides it’s best to quickly pat his best friend’s shoulder and have him calm down and clear his clouded mind. Jungkook finally seems to show a little frustration himself and for a second, Taehyung thinks he’s going to yell back. The thought makes him feel even more infuriated from Jungkook talking back, more anxious from making the boy mad, and more content from being able to settle this with him. None of these emotions he can explain much more to himself.

Before either of them can even act on anything, Yoongi speaks up and interrupts their thoughts with an interested tone, “So that’s how you got the bruise?”

Jungkook breaks eye contact with Taehyung to glare at the older and spit out a clipped, “Yes.”

“Why did you hit him, Taehyung?” Hoseok demands, voice strained with worry and exasperation. “He’s obviously not doing anything.”

Taehyung is no more calm now than before. He answers the question while gesturing to Jungkook accusingly, “When I woke up yesterday he saw something he wasn’t supposed to and was being a jerk while supposedly trying to help.”
“I was trying to help, Taehyung!” Jungkook argues back, his tone coming out almost like a whine or plead. As he continues speaking, he gets more irritated and aggressive, directing a hard gaze toward Taehyung. “You even said you appreciated it. But I just didn’t know how to help because you didn’t give me anything to go on!”

“Maybe you shouldn’t have jumped to conclusions!” Taehyung sneers in return, matching his harsh gaze. If he was transformed at the moment, he’d be snarling in anger. But the only thing his wolf side can control is the way his ears plaster against his skull and his tail ruffles between his legs. Jungkook really does something weird to him, usually he’d be aching to transform and get at him properly.

“I saw them, I didn’t think straight, and I automatically assumed the worst,” Jungkook points out for his defense. Then he puts his hands in front of him, “I don’t understand why you didn’t yell at me then!”

“I’m sorry for being too busy sulking over the shitty memories you brought back!” Taehyung sarcastically answers. “And thanks for doing it the moment I woke up, Jungkook. I really feel the care.”

“Oh come on! What was I supposed to do? You have a panic attack and before I can tell you’re okay I see --”

“Don’t you dare talk about it so easily!”

“The point is, Taehyung,” Jungkook raises his voice louder then sighs, exasperated, “I was worried and your weird reactions to me were throwing me off of how sensitive it was.”

Taehyung huffs at this, head tilting sideways to try to understand him. Weird reactions to Jungkook? It doesn’t click at first, but then he realizes he probably did confuse the human. When he woke up, he actually didn’t notice Jungkook with the way he was so focused on thanking his best friend. Then he was excited when he did see him, happy Jungkook took time to see that he was alright and greet him. But once the boy pointed out the scars and started raising his voice, he wanted to cry because of the memories. He couldn’t even look at him.

It wasn’t until he really started to accuse the person of being terrible that Taehyung snapped. As much as he was fed up with the disrespect, he couldn’t find it in himself to stay completely mad at the other with the depressing memories. It really must have been confusing for Jungkook.

Before Taehyung can say anything else, Namjoon cuts in, “Wait. I have a question.”

“What?” Taehyung groans.

“If you’re mad about yesterday,” Namjoon seems to ignore the dangerous tone, “why are you arguing now?”

Taehyung looks at Jungkook with another scowl when the boy crosses his arms, “That’s exactly what I want to know. Why didn’t you just yell at me then?”

“Because...” Taehyung looks down and licks his lips in contemplation. He sees again what keeps stopping him from really getting angry with Jungkook; when the human manages to control himself in a hostile situation. With Jungkook being so calm right now, it makes him feel safe from the ready-to-strike wolf inside that unleashes whenever Taehyung gets angry himself. But right now, Jungkook seems to be disappointed and it makes Taehyung realize that his whole point was not to argue so much.
He deflates a bit, self-conscious, “Jimin already did and I just wanted you gone, Jungkook. I didn’t even want to talk to you today but Jimin said I should.” The attention goes to Jimin for a second, who only nods in confirmation, Taehyung crosses his arms as well and says, “So here I am and I’m pretty sure I’m done with whatever I wanted to tell you.”

Jungkook seems to still be confused at how easily Taehyung’s mood changes, but gathers himself enough to question him with an disbelieving scoff, “You just wanted to hit me and say you appreciate my efforts?”

“Yes,” he nods shortly.

Jungkook shakes his head almost degradingly, a little chuckle coming through, He says, “I only let you hit me because you couldn’t yesterday and I know I deserve it. Whatever you think of me now is fine by me.”

The sudden dismissal of Taehyung’s previous anger is a little unnerving. For some reason, he has the urge to continue to argue with Jungkook, maybe get an actual punch in for talking to him like shit the day before. But the human only talked back when it was necessary and backed off when there was nothing else to get worked up about. He put Taehyung’s anger to a stop, had him realize there’s really nothing more to say.

Taehyung really doesn’t understand how the boy could so easily make him drop a subject by just deeming it resolved. Jungkook had ended the discussion with his last sentence, leaving no room for Taehyung to argue about anything else.

Seokjin speaks up through Taehyung’s silence, “Wait,” he says, “Jungkook, you said you got that bruise from getting slapped but also that Taehyung didn’t hit you yesterday. Who really hit you?”

Instead of answering out loud, Jungkook only turns sternly to Jimin, who looks down and sheepishly raises a ring covered hand to answer the question. There are mumbles throughout the table and someone saying something about boys who can get dirty but he can’t understand because Namjoon suddenly raises his voice,

“Knowing Jimin, we know it was for a good reason. Let’s all just make sure no one gets hurt anymore, alright? Taehyung, do you accept Jungkook’s… settling of the argument? Can you be civil now?”

Taehyung frowns undecidedly and stares into Jungkook’s naturally dark eyes. They may usually seem dominating over Taehyung, but now there’s something like pleading in them that he just can’t ignore. It has him sighing, “Sure.” Jungkook visibly relaxes. “As long as he never does it again.”

Jungkook lips quirk up into a relieved smile, his large eyes soften, and he speaks with understanding, “Of course, Tae.” Taehyung realizes yet again how interesting this boy is.

Chapter End Notes

lol what do you think about Jungkook?

He's pretty protective, right? and casual, sometimes forcefully though. But! He gets embarrassed easily and is kinda innocently curious, so he doesn't always pick up on
subtle things. Like irl!jungkook, he likes to tease his friends and get on their nerves. He'll avoid fights and arguments if he can and will probably lose if he gets involved... but will put up a good fight? He also likes to be depended on, and will definitely try to be the hero - as we've seen...
Chapter 13

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

I'm sorry if you got that first upload! I made a huge mistake and had to delete the chapter because it didn't have complete formatting... I'll be a little more careful this time around!

“... and so that was a little awkwar-”

“Yoongi-Hyung!”

“... uh, what?”

“You - you can’t just say that!”

“Why? I’m sure I wasn’t the only one who thought it was.”

“No, I mean about yesterday! That’s not something you just say so easily, hyung.”

“... oh, Namjoon’s birthday? Yeah, that was yesterday and it was a little awkwar-”

“Ugh! You guys never tell us when your birthdays are…”

“Well, Jiminnie, ‘cause it’s not that big of a deal.”

“No. It’s a big deal. If not for you, then for me and Tae. Please tell us these things?”

“Why do you care?”

“Because… - sigh - there were so many birthdays and it was terrible because it just showed another year we didn't get picked but now we’re out an--”

“I get it… Hyung will tell you his if you tell him yours, alright?”

“Alright.”

“March ninth.”

“So far… October thirteenth.”

“And yours is so close! Jesus, why didn’t you tell me?”

“See!”

“Yeah, but we like, just met so I kinda have to be supportive with your birthdays.”

“- chuckle - Who has the next birthday?”

“Yours actually. Jin-hyung’s is in December.”
“Cool! So is Tae’s!”

“Yeah his is the fourth. When’s Taehyung’s?”

“The thirtieth. He loves how it’s New Years Eve.”

“I would too. If it were me, I would make a huge party.”

“Well what do you guys usually do on your birthdays?”

“Oh you know, give your friends panic attacks mostly. Classic event for Namjoon’s. Honestly, today’s fight was a bonus, shoulda done it yesterday.”

“No, hyung! I’m serious!”

“Well - sigh - nothing really. Just a small present here and there like you saw at Hoseokie’s place.”

“You don’t… go out and… I don’t know, do something or buy something you really wanted to all year?”

“No.”

“Well, what do you want, hyung? What’s something you’ve been wanting for awhile now?”

“…”

“Something maybe you’ve seen and thought you’d do it later on a special occasion. Or something for yourself?”

“…”

“…”

“I… I guess just a piercing?”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah, ‘cause like, I see them everywhere and I always thought I’d like to take a chance and put one somewhere other than my ears.”

“You can do that for your birthday!”

“But like you said, it’s so far. When I think about it, I want to do it right away.”

“Then do it sooner! It’s for yourself, right? Think of it as just an early birthday or Christmas present.”

“I could make that work…”

“Good! And I’ve never seen a piercing somewhere other than the ears outside of photos so that’d be fun.”

“Are you serious? Have you ever seen the process of a piercing?”

“No.”

“Then Hyung will take you with him.”
“Oh! Really?”

“Yeah, you shoulda told me that earlier. I work at a piercing and tattoo parlor.”

“Really??”

“Yes, Jiminnie. - laugh - I could’ve took you weeks ago!”

“Ah, Yoongi-Hyung that would be so awesome… I also wouldn’t expect you to work there.”

“Oh? Why?”

“To be honest, yo--”

“- exaggerated sigh - Oh boy…”

“No! - chuckle - Hyung, I mean to be honest, you’re a real fluff ball. That’s like Tae working at a sex shop.”

“Hey, what if he’s interested in it? If Taehyung likes it, let him work at a sex shop.”

“Yeah, I guess I would support him… So you like it?”

“Didn’t I just say so?”

“Ah but we were talking about Tae in a sex shop.”

“I… - laugh - I don’t know what to do with you…”

“Just a little hurt by that~”

“I take nothing back.”

“Oh, I got a text, hold on.”

“Of course.”

[ little studio apartment (2) ]

Puppy Tae
> im not gonna teach south korean history to the wall jiminnie

“It’s Tae.”

“He texted you? Don’t you two live together?”

“Yes but he probably heard me talking on the phone and didn’t want to interrupt.”

“I see. Well that’s actually nice of him to do.”

“What do you think he’s like, hyung?!!”

“I mean… he hit Jungkook twice so…”

Puppy Tae
> why yes we were in involved in ww2! gosh youre quite the scholar mr wall
“Hello?”

“Sorry, Tae’s being impatient.”

“What does he want? You should get to him.”

“He’s gonna help me with something…”

“You’re making him wait on something he’s taking out his time for? You’re low~”

Puppy Tae
> well A fking plus for you mr paint. always gotta be on top mr wall huh?

“I know, I know! I’m talking to you and I don’t wanna do it any more than he does…”

“Just go do it, Jiminnie. I’ll see you tomorrow, yeah?”

“Yeah.”

[ Call Ended ]

Jimin timidly presses the brown button on the screen to end the call. Then he sighs heavily and makes his way for Taehyung.

In all honesty, he has no idea how Taehyung puts up with him and his needs. Before, they didn’t have to do this. But Jimin was careless and he left without his glasses, resulting in him needing to be read each and every one of his assignments along with anything outside of school that involves close distance reading.

So many years ago, when Jimin was actually able to speak clear sentences and tell staff what he needed help with, he became the subject for years of scientific research. They obviously knew he was different from the start, actually thinking he was blind because of how he didn’t open his eyes until he was more than a week old, and when he finally did, he never seemed to see as well as other kids his age because of his different eyes. Hybrids shouldn’t have vision problems in the first place.

Of course, other cat hybrids can see through a cat’s eye when they’re transformed, so most people didn’t think of him as special. However, it’s difficult for researchers to learn much about a feline’s vision through a hybrid when an animal body has its communication limits and the hybrid can’t remember enough after transforming back into a human. Jimin saw differently 24/7, the vision never changing when he transformed to a full feline.

The actual research didn’t start until he was around 8 or 7 years old because needed Jimin to understand what exactly they meant in their questions and tests. They also needed him to be old enough to know that not only did his eyes look different than everyone else’s, but that he can also see differently than everyone else. He ended up attracting some animal researchers who wanted to know more information about the eyes of a domesticated cat. The world already knew the basics: a cat’s color vision is limited and they’re most likely farsighted, but it wasn’t until scientists knew about Jimin that information was being strengthened and redeveloped.

Hybrid scientists not only wanted to see exactly what characteristics and properties he had received or had taken away, but they also wanted the best for their hybrid and used the information to create special glasses for all his vision needs. The glasses help Jimin see perfectly in his human form so he can read the clocks on the walls and the textbooks he’s given. What the glasses also did was allow him to see all the colors a normal human could.
The staff told Jimin about how around 1 out of 12 human men are affected by some type of colorblindness. It wasn’t until the early to mid 21st century that a pair of sunglasses was accidentally created that happened to enhance the hues seen through them. What this meant for color blind humans was that the colors they saw through the lenses were changed before getting to their eyes, allowing them to see hues they could not without them.

After more than half a century of rapidly advancing technology, scientists developed a type of prescription glasses that would be specifically made for colorblind people that was able to cross-pollinate with the person’s other vision problems such as nearsightedness, farsightedness, and double vision. When looking through these custom made glasses that resemble average prescription glasses, a person with blurry vision and deuteranopia would be able to see as clearly as others around them.

Though a permanent, effective, surgical treatment to cure color blindness and total blindness is still not something scientists have been able to find, the staff had informed Jimin solemnly.

A large amount of domesticated and wild cats were better understood and were able to be helped with the information Jimin’s tests gave them, his young self was told. It made him feel appreciated and important, especially since the staff crafted him new glasses each year as he grew older and his eyesight changed occasionally.

Research on Jimin continued until the day he left for Seoul. He even got his newest pair just a month prior to then, and everyday he wishes he could have had a little more time to prepare his belongings for the trip. It wasn’t until him and Taehyung were seated in the van that he realized they would not let him go back. Jimin constantly wonders if someone had found his glasses on the bedside table while cleaning out his room, if the staff will ever remember that they need to tell Jimin about his next appointment for his new lenses or frames, if they will ever need him for more testing, before realizing he’s no longer available.

But none of that seems to happen because they’re months into living in Seoul now and Jimin still hates the way he needs Taehyung to read chapters of a history book out loud for him, the small print ingredient labels, directions to simple objects that don’t show well when you stand 2 to 3 feet away from them, as where Jimin’s eyesight is best. He needs Taehyung to completely reorganize their shower just because the labels are too small or the bottles all look the same. He needs him to write as big as possible when he writes him letters he insists on continuing like when they younger.

Jimin even had Taehyung navigate through his phone to make sure the text size is legible and the colors were bright. Had him change the color of everything important in their house they could, like putting a piece of colored paper over the small light of their electric stove that tells if the surface is hot so it’s be a dull blue-ish light other than the normal soft brown that blended in too well with the appliance color.

Even at school, he’s always there to subtly read and point out important aspects of whatever Jimin is given in a whisper - as he did with Jungkook’s note their first day. And Jimin thanks the staff for the typing class he had to take because that’s the only way he can turn in any of his papers if he can’t see the the paper well enough to write efficiently.

It makes him feel even worse when Taehyung messes up himself and can’t read whatever it is Jimin’s asks, needing someone else to tell him or concentrating too hard to figure it out on his own because when he was just a child, Taehyung was diagnosed with dyslexia - and it still hurts Jimin to no end.

Before, they didn’t have to do any of this and Taehyung could focus more on fixing his own problems than spending so much time on Jimin, who is forced to see through farsighted, red-green
deficient vision for longer than he usually allowed before: when he showered, slept, transformed, or took the research tests. He hasn’t had to see without his glasses this much since he was 9 years old.

Taehyung knows Jimin hates himself for doing this to him but he always insists that Jimin having him read everything out loud, then be corrected, helps him with his dyslexia more than Jimin knows - but he doesn't really trust that.

He continues to think about all of this now as Taehyung mispronounces yet another sentence in the past hour they’ve been here because the 설크 looked like a ㄱ. Jimin quietly says it correctly for Taehyung to repeat before he’s moving on to say the last question of the worksheet. Despite his enhanced hearing, he can’t seem to make out what Taehyung recites over the blood rushing through his head at the thoughts of what he puts his best friend through.

Jimin wishes he could cry. But his words don’t get choked up through tears, he isn’t sniffling, his eyes don’t excessively water, because the only real mutation he received was a lack of completely functional tear ducts that barely keep his eyes as hydrated as he needs, causing him to require tear solution that is specifically designed for feline pets.

“Jiminnie?” Taehyung’s concerned voice finally comes to him as he stares at his laptop screen for too long. It startles him to attention and he realizes then how dried out he made his eyes. Instead of answering, he clenches the eyelids shut and rubs at them with a whine as they burn and irritate at the friction.


Jimin pouts and does as he’s told. By the time Taehyung comes back, he’s decided to blink with his eyes staying closed before opening them briefly to squeeze the liquid in and blink a few times. They stay in silence as Jimin lays on the ground with his eyes closed to let them set longer than needed.

Then he breaks the silence by speaking softly, “Sorry…”

“For what?” Taehyung chuckles. “Forgetting to blink for a minute? I do that all the time.”

Jimin only sighs, “For making you take care of me so much.” He just knows the other is now frowning at how he changed the mood. “I make you do everything for me, Taehyung, and I feel so bad. It’s all my fault for forgetting my fucking glasses an--”

“No, Jimin, don’t say any of that…” Taehyung pats Jimin’s thigh to help. But he rolls away to his side in self-pity as his friend continues, “They didn’t tell us enough. It’s not your f--”

“It is! I can’t see shit and it’s because I was too selfish thinking I wasn’t going to have to leave! I should’ve kept them on. I should’ve double checked. I should’ve realized I couldn't see. And now you have to read everything for me and reorganize the entire house because of me! I - I should’ve thought more. I - I c-can’t believe I'm doing this to you. T-Taehyung, I’m s-so sorry!”

Jimin wishes he could cry. But all he can do is breathe heavily and stutter, almost to hyperventilation in the silence Taehyung creates, his eyes finally getting to average wetness on their own with his tear ducts working as best they can. His best friend doesn’t say anything for a while but Jimin doesn’t need him to make a sound when can feel his despair and sympathy through the brotherly connection they’ve formed over their lifetime that’s stronger than anyone’s he’s been around. It only makes Jimin more sure of himself about inconveniencing the other so much.
Eventually Taehyung breathes out his own shaking sigh, then sniffs wetly, letting on he’s crying. Jimin immediately frowns and faces the crumbling expression of his best friend staring back at him through teary eyes. Jimin gasps, sits up to grab his arm tightly and look him in the eyes to make it known he’s there and willing to provide support himself. The action only seems to do Taehyung worse because he sobs, but never turns away when he goes to wipe his cheeks.

Jimin’s own face falls harder at the scene, at making his friend cry.

Taehyung says through his tears, “I - I… I’m sorry t-too, Jimin.”

Jumin shakes his head quickly, caressing his long arms in his small hands. “No, you didn’t make me forget them o-or anything. It was all me. You have n-nothing to apologize for, Tae.”

“Yes I do!” Taehyung says, then takes an arm away from Jimin’s small hand to rub at his tan, glistening cheeks. “I try m-my best to make th-things easier for you b-b--”

“No, Taehyung,” Jimin interrupts as sternly as he can while watching his best friend cry so he will understand his words. “I’m not complaining. You’re doing fine. You help me s-so much, I can’t... do anything without you... D-don’t think I’m saying you’re n--”

“But I’m not enough, Jimin!” he says loudly through a sob that wracks his body. Though Jimin knows he’s seen Taehyung through worse, the wolf is unfortunately getting pretty worked up on this, which only lets him know Taehyung is more serious. “You n-need more than what I can d-o for you. I’m dyslexic and I’m not v-ery bright and I can’t control myself and I’m n-not with you as m-much anymore and - and - you need more than me!”

“N-no, Taehyung, you’re the best I could ask for,” Jimin tells him sincerely as Taehyung pouts and shakes his head in denial. This makes Jimin give a shaky sigh and slump to look in his lap defeatedly. “Taehyun--”

“No,” he states, continuing to shake his head with his mouth pulled down in a deep frown.

“Taehyung, don’t be like this. I was th--”

“N-no, J-Jimin!” he says again, content with being the one to blame. Jimin, however, isn’t, but he gives up anyway on trying to tell him otherwise. Instead, he stays quiet in despair.

They sit like that for a while in the silence of their home, Jimin holding Taehyung’s wrists limply while staring down at his own lap; Taehyung letting Jimin rub circles into his skin as he looks slowly around the room, wondering just how much Jimin can see. Jimin has once said that the world is like it’s been dunked in caramel like a green apple. But he’s always disliked caramel and all apples look the same as the caramel now. Only the splashes of blue and bright yellow help him remember that there’s more to everything, that he used to he able to see it all.

Taehyung always knew Jimin could see in blues and yellows when he wasn’t wearing his glasses, so when he realized Jimin left them in his room, he began to wear the blue in his clothes and decorate the house in it as much as possible. Of course, Jimin loves his best friend trying to help and brighten his day, but he doesn’t want Taehyung to go out of his way for him by requesting the blue curtains and bathroom rug.

“Jiminnie,” Taehyung finally sighs out. The sound makes Jimin flinch, but once he realizes Taehyung’s voice is soft and understanding, he listens in. “We’re both a little messed up but… let’s not think about it too hard, okay? Let’s be happy they at least let us have each other. A-and we probably wouldn’t be together if it wasn’t for you, Jimin. You screamed so much louder than me.”
Taehyung’s voice is full of affection even as he chuckles at his last words. Jimin allows himself to
smile with him for a bit, before he looks up at his best friend in sadness, “Do you think they’ll find
my glasses, Taehyung? Do you think they’ll remember to make me a new pair? Do you think
they’ll send them to us?”

It’s subtle and slow and Jimin can’t really see it, but Taehyung’s soft smile turns upside down. It’s
expected, as Jimin had been frowning as he even said the words, already sure of the answer. Still,
he asks one more question in a hesitant whisper, “Do you think they’ll let us… call for a pair?”

“I don’t know,” Taehyung admits in the same innocent whisper. “We’ve never needed to call them
before.”

“Th-they said for emergencies right? This is like an emergency. I can't see… Kinda. But it can
work… Right?”

The wolf hybrid thinks this over for a bit. Jimin hopes he sees the proposal the same way he does
and let him call for a new or the same pair of glasses. He’d probably never actually do it if
Taehyung didn’t think it would be alright. The person on the other end might not even speak to a
hybrid anyway, but they have no other way to get Jimin glasses when no one will service a stray
until he gets an owner.

Taehyung’s lips quirk up and he says, “I think it’ll work.”

They decide to call right then, unable to contain their sudden curiosity and excitement of what
might happen despite their how awful they just felt. Maybe Jimin will get his glasses back and they
can live easier. Taehyung sifts through his few phone contacts as Jimin clears the coffee table they
were working at because his own phone is in his room and homework can wait.

The phone is ringing on Speaker in the middle of the table when Taehyung belatedly clarifies,
“You’re gonna say everything, right?”

Jimin nods nervously and shakes his hands out as they start to sweat. They’ve never called these
people before, so they don’t know what they need ready. Does he need to tell them his birth date?
Address? Blood type? Will a computer pick up?

He’s taken out of his thoughts when the voice of a middle-aged woman introduces herself as
Siyeon and asks how she can be of assistance.

For a second, Jimin stays in silent shock that not only did a real person answer, but he’s actually
doing this. Maybe Jimin will get his glasses back and they can live easier. Taehyung sifts through his few phone contacts as Jimin clears the coffee table they
were working at because his own phone is in his room and homework can wait.

The woman questions in surprise. Her voice is not the most professional for a moment.
“Wh-why are you - I mean, may I have your identification number please?”

Jimin gives his ten digit number to prove his origins.

As sudden and personal the question is, Jimin gives his ten digit number to prove his origins.

“Ah yes, Park Jimin. Okay, I have you here. Though your default photo is a bit different than the
rest, is this of your knowledge?”

“No, my eyes are closed and I’m wearing glasses.” Jimin calmly confirms the difference in his
photo she’s referring to. All other hybrids keep their eyes open and don’t have the need for any
vision aid. His eyes are closed so they wouldn’t reflect and possibly mess up the photo, and he kept
his glasses on because they should be a permanent accessory that identifies with him.
Siyeon hums in acknowledgement, “It says here it's due to your eye's being of your animal, is that correct?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“Okay, now that identity is out of the way, what can I help you with, Jimin?”

Jimmie takes a shaky breath, fully aware she is letting her professionalism slip a bit because she is speaking to someone lower than her by a landslide. “As you can see, I need glasses. However, ma’am, I didn’t take them with me as I was leaving for Seoul. This was on accident. I was hoping someone could either retrieve them or make me another pair if they’ve been lost or broken, then send them to my address, um, please?”

“I’m not sure if I can do that, Jimin.” Siyeon states blankly. “Your profile says you are a stray that has been relocated, residing with another relocated stray named Kim Taehyung since about mid July. If you lost or broke your glasses since that time, you will need to contact the optometrist or personal ophthalmologist that’s been assigned to you.”

“M-ma’am,” Jimin says anxiously at the thought of not being able to do get his glasses back. “Not only was my prescription not given to an optometrist, I was unable to bring my glasses with me as I was being relocated. I’m only asking if you - someone - can get them and send them to me.”

The woman sighs. Her tone is less like she’s reading straight off a book when she answers this time. Jimin is not sure whether to call it condescending or sympathetic, “I don’t really understand why you didn’t call earlier. How have you been living without your glasses?”

“Kim Taehyung,” he tells her while looking at said hybrid gratefully. “He’s been reading everything to me, ma’am. Everything from my homework to the labels on my clothes. Of course, I can see enough myself, but I am farsighted, which makes it difficult to do more at-home everyday tasks like cooking, laundry, and… school work.”

He tries to soften her up by pressing how this can greatly affect his chances of getting an owner if he can’t do things like washing clothes and making meals. It seems to work a little and his hopes jump a bit at her caring tone she begins to adopt.

“Jimmie I should tell you that I’m pretty much strictly allowed to take requests from relocated strays only if they are emergencies,” Siyeon says softly. “Emergencies like being kidnapped or having your home taken away from you. Really, I would have to say no and hang up but if your glasses are easily accessible I will try my best get them to you. No one should be going without their glasses for so long, especially with eyes like yours. I have no doubt they are only disadvantageous in human form.”

The monologue had Jimin’s emotions on a rollercoaster, but he’s so relieved at what the woman said about going out of her way for Jimin and he smiles widely at Taehyung, who does the same with a thumbs up. Jimin turns back to the phone and says, “Thank you so much, ma’am, it would mean the world to me if you could get them.”

“I’ll do my best,” her tone is slightly proud before it suddenly goes back to more professional. “Your address is already here so I all I will need from you is instructions on how I can get them from your previous room, or if there’s any staff you know that will be willing to help. It will be tricky if they’ve already cleaned your room out and gave it to someone else.”

Jimmie eagerly explains which room he had and how to navigate to the glasses. He also gives Siyeon some names of staff he and Taehyung befriended that he knows would definitely help out. The two
of them spent most of their lives with the staff rather than other hybrids, so he has no doubt they will be willing. Once he’s given as much information as the woman needs, Jimin asks, “I would like to know, ma’am, if you can give me an estimate on how long they might take to get here?”

At this, Siyeon sighs, “To be honest, Jimin, about a month.” Jimin’s heart drops and he feels Taehyung’s hand in his hair for comfort. “I am really not supposed to be doing such a small favor for a relocated stray. I have other things to do as well so sneaking around is going to have to wait longer than you think.”

“I understand.” Jimin frowns but does his best not let it show in his voice.

“I’ll do what I can, Jimin. I hope you and your roommate live comfortably. Fare well.”

“Thank you. Good bye.”

The nice woman hangs up first while Jimin just stares at the screen until the device is taken away by Taehyung. “Hey,” he tells Jimin with a small smile that steadily grows. “At least she’ll get them for you.”

Jimin nods sternly to himself before he looks up at the careful expression on his best friend’s face, “We’ve gotten through these months, we can get through one more.”
To say the least, Jimin is proud. Proud that he mended his best friend’s relationship with Jungkook in such a short amount of time. He knows Taehyung doesn’t hold grudges for long, but this situation was something more personal for him and Jimin, which is why he did his best to convince Taehyung to settle the argument the day after the incident.

Now, the days after that, Taehyung is reaching out to pat Jungkook’s arm as they’re walking up the school steps, a soft gesture that means he’s sorry for the other day. Jungkook’s expression flashes to one more noticeably relieved and smiles, showing his adorable bunny teeth that were more contradicting when he had gotten angry.

In class, Jungkook is talking to Taehyung more, Jimin joyfully notes. It isn’t much, but he explains more of the notes than usual instead of teasing and telling him to just copy his own. Jimin sees the appreciation in his best friend’s eyes when he does this and more, Jungkook even going as far as giving a quick curse to the student that seemed to want to take advantage of Taehyung’s kindness today and have him take his notes for him the entire period.

Jimin knows Taehyung was raised right and is glad to see him giving back. He thanks Jungkook each time, scratches under his chin, is willing to listen to his rant, and buys him an energy drink after hearing how late he was up last night thinking Taehyung would never truly forgive Jungkook after embarrassingly pushing all his personal buttons.

The reason all this really makes Jimin so proud is because he knows how much Taehyung wanted to have such a large group of friends. Jimin has always been content with a few close friends he could talk to about anything, but Taehyung was more of a social butterfly and always ended up getting a friend out of whoever Jimin accidentally charmed his way into talking to. Seeing his and Taehyung’s now closest human friend coming back together was fulfilling.

Of course, the two love all of their human friends equally and would never hesitate to quickly mend any disruptions among the relationships between them.

Strengthening is just as important as mending, which is why Jimin is out buying clothes with Jonghyun, Hoseok and Seokjin because either no one else wanted to go with them, or they had other things to do. The four got the idea when Namjoon tripped and held onto Yoongi for support, causing them both to fall in the hard dirt and roll down the rest of the hill of the the school’s yard. By the time they were able to get back up, they were both covered in dead leaves and dust. They didn’t seem to care they ripped a few more holes in their jeans and smudged their clean shirts, but Seokjin, Hoseok, and Jimin certainly did.

The clothes they were looking at were not only to replace Yoongi and Namjoon’s outfits, but also for themselves. To Jimin, Hoseok always seemed to not care about what he wore as long as it matched, and it always ended up coming together in some way. Jimin realized Hoseok actually spent a lot of time picking what to buy, making sure it stuck to his theme of black and somewhat edgy.

Seokjin and Jonghyun were people who looked like they spent at least ten minutes picking out their outfits each morning. Seokjin usually going for any theme he might feel like, he tells Jimin, which he knows can range from comfortable and innocent to rich car door guy. Jimin hasn’t known Jonghyun for much more than a few weeks of simple Hello’s but he already feels comfortable
enough to agree with him when he complains about certain clothing he can’t pull off. They all laugh and Hoseok smirks his heart shaped smile while pulling him into a different section.

Jimin, however, can’t really help others or buy anything for himself when he doesn’t necessarily know what he’s looking at. Like Seokjin, he usually already has a theme for the day in mind, and they connect like that when Jimin agrees on his choice of buying both a fuzzy sweater and a jean jacket. Seokjin does his best to get Jimin into some clothes, but Jimin can’t tell the colors from each other and doesn’t know what would look good on himself.

Eventually, it wasn’t fun if he wasn’t participating and he ended up just trusting Seokjin’s judgment and wearing what he handed him. He has all his own clothes he brought with him to Seoul, and Taehyung will always be there to help in the color department if Seokjin somehow got him to buy a colorful scarf only a grandmother would love. It’s not as if the styles Seokjin picked out for him were bad, he just prefers to really spend time looking for clothes to wear. Jimin loves wearing cute and comfortable items like large hoodies and simple chokers. His bottoms usually consist of slightly ripped denims, tight jeans, or sweatpants. Thankfully, Seokjin seemed to understand his style.

They’re leaving the store with a bag per person, Jonghyun and Hoseok with two, and smiles all around. It isn’t until Jimin gets a text on their way home that Jimin sighs out in sudden disappointment.

[ little studio apartment (2) ]

Puppy Tae
> oh shoot
> sorry i forgot to tell u jiminnie but i left home like half an hour ago with namjoonie-hyung and jungkookie
> im fine just so u know when u get home and im not there

While sending a reply of acknowledgment, Jimin’s disappointment and despair sprouts in the form of not wanting to arrive to a silent home after coming back from a fun event. Usually, Jimin wouldn’t mind so much and he’d either watch a few new episodes of his favorite show or do his homework, but he can’t really do his homework without Taehyung and he can’t really watch his and Taehyung’s favorite series alone. He could cook a bit or play a few phone games, but that doesn't sound too fun when he has people he could be around.

For a moment, as Seokjin is dropping off Hoseok and Jonghyun at the park together and Jimin slides himself into the passenger seat, he catches a glimpse of a man with impressive gages throwing around a football. Jimin automatically thinks of Yoongi and how he had said he works with piercings - and really, he couldn't go with anyone else. Seokjin works in the evenings and his shift is coming up in an hour or so, Hoseok and Jonghyun seem to want to be alone in the park, and Namjoon, Jungkook, and Taehyung are doing something Jimin not only doesn’t know, but also doesn’t really mind not being apart of, especially if he inconveniences them by unexpectedly asking to join.

So Jimin asks Seokjin hesitantly if he knows the location of Yoongi’s work and if he could drop him off there. Not surprisingly, the older says yes. The only questions he asks is if Yoongi told Jimin what he did, and only because Yoongi apparently doesn’t like people interrupting him but if he willingly told their new friends, then he shouldn’t mind.

After hearing this, Jimin briefly wonders if he’s overstepping his boundaries but not only had Seokjin agreed to drive him, he also knows Yoongi better. Jimin doesn't think he would take him if he knew it wasn’t alright. He’s trusting Seokjin isn’t pushing him in a lions cage before driving
away as he sends a quick text to Taehyung saying he will be taken home by Yoongi later.

Then Seokjin is pulling up into a parking space on the side of a small shop painted all around in black with a few short but wide tinted windows and a sign above the door reading: Red Pearl Tattoo and Jewelry. In all honesty, the place is pretty sketchy for a hybrid and Jimin wonders again if Seokjin is really doing the right thing by driving him here.

His nerves are settled a little when Seokjin has him wait to get out of the car until there are less people walking around for his well-being. Jimin doesn’t know why he can’t just walk him up to the door - preferably straight to Yoongi - and then leave, but he’s too weirded out by the older’s general nonchalance on the subject of coming here in the first place to ask. Eventually, Seokjin deems outside safe and tells Jimin to say hi to Yoongi for him because he really needs to get ready for work.

So Jimin tries not to show he’s too nervous as takes his shopping bag, thanks Seokjin for the day, and leaves the car, walking briskly to the front of the building that looks a lot more intimidating up close. Before he can even reach the door, he sees Seokjin’s car leaving out into the main road and his stomach drops slightly at the thought of being left alone in such a new place. Thanks to Seokjin, there is currently no one outside to possibly harass or kidnap him, but quite a few empty cars fill the parking lot to the side, and he can’t see through the tinted windows that are higher up the wall than his eyes. It’s an interesting design but Jimin realizes it’s to compensate for the impressive spray paint artwork that advertises the shop with decorative needles and flowers.

With his tail between his legs and ears against his head, he reaches out for the door while holding his breath.

When he enters the building, the first thing he does is stay by the shut door to blink and get his eyes adjusted to the darkness compared to outside. Once he’s able to see, he looks around and notices the murmur of voices he heard at first stop as the people inside stare at him, letting the background rap music fill the air.

Jimin purses his lips as he inspects the people waiting on the side of the room. They are 4 people from ages 25 to 40 if Jimin does his best in reading ages, and looking somewhat intimidating with their own tattoos or just blank skin, piercings or none, clothes varying from white to black in different shades of yellow and the occasional hint of blue.

He analyzes the room itself. The area he’s stepped into is small and only seems to be a waiting room. To one side are chairs where the men are seated and staring, and to the other side is a desk with a young man in his early 20’s behind it, facing the customers but watching Jimin. The walls around him are painted a dark color he’s almost sure is really not just brown. It isn’t very visible anyway with how the walls are packed tightly with countess frames depicting various styles of piercings, tattoos, and drawings.

Parallel to the wall he came from is an opening to a hallway with doors Jimin can only think of as the rooms where people are being worked with. So far, it seems like a generally bad room for a person like him - one exit, not really any windows, lots of potential predators.

However, he isn’t able to take in the death-trap of a shop for long before the man at the desk is stuttering out a polite, “H-hello.”

Jimin swivels his head towards him quickly, never really letting his ears get very high from their place against his head out of fear. He slowly walks up to the cashier, his back to the other customers, and plays with his rings while speaking quietly,
“Hi. I’m looking for Yoongi? Min Yoongi?”

“Min Yoongi?” the man questions and looks through a few papers scattered around his desk with his forehead creased in confusion. “Are you waiting for someone he’s working on? Or are you here to make a more… private appointment?”

Jimin’s breath catches in his throat at the questions and what they mean. Out of humiliation for being a hybrid that’s thought of someone who’d go around with anyone he finds, and shame for not even having an owner to be waiting on. He puts his head down, his mood falling even more.

“So a private appointment?” he repeats in a lower tone as if he’s trying not to judge and let it be discrete.

But Jimin did not mean to bring his head down in that way and he immediately raises it to look into the man’s pitiful, almost disgusted eyes. “No!” he says a little too quick and loud in his own uncomfortably high voice. “No, I’m just… looking for him.”

There’s a silence that hangs between them that allows Jimin to hear the voices behind him start up again. If he wanted, he could easily make out what they’re saying, but something tells him it would be best to remain ignorant to their words. “Is…” Jimin starts up again, “Is Yoongi-Ssi here?”

“Y-yes!” The painfully awkward conversation continues as Jimin tries to focus on the rustling of his plastic bag as he slowly swings it in front of himself. “I’ll even call him up right now for you.”

He nods and tightens his tail around his leg as he watches the man pick up the phone and press a button before hold it to his ear impatiently in their silence. The ringing coming from the phone in front of him is quiet and meant only for the cashier to hear as he waits for someone to pick up the phone, but Jimin intentionally listens to it so he can have something to focus on instead of the vulgar lyrics of rap and the possibly just as vulgar words behind him.

It doesn’t take very long for Yoongi’s familiar voice to come through the line in a calm, “Hey, what’s up?”

“Ye-ah - uh,” the man says slowly as he tries to look somewhere other than Jimin’s grey eyes staring straight at the phone next to his ear.

“What’s wrong?” Yoongi’s voice sounds suspicious.

“Nothing, Yoongi, I just…” Jimin feels a little guilty for making this poor man so uncomfortable and he looks away from the phone and tries to find something else to watch as a distraction. “There’s someone here looking for you and I think you should come out to… to greet them.”

“Hyung,” Yoongi sighs is the way Jimin knows means the Senior doesn’t want to do something, “I was literally just about to start. It’s a short process. I can’t just leave and make it longer.”

“Yoongi, no, I really think you should come out here,” he insists.

“Fine. But who is it? Do I know them?”

“I - I think so?” the man frowns in confusion and glances to Jimin, who nods quickly with wide eyes so the cashier can get Yoongi to come out faster. But the action also shows Jimin could hear Yoongi on the other end, which makes the man a little nervous. “Yeah, I guess you do know him…”
There’s a wolf whistle from behind that almost drowns out Yoongi’s, “Um, alright? Be right there.”

The man hangs up the phone with skeptical eyes on Jimin, “Y-you could hear him?”

Jimin purses his lips and looks down, embarrassed for having been caught doing something unusual, “S-sorry for listening i-in.”

It sounds as if the man is about to say something else but there’s a door opening and closing from the hallway, then footsteps coming closer that takes Jimin’s attention as he turns quickly to the sound in anticipation of someone familiar who’d make him feel less nervous.

Yoongi finally comes into view while drying his hands on a white cloth he’s holding. The moment his eyes catch Jimin’s, he stops in the entrance way with a startled expression. Jimin takes this moment to take in Yoongi’s appearance, a plain black button up shirt only half rolled up his arms and half tucked into deep blue denim jeans that hug his legs in an almost lazy way, letting the fabric bunch slightly at the upper thighs, knees, and ankles, where his matching black hiking boots are nestled.

After a silent few seconds of empty eye contact, Yoongi collects himself a little by standing up straighter and speaking in a clearly surprised tone, “Jimin.”

Jimin only gives a small, forced smile, not able to relax even as he sees his friend with all these eyes on him, “Hyung…”

“What are you doing here?” he asks with furrowed brows as he takes a few steps toward Jimin. “How did you get here? Did you take a bus?” Then his eyebrows raise in suspicion, “I swear, Jimin, if you did that I’m gonna be so--”

“No, hyung,” Jimin allows himself to interrupt hesitantly. He grips harder on the bag’s handles as he speaks quietly, “I just…” Yoongi seems to notice his tone and thankfully softens his expression to one more understanding so Jimin can continue his explanation. “I was bored a-and I asked Seokjin-Hyung if he could drop me off here. He a-agreed so here I am… He says hi by the way…”

“You were bored?” Yoongi questions with a small frown of curiosity, and Jimin nods slowly.

Unfortunately, someone seated to the side decides to raise his voice to be heard, “Awe, come here, pretty boy, I’ll give you something to play with. I promise you’ll never get bored.”

Jimin glances towards the older man to his side as he leans over to try to grab Jimin’s arm. He knows better than to flinch or give a disgusted look at these comments so he only steps away a bit toward Yoongi and says even quieter, “N-no thank you, s-sir.”

“Oh babe, I’ll be having you call me something else than sir,” the man continues with a devilish smirk. “Something a little familiar. Starts with D…”

“Um…” Jimin completely understands what this man wants and what he had meant but he’s too overwhelmed and was never really taught how to reject the advances of anyone because he should always be with his owner in the first place, who would tell the man to go away. The smirks this man and the other customers are wearing only make Jimin more afraid of how this will turn out. He shouldn’t have come.

“How ‘bout it, sweetheart?”
Before him can think of anything else to say, Yoongi is finally and thankfully stepping in to save him with a hand on his wrist, pulling him to the hall while sighing out an uninterested, “I think he’ll be coming with me.”

“I bet he will be,” the man chuckles deeply, which makes Yoongi scowl at the customer and pull harder at Jimin’s wrist to get him moving from his paralyzed state.

“I have to get back to work, hyung!” Yoongi yells over his shoulder as they walk through the hall. “I’ll take care of him!”

A large burst of laughter from multiple men is heard from behind that definitely mutes whatever the cashier might have to reply with. But Jimin sees how Yoongi only rolls his eyes as he ushers him through a door Yoongi opens. He stands uncomfortably by the door while the older shuts it again and goes to sit on a chair that rolls over to a man in his own large chair, who is littered with dragon tattoos and spiked piercings.

The man, fortunately, doesn’t do much other than raise an eyebrow at Jimin before turning it to Yoongi. Yoongi shrugs as he gathers supplies from a table beside him, “Jimin’s a friend. He’s not here to do anything but watch me work like the nosey kid he is.”

Jimin whines almost playfully at the description, ‘Yoongi-Hyung~’

But the Senior smiles at him with a shake of his head to show he’s only teasing as the man speaks in a deep, unbothered tone, “Sit down, boy, get comfortable. I won't do anything to you.”

Jimin nods slowly and looks around for somewhere to do so. The room is small with cabinets lining the walls, a crowded desk in one corner, the customer and Yoongi in the center, and the only other place to sit on a chair on the other side of the man from Yoongi. Another rather unsafe room. It’s a little uncomfortable to get to the other side of the room as no one else talks, but he walks toward it silently anyway after setting his shopping bag in a corner of the room near the door.

Jimin notices Yoongi look up as he passes and grab his arm before using the other to roll over a half chair, one without back support, from under the desk in the corner. He stops the chair beside himself and tells Jimin, “Here. Sit here to see.”

He does as he’s told, placing himself on the cushion and curling his tail widely up his torso so it passes around twice, ending high above his chest so the tip taps his neck in an insecure gesture.

Yoongi sighs without turning to Jimin as he cleans the area above the man’s wrist but on the lower part of the top his forearm where a black tattooed spiral is located. “Why did you come here if you’re going to stay so scared, Jimin?” Yoongi asks, almost annoyed.

The question startles him and Jimin doesn’t know how to respond in defense, “I - I’m n--”

“Not scared?” Yoongi finishes. His voice goes to one more matter-of-factly, “Your body language says differently. It was dangerous to come here alone, Jimin. You don’t know how to do anything in public so people will just do whatever they want with you, like that asshole out there. You're very lucky he didn't touch you before I came because you know very well what he would've done.”

Jimin purses his lips and pouts at these facts Yoongi automatically tells him. He knows what he says is all true and the older is just looking out for him as best any friend can, but his ears are still somewhat flat, even now that he’s with Yoongi and able to have an actual conversation with someone he knows. It obviously gives away how he really feels about everything that’s happening.
“I just wanted to be with someone, hyung. But it wasn’t so fun when Seokjin-Hyung left me alone to find you… He didn’t even stay to walk me inside…”

“He has a job, Jimin,” Yoongi states.

“I - I know that but,” Jimin watches in isolation as the older irritatingly snaps on some rubber gloves before getting a tool from his small stand beside him that has a sharp point at one end. “I was alone,” he finishes lamely but as collected as he can because he knows he’s getting on Yoongi’s nerves.

“Which brings me to my next question,” Yoongi lines the long metal tool to point in the center of the spiral, which causes Jimin is scrunch his face and close his eyes for what happens next. “Why were you alone? I’m sure the others wouldn’t exclude you.”

He doesn’t open his eyes, especially when he hears the slight strain in Yoongi’s voice. “I uh… Tae wasn’t gonna be home when I got back because he’s with Jungkook and Namjoon-Hyung. Hoseok-Hyung and Jonghyun-Hyung will probably deny they’re on a date too. So… when I saw someone that reminded me of you, I thought I could come see you. B-because you said you’d let me come here.”

Yoongi is silent but Jimin can feel his amusement. It’s either coming from the older probably seeing him with his eyes shut, or from something he had said. Either way, it’s unsettling. Jimin takes his chances and opens his eyes to see Yoongi smiling softly but not looking his way. The older is currently doing something else with the opening he had created while Jimin was closing his eyes. Now, he seems to be widening the small incision by pushing another tool around inside the skin.

Jimin frowns at the action and the visibility of the tool underneath the man’s flesh. Next, Yoongi grabs a small circular object that shines like a diamond on one side, the actual jewelry, Jimin thinks. He watches somewhat on edge as Yoongi places the non-jewel part inside the wound, in the middle of the tattooed spiral. Then he inspects it a little, moves the skin around with his gloved fingers, fiddles with the piercing a bit more, and finally leans back to see the piece as a whole.

The man seems content with his result and says he might come back for a few more. Yoongi nods proudly and gives him a few tips on caring for the new piercing before leading him out the door with a paper he had taken out of a cabinet and signed all while Jimin sits there with his hands between his spread legs, spinning around until he gets more attention.
Chapter 15

Chapter Notes

Yoonmin! Yoonmin! Yoonmin!

For the most part - no, for the whole part, they were silent as Yoongi worked on two, then three more people’s new piercings in many different places on their body. After Jimin watched him make each opening with the tools or jewelry, he briefly thought he could go without closing his eyes for the initial pierce - until the third customer asked for another one on his tongue and it made him have to turn his body all the way around.

Other than the unsettling second-hand feeling of a piece of metal sliding around under skin, Jimin is generally comfortable. After explaining what made him want to visit Yoongi at work, the older had yet to make any more conversation with Jimin. It really just made him a little lonely because he didn't just come to see the process of a piercing like Yoongi promised one day, he also came to hang out with his friend on a nice Tuesday evening. So while Yoongi is meticulously cleaning his supplies after the tongue piercing and Jimin is able to turn back around, he finally admits to himself that he’s more than a little lonely and wants a whole lot more attention than he’s getting right now - which is currently none.

Jimin huffs noticeably loud into a pout and kneads the plush cushion of the chair between his legs with his small hands. To Jimin pleasure, he catches the human’s attention with the noise through the soft but high tempo background music of the shop. Yoongi sighs himself and only glances to him briefly with an eyebrow raised. “What?” Yoongi asks almost uninterestedly.

Jimin continues to pout at all the walls he’s facing as he spins in the chair, feeling a hint of embarrassment coming from Yoongi that only makes him confused. “Nothing, hyung.”

“Sure,” is the reply.

This causes him to frown outwardly at the stop in the conversation. Of course, there is something bothering him to make him huff and pout like this, but he doesn't want to simply say it because how would the older ever know his signs of sadness if he doesn't care to look for them? Nevertheless for Yoongi’s comfort, Jimin doesn’t push anymore if Yoongi is not wanting to speak. He’s at work, it’s fine.

They stay in silence like that for a while longer as Yoongi organizes his tools now. The table he has kind of looks like what a dentist would use, Jimin boredly notes. It’s a small rectangular shape that also rolls around and adjusts up and down so Yoongi can access it however he needs. Sometimes however, Yoongi needs to get items from the supply cabinets that are against the walls. He usually gets jewelry he doesn’t already have out on the desk in the corner or a binder full of images of what the customer is interested in for them to look through.

Everything is all very organized and peacefully simple enough to look at for Jimin to enjoy himself a little without being too bored. The swivel chair also helps as he is able to he look at all the drawings on the walls without moving far. He notices now that though the drawings everywhere
are for tattoos, but Yoongi has only been piercing people today. It's not very interesting but Jimin grabs the topic and speaks on it in a low, hesitant voice, “Do you tattoo people, Yoongi-Hyung?”

“Yes,” comes the quick response.

This makes Jimin almost whine out loud. Why isn’t Yoongi talking to him? Seokjin had said he doesn't like being interrupted, so maybe he just doesn't want Jimin there as he works. Such a thought makes him insecure at the way he had visited so unexpectedly. Even when Yoongi is done messing with his tools, he doesn’t seem to want to have anything to do with Jimin as he automatically rolls to his desk to organize those papers and jewelry.

Instead of saying something about his distress, Jimin takes a deep breath to calm himself because Yoongi is a person with his own desires and maybe he just doesn’t desire making conversation at the moment. Jimin nods at the photograph on the back of the door in agreement with himself. It isn’t a very big deal. He’ll just sit here until Yoongi’s ready.

He sighs. If Yoongi didn’t want to talk, why had he been the one to ask questions when Jimin first entered his workspace? Had he only taken pity on him and the way he was treated in the waiting area? Of course, Jimin appreciates him taking him out if that situation, but why is he pretty much ignoring him now? Had Jimin somehow embarrassed Yoongi? Another whine is caught in his throat. Really, why isn’t he getting attention? Suddenly, the urge to be pet grows quickly though he hadn’t wanted it in the first place.

Yoongi places a pile of papers in a cabinet silently before seating himself back at the desk and Jimin looks around for another distraction, eventually taking out his phone to see if he has any texts. Sadly, there are none. Maybe he should start a conversation with Taehyung instead. That sounds appealing.

[ little studio apartment (2) ]

You
> taetae

Not surprisingly, a reply is almost instant and the smallest smile graces his face as he’s temporarily distracted.

Puppy Tae
> hey jiminnie
> whats wrong? arent u with yoongi-hyung?

You
> im fine tae. i just want someone to talk to :\n
Puppy Tae
> ?? but yoongi-hyung??
> whats wrong jiminnie

You
> really taehyung nothing im fine
> cant i want to talk to you?

Puppy Tae
> of course but im doing something. i thought u went to hyung bc i wasnt home right? is he not being nice to u? :(
You
> no he isnt doing anything wrong taehyung
> so whats up

Puppy Tae
> stop jimin youre obviously uncomfortable
> if u want i can go home and u can tell me about it
> …
> is that a yes or no

You
> a no tae its fine
> i just want someone to talk to rn

“Jimin,” Yoongi’s voice breaks Jimin away from the texts. His face lights up at the thought of Yoongi changing his mind, but he turns only to see the older’s back and frowns. “You’re purring,” the older states casually.

Lonely, lonely Jimin and his high hopes of Yoongi wanting to talk are struck down even further when he realizes he has been unconsciously purring and not only is it because of stress, the act is annoying his friend.

“Why,” Yoongi calmly adds.

“No reason, hyung.”

“Okay.”

This time, Jimin can’t suppress the whine that escapes his throat, abandoned and eerily similar to an actual cat. It surprises Yoongi, causing him to turn with a confused expression. Jimin quickly purses his lips, flattens his ears, widens his eyes, and swivels the other way in shame.

He hears the rolling of a chair come to a stop behind him but pretends to be interested in the koi fish on the door he’s seen 15 times already. Then the feelings of curiosity and guilt tingle from behind, coming straight from Yoongi. Guilt? Jimin doesn’t know why Yoongi would be guilty. If anyone is, it’s Jimin for thinking he could visit and not upset someone. Before he knows it, Jimin’s purring again and Yoongi’s shame flows over him.

A hand suddenly makes its way in Jimin’s hair, which stops his purring and any other movement. Fingers rake through his hair, scratching his scalp gently and sifting through any knots. Jimin can’t do anything but sigh contently and relax into the feeling of being pet. It soothes him after being so uncomfortable and hesitant since he came.

Yoongi voice comes through his air of contentment, sounding deep and tired, soft and small, “How… how was your day, Jimin?”

“M-my day?” he repeats suspiciously after Yoongi had been practically ignoring him. It’s also such a random question, but he can’t seem to not answer when he gets such an anxious feel from Yoongi. “It was alright.”

“Worse now that you’re with me?”

“No…” Jimin sighs, slumping as much as he can into the backless chair and pushing the hand further into his hair. It’s true his day turned upside down now that he’s visited the human, but at least Yoongi didn't ask him to leave or tell him outright that he doesn’t want to talk.
“What did you do then?”

“I… went shopping with Jin-Hyung, Jonghyun-Hyung, and Hoseok-Hyung after school... Bought some clothes Jin-Hyung said looked good.”

“You don’t like them?”

“They’re pretty but… I’m colorblind… so I don’t know anymore. How was your day?”

He hears Yoongi sigh and the hand in his hair slow a bit, “A-Alright.”

“Worse now that I’m here?” Jimin teases, but at the same time it’s a serious question because he genuinely thinks he made Yoongi’s day worse.

“No… You just,” Jimin’s breath stills as Yoongi gets quieter and more embarrassed, “made it... better… I guess.”

“Doesn’t seem like it,” he mumbles, keeping his voice calm even as he pouts.

“What’s wrong, Jimin? You don’t seem happy here. I want you - everyone - to be happy here when they visit.”

Now, it’s Jimin who sighs but never changes the calm tone of voice to let Yoongi know he’s serious, “You won’t talk to me, hyung. I just want to talk and you’re not answering.”

“I’m sorry,” Yoongi takes his hand away from his head and Jimin pouts now at the loss. Of course he would drive the older away. “I… I really am not... used to people being around while I work. I don’t know how to deal with humoring, I guess.”

Jemin puts his head down at this statement and messes with his phone case in his hands. “I can leave, hyung,” he offers quietly with a shrug. “I mean, I’d need Jonghyun-Hyung to pick me up, but if I’m distracting you or making your day worse, I can leave. Really, it’s fi--”

“No, Jimin,” Yoongi irritatingly says. It’s not a tone Jimin expects, he sounds even more fed up now that Jimin’s said this. “I asked you if you wanted to come and you came. I should be making your day better. Here,” Yoongi pulls slightly on the back of Jimin’s thin shirt to get his attention. When Jimin turns, Yoongi motions for him to join him at the desk with a small, shy smile. “I’ll show you what I’m working on.”

The desk is full of sketches in pen, pencil, and marker that create all things from beautiful blooming flowers to angry flaming skulls to almost uncomfortably private drawings of women in different positions and stages of undressing. It all looks so wonderful to Jimin as he sees a whole new world of what Yoongi can do. The sheer amount of drawings are also impressive, he can’t believe he’s never brought up the topic of art so he could see this talent sooner.

He smiles widely at the papers as he speaks truthfully, “These are for tattoos, right? I love them. I think you’re an amazing artist.”

“Thanks,” Yoongi mumbles embarrassingly while attempting to move some around and hide others. A dark blush graces his cheeks and Jimin would do anything to see the red color against the older’s light skin. “There are a few that are a little um - inappropriate though and I’d rather you not see them.”

Jemin giggles despite the serious look Yoongi quickly gives him. “It’s fine, hyung. I’m not the most innocent person you’ll meet.” This earns him a scandalized expression that makes him
outright laugh and shake his head. “I’m not sure if I want to know what you’re thinking but I’m just saying I’m a hybrid. I’m a lot more mature than humans my age. And I’ve also been witness to a few inappropriate situations.”

Yoongi pouts and furrows his eyebrows in the way he does when he doesn’t think he’s being taken seriously. “That’s not something to laugh about, Jiminnie, you know that. You shouldn’t be pushed into seeing things you don’t want to…”

Jimin shrugs as his smile slowly fades at the truth. “It’s just bad timing and bad people.” Suddenly, he hears something quick and loud that has him straightening his back and facing the door in surprise with his ears at attention. “Someone doesn't know the meaning of walking calmly in high heels.”

Now, Yoongi chuckles, “Is she coming to me?”

“I don’t know,” Jimin squints as he focuses on the soft footsteps so far away as if he’d be able to hear better by staring at the door harder. “She’s kinda pacing in the waiting area… Now her and one or two more people are coming closer.” He squints a bit more and tilts his head for a second to get a clearer understanding of the male voice getting louder, “Yep, she’s been referred to you.”

“Fun,” Yoongi says rather boredly.

Not five seconds later, the cashier opens the door to let a distressed woman in an expensive, professional looking suit and skirt set enter. Right behind her is a pretty teenage girl about Yoongi’s age holding a sleeping young child against her hip. When the three newcomers who are awake lay their eyes on Jimin they freeze for a good few seconds.

That’s one of the things Jimin dislikes about being a hybrid out in public, the confusion, fear, lust, or just curiosity that shows on people’s faces when they see him and/or his best friend. It usually continues until he’s out of sight. Staying here while Yoongi worked with three customers was only a little uncomfortable as the older men smirked and winked at him, enjoying the way Jimin would squirm and look away as much as he could. This woman seems to be frightened, the teenager seems confused, and the cashier is startled.

The man Jimin met earlier speaks first as he ushers the customers farther in the room, “I c- completely forgot he was here, Yoongi.”

“Where else would he be?” Yoongi lazily replies from beside Jimin. It gives some sort of comfort to him how Yoongi is so nonchalant about dealing with people who treat Jimin differently, whether they do so in a good, bad, or neutral way. He suddenly feels compelled to be closer to the Senior, so he puts his head down and rolls in the silence until he’s almost completely behind him.

“I - uh,” the man stutters out after tearing his eyes away from Jimin.

“What is it, hyung?” Yoongi asks almost angrily.

“The girl,” Jimin tells Yoongi quietly, which brings all attention to him. He only looks at Yoongi though, “She’s never had a piercing before so he thinks you’d be best to do it since you’re about her age.”

“Ye-ah,” the cashier nods then crosses his arms disapprovingly. “He keeps listening to my conversations, Yoongi, it’s creepy.”

“Tell him yourself, it’s not my problem,” Yoongi immediately answers coldly as Jimin puts his head down again at being called creepy. Hostility and defensiveness however, seep from Yoongi
and Jimin is not sure what to think of it, only accept that it helps calm his nerves.

“Anyway,” the man continues to Yoongi. “This is Yumi and her mother Jongil. Jongil, this is Yoongi and I’m sure he can answer any of your questions.”

When the door closes, Yoongi stands with his arm stretched out to the older woman, smiling softly now. “Hi, what can I do for you? Or rather, your daughter?” Yoongi shakes both of their hands charmingly.

Jongil still looks uncomfortable even after returning Yoongi’s smile politely. She gently grabs the sleeping boy out of her daughter’s arms when she speaks with concern, “Yumi has been wanting a piercing for so so long but I’ve never let her. I don’t want it to affect her job, you know? But… it’s her eighteenth birthday now and I figure I should give her a gift she truly wants.”

Yoongi nods along with the woman in understanding, “It’ll be alright ma’am. It really just depends on how visible the piercing is and where she decides to work.” Then he addresses the only slightly nervous girl with another smile, “You can sit here. Do you already have a place in mind?”

The girl does as she’s told as her mother seats herself in the chair opposite Yoongi with the child on her lap. “Yes, I want it um, on my belly button… It’s somewhere where people won’t really see.”

“Good choice,” Yoongi briefly leaves her side to open a cabinet and pull out a glass display case with different designs and styles of the same, hook like jewelry. “Is there any type of material you’re trying to avoid? We should stay away from anything that might irritate your skin like if you’ve ever gotten bad reactions from fake silver.”

Jimin watches as Yoongi and Yumi discuss which might be the best piece of jewelry for her. He sees the way she crosses her legs each time he looks at her, the subtle bite of her lip when she points at something of interest. She’s pretty, no doubt popular with the guys. She has pale blue skinny jeans, a white flowing blouse - despite the lowering temperatures - that hangs only slightly low on her chest, and silver necklaces and fingernails. Her body is even ideal, thick thighs, thin waist, dark almond eyes, long hair, pale skin, all the works. Jimin might even be a little envious of how she can catch someone’s eye from her beauty and not his differences - and maybe the way she’s so interested in Yoongi, and not him.

But Jimin also sees the unfaltering expression of Yoongi’s soft smile as he looks nowhere but where she points and her eyes. There’s no difference in his professional tone, he only smiles to make her comfortable and when she finally makes a choice to encourage her.

This, for some odd reason, makes Jimin smirk as he rests his cheek against his hand propped up on the desk of drawings and other cases. For someone who says they can’t humor others well, Yoongi is doing a good job keeping Yumi on edge.

Yoongi asks Jimin quietly if he could put the display case away while he pulls on some gloves and tells the girl to lift her shirt up so they can start. Once Jimin is back in his chair, Yoongi is already shaking his head slowly, telling Yumi to relax because, “It’s just rubbing alcohol.”

After cleaning the area, she asks Yoongi with a little desperation, “Is it gonna hurt?”

Yoongi looks up at her in surprise. “Yes,” he chuckles lightly, which makes the mother stand up abruptly.

She takes her son with her and says hurriedly, “I’m going to find the bathroom. I don’t think I can watch my baby be in pain.”
“Do you need help findi--” Yoongi tries to offer his help to the rattled woman but Jongil is already shutting the door.

“It’s alright!” She belatedly yells in response from the other side.

Jimin bites back a laugh at this before he returns his attention to Yoongi and Yumi at the center of the room. She’s looking at Yoongi with a hard gaze while lust is rolling off her; Jimin feels jealous and like he wants to throw up simultaneously. She’s very pretty, and Jimin wishes she could pay attention to him.

“Is there anything you can do to help?” she asks with a finger on her pouting lips.

“Um,” Yoongi casually looks around the room before shrugging with an uneasy smile. “No. The best thing to do is hold the chair I guess.”

Yumi sighs into her seat, but in a more relaxed way than anything, “Talk to me then, hm? Take my mind off it. Do you have any piercings, Yoongi-Ssi?”

He shakes his head and looks back to Jimin, “Can you get me a marker, Jiminnie? Any kind is fine.” He takes the thin pointed Sharpie and goes back to the girl's stomach. “No, I prefer to keep piercings and tattoos for occasions. There hasn't been anything worthy of that yet.”

Jimin frowns at what Yoongi says. Hadn’t he wanted to get a piercing just because? Either Yoongi had been only humoring Jimin, or there’s more to his decision he made with him more than a week prior. He doesn’t let himself think about it for too long.

“I can see that,” she nods at him in understanding, but still curious and eager to make conversation. “Would you get one for a girl?”

This makes Yoongi suddenly smirk before handing the marker back to Jimin and grabbing a tool he can’t really describe in one hand along with the shiny piece of jewelry she picked out earlier in the other. Luckily for Jimin, he’s at an angle where can’t see what’s going on with the process and it saves him from possible disgust.

“I wouldn’t get one for a girl,” Yoongi finally answers. In the unusually soft and caring voice he’s taken to speaking to Yumi with he says, “I’m going to start now, alright? Do whatever you think might help.”

Yumi nods hurriedly and takes a deep breath while holding onto her shirt bunched up beneath her chest tightly, “Keep distracting me. Why not? Are you single?”

Jimin has to give props to the way she asked this. Admittedly, he saw it coming since the “bedroom eyes,” but most people just ask if someone is single blatantly without much build up. At least, he thinks, she used a relevant topic that makes conversation easier between Yoongi and her. The two speak easily because she’s found something Yoongi doesn’t mind talking about.

“I am,” Yoongi replies with a quick charming smile and eyebrow raise before turning back to her stomach.

“That’s surprising.” And based on the difference in her tone of voice, Jimin can only guess what happened in the middle of her sentences. She sucks in a deep breath that sounds as if she’s cursing the cold and the pain.

“And why’s that?” Yoongi chuckles amusingly at her. They seem to lock eyes now and Yumi gives a relieved smile to him while keeping the intimate eye contact.
“Have you looked in the mirror?” she asks with her own flirtatious smirk now. “I’d think you have with how nice you look in your outfit.”

Jimin sees the way Yoongi shakes his head and fiddles with the piercing on her stomach one last time. “How do you feel?” he goes back to talking about what’s really happening, but doesn’t take away his smile or the pride and amusement Jimin feels coming from him.

“Better now that you’re smiling, handsome. You should do it more.”

“I mean the piercing,” Yoongi laughs at her, patting the area around her belly softly and never removing his hand from her skin. “Does it hurt?”

“Not as much as my heart when you laugh. I’d listen to you all day if you let me, you know.”

This girl is something. Jimin doesn’t know whether to be annoyed or impressed with her almost desperate antics. He guesses he’s more impressed with how well Yoongi is taking her gradual flirting. Yoongi isn’t necessarily egging her on or ignoring her advances, just really rolling with it to see where it goes. It even looks as if he might flirt back just for the fun of it. Either way concerning Yumi’s flirting, Jimin can’t disagree with her statement about Yoongi’s clothes though, he looks... appealing with the sleeves of his button up rolled to elbows, revealing his soft pale skin that’s such a beautiful contrast to the dark color scheme of the rest of his deep black and blue outfit. Of course, Jimin is only really looking at him to understand Yumi’s perspective. Of course.

Then Yoongi laughs again and Jimin thinks he can understand that joy of the sound as well as Yoongi stands up with a hand out for the girl to take, “I think you’ll be fine, Yumi. Trust me.”

Yoongi stands her up in a gentleman-like fashion before walking away to take a sheet of paper from another cabinet like he always does when he finishes with a customer. He quickly fills it out while the girl stands in front of a tall mirror with her shirt exposing her new jewelry.

“Here,” he grabs her attention to hand the paper to her, “My cousin at the front will help you with cleaning supplies. Make sure he sees this?”

Yumi looks down at the paper with a pout and Jimin watches intently as she steps closer to Yoongi, an unfamiliar feeling bubbling inside of him. “Can’t you help me, Yoongi-Ssi? It’s my birthday, after all.”

He sighs through his handsome smile then strokes her arm softly, which makes her blush and bite her lip up at him. “Wait here for a minute for me, yeah?”

“Anything to see your backside.”

Yoongi leaves her quickly to approach the desk Jimin is still at. He sifts through the countless drawings with a playful smile at his lips that Jimin can’t look away from. “What are you going to do?” Jimin asks quietly, not sure if he really wants to know what kind of cheesy courting ideas of Yoongi might have in mind.

“Gonna play with her,” he responds in a whisper that Jimin has to strain to hear. Then Yoongi raises his voice to one more noticeable as he seems to find a satisfactory drawing, “Hand me that thick marker, Jimin?”

When Jimin does this and finally allows himself to look down at what Yoongi is doing, he is thoroughly surprised and somewhat amused. He has picked out a detailed drawing of a naked, properly displayed and disheveled boy dog hybrid on his knees crying. But he can’t seem to move his hands from where they are behind his back to wipe at the tears down his face. Jimin doesn’t let...
himself linger anywhere between the spread legs of the hybrid as he reads what Yoongi writes in an empty bottom corner: *I’m gay, baby*, with a heart or two around it.

He then carefully folds the drawing twice with a smirk and walks back over to the patiently waiting girl who seemed to have been looking somewhere lower than Yoongi’s eyes the entire time. Yumi smiles brightly at him now with a slight blush as he takes her hand to walk her to the door, which he opens for her.

When she’s just outside, he hands her the folded message and leans in to kiss her hair briefly. Yumi traces the edges of the paper as this happens before Yoongi closes the door on her slowly.

They don’t hear her leave when Yoongi strides back to his seat with his smirk next to Jimin, who smiles widely at the older and leans closer toward the door to hear what she does next.

Yoongi casually puts his hand in Jimin’s hair again when he relays what is happening, “She’s walking away… opening it… oh! She gasped! And now she’s complaining for a discount.”

The two can hear laughter from the cashier at the front, which they join in as they also hear her loudly explain why she’s upset.

Once she leaves, Jimin leans into the hand in his hair against as the smile fades into a more curious expression, “Why did you have that picture, hyung?”

Yoongi stills for a moment and Jimin thinks he may have overstepped something. But the older continues with a sigh as Jimin feels trust and peace from Yoongi before he says with his low voice, “Someone wanted a custom design… They’re paying extra for it. But now I have to make a new one before tomorrow.”

Jimin smiles and nods at the way Yoongi easily tells him the truth, and thinks for a moment, he can be a little more comfortable too as he finally says what’s been on his mind since saw the drawing, “It was wasn’t right.”

“What?” Yoongi hesitantly asks. “Drawing it for them or doing that to her?”

“I mean… it wasn’t anatomically correct. You drew some things wrong,” he mumbles insecurely while playing with his rings.

“O-oh,” the hand in his hair slows ever so slightly. “Well… do you think people will notice?”

“If they own a hybrid, yes.” Then Jimin says something he really doesn’t mind doing, but he knows is risky to offer, “I-if you want I’ll help you… like tell you what was wrong and help you fix it…”

Yoongi’s silent for a bit and Jimin is too anxious and embarrassed to understand what emotions Yoongi might be feeling. He really only meant that he’ll point out the flaws and tell him what to do to change it, and he hopes Yoongi understands that without feeling uncomfortable. Then the older scratches behind his ear in just the way Taehyung always does when he’s sad and mumbles to Jimin, “If that’s alright with you…”

“Yeah,” he nods shortly with a blush.

So Jimin sits there with Yoongi, teaching him things like how much mobility a dog hybrid has over its ears and how their tail curls in certain positions - making sure to say nothing about the fact that the older obviously has no idea knots were also passed down to hybrids - until the cashier tells them the shop closed and he didn’t give Yoongi any more customers because of what he did to that
poor girl.
Chapter 16

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

For Jimin to say he’s never been jealous of Taehyung is a lie. There has been more than one time in his life where he’s seen his best friend in a situation he wished he could be in. Everything always seems to come so easily to Taehyung when it came to social life and the way people worked, humans and hybrids alike.

What Jimin was mostly envious of was the carefree yet exciting life he always had. Of course, they’ve always lived the same life, side by side, but the wolf seems to get the more dramatic or adventurous side. No one really wants a dramatic lifestyle, but being a shy hybrid like Jimin, he didn't want a normal one. Even after coming to Seoul and expecting something more, Taehyung still managed to have a more hectic life.

Already, he’s had a dramatic argument with a friend that only brought them closer together, a frightening panic attack that resulted in the argument, a chance to transform at his own pure will because he felt so safe, and out of it all, he’s been strengthening the relationships he has with their new friends. Jimin isn't wanting this to happen to him, and he certainly doesn't believe Taehyung should be happy himself with all the negative situations happening to him, Jimin only thinks he’s been living the background of Taehyung’s life.

Don’t get him wrong, he’s been having a great time since they moved to Seoul; they’ve made awesome friends, dyed their hair, gone out to a cafe, had a meal with another family, Jimin even had a little one on one time with Yoongi, which almost never happens with any of them.

As much as Jimin wishes he could have as an exciting life as Taehyung, he also knows homework isn’t being forgotten in the chaos and the life he’s living is just fine if he stopped to think about himself for a bit. Taehyung is nothing if not a perfect friend who doesn’t treat Jimin with anything less than affection after all they’ve been through together. In the back of his head, Jimin has a feeling Taehyung knows he feels left out when all the attention is on him most of the time while he’s dealing with Jungkook or his wolf.

Times like now are when he feels the most loved by his best friend. Their human friends are all around them, but Taehyung is right by Jimin’s side. It gives him some sort of assurance that Jimin is not just someone to pass time with now that they’ve moved to Seoul. He’s never actually believed that, but he can’t say it’s never crossed his mind.

When Jimin says, ‘right by his side,’ it really means, ‘right on his side’ because Taehyung has no sense of privacy and half of his upper body is on Jimin’s back. They’re in a weird position on the ground in front of their television, Jimin laying on his stomach, resting his cheek on his crossed arms; Taehyung’s stomach pressed up against Jimin’s side, his own cheek on Jimin’s shoulder blade as he scratches Jimin’s lower back. Jimin doesn’t really mind it because he isn’t physically or emotionally uncomfortable - as long as Taehyung doesn’t move a leg over him because he’s always had this weird disliking of Taehyung’s long legs while his are short.

They’re watching a cliche movie on some horror TV channel about huge, slimy aliens coming on board this spaceship uninvited. It’s probably a hundred years old, which is why they all seem to love making fun out of it during the dramatic quiet scenes or commercial breaks. As the credits roll and a classic horror they’ve all seen before is about to start, Taehyung and Jimin laugh quietly together about their favorite part that completely failed to scare them.
Distractedly, Jimin registers hearing someone standing up and walking softly towards the front door, away from everyone else. If the movie hadn’t just started and if the others seemed more interested in the person too, he would have looked back to see what was happening. But the only emotions he can really feel right now is Taehyung’s excitement for the beginning and he lets the person do whatever he wants.

That is until he hears someone whisper his name. As all whispers are, it’s quiet and only slightly difficult to make out. But since being friends with the humans, Jimin can easily tell who the voice belongs to - as a good friend should. He isn’t too absorbed in the movie to forget his manners and respond appropriately when someone calls his name. Except, he allows himself to not look back like he should as he immediately responds to the call before he makes the human repeat himself, “Yeah, Hobi-Hyung?”

An even softer sound is heard that would have passed him if there hadn’t been a silence in the movie.

Again, he doesn’t take his attention away from the movie as the main character’s romantic interest appears - a hot piece of ass if you ask the hybrids as Jimin smiles to himself and even feels Taehyung’s smile on his back at the camera’s blatant “checking out.” The response to Hoseok is a polite but thoroughly distracted, “What?”

“That’s amazing,” Hoseok says with his own smile coming through from somewhere behind them. His voice gets louder as he comes closer and Jimin vaguely realizes he had been the one to go to the front door earlier. Hoseok has always been easily amused so Jimin doesn't question what he had seen over there to make him call.

“If you’re talking about this actor then I completely agree, hyung,” Jimin tells him as Hoseok sits back down on the couch.

Seokjin and Namjoon laugh out loudly with a few claps and Yoongi and Jungkook snicker a little at this. Honestly, Jimin has no idea what is going on or what they’re really laughing about but he can’t seem to care to find out when the camera tilts down as the actor walks away to show where the main character - and probably everyone else - is looking. Taehyung nods hurriedly and takes out the phone in Jimin’s back pocket, “I totally forgot he was in this movie. I have to know his name then download a hundred pictures of him for wallpapers on my phone and the laptop.”

Jimin frowns at his friend’s plan without looking away from the screen, “That’s my phone.”

“I don’t know where mine is and I know you won’t mind me downloading all of it.”

Jimin only hums in response because he knows Taehyung is nice enough to change his wallpaper as well before sending the pictures to himself. As the first commercial break begins, Jimin remembers he never figured out why Hoseok called him. Even if it might be a little late, Jimin knows to not ignore a human. Without the weight of Taehyung on his back when he shifted to his back, Jimin can prop himself up on his arms to turn back at the five eerily smiling humans scattered on the couch and ground. He catches Hoseok’s eyes, “You called, hyung?”

The humans’ smiles grow wider as Hoseok nods and points to the short entrance way where the front door is hidden, “Yeah. From in there.”

Jimin frowns as his forehead creases in confusion, “What’s over there? Why’d you say that?”

“Because you heard me!” Hoseok exclaims in excitement. “I even whispered from the farthest wall!”
Oblivious as ever, Jimin still doesn’t know what the whole point was to call him. “But… what’s over there?”

Namjoon chuckles in his deep voice at Jimin’s confusion. His eyes are filled with amusement, “Nothing is over there, Jiminnie. We just wanted to know how good your hearing is.”

Once Jimin understands, he smiles a bit himself and falls to lay on his back now to watch Taehyung scroll through the images of man’s most sexy creation. “Oh,” Jimin replies proudly. “Yeah, cats can hear better than dogs.”


“Is that why you guys whisper so much?” Seokjin curiously questions.

Jimin raises his eyebrows and Taehyung puts the phone down as they look at him almost in embarrassment for being caught. It’s a harmless act, but what if the others feel left out? “N-no, it’s just a habit,” Taehyung answers.

“That’s really interesting if you think about it,” Namjoon nods. He’s using the tone of voice they’ve labeled as when he is about to talk about something sort of deep. At least he isn’t angry.

“How?” Jimin asks.

“Well, you guys have been together since you were born, right?”

“Yep,” Taehyung goes to high five Jimin, who eagerly hits the palm in celebration of their long brotherhood.

Namjoon chuckles and continues, “If you’ve been whispering so long it’s become a habit, I can’t imagine how good your hearing is for specifically each other’s voices.”

Jimin laughs at Namjoon’s interest. He already knows how acclimated he is to Taehyung’s voice and especially the way it gets when they whisper. Years of getting quieter have made the words form more into sounds with fluctuations. As they’ve lived in Seoul, it’s regained some clarity since there aren’t hybrids around every corner with a thirst for gossip. “I guess it is pretty interesting,” Jimin looks at Taehyung proudly. “Sometimes I can hear him over the shower.”

Taehyung quickly turns to him in surprise, “Same!” They share another high five.

Seokjin scrunches his nose, “I don’t even want to expand on that.”

After Hoseok hits the oldest with a nervous laugh, Yoongi changes the topic by bringing Jimin’s attention to himself, saying casually, “Jiminnie, your hair is a nice color. Come here so Hyung can see it better.”

The sudden compliment actually has Jimin’s face heating up, especially since the older said it so easily, making it seem more genuine. To cover up the unfamiliar flutter in his stomach as he maintains eye contact with Yoongi’s softly smiling face, Jimin responds with his own cheeky smile, “You picked it out, of course you like it.”

Rolling his eyes slightly, Yoongi waves a hand toward himself, “Just come here so Hyung can see if we should touch it up soon.”
Nonetheless, Jimin stands quickly as to not block their TV and plops himself next to the Senior, who’s back is up against the couch as he sits on the ground. Before he can get very comfortable, Yoongi spreads his crossed legs and taps the area between them to ask Jimin to sit in front of him instead. Jimin complies easily, swiftly seating himself with his back to the older.

“Hyung, I didn’t know you picked out his color,” Namjoon comments as Yoongi threads his fingers through the fading silver strands turning dark at the roots. Jimin shivers subtly at the feeling but lets himself enjoy being pet.

“He was near a panic attack trying to choose himself,” Yoongi scoffs with a hint of pride. “It was also his first time. He should be comfortable with a more natural new hair color before doing something like bright orange right away.”

“Hey,” Taehyung frowns at Yoongi from his place in front of the television. “Orange is a good color to start with!”

“Jiminnie said you’ve dyed your hair before,” Yoongi tilts his head. “I didn’t know it was orange.”

Jimin hums at this statement through his purrs, “Had it for about a year.”

Jungkook beams at this new information, “Taehyung, do you have pictures? Can we see them?”

Jimin’s lazy, pleased smile fades away with his purring as he catches his best friend’s hesitant eyes. The time Taehyung dyed his hair isn’t something they like to talk about; not because it looked bad, but because of the situation he was in to make him dye it. Later on, when it was over, Taehyung learned to love the color and his first hair dying experience.

Now, they share a worried look in response long enough for everyone else’s smile to fall and Jungkook to stutter insecurely as he takes back his words.

As much as both hybrids hate the story of their rocky past, they really do want to stop avoiding it. They both apologized and it’s been almost 2 years since it’s happened. Jimin is fine with sharing the bulk of it to their close friends like these, but he’d rather some events stay in the dark. However, it’s Taehyung’s story to tell and Jimin won’t say anything without him. Either way, Jimin gives a short, encouraging nod and a warm smile to the wolf hybrid.

It’s just enough to make Taehyung sigh deeply in the awkward silence filled with the soft footsteps of actors in the woods. He looks up to Jungkook - who’s avoiding the gaze in embarrassment and focusing on the movie - and smiles weakly even though Jungkook is the only one not really looking. “Jungkookie, come help me find the laptop. I’ll show you guys,” Taehyung speaks quietly.

“Ah, Tae, i-t’s fine,” Jungkook woodenly waves it off. “You d--”

“Guess I’ll find it alone~” Taehyung’s teasing voice interrupts with his ever so adorable smile that makes Jungkook smile and follow after him into the hall.

Hoseok hesitantly asks Jimin, “Is it really okay to talk about it?”

“Not my decision,” Jimin distractedly hums since Yoongi found that one spot behind his ear. His purr starts up again and he slowly leans back against Yoongi’s chest comfortably, especially with the thought of Taehyung being willing to share a sensitive event in his life.

Hoseok’s hand finds its way in Jimin’s hair too for a brief scratching that makes him smile up at the older. “You’re so cute, Jiminnie! I can see why Yoongi-Hyung loves to pet you so much.”
Namjoon and Seokjin laugh when Yoongi replies with a gruff, “Shut up.” Jimin doesn’t really know what to think of that information, but he smiles to himself for having a small spot in Yoongi’s heart.

Taehyung and Jungkook come back with the hybrids’ shared laptop in the wolf’s hands, the both of them seating themselves in the middle of the couch on the ground with the laptop on the coffee table. “Gather around to witness my edgy phase.”

Namjoon mutes the movie and lets Seokjin cuddle in closer to see the laptop clearly, Hoseok on the Junior’s other side. Jimin laughs at the way Taehyung has decided to label this time in his life while moving away from Yoongi so the older can sit on the other side of Taehyung, Jimin next to him.

“Your edgy phase?” Jungkook questions as Taehyung sets the laptop up.

“Yes,” he nods. “I wore fake suits and leather and heavy eyeliner and lots of black and white. Those were the only colors that really went well with orange.”

“That sounds awesome.”

“It’s better because I was like, thirteen or fourteen.”

“We get to see baby Taehyung?” Hoseok claps enthusiastically.

The first photo Taehyung brings up results in a good reaction from the humans. It’s four young boys standing in what Jimin remembers to be a hall. From left to right is a cute, chubby Jimin in his short glasses with his hands squishing his cheeks at the camera, then a boy hybrid dressed in all black with a smirk and an arm around Taehyung’s shoulder, who is third with a peace sign near his eye and brown hair, then another hybrid in black with one of his arms around Taehyung’s waist and the other holding the camera.

“This was when we were younger, though. Nothing happened then,” Taehyung explains while pointing at the screen. “It was when we meet them, those two kids.”

“Who were they?” Jungkook asks.

Before Taehyung can answer, Jimin whines while pointing over Yoongi, “Tae, change it I look fat.”

“But, Jiminnie, you’re just a baby!” Hoseok ruffles his hair.

Jimin only hums with a pout because not only does he know he was a bit overweight then, he knows Taehyung doesn’t want to give names to the kids that started to hang out with them. They were so bad it’s best to keep them without labels.

Taehyung ignores Jungkook’s question and changes the picture to one much like the one before, the four of them standing outside now. Taehyung is still between the two smirking dog hybrids in black with Jimin in his beloved glasses he left behind, a stubby finger poking his own puffed out cheek in a pout. Taehyung however, has changed. His hair now a bright orange, wearing a large dark grey sweater, and the smallest hint of cuteness in his smile that’s less boxy.

“Woah,” Seokjin comments, “That’s a big change.”

“It’s almost like a different person,” Namjoon nods.
This third image is also outside. Taehyung is now wearing eyeliner, a fake leather vest, chains, and his arms are finally around the two other boys’ necks, looking down at the camera in an angle that shows off his stuck out tongue and menacing glare.

“Oh shit,” Jungkook breathes out with wide eyes. “Is that really you? Tell me that’s not you, Taehyung.”

“Like I said,” Taehyung shrugs, “It was my edgy phase.”

More images pass of the three in similar poses and outfits. They’re all in black with darkly outlined eyes, hands in either peace signs or rock signs, and their tongues out if they’re not showing off their teeth. They get to one now less dark. The boys are wearing white button up shirts, a loose tie, and black pants with a wallet chain attached as they lean against a wall. While the other photos were taken by one of the trio, this was not.

Yoongi stops Taehyung from going any further with the pictures. “Where’s Jimin?” he frowns. “All these pictures except for two don’t have him. I thought you guys were always friends.”

Taehyung stutters out in shock. Honestly, neither of the hybrids thought one of their friends would ask about it. Well, they hoped, really. “Um. H-he wasn’t… there… through this.”

“Why not?” Hoseok asks.

It’s Jimin who answers, “After a while I was taken out of the same sort of… living ward as Tae. He was supposed to leave not too long after me but these boys made him worse. Even when they were gone, it was a while before he was moved to the same place as me, but we still saw each other everyday.”

Yoongi looks at Jimin with the confused pout he wears when he doesn’t really know what other people are doing or talking about and Jimin is yet again wondering how he still somehow fit in at the tattoo and piercing parlor. “You’ve said before you guys were in different wards at some point,” Yoongi says. “That that’s where they allowed hybrids to dye their hair. What makes it different from the rest of the place?”

Feeling he may be talking too much on his own about what is really Taehyung’s story, Jimin looks at his best friend to let him answer. Taehyung replies easily, “It’s just a place where hybrids with differences went. Like, so they could figure out how to make us normal. We still did everything that everyone else did though. Had the same classes as normal hybrids, with normal hybrids. We just lived somewhere else closer to where they could... sort of research us.”

“That’s good,” Seokjin nods. “They don’t completely isolate you and make you feel different.”

The other humans seem to agree on this. Then Jungkook asks, “But what were your differences? And why did Jimin leave before you?”

“Well, we’ve told you that,” Taehyung frowns to himself as if wondering if he may have imagined it.

Everyone else looks confused, so Jimin supplies, “Taehyung’s inability to control his wolf and my eyes.” They light up in understanding. “They actually had to teach me that I saw things completely differently than everyone else. Then they needed to know exactly how I saw and if I had any problems other than color blindness.”

Suddenly, they all go back to being confused, mouths agape. “You’re colorblind?” Seokjin asks disbelievingly.
Jimin recoils a bit at their expressions of bewilderment. “Y-yeah? All cats are.”

“This whole time?” Namjoon questions. Jimin nods slowly and tentatively.

“You’ve been colorblind,” Hoseok continues. “This whole time?”

Now it’s Taehyung who answers in a sort of groan, “Yes, he’s been colorblind this entire time. He left his glasses at home and now he sees like a cat until they mail them back. It’s why he had glasses in the pictures.”

“Wait, Jimin,” Jungkook asks, “What color is the front of your house?”

He frowns, “The grass? It’s green. All grass is green. I’ve seen grass before.”

“No, I actually meant the paint at the front of your house but you’ve seen green?”

“Yes!” Jimin groans, throwing his head back in frustration. It makes Yoongi and Hoseok chuckle. “I have glasses! I just don’t have them right now. But that’s why we were in there.”

“Why’d you leave?” Seokjin leans in. “I mean - it’s good but why didn’t Taehyung?”

Jimin points to the image on the laptop screen, “Them.”

Taehyung expands, “I was getting better,” He sighs sadly. “I really was. But then we met them and they took me away from Jimin and I just went downhill. My transformations were crazy. Not to mention, the three of us skipped classes and broke every rule.”

“So…” Jungkook starts curiously, “When they left, you got to see Jimin again and he made you better?”

He nods, “Then I got to live near him, and eventually right by him, and then we were brought here.”

At this, Jimin giggles. He really does remember all the times him and Taehyung would beg staff members to let them live together. It was fun living in the same building and not side by side too though, because whenever they would pull pranks and need somewhere to hide, the victims never knew whose room was whose and where they might have run off to. They would spend countless movie marathons in one room and retire to their respective ones only for clean clothes or when the staff would find out they’ve been away from their own rooms for too long.

“More specifically, Jungkook,” Namjoon adds in Jimin’s stead, “I think what Taehyung needs is something to keep him grounded. Someone his inner animal trusts enough to stay calm and collected. Someone more emotionally stable than him when he has a hard time. Jimin seems to be that person because they grew up together. I have no doubt the wolf also sees Jimin like a brother. Therefore, Jimin has become that balance his mind needs compared to his normally carefree self.”

The humans look at him in confusion. “I’m taking psychology.”

They hum in understanding now and Jimin nods at Namjoon’s words. “It’s why he gets relatively calmer when he’s having some sort of… out of control experience and I step in.”

“Like the last time?” Seokjin asks. “When he got angry at Hoseok?”

“Yeah, but,” Taehyung turns to him, “I still couldn’t stay completely calm because I couldn’t make sense of everything about Minho-Hyung. It was confusing.” He frowns, then lights up, “But Jimin helped a lot and so did Jungkook!”
All eyes snap to Jungkook, whose naturally wide eyes grow larger in surprise as he points to himself, “Me?”

Taehyung nods enthusiastically and Jimin says, “His wolf likes you and being there for him that day beside me almost made it calm down.”

“But you also kinda made it a whole lot worse,” Taehyung adds with a shrug. “Made me overwhelmed until I fainted - panic attack - whatever it was.

“Wh-what?” Jungkook blurts out. “I did that? H-how? Taehyung if I make you worse, tell me. I don’t want to hurt you, remember?”

“It’s alright, Jungkookie,” Taehyung taps his cheek fondly while shutting off his laptop. “You do more good than harm now.”

“Now? What does that mean? W-wait, you’re turning this off? You didn’t tell us the end. How did you guys get back together? What made the guys leave?”

Taehyung stops mid-close to look skeptically at the other humans’ pleading expressions that tell they also want to know the rest of the story. But their laptop is getting hot so they he can’t use any reference pictures and the end of the story is the main event they don’t like to talk about. However, it would all be better and laid to rest if they spilled it all out to someone.

Before he can answer, Jungkook’s face does that thing it did just twenty minutes earlier when he realizes he said something wrong, pushed a little too much at what he wanted without thinking enough on if it’d be alright. Taehyung doesn’t mind honestly, he likes the way the other is passionate and assertive with what he wants. It makes Taehyung a follower, not a leader, and he doesn’t have to listen to so many voices, only the one he thinks is his own.

And right now, he wants to get only a little off his chest and let Jungkook be his naturally straight forward self instead of this hesitant, albeit appreciated, side.

“I’ll tell a bit,” he says, making both Jimin and Jungkook smile softly, “but you’ll understand a little more than them because you saw some things you weren’t supposed to.”

Jimin almost panics at this. What exactly is Taehyung going to say that might let Jungkook connect the dots? He thinks for a second to make an escape from the conversation by going to the bathroom or offering to take the laptop back. No, he isn’t ashamed if Jungkook were to guess correctly; he only is not expecting so soon for someone to know this information. It would be more of a relief if Jungkook found out, then a panic of what he might react with.

“So one day,” Taehyung says to the empty wall behind the television, “A day with those other hybrids. I had gotten really mad at Jimin. They told some lies to make me like that. I met him outside class when it ended. I started it - the fight. We… did some stuff. Fought. We both know how to fight, it’s not like every hybrid is the calmest when they’re stuck in a loop without control. We hurt each other in ways we would have never thought we would. It wasn’t until Jimin did something really risky that I… was forced to stop. I ended up somewhere alone where I thought through everything. I realized my mistakes then. Jimin was the only person I allowed to see me until I got out. Then with his help, I left those guys and dug out all my clothes and eventually moved to the normal ward.”

They’re quiet for a while, and the only sound is the commercial softly playing on their television screen. Hoseok is the first to speak, “So you guys have moved passed it right? There’s not a possibility of your friendship falling apart at the moment?”
Jimin smiles and shakes his head, “We’ve moved passed it. It’s all in the past now.”

“Good,” Yoongi nods while crossing his arms. “I would hate it if you broke up from something like 2 years ago. You grew up together, be happy.”

Jimin’s face heats up at the way Yoongi so easily tells them to take care of themselves and Namjoon chuckles, “You say it like they’re a couple, Yoongi-Hyung.”

“Might as well be,” Seokjin shrugs. “They’re like a weird married couple that’s totally okay with the other dating someone else.”

Hoseok tilts his head and bites at his lip, “I - I think that’s called polyamorous? It’s about the feelings being mutual and commu—”

“We’re not together;” Jimin whines with his hands over his face. “That’s weird.”

They laugh. Taehyung shakes his head now and stands with the laptop in hand, “It is. I’ll put this away and we should finish the movie before you guys have to leave.”

When the wolf hybrid leaves, he also leaves a confused Jungkook with wide, calculating eyes and furrowed brows. Namjoon asks if he’s alright but the only response is to Jimin, “You did it?”

The tension in the room is back and Jimin’s smile falls to an uneasy frown. Jungkook continues, “Y-ou gave him th-the… You said you didn’t know.”

Jimin looks down at his rings, embarrassed, self-conscious, and ashamed. “It’s not like you would react well,” he mumbles, curling in to the closest body to him. “I didn’t want to do it. I didn’t plan on it or anything. It was risky but I was forced… Tae’s not proud of what he did either, but w-we let it go. You… you weren’t supposed to see that. You don’t understand.”
“Uh... It’s been on my mind for a while...”

The loud English lyrics wake Jimin this morning. He shoots up in bed with a short yelp as he tries to make sense of the blasting beat coming from his open doorway.

“Got to let this off my chest... Before... it’s too late...” Jimin recognizes through his sleepy mush brain the song playing is Taeyang’s Only Look At Me. One of his favorite songs as of recently. But why is it so loud? “I can’t let you go, you gotta let him go. I can’t let you go, you gotta... listen.”

Suddenly, the source of the music is presented when Taehyung jumps into the room with his phone in one hand and a brown bag in the other. Jimin laughs tiredly but genuinely as his best friend dances in place, which mostly consists of hip thrusts with random powerful arm movements despite the slow song.

Then he puts the phone to his mouth to sing along passionately, “I’ve been telling you everyday I smile when I see you. I’ve told you so many times.” The brown bag is quickly thrust in front of Jimin and Taehyung looks at him dramatically, “You’re the love of my life.”

Jemin takes the bag in his hands with a giggle so Taehyung can continue dancing and singing. “In this world full of lies, in my nervous heart, the one thing I believe in is you.”

The hybrid then seems to go out of breath and lets the song play while he hunches over Jimin’s bed to breathe heavily. His struggle makes Jimin laugh more and take the phone out of his best friend’s hand to turn the music off.

He pulls the heaving boy onto his bed with a chuckle, “What are you doing, TaeTae? It’s Saturday, the day we sleep in. And why are you dressed? What is this?”

Jemin frowns curiously at the bag in his lap and the way Taehyung is not clad in his usual baggy shirt and sweatpants of pajamas, but another pair of a baggy shirt and sweatpants. This is a special outfit Taehyung wears when he goes out to buy something. However, Taehyung waves the questions off and smiles his way, “What time is it?”

“What? You woke me, I shou--”

“The time, Jiminnie, just look.”

Rolling his eyes, Jimin checks his bedside clock anyway, “It's 10:13. Why?”

Taehyung’s smile only widens until his eyes are almost gone, “And what day is it?”

“The thir--” Jimin’s eyes go wide and he whispers out, “It’s my birthday...”

“HAPPY BIRTHDAY!” Taehyung yells enthusiastically. “I timed it just right! It’s ten thirteen in the morning and October thirte--”

But Jimin cuts him off by reaching over to bring the other into a tight hug. “Thank you, Taehyung,” he mumbles into the shirt. He can’t believe Taehyung was the only one to remember his birthday for the first year they’re out in Seoul. It’s such a big accomplishment for them but he
He takes the bag and pulls out an assortment of three different small pastries along with a larger fruit cup of apple and orange slices, cubed melons, cut strawberries, and small grapes. Fruit has always been Jimin’s favorite food, especially cold, juicy, slices of apples and oranges. The pastries are something more like a guilty pleasure because of their obvious lack of nutrients. Nevertheless, Jimin loves them both and hugs his best friend again for knowing exactly what he likes.

“B-but this is all just sugar, Tae.” Jimin frowns half heartedly. “I can’t just have this for breakfast. I’ll crash.”

Taehyung scoffs and waves it off, “It’s fine. We’ll be going out and eating more later.”

“More as in more sugar?” Jimin teases. He doesn’t really mind, it’s a special day. But if they’re going to be out doing God knows what, he doesn’t want to feel lethargic from not eating something of real nutrition.

Taehyung whines in a pleading tone, “Just eat, Jiminnie?”

“Okay, okay. What about you? What do you have?”

“I already ate,” Taehyung tells him, making himself comfortable next to Jimin’s bed. “Got myself something before I came home. But really, Jimin, the best meal is gonna be tonight’s. We’ll be eating well.”

Through a mouth full of grapes he says, “Something tells me today’s expensive. Do we have enough money?”

Taehyung nods, “Of course! Didn’t you notice I bought the cheap meat for the past few weeks?”

“Yeah but I thought that was to make up for the hair dying.”

“No, we already fixed that a while ago,” he shrugs it off. “Just eat. Let me take care of today!”

So Jimin complies and doesn’t worry about the type of money Taehyung spent on him. Taehyung’s someone who has impulsively bought almost whatever peaks his interest, but Jimin is fortunately always there to keep him on the right track. This, however, is completely out of his hands because Taehyung is passionate about giving to those he cares for and definitely won’t pass up a chance to make his best friend’s birthday amazing.

After happily finishing off his fruit and sharing the most of the three pastries with Taehyung, Jimin gets ready for the day. He washes up, dresses himself comfortably in clothes he can also safely be in public in, and stays close to Taehyung as he walks them to somewhere close; their first stop.

It takes them about twenty minutes to arrive at the crowded mall, then three minutes to set foot in a lively arcade. Jimin hugs Taehyung until he has to gasp for air when the wolf hybrid says at the entrance, “Let’s go wild!”

Jimin doesn’t know how long it’s been since the last time he’s been to the arcade. It must have been a few years because it was when he and Taehyung were at the peak of their friendship before they were separated. He hadn’t gone to one without Taehyung since. He forgot how much of a kid
he becomes when he’s holding his breath watching the spinner that holds his ticket wallet’s fate, when he’s gripping the car racing simulator tightly as if it’d help him beat Taehyung, and when he’s throwing the basketballs at the loud hoop like he’s on a real court.

The hybrids laugh and joke around, especially at how much older they are at this arcade than all the other kids. They’re like overgrown children without supervision. Just when they’re almost burnt out, they hear from a kid about half their age about another, better arcade on the third floor and the process starts over.

Finally, the two tire of the flashing lights, ear splitting children screams, bustling crowds, and ringing game alarms. Deciding they don’t actually need three centimeter plastic frogs, kazooes, feather necklaces, or anything of the sorts, Jimin and Taehyung find an enthusiastic group of kids and thankful parents to evenly divide up their three hundred tickets for.

They then window shop around the mall, chatting for a good while to get their pulses even and apparently buy time before Taehyung is pulling Jimin back downstairs and across the street to a movie theater. The second stop.

Jemin almost spills their popcorn from how much he’s radiating with excitement to watch the movie Taehyung bought them tickets for. He’s seen the trailers for it and obviously Taehyung had an interest in it as well to remember and get them tickets for Jimin’s birthday. Not only do they get to see the new movie, Taehyung bought them the 3D version that makes the experience so much better.

After the movie, Jimin realizes Taehyung’s cheeks might be hurting from smiling just as much as his are. Jimin is sure this is going to be the best day for the next five years and it’s not even over.

Taehyung hadn’t let Jimin eat much more than the popcorn since breakfast, insisting they’ll be eating lots during the rest of the day. But now, as they’re walking back home, Jimin puts a friendly arm around the wolf’s shoulder as he complains about his hunger because it’s well past lunch time and he hasn’t had anything real to eat since morning.

“It’ll be fine Jiminnie,” Taehyung shakes his head. It would be more cute if his faded blond hairs were able to move freely and not be stuck under the beanies they’re both wearing to avoid anyone knowing they’re hybrids. If Taehyung looked cuter, he might be a little easier on him when complaining.

“But I wanna eat!” Jimin groans dramatically, throwing himself on his best friend as much as he can while walking. “And not something with sugar. I need sustenance! I swear, I need a raw carrot. Maybe a head of lettuce. I’ll just bite into them. No cooking needed. And water. I need some water.”

“Mmm,” Taehyung nods. “I’m thirsty too.”

“So can we go out?”

“Nope.”

“Tae!”

It turns out, Taehyung has other plans for lunch. After a threat to pin him down in a wrestling match, Jimin gets Taehyung to spill what it is.

“I told the five of them it’s your birthday,” Taehyung explains as they sit outside on the steps before their front door, “and they’re gonna be part of the rest of today. Yoongi-Hyung offered to
feed us all at his place so now we’re just waiting for Seokjin-Hyung to pick us up.”

Jimin silently bumps shoulders with the wolf hybrid with a large smile on his face at these words, positive Taehyung knows just how much he’s excited and appreciative. He can’t wait to spend his birthday with their friends because that will make it all the more special. He also can’t believe Taehyung was able to get the five humans into this for him and still have more planned. It’s so amazing to be treated through this, no words can describe his emotions. Good thing Taehyung can feel them rolling off him.

Soon, Seokjin’s car is pulling beside the curb and they climb in. The older sings Jimin a gag version of the Happy Birthday song on the way there along with throwing in a few driving puns that all make Taehyung roll his eyes with small chuckles but have Jimin cracking up with laughter as loud as the human’s.

They quickly arrive at their third stop, a cozy looking one story surprisingly in the same neighborhood has Hoseok but a good ways away. Inside is where Seokjin leaves them alone by disappearing through another door somewhere so Jimin and Taehyung can meet Yoongi’s parents properly.

Taehyung stands before the mother and Jimin, the father. Yoongi’s mother is just barely taller than her husband but they share many similarities with their son including the same default stern expression that makes the two hybrids put their heads down slightly in respect. Taehyung introduces himself first by bowing politely and saying,

“Hello. I’m Kim Taehyung. Thank you for letting us into your home. It’s nice to meet you two.”

Jimin follows right after. “My name is Park Jimin. It’s nice to meet you. Hyung is really generous for inviting us over.”

After a short, scrutinizing hum, the parents introduce themselves as well with only their names. The father speaks in a mature, slow voice that Jimin foresees Yoongi taking on in his older days.

“Yoongi’s told us a thing or two about his new friends. Never told us they liked wearing sunglasses inside though,” he raises an eyebrow and the smallest of smiles appears on the couple’s face, which is perceived as condescending.

Jimin chuckles nervously with the two adults, wondering if he feels comfortable enough to take the sunglasses off. He should. It’s only Yoongi’s house, their older friend since day one. But he’s been wearing them all day - through the mall, the arcade, the movie theater, and he just naturally kept the black shades on even up until now. He feels a bit uncomfortable under the criticising gazes of Yoongi’s parents, so he doesn’t want any more attention now because of his unnatural eyes if he takes them off. Even if the two know about them, everyone still seems to stare.

“I-it’s to make me look more… human.” Jimin manages to say. “It gets uncomfortable when people stare.”

The adults automatically make curious expressions at them. Yoongi’s mother says in a disbelieving tone, “What?”

Jimin’s eyebrows raise and his mouth opens a bit. Do Yoongi’s parents really not know Jimin and Taehyung are hybrids? His father said Yoongi only told them a few things, and Jimin would think being a hybrid would be one of those; the other at least about Jimin’s eyes. He looks at Taehyung, who’s wearing the same shocked expression.
Taehyung asks the parents tentatively, “D-did Yoongi-Hyung not--”

“Oh, apparently not,” the woman interrupts with a frown. “He said nothing about his friends being any different.”

“I guess it doesn't matter.” Yoongi’s father says. His scowl is much the opposite of his son or wife’s, which are on soft, round, pale faces that make it less intimidating while the man’s is on a worn, stone face that only adds fear. “Apparently, there’s something he doesn’t want us to know… Teenagers and their secrets.”

The hybrids quickly wave their hands in objection. Taehyung blurts out, “N-no, sir. He p-probably just forgot.”

Yoongi’s parents contemplate his words for a bit. Jimin can’t tell if they’re actually angry at their son for seemingly keeping information away from them or if they’re only stating an observation about this generation. It’s hard to tell with their almost permanent disapproving expressions toward the hybrids. Jimin wonders briefly if they treat Yoongi this way, with frowns, stiff words and quick, pessimistic ideas. It’s more possible they don’t and they’re only trying their best to analyze Yoongi’s friends. Yoongi may be tough looking but he has a big, soft heart that cares for pretty much anyone. He couldn’t be being raised badly.

Jimin concludes the parents just might be like Yoongi - rather, he might be like them. Through the awkward silence, the mother finally speaks in a controlled, even tone as she looks down at the hybrids with creased eyebrows and a short nod, “That’s good… better. I’ll talk to him later though.”

“I’m sure he just f-forgot, ma’am,” Jimin chuckles nervously from the never lifting scowl on the parents’ faces. His hand is quickly taken in Taehyung’s for comfort. “It-it’s no big deal. Taehyung and - and I are--”

“It’s not your fault, boys.” Yoongi’s father cuts him off, making him purse his lips in fear and shame, mostly for apparently disappointing a human. He thinks to himself he might be getting too comfortable with humans. The man gestures to a door on one side of the room, “We’ll talk to him later. Go on in there with the rest.”

The hybrids give quick bows to Yoongi’s parents before following their orders and arriving into a living room where the five of their friends wait. All negative emotions leave them when laying eyes on their friends and they let themselves forget the first encounter momentarily. The humans all wave and pat Jimin on the back, giving him ‘Happy Birthday’s and smiles. Jimin says his ‘Thank you’s quietly from all the attention. He’s a bit overwhelmed.

Thankfully Yoongi notices as Taehyung goes off to the couch with the others. He pulls Jimin to the side and pokes at the sunglasses, grinning, “What’s with these? I’ve never seen you so normal.”

Jimin chuckles nervously, putting his head down, “I can’t necessarily go out with reflective eyes, can I?”

He pulls at the beanie in response, “Same for these I guess, huh? Take it all off, Jimin. You’re fine at my place. It’s weird not seeing your cat parts.”

“My cat parts?” Jimin asks. He takes the sunglasses and blue beanie off anyway, letting his ears flick around in discomfort and his eyes sharpen at the light change.

Yoongi smiles softly as he reaches up to mess with the hair between his ears, “Better. We should
color your hair again, you can see the roots growing back in.” Then Yoongi leans in to look behind
Jimin with a frown. “And your tail. Get your tail out. It must be uncomfortable like that.”

Jimin nods obediently, “A little, after a few hours.”

“Come on,” Yoongi gestures to the others with his head. “Get Taehyung to get comfortable too.”

They rejoin their friends and Jimin takes his tail out of his sweatpants where it was curled around
one of his legs. It was tight along the muscle to make sure no one would notice, but it had also
started to cramp. His tail aches as he finally stretches it across his back naturally.

Namjoon questions Jimin once he gets Taehyung comfortable and sits beside Hoseok, “So what did
you guys do? Taehyung only told us what’s happening after this.”

“We went to the arcade and the movies,” Jimin tells them. “I haven’t been to the arcade in years
and we’ve definitely never been to a movie theater!”

“You’ve never been to a movie theater?” Seokjin asks, eyes wide.

He shakes his head, “Only seen it in movies.”

“How ironic.”

“So you’ve been in public all day?” Hoseok inquires curiously. “I’ve always wondered how you do
that.”

Jungkook nods, “Me too. How do you guys get groceries and stuff?”

Jimin ruffles Taehyung’s hair, “Tae dresses up like we are now - so no one sees anything - and he
goes off. I always have him on the phone though to keep him safe and tell what to buy.”

“Smart,” the boy smiles.

The seven talk more about arcades and video games to get their minds off school and other
responsibilities. It isn’t until a timer goes off somewhere in the house that Jimin remembers how he
didn’t properly thank Yoongi for offering to feed them.

Yoongi comes back holding the hot soup bowl and Namjoon with bowls and the rest. When the
table in the living room is being set up nicely for Jimin, Yoongi tells him to stay put so they can be
as helpful as possible.

“Sorry we have to eat in here, guys,” Yoongi sighs when they’re digging in. “The dining room is
packed with all my parent’s work supplies. We need more time or people to organize shit at the
Pearl.”

“It’s alright, hyung,” Jimin assures with a bright smile. He doesn’t understand anything else
Yoongi had said, but he’s just appreciative. “Thank you so much for doing this for us.”

He only shrugs as if cooking a meal for seven people is no big deal. It makes Hoseok laugh, “He
does this a lot, Jiminnie. But if you call him out, he’ll deny how much he likes taking care of us.”

As if on cue, Yoongi grumbles something like, “Shut up.”

“Hyung, that’s so cute!” Taehyung giggles, laying his head on the older’s shoulder with his box
smile.
Yoongi shrugs him off in an obviously fake look of disgust, “Your ears are touching my face.”

“If it was Jiminnie, would you complain?” He teases, making the humans break out in deep “Ooh!”’s. Jimin looks at the two in confusion.

“His ears are just softer than yours,” Yoongi pinches Taehyung’s side softly in retaliation.

“So you admit you like Jimin’s ears!” Jungkook takes the chance to tease more. “You like petting him, huh!”

Yoongi scrunches his nose in distaste but doesn’t look up at any of them as he takes another spoonful. “I’m more of a small dog person. Taehyung’s like a big dog.”

“Don’t avoid the question, Yoongi-Hyung!” Namjoon laughs, earning himself a glare.

Yoongi looks at Jimin with a small frown that almost matches Jimin’s confused one, “Fine. I like petting you.”

Jimin’s face heats up and feels Yoongi’s embarrassment flood off him as well. If Jimin could see enough color, he’d probably see the red on everyone’s faces from laughter and shame.

He’s never really had anyone praise him so much as Yoongi’s done in the few months they’re known each other. The older constantly tells him he looks nice or how his eyes are pretty with whatever he’s wearing or that his cooking is good when he comes over and now he’s telling him he likes petting him and seeing Jimin’s “cat parts”. Compliments come so easily from Yoongi to all their friends that he knows they’re genuine.

It takes a small shove of Namjoon’s vibrating body to let himself join the teasing of Yoongi expressing his feelings.

After lunch, Jimin is still unable to help clean up because it’s his birthday and apparently he should be treated like royalty. As Taehyung said as much. They stay with each other at Yoongi’s house, talking, joking, exchanging memes, until Jimin asks Taehyung what else he has planned for the day.

It seems as if he asked at the right time because he checks his phone and smiles at Jimin easily, “The amusement park.”

Jimin’s mouth falls open and he tackles Taehyung. To be very honest, Jimin thinks the amusement park tops all other places - Taehyung knows that. As his best friend, Taehyung knows how much Jimin has always wanted to go to one but how little time and resources that had. They need supervision in such large areas where they should be having fun. Unlike the mall, the amusement park requires a lot more movement. It would be difficult to stay on the down low having so much fun, especially if Jimin needs to cover his eyes with sunglasses in the evening.

So with the promise of safety from their five human friends, Jimin climbs onto Taehyung and rub his face all over the other’s. He doesn’t care if it’s not good for his skin, neither does Taehyung, because as Jimin’s plump cheek covers almost all of Taehyung’s face and even down to his neck, he knows Taehyung will really understand how thankful he is to have a friend like him.

It scares the humans though - all except for Namjoon, who seems to understand their exchange. The other four however, think it’s some weird sexual act and Hoseok even goes to cover his eyes at the scene. It isn’t until Jungkook mutters something about sex on Yoongi’s couch to someone that Taehyung pushes himself away to try to explain in embarrassment.
"N-no! We're not - he’s n-not - I swear it’-s not--!” He sputters and desperately tries to keep Jimin from reaching his face anymore.

Namjoon and Jimin laugh though, cutting his hurried stuttering off to let Namjoon tell the humans that what they’re doing is completely normal and usually done for platonic reasons.

He explains that it’s an action common to hybrids that shows affection and/or possession along with other strong emotions in an animal like way, as the instinct was passed on to them. The humans learn it is also called “scenting” to make the hybrid or human smell like the other depending on the situation. However, Jimin and Taehyung are both hybrids and have no intention to do this now other than for Jimin to show how thankful he is without words.

“They do it all the time to us,” Namjoon adds with a chuckle. “I’m surprised you haven't noticed.”

“Well it’s not like I get straddled by Taehyung every now and then,” Jungkook laughs as he leans back on his arms. It makes the humans laugh but Jimin catches a pulse of emotion he’d rather not think about come from Taehyung - and maybe Jungkook too.

“I mean they rub their cheeks on our clothes and stuff.” Namjoon pushes the younger lightly. “It’s an instinct to show who their friends are and to know where to find us - like at school. Taehyung does it the most. Probably because his animal side is stronger.”

“How could I not have noticed,” Seokjin crosses his arms.

“We do it when you’re not paying attention,” Jimin admits. “It’s weird if you catch us scenting one your guys’ shoulders.”

“But we also do it by being pet,” Taehyung speaks, pushing Jimin off him to sit up comfortably. “You guys like doing it so whenever you pet us, we go the extra mile and rub against your hands to scent you.”

“I feel used,” Yoongi pouts.

“Do we even smell differently?” Jungkook asks.

“Of course!” Jimin says. “All hybrids have a scent gland that do pretty much exactly what they would in the wild. But even though humans don’t, you smell like emotions and the places you’re around the most.”

“Until we scent you,” Taehyung nods. “Then you smell like us because you never scent us.”

“Does it come off?” Hoseok wrinkles his nose.

“Yeah. From what we do to you guys, it’s only after a little less than a day. It has to be constant for humans to stay more than a day. It’s really a shame humans don’t have their own smells like hybrids.”

“Oh! What do I smell like?” Namjoon enthusiastically asks.

Jimin laughs, “Paper, ink, and cotton.”

He thinks it over a bit before understanding why it would be so. The others ask what they smell like and are pretty satisfied with their answers. After Yoongi gets his scent, he asks,

“But what about you guys? You said you smell differently than humans.”
“Yeah, we smell like tastes and better smells and everything is so distinct and unique,” Jimin tells them.

“Jimin smells savory and sweet. Like honey and what really good beef tastes like,” Taehyung happily ruffles Jimin’s hair. “Speaking of Jimin, we should start heading out to the amusement park.”

Jimin lets Taehyung change the conversation topic by suggesting they continue Jimin’s birthday plan. He normally wouldn’t allow Taehyung to ignore the fact that they didn’t say what Taehyung smells like or let Jungkook ask about himself, but Jimin knows Taehyung is just embarrassed and would rather them stay in blissful ignorance.

So they all dress up for the cold evening, say their farewells to Yoongi’s parents, and file into the two cars. Jimin decides not to wear his sunglasses nor do either of the hybrids hide their tails or ears when saying goodbye to the parents, allowing them to stop dead in shock before they slip out the door with their friends. They keep the beanies in the backpack Yoongi brought with him, where he also brought a bottled water, a phone charger, a polaroid camera, bandages for small cuts, a pill case, and the other’s wallets.

“Why do you have all of this stuff?” Jungkook teases in the back seat of Yoongi’s car with Jimin, Taehyung in the passenger seat. “What do you think is gonna happen there? The zombie apocalypse probably won’t start until a few more decades.”

The hybrids laugh but Yoongi only shakes his head, “Most of it was already in there. I just put what I need for wherever I’m going and leave some stuff in. You never know when you nee--”

“Is this a pocket knife?”

“Yep.”

Jimin sees the amusement park before any of the rest do, but he gasps loud enough for everyone else to know they’re close. It’s only a little embarrassing and they have to explain how they’ve never really done anything before coming to Seoul. The sight of the ferris wheel he’s always seen in movies along with wounding rollercoaster tracks slowly come into view above the buildings around them.

When they all group back up at the entrance, Taehyung plans to pay for himself and Jimin - which is pretty much the same money - and whoever will allow him. No one does, but they actually pitch in to pay for Jimin’s ticket, leaving Taehyung to only pay for himself.

Then, they’re off on Jimin’s fourth stop of the day.
Chapter 18

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

Double update to finish of Jimin's birthday AND because it's my irl birthday today... There's quite a bit of back story in this chapter so I hope you enjoy it!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It’s safe to say Jimin is having a blast. He wants to ride all the rides and play a few games - because honestly, they're made for children. With Taehyung and their human friends, he rides whatever he wants in both fear and excitement, loving the thrill he gets from each one. The seven also take pictures next to the largest ones to show they’ve been on it.

However, none of them are even half as afraid of the rides as Hoseok is, and the rest split into random groups of three to take turns between going on the rides Hoseok doesn’t want to and waiting at the bottom with him. Sometimes, when three come back down, they are able convince Hoseok to go on with the other three. They misjudge just one ride for Hoseok, and he comes off only to run to the nearest trash can and empty his stomach. Yoongi gives him a pill to help. Hoseok rides with them more times than he doesn’t so it isn’t as if he isn’t having fun with them. Jimin appreciates the older facing his fears for him and his birthday as well and makes sure to stay close to Hoseok to show his affection.

Other than riding roller coasters and waiting in lines, they share colorful cotton candy and large sodas. It isn’t necessarily the best for them, but no one complains, Jimin and Taehyung have never had any of these amusement park foods. They talk; share stories, make dares, and eventually the sun has been down long enough for Namjoon to suggest something hot to drink for the mid-October evening. Jimin groans when he takes his first sip of the coffee the older bought him, then proceeds to never let go of his arm as they walk.

They don’t go on any more rides, just slowly circle themselves around the park while drinking the hot liquid to pass time. Jimin takes this moment to really understand that he’s never had this much fun with someone other than Taehyung. He and his best friend have always been as thick as thieves, so when the wolf hybrid left Jimin for a year, everyone thought he would go into some type of depression after about the first six months.

Those months of being ignored and yet also belittled by Taehyung and the other boys was when he started to believe it himself too. He had an alright time getting by being relatively happy with the few other people he knew who also understood what was going on with them. Despite their efforts to get Jimin to mess around and go outside with them, Jimin felt like his entire family - which solely consisted of Taehyung - had turned on him. He thought he wouldn’t ever see his true best friend again.

Then for the last five or six months, Jimin made close friends with staff that him and Taehyung were already on good terms with. They were all mature adults, a crowd Jimin shouldn’t have needed when he was only 15, but they were there for him. Because they were staff, he rarely had to
leave the buildings, he was kept hidden away from Taehyung and the boys, and he was able to learn a fair amount of information about hybrids they don’t usually tell to the public nor other hybrids.

They were adults intending on keeping Jimin safe and Taehyung sane, not playing video games with him. He thinks this took some part in the bit of Jimin’s personality where he’s a text-book hybrid. They treated him like one, but they were still respectful friends - they never touched him or said anything rude or sexual, but often talked like he wasn’t there and gave him orders to do this or that.

After his and Taehyung’s fight, he was hesitant to speak to the other hybrid in fear he would never be the same as when they grew up together. But then Taehyung asked for Jimin to visit him in the hospital one day and he was oddly pleased to see the opposite. Who he met was his absolute best friend in tears, afraid of himself and reaching out for help. Taehyung admitted to every wrong thing he had done under the boys’ influence, to having nightmares every other day - when the two didn’t have him stay up all night, to not being in control of the animal inside him, to thinking it was okay to let it loose and control him.

Jimin visited his hospital bed every day until he was released and then stayed right by his side as much of the day as possible until Taehyung was moved into the same ward as him because he knew Taehyung didn’t need space - he said as much - he needed help and support and his strong, mature best friend to balance him out as he fights to control himself.

The entire event was hard for the both of them, so when they opened up about it to their friends a few days ago, they are both grateful Jungkook doesn’t seem to have any hard feelings towards what Jimin had to do. He doesn’t treat either of them any differently and has shown to be understanding of how difficult this time was to the hybrids.

Once Taehyung was released from the hospital, they were back at it again, teasing staff and making pillow castles. Jimin didn’t think he needed anyone but his best friend for his teenage years. He and Taehyung have always thought love could wait, not only because they’re being kids and having fun, but also because it doesn’t matter who they love, they’ll have to love whoever picks them. But all too soon, they were being taken from their adjacent rooms at dawn. Jimin had seen Taehyung being taken the opposite way in pure terror and hostility, his loud growls echoing off the narrow walls as he struggled with restrained hands to fight back.

Jimin knew they wouldn’t take Taehyung’s resistance seriously with the anger issues he used to have, so Jimin made a scene himself. He screamed and yelled and kicked and shoved as much as he could until the guards were tired of trying to tie him up or give him some type of sedative. With a little more persuasion from the newly woken staff, Jimin was reunited with a sedated Taehyung in the backseat of a car.

So he didn’t have fun without Taehyung. Or do much of anything else without him for that matter. But now he’s with Taehyung and five other friends at the amusement park on his birthday and having the best damn day of his life.

Maybe he should let loose a little himself and for once not think about everything as how it would affect his chances of having an owner. Maybe he should stop worrying about the past and really take in his present. Come out of his little shell and really have fun in Seoul.

“Jimin,” he hears Taehyung whisper to him as they’ve stopped in front of the entrance for an inventory check.

Jimin snaps out of his thoughts and looks blankly up at the familiar tan, round face that is
Taehyung. The wolf hybrid is wearing a concerned expression, “Hey, Jiminnie, you’re gonna dry out your eyes and we didn’t bring any drops. You good?”

Jimin frowns at the statement but nods his head. He speaks in a raspy tone, “I’m fine. Where are we going now?”

Taehyung keeps his own concern for a brief moment but decides to leave it alone, standing upright again. “We’re going to eat. We’re all a little hungry. You?”

Jimin finally breaks into a smile at the thought of a meal, “Starving.”

The fifth and last stop is at a little hole in the wall on the corner of Sketchy and Still Safe, a sort of combination of a bar and restaurant. The humans tell them it’s greatly underappreciated for its quality and authentic home cooked food and lively atmosphere but the hybrids can see why not everyone would not want to walk through these doors, it doesn’t look very kid friendly. Either way, the other five say it’s alright as long as they stay in a group - which is still a little nerve wracking.

Inside the doors is much different from the cold, dark outside. It’s almost packed with people between the ages of what looks like 25 and 40, about 90 percent of which are male. Jimin rates it 20x higher than the Red Pearl on his Danger Rating. The lighting is not excessively bright like most restaurants, but just low enough to give the place a warm glow. The temperature is also significantly different, being more warm and cozy than hot and stuffy. Through the flexible crowd of loud, ignorant adults, they make their way to the farthest booth at the back corner.

Taehyung and Jimin each stay between two of their human friends until they sit down, all of them trying their best to make them as defended and discreet as possible. Jimin practically plasters himself to Seokjin’s back, hiding behind his broad shoulders.

The table is surprisingly clean compared to what one would expect from such a careless looking place. Instead of sitting how they normally do, both hybrids are relative close to the center but separated and still next to Yoongi or Jungkook. This arrangement is to make sure anyone who is looking will assume Jimin belongs to Yoongi and Taehyung belongs to Jungkook while also protecting the hybrids.

Unlike when they went to the café, their waitress doesn’t seem to care two of them are hybrids, treating them as normal customers. However, she is the only one in area that does so. The other customers give looks, Jimin felt foreign touches on his lower back on their way over, and the people they are seated next to keep giving glances, but nothing is too uncomfortable to have them take up the offer of going somewhere else.

Pretty quickly, they fall into comfortable conversation and their voices blend with the rest of the customers. The food comes, the oldest grill the meat, and they eat as much of the tender beef and vegetables as they can considering the amount of junk they already ate at the amusement park.

About half an hour in to eating, a man abruptly runs up to their booth reckless enough to bump their table, have the contents rattle, and make about half of them jump in their seats.

“Hey, what the fuck?” Hoseok eyes the culprit.

But the man wavers in his place and continues to smile without much acknowledgement to the words. He is quite obviously drunk and acting on the encouragement of his laughing friends somewhere behind him as he shakily raises a hand to point at Yoongi, then to Jungkook. The smile on the dirty face of this over 30 year old man only breaks to laugh. Just the sound has Jimin jumping and moving as close as he can to his closest friend, away from the man almost doubling
over from laughter.

“I - I can’t -!” the man’s high voice comes through his laughter. “Y-you - you two! You - you - you can’t own them!”

Jimin ears fall downward when a finger is pointed at him with another bark, “He’s too pretty! Too pretty and - and he looks r-rare!” The finger is then quickly casted in Taehyung’s direction, almost making the man fall from the movement. “Too rare! Wait…” His face goes lax and he stares at the wall for two seconds before laughing at himself. “I got it wrong!” He points at Jimin, “You’re rare,” then Taehyung, “You’re p-pretty!”

As the man holds his stomach while continuing to blabber on about how Yoongi and Jungkook can’t afford such things, the humans look around at each other in horror, confusion, and disgust. It isn’t until another man comes up behind the offender that they start to do really pay attention.

The new comer places his hands calmly on the drunk man’s arms, “Sir, I think you should leave.” He stands there, seemingly bewildered at the act, before shrugging off the hands, “I’ll leave w-with one of them! Both of them! I d-deserve them!”

He struggles as the shorter, calmer, younger, new sober male easily restrains him and says, “You might, but these boys are taken. You’ll get one a different day. Let’s go over here, sir.” Pushing at the man’s shoulders, he manages to moves him away from the table without causing too much distress.

Jimin uncurls himself from a position he hadn’t known he was in, pressed right up against Yoongi’s side, seated lowly, ears flat and pupils narrow as he watches the scene merely an arms length away. When both men are gone and their human friends are fussing over the drunkard, Jimin looks up to see the shorter man sit back at the bar while the drunk goes to his friends.

Jimin tries his best to keep himself engaged but the incident had disturbed him more than he thought. He continues to think of the way the drunk so easily spoke because of the alcohol about how he simply cannot believe Yoongi and Jungkook are owning hybrids. It makes him realize how expensive and valuable hybrids are no matter their differences. Even regarding the differences, he had called Jimin “rare”, not weird or wrong or anything of the sort. It makes Jimin feel a little prouder of his “cat parts” despite the fact the man was completely intoxicated.

He had witnessed two men acting differently than those he usually encounters. People usually give snarky, inappropriate remarks and try to get the hybrids’ attention or a picture. However, the drunk spoke only to the humans about price and quality while the helper had not given much of a glance to hybrids. To the shorter, Jimin would like to thank him for handling the situation effectively and not letting it go out of hand.

Jimin takes another glance at the man behind Taehyung’s side of the booth but sitting at the bar to Jimin’s right. He’s leaning with crossed arms on the wood with a beer in his hand, using it to gesture softly as he laughs and talks with his companions. Based on his lean, muscular body and slicked back long blond hair, Jimin guesses the man is in his mid to late twenties. Even his face is young and cheerful, skin clear as his smile makes the area near his eyes wrinkle slightly while showing perfect white teeth.

He shakes his head quickly to stop himself from glancing at him for the nth time. A hand suddenly breaks his thought process as it makes contact with his arm. Jimin jumps before realizing it’s only Yoongi giving him an assuring squeeze along with a concerned furrow of his brow. He tries his best to give the older a small smile but it comes out more like a grimace as his ears flick nervously
at the gaze Yoongi has on him.

The chatter about the best way to eat lettuce at the table is stopped when Seokjin gestures to Jimin with a frown through a mouthful of meat, “You okay, Jimin? It’s your birthday after all.”

Jimin nods hurriedly but doesn’t give much more than a short glance to Seokjin before stuffing his mouth with some raw lettuce.

Hoseok tells Seokjin, “He might be a little shaken from that asshole.”

“Oh my god,” Taehyung’s eyes widen at Jimin as he looks as if he’s made a great discovery.

“I know right,” Namjoon shakes his head disapprovingly, “Being around Jonghyun-Hyung so much I would think you would’ve used better language.”

Hoseok blushes and pushes at Namjoon as much as he can in the booth. He keeps quiet but Taehyung goes on enthusiastically, ignoring both Juniors. “Oh my god, Jiminnie!” Taehyung shakes Jungkook’s arm happily. “Jiminnie, Jiminnie, Jiminnie!”

Jimin hides his face and groans, “Don’t, Tae.”

But Taehyung isn’t paying attention and keeps looking back in his seat. He finally looks with wide eyes right at Jimin and reaches over the table, “Grab my hands, Jimin.” Jimin complies but keeps his head down in embarrassment. “Jimin, I’m so happy right now, this is perfect!”

Jimin shakes his head with a pout and whines, “No, Taehyung, i-it’s not like that, I swea--”

Taehyung cuts him off with a laugh. Vibrating in his seat, he smiles his largest smile and finally addresses the others. “The guy! Over there!” he turns back to indicate where the short yet older man is sitting. “He’s totally Jimin’s type!”

“What?!” the humans nearly spit out whatever they had in their mouths before recklessly trying to catch a look at the man as well.

They each have relatively different expressions on. Seokjin is almost as excited as Taehyung about the information, Namjoon and Jungkook seem surprised to find out Jimin’s type, Hoseok only shrugs and takes another bite of food, and Yoongi looks between the savior and Jimin with confusion. Jimin all but takes his hands from Taehyung’s to hide himself.

He catches Taehyung looking back more times than necessary after the initial shock as passed and he whines again, “Oh my god stop being so obvious!”

“But it’s love at first sight, Jimin!” Seokjin friendly pushes him.

Jungkook chuckles a little after taking a glance, “How do you plan on getting his attention?”

“I don’t,” Jimin crosses his arms defiantly, looking more like a stubborn child.

The table makes noises of disapproval and Taehyung pouts, “But if it goes well he could buy you, Jiminnie! How awesome would this birthday be then?”

Jimin purses his lips as he mulls over this information. Him and Taehyung have been focusing more on not being seen and staying away from anyone one who might want them but they haven’t been focusing on finding someone right for themselves. It’s never been difficult for Jimin to catch someone’s eye, but when it comes to someone he has an interest in, he would much rather not get
their attention in the first place to avoid embarrassing himself.

But that was when they were home and surrounded by hybrids and staff, all of who they shouldn’t form romantic relationships with. He shouldn’t be worrying about that anymore. He should find people of his own interest because he’s out here now and he can choose the person who will own him to make sure he likes them first. With spotting this man, Jimin is already on the right path. Didn’t he say he should be more open in Seoul?

“I’ll think of something…” Jimin mumbles into his hand as he leans against the table.

“’Atta boy!” Namjoon claps and nods with an encouraging smile. “There’s no harm in just saying hi.”

Jimin smiles softly before Yoongi lowly says, “Actually, he could be kidnapped.”

“Hyung don’t be a party pooper.”

Jungkook turns dramatic by fluttering his eyelashes and pouting, “Do you not want anyone else petting his soft ears?”

Seokjin and Namjoon snort while Jimin’s face heats up at the thought of Yoongi feeling that way - anyone feeling that way. But the older glares at his friends, “I just don’t want him talking to strangers.”

“Then I will!” Taehyung announces. They look dumbstruck at his smiling face. “I’ll talk to him first.”

“Then you’re talking to strangers.” Yoongi rolls his eyes. “You’ll take the same risks as Jimin.”

“Then I’ll go with him,” Jungkook brushes off Yoongi complaint with his own smile. “Taehyung and I will talk to him before Jimin. See if he’s safe for just him.”

They all look at Yoongi with pleading smiles even though he doesn’t really have means to stop them from putting their plan into action. Yoongi’s small frown turns to Jimin’s pleading eyes yet nervous ears. He wants to talk to the man but he is also afraid of not knowing what to say and, of course, ending up in the wrong situation. Taehyung and Jungkook pose a good system that will help see if Jimin should talk to him in the first place. Jungkook will seem like Taehyung’s owner as they talk to the man about God knows what about Jimin.

Yoongi finally sighs and grumbles, “Do what you want.” Jimin smiles and hesitantly rubs against the older’s arm to show his appreciation. Thankfully, Yoongi allows it and pets his ears lightly.

Then Taehyung and Jungkook stand with purpose and make their way to the bar. Despite how the man had been talking to someone to his right, there is a seat between them and he’s put his attention elsewhere, making it easy for Taehyung to slide into the bar stool as Jungkook stands and holds him around the waist.

Jimin watches and listens closely as the man glances at Taehyung, then to Jungkook before giving an amused, “Hey.”

He hears Jungkook say, “Hi,” rather confidently and if he could see their faces, Jimin would think him and Taehyung are wearing smirks. Groaning in embarrassment, Jimin looks at his plate before him and just listens.

“I’m Jungkook, this is Taehyung, and that kitten over there is Jimin.”
Jimin just about has a heart attack when he realizes the man will look his way but still manages to catch his eyes when he glances up before blushing hard and hiding his face in his small hands.

The man chuckles, “Yeah? I’m Youngbae.”

“He’s cute, huh?” Taehyung speaks up.

“Adorable really,” Jungkook adds.

“I guess.” He seems to be talking through a smile.

“Thing is, it’s his birthday and he’s noticing he’s been lonely for another year.”

“We wouldn’t say he’s desperate.”

“But you’ve caught his eye.”

Jimin almost yells at them for talking about him like this. Calling him a kitten and making him seem so hopeless. But he doesn’t and some part of him wants to believe they know what they’re doing.

“Really?” Youngbae laughs affectionately. “How did I do that?”

“He’s got a thing for responsible men,” Taehyung shares shamelessly.

This actually makes Jimin’s heart rate pick up as he flicks his ears and tail in embarrassment. “Oh my god,” he whispers, which the other human’s laugh about even if Jimin’s the only one who can hear them.

“Responsible?” he asks, amused. “I am at a bar, drinking beer.”

“And you seem to be holding yourself well.”

He laughs again - beautifully, “I’ve been told I have a high tolerance. What’s your point, boys?”

“If you wouldn’t mind…” Jungkook trails off.

“We’d like to introduce him to you properly.” Taehyung finishes.

“Because I’m responsible?”

“Because it’s his birthday and you’re hella hot and super sexy.”

He chuckles for yet another time, “You’re gonna let him talk to me that way?”

“He likes what he likes and he’s never wrong,” Jungkook states. “He got me, afterall.”

“So I wouldn’t be wrong about you either,” Taehyung says and Jimin would think his friends were actually flirting he if he didn’t know any better.

“And what are you planning on me doing with him?” Youngbae wonders.

“Just talk to him. We trust you. You’re responsible.”

“C’mon,” Taehyung laughs, “You think he’s cute too.”

“I do,” he admits. “Alright, I could talk with him.”
“Go get him, Tae,” Jungkook softly tells Taehyung.

Jimin looks up to see Taehyung and his shit-eating grin walking toward him. Yoongi reluctantly makes way so Jimin can be lead by his best friend to the bar. Jimin doesn’t really know why he’s so nervous. Maybe it’s the suggestive eyes Jungkook gives him or maybe it’s the admiring ones he gets from Youngbae, but he keeps his gaze down until he sits on the bar stool Taehyung left empty and he must look up.

When he does, he meets the man’s soothing smile and Jimin manages to get out, “Hi. I’m Jimin.”

“Youngbae,” he replies. Jimin thinks his voice sounds much better when it’s directed to him, giving him goosebumps despite the warmth of his cheeks.

“Have fun, Jiminnie,” Taehyung sings before leaving with Jungkook back to the table.

“So, Jimin,” Youngbae doesn’t stop looking away from him even if Jimin has, “It’s your birthday right? How old are you now?”

“Um, I’m 17,” he glances up longer.

“And how’s today been for you so far?” he encourages gently.

“Really nice actually. Taehyung’s made it his duty to make it amazing. Everything’s been a surprise,” Jimin smiles at how happy this day has made him.

“You really are cute,” Youngbae states, causing Jimin to stutter out random syllables and pat at his cheeks as if it will keep them from reddening too much. “What is a pretty little hybrid like you doing all alone in Seoul?”

“I - uh, I couldn’t get an owner.” It’s all Jimin can come up with that isn’t a total lie about why they’re in the capital. “Taehyung and I have been here since July. And things have been fun, but today’s my birthday and right now is the happiest I’ve been in a long time.” He almost rambles but Youngbae is giving him his bright smile and Jimin thinks he can maintain conversation without messing up too much.

Jimin continues to talk with the man for longer than he expected. Slowly, he loosens up as Youngbae asks him questions like how he’s settling in and how he’s doing in school. Jimin asks his own questions too and finds out the man is a back-up dancer for K-Pop Idols, which is why he has such nice muscles Jimin silently concludes. Furthermore, Youngbae shamelessly flirts with Jimin by complementing his appearance and manners and especially his small hands.

He would deny it, but Jimin tries to flirt as well without saying anything about how hot yet respectful Youngbae is. Taehyung is completely right and he knows it, Jimin does have a thing for responsible men and women - which everyone should have. There’s something about someone always knowing what to do that makes Jimin feel more than safe with them. He likes being taken care of. A lot.

Being respectful falls into the responsible category because as the two talk, Jimin very much appreciates the way Youngbae is considerate and understanding toward Jimin wanting to form a relationship with someone before becoming owned by them. He doesn’t ask to pet Jimin or touch his tail or say anything about his eyes or anything Jimin even seems remotely uncomfortable with. Even as more customers fill up the bar around them and pointedly eye Jimin up and down, Youngbae silently demands Jimin to only look at him. It’s just mere chatting and occasional flirting - and Jimin enjoys it.
Eventually, the conversation wears out and Youngbae says, “Well, Love, I’m gonna put this straight, okay?”

“Okay,” Jimin nods without really knowing what the man is referring to.

“You’re young. Too young.”

“O-oh,” he understands. “I wasn’t really expecting to…”

“No, I know you weren’t meaning to be taken home.” Youngbae smiles affectionately. “But in general, you’re too young for me. You have a lot to learn - about life, people. I just don’t see us going anywhere that way.”

Jimin tries his best to smile softly. He knew he had almost no chance to catch this attractive man’s attention in the first place, but he managed to make an entire conversation with him and that’s all Jimin really cares about now. “It’s okay. I had a really nice time talking with you, Youngbae-Ssi.”

“I did too, Pretty.” Youngbae reaches out hesitantly to cup his cheek and stroke it with a thumb. Jimin tries to repress the urge to nuzzle into the older’s hand, afraid he might cross a line. But he complies anyway and blinks up slowly at the man while pressing gently against his palm.

Youngbae smiles proudly. “I’ll tell you what.”

“Yes?”

“I’ll give you my number and if you ever want to talk or anything, call me - or text.” Youngbae says confidently. However, Jimin is confused by the offer, showing the emotion with a pout and attentive ears. Youngbae chuckles and slowly takes his hand away, “That’s all I mean. It sounds a bit like I’m offering to be your sugar daddy, but I’m really not. We can talk or hang out if you’d like. I just don’t see anything between us, Love... Other than if you want someone to talk to, I’ll be there.”

Jimin nods in acceptance.

Youngbae asks the bartender for his amount owed and a pen. He writes his number on a napkin and hands it to Jimin before paying and standing up, “Encouragement, sympathy, advice, you’re young, don’t be a afraid to ask, alright? I really enjoyed talking with you, Darling. Happy birthday.”

Then, with a slow kiss to the forehead, the man is gone and Jimin must make his way back to the table with a small frown.

The moment he sits down, Seokjin asks, “So, you getting potential ass?”

Jimin sputters but laughs - and like that he’s out of his blue mood, “N-no. He said I’m too young. I got his number though, I can talk to him whenever I want!”

Holding the napkin up like a trophy, Jimin convinces himself he did succeed in someway. His friends congratulate him and press for details about what they talked about. Jimin only shares bits and pieces like his occupation and how wonderful his scent is.

However, he gets distracted by Yoongi’s contrast in mood and points it out with a cock of his head, “What’s wrong, hyung?”

He only shrugs, “I still don’t think you should be talking to strangers.”
“But he’s not!” Jimin giggles. “He’s not a stranger anymore and now I even have his number! I think you’re jealous because his scent is better than yours.”

“N-no!” Yoongi frowns. “Are you saying mine is bad?”

“No, I think yours is just fine. I’m only saying… compared to him, he wins. His is so… ah, I shouldn’t say that here.”

Yoongi scoffs as the others excitedly push Jimin to say what he means, but eventually smiles, “Just don’t fall into his trap cuz he smells good, okay?”

Yoongi nods his head with a smile, deciding Yoongi’s concern won’t go away and it’s not so bad. They’re about to ask for the check but Jungkook interrupts before someone can raise a hand to call for the waitress as she passes. He frowns and looks between Taehyung and Jimin, “Speaking of scent, you guys never told us Taehyung’s or mine.”

While the humans think about it to realize Jungkook is right, Jimin suddenly laughs while Taehyung remains quiet. Maybe it’s the lively atmosphere he’s been around but Jimin feels loose enough to tell Jungkook the truth, “That’s because Tae is ashamed for no reason.”

“I am not,” the hybrid crosses his arms. “I never said I’m ashamed!”

The rest share full of interest and curiosity until Hoseok speaks up. “Why would he be ashamed?”

Jimin raises an eyebrow at Taehyung to ask if he has permission to explain. Fortunately, Taehyung seems to give up and shrugs in response, which Jimin takes as confirmation. “Taehyung smells like strawberries and Jungkook.”

“Me?!” Jungkook questions, flabbergasted yet darkening in the face in the way Jimin has come to know as a blush. It’s adorable.

“Is that even possible?” Yoongi asks with furrowed brows as he thinks back on what Namjoon and the hybrids had told them.

“Of course,” Namjoon nods, “When scenting, it’s to make the other smell like themself or themself smell like the other. It just depends on the situation and intention. That’s really all Taehyung did.”

“But I thought you guys said you only made us smell like you?” Hoseok asks. He seems almost betrayed at the possible lie. “To satisfy your animal or whatever and show that we’re your friends.”

“That’s the thing,” Jimin smiles. Deciding he nor Taehyung have much to lose, he shares how Jungkook is the only one this is happening to. “Instead of putting his scent on Jungkook like everyone else, Tae only put Jungkook’s onto himself.”

Jungkook asks Jimin despite Taehyung being right beside him, “But why? Why did he use mine?”

Jimin shrugs to try to show it’s not a big deal because it really isn’t, he just thinks Jungkook should know the little secret. “Because he likes the way you smell. More than the rest of us.”

“What does Jungkook smell like that’s so different?” Seokjin asks curiously.

This time it’s Taehyung who answers, still somewhat frowning and crossing his arms, “He smells dominant and maybe it’s because part of him smells like dogs and dogs are like wolves and I’m part wolf and my wolf has some weird connection to Jungkook in the first place but it’s feminine and natural and dark and I just want to have it on because it’s really balanced and warm.”
They all sit there, stunned at Taehyung’s confession to why Jungkook’s scent is the one he wants to keep. Jimin has a feeling there is more Taehyung really wants to say about Jungkook but this is all they have for now and it leads on to some interesting statements Jimin would rather not talk about on his birthday. They should be discussed with Taehyung in privacy.

Taking all the information surprisingly but seemingly forcefully lightly, Jungkook goes on to ask about more information with an almost steady voice despite Taehyung’s personal outburst, “O-oh. And how long d-does it stay?”

“A day or so.”

“But... you said it stays for less than one from how you scent us.”

Jimin responds, “Yes but that’s when we’re scenting humans. Having scent glands also means our skin absorbs others’ scents. Taehyung just wants yours on him so he takes it and after it comes off, he scents again like the usual.”

Jungkook nods slowly, letting all the information sink in as the rest stay quiet. Eventually, Jungkook looks up at his quiet friends with an unaffected expression and a shrug, “Cool.”

“It’s not as intimate as it sounds, don’t worry.”

“...Cool.”

Seokjin sighs, shaking his head, “What a day.”

And Jimin can’t agree more. He was woken up by his best friend to his favorite song for his favorite food before being taken to have the most fun he’s had in years. He was able to spend half of his day with the friends he’s learned so much from and meet a man he still has a bit of a crush on. Youngbae's proposed setup is a bit saddening compared Jimin’s initial thought of dates and ownership, but he knows he faced his fear of talking with humans other than his schoolmates and got out of it another adult he can rely on. Then he, for better or worse, got Taehyung to tell his small secret. It came out to be a monologue full of confusing yet suggestive statements Jimin will pry into later because there is something he’s treading along Jimin would love to tease him about.

Chapter End Notes

A bonus chapter will be up sometime before next Friday so please anticipate a little tomfoolery~
You
> anyone who wants to hear jiminnie be the most annoying little shit
> call me in the next 90 seconds
> mute yourself or he will hear

[ Group Call Brain-Hyung , Smells-Like-Jiminnie-Hyung , My Wolf's Kookie ]

It had only taken 15 seconds for the silent calls to start coming in. Taehyung quickly accepts each, merges the four devices into a mutual call, and puts his phone on speaker. It’s fine there are only three of them, it’s almost midnight and he would’ve been just fine sharing this common occurrence with only one person. It’s just a little something for Taehyung’s amusement. Once he heard Jimin’s bedroom door open and their hallway closet door do the same soon after for the second time that night, Taehyung knew what would eventually happen as Jimin shuffled back into his room quietly.

Taehyung waites tiredly in the night silence for the sign that he knows will come, his even breathing and the wind howling from outside most likely the only sounds his friends can hear. They sit quietly like this for almost an entire minute until Taehyung hears it, Jimin’s door opening slowly now and soft feet hesitating at Taehyung’s own door in the hall.

Two short knocks come to the wooden door, almost as loud in the silence as the wind against his window. He shifts and hums in reply, knowing Jimin will understand that it’s alright to open the door. The handle twists with a creak and the door opens loudly, just enough for Taehyung to see the short dark figure that is his best friend enter his room.

“Taehyung?” his small voice comes out slightly raspy. Taehyung briefly wonders if his phone catches it.

“Hm?” Taehyung answers calmly in his own deep and tired voice.

“Tae, can I - ?” he pauses to start over, his voice hesitant as he starts a build-up. “It’s cold, Tae.”
“Yeah.”

“I’m cold.”

“There are more blankets in the closet, Jiminnie.” Taehyung plays innocent to Jimin’s true intentions yet understanding to his temperature predicament.

“I know that, Taehyung. I got some,” Jimin tells him. Taehyung doesn’t seem to catch on to what he really wants so he stubbornly puts a whine in his voice, “But I’m still cold.”

“Then get another,” the wolf chuckles softly, entertained by the way Jimin is dancing around the request and choosing to play a little longer.

A powerful gust of wind hits the house, making Jimin jump slightly and hold onto himself. Taehyung sees the way his form shakes but doesn’t say anything about it because it could be dealt with if Jimin would say what he wants outright. Instead, Jimin whines louder, “But Taehyung!”

“Yeah, Jiminnie?” Taehyung hums in plain amusement now, biting back a giggle at his friend’s now desperate tone.

“Please?”

“I don’t have an extra blanket in here.”

“That’s not what I mean,” he huffs childishly. The wolf knows exactly what he wants and always gives it to him, but not without teasing Jimin about how he doesn’t ever say it aloud. He tries one more time to ask indirectly. “Taehyung, I’m cold and it’s loud.”

“Yes.”

“Taehyung, let me sleep with you,” Jimin finally says what’s on his mind, leaving the completely needy voice for a more annoyed one as he is forced to humor Taehyung, who only chuckles.

“But you have your own bed with like what? Five blankets?” Taehyung doesn’t give up on his teasing.

“But I’m still cold and it’s still loud and I actually wanna sleep,” Jimin continues to whine. His voice clear in the silence since he’s stopped whispering. Taehyung can clearly imagine the pout and drooping eyes as Jimin almost stomps in place.

“Then go sleep with your warm five blankets,” he suggests with his most friendly tone that only makes Jimin roll his eyes. “I only have two and it’s just as loud in here as in there. Why would you want to sleep with me?”

Jimin lets out a defeated noise that Taehyung finds adorable as he makes his way to the bed with heavy feet. He can’t see much in the darkness other than the way his black figure kneels down to rest his cheek on the mattress beside Taehyung. Up this close, Taehyung can now see the small pout and reflecting cat eyes in the little light coming from the window. It’s almost creepy but Jimin starts begging and he labels the expression as cute. “You’re warmer than the blankets and you’re a lot bigger than me and it’s not the same! Please?!”

Taehyung sighs dramatically as if he doesn’t actually want this, but it’s with a smile Jimin can see because he always gives in and can’t hide the fact of how much he enjoys being depended on. “Fine. But close my door.”
He scrambles quickly to do as he’s told before coming back and eagerly clambering onto the bed to be between the wall and Taehyung, his long tail swooshing behind him to keep him steady through it all. Taehyung shivers when the blanket is lifted so Jimin can get under the warmth beside him, letting in a temporary rush of cold air. The smaller hybrid’s cold skin makes him hiss as it presses against him when Jimin cuddles his side, hugging his arm with small cold hands and bringing his short legs up to Taehyung’s hips as he curls into a fetal positioning for warmth.

“Jesus, Jimin, of course you’re cold!” Taehyung tries to pull away from the other’s legs that keep coming back to entangle with his own. “You’re not even wearing pants!”

“It’s hard to move with all those clothes and blankets,” Jimin presses his freezing cheek to Taehyung’s shoulder as he gets more comfortable into the wolf’s side before he mumbles defiantly, “But okay Mr. Hypocrite, I’ll listen to you complain about my lack of pants.”

“You’re calling me a hypocrite?”

“Yes! You’re completely naked!” Jimin looks up at him now with wide, accusing eyes that still look a little terrifying. “And how could you not tell me when I asked to lay here with you?!”

“Okay, first of all,” Taehyung points out, shifting back so he can look down at the hybrid who’s pouting, “I’m not a hypocrite because I didn’t say I was cold. Second, how in the world do you know I’m naked?”

With a sharp glare and a scowl, Jimin nudges the bare side of Taehyung’s hip with his own bare knee before slapping his stomach, making the noise resonate through the room despite the wind. Despite clearly not having any top or bottoms on, Taehyung still raises his eyebrows at his best friend, “That is still not enough proof for you to come to that conclusion. You’d have to touch somewhere else to know.”

He grins proudly when Jimin huffs and backs off momentarily. Before it’s too late, the cat says, “I know because I thought there was a caterpillar in the bed when I cuddled you.”

Taehyung suddenly sputters and heats up while trying to get a good look at Jimin’s face, “Excuse me?”

“You heard me. But then I kept moving and realized you weren’t wearing underwear so I just put two and two together,” Jimin shrugs, snuggling into the heat of the skin anyway. “It’s just your manhood, we’re safe from small insects.”

“I can’t believe you,” Taehyung sighs out while shaking his head. He lets Jimin hold him tightly as he stares up at the ceiling, “First you whine about being cold and then you compare my manhood to a caterpillar. I should kick you right outta the room with my three legs.”

“I’d barely call that flaccid thing a toe.”

“Jimin!” Taehyung yells out now in embarrassment. The other hybrid laughs loudly in the silence, the wind outside almost completely passed seemingly for the phone to pick up every word. “I will shove this brick hard toe so far up your ass you will see the stars unless you stop right now!”

“Honestly, Tae, look at my ass,” Jimin rolls his eyes as he slaps his own hips through the covers. “I’m so thick your tick-tack won’t even breach my tight ri--”

“STOP TALKING, PARK JIMIN!”

Jimin just cackles devilishly and rolls about the bed all while slapping Taehyung in his amusement.
Taehyung is beet red for many reasons. One, Jimin is insulting his size. Two, Jimin has gotten to the rare tired point where he speaks sexually and has absolutely no filter. And three, his friends are hearing this conversation as the whole point of embarrassing Jimin turns tables.

He groans in both physical and emotional pain, “This is a mess. I just wanted to expose how needy you are and I end up getting belittled by my own brother.”

“You were little before I said anything.”

“I will shove you off the bed.”

“Wait, you said expose me?” Jimin’s voice becomes curious and accusing instead of going on with whatever his sleepy brain might throw out. He reclaims his position on the wolf’s side to inspect his friend’s expression for more information.

Taehyung is grateful to catch the other’s attention and he awkwardly picks his phone up from the edge of the bed with one hand to show the dimmed screen to Jimin. “Yeah, I have some of our friends here,” Taehyung tells him with a small frown. “I knew you were gonna bitch about the cold so I brought them for the ride. Here.”

Jimin takes the phone from Taehyung’s hands just as loud bursts of static come through. Softly laughing voices are presented as Jimin attempts to read the names on the small screen.

“Hello, Jimin!” one of the young voices laughs, Jimin recognizing it as Jungkook.

“Hi, Jiminnie,” a deep voice speaks through a smile; Namjoon.

“Hey, kiddo. Sorry, not sorry for listening in,” a third gravely voice says. Yoongi then chuckles, “You’re priceless.”

Jimin blushes at the words as the three start laughing, filling the room with loud static of varying pitches. He wonders whether he should be ashamed, embarrassed, or angry at the fact that his friends heard the entire conversation. Then he realizes they’re only making fun out of the end of the conversation and decides to laugh along. He asks the wolf, “They heard me talk about your d--?”

“Yes!” Taehyung interrupts in a panicked tone.

“I’m never looking at caterpillars the same way again,” Jungkook manages out, followed by agreements.

Jimin shrugs, yawns, and hands back the phone with determination, “I don’t bitch, by the way.”

“You do,” Taehyung pokes him on the nose softly, making him whine and bat his hand away.

“You’re cute though, Jiminnie,” Namjoon sighs out. “You’re like a little kid who had a nightmare.”

“I’m no kid!” Jimin tries to snap back, failing because of the way he’s gotten considerably more tired.

“Is it really that cold in your house to whine about it?” Yoongi asks casually.

“Jimin’s just sensitive to the cold,” Taehyung explains, continuing to poke at Jimin’s cheeks and nose. “He’s always decided it was okay to jump in bed with me whenever it got too much.”

“If Hoseok were here he’d say something about not being able to resist that whining.”
“You sure you’re not talking about yourself, Yoongi-Hyung?” Jungkook teases. “I bet you’d cave in easily just to feel hi--”

“Shut up!” Yoongi growls a little too loud to be taken seriously. They laugh while Jimin’s face heats up. Taehyung feels the blush against his skin along with the confusion in the air.

“Is Jimin really not wearing pants though?” Namjoon asks suddenly.

“Keep yours on, Namjoon. You got a boyfriend.”

“Hey I’m just concerned for his health! Being uncomfortably cold yet hot at the same time while Taehyung is just nude under worse conditions might be something bad.” Namjoon explains. He actually sounds concerned and it makes Taehyung chuckle.

“I have a lot higher body temperature than humans do,” Taehyung assures. “Jimin’s just a drama queen.”

“Am not,” Jimin mumbles back as he tightens his grip on Taehyung’s arm in warning. “But put some pants on. I don’t want a caterpillar crawling in my briefs tonight.”

Yoongi snorts and Taehyung sighs, “Not only is this caterpillar going to stay as far away from you as possible, I’m too tired to get up so deal with it.”

“Fine, I’ll get them,” Jimin announces in annoyance before he throws a determined leg over Taehyung’s hips to sit up straight, the first step to getting out of bed. The sudden movement makes him disoriented and his tail has to sway quickly to keep himself from falling right on top of his friend. His half closed eyes does nothing to help his balance as he almost falls off the other side with a yelp as he has to tighten his legs around the wolf and grab at his stomach to stay still, his head spinning and vision spotting when blood rushes to his head.

As nonchalant as Jimin is about waiting to move his other leg over, Taehyung is just as panicked. A choked gasps leaves him before he hurriedly hits Jimin anywhere he can to get him to move away. “J-Jimin!” He scolds the hybrid who only yawns. “You do not up and straddle a man who is naked! Especially with the little amount of clothes you’re wearing!”

The others burst out laughing while Jimin only shrugs sleepily before he finally musters up enough strength to get off the bed and slowly rummage through some drawers in the dark.

Namjoon says, “Jimin has been doing an awful lot of straddling of you, Taehyung. Are you sure you aren’t together?”

“We’re not!” Taehyung groans loudly. He gets a face full of cloth when Jimin returns to the bedside, wearing Taehyung’s sweatpants with his own hoodie.

“I got up too fast and had to clear my head for a second, Mr. Tick-Tack. So sorry for sitting for a little longer than necessary before I got you pants.” Jimin frowns and crosses his arms as he turns away so Taehyung can put on the basketball shorts he managed to find in the messy drawers.

“You sat right on my dick for a solid five seconds and I was beyond uncomfortable,” Taehyung huffs. “I hope you learned your lesson, Mr. Needy-No-Pants.”

Jimin ignores their bantering, too tired to take anything seriously as he gets back into his previous spot. He listens to their friends’ voices through the phone for a bit longer before he imitates Taehyung’s high voice from earlier, “‘You do not up and straddle a man who is naked...’”
Jimin sleepily chuckles lightly to himself as he hugs Taehyung close and enjoys the way the wolf lets them share body heat. Shortly after Jimin had spoken, Taehyung hears a muffled phrase come from the phone in Yoongi’s tired voice. He questions it aloud.

“I think he said ‘you can straddle me while I’m naked.’” Jungkook supplies helpfully.

“No, I heard ‘was he facing you or had his back towards you?’” Namjoon argues.

“Now that you put it that way, I think it was ‘how did his face look when he rode you?’”

“Oh I remember now! It was ‘straddle my face instead.’”

“Yeah it was one of those.”

There’s a short, awkward silence where Taehyung has become too uncomfortable and shocked to say anything about their words, staying put as he listens to Namjoon and Jungkook insist Yoongi wants to have sex with his best friend.

“You all are fucking assholes,” Yoongi eventually speaks with anger, sounding like he is taking as much amusement from this as Taehyung; none.

“Ah, yes, sorry, it was ‘let me fuck your asshole.’”

Namjoon adds cheerfully, “Or as Jimin put it, his thick ass that let no tick-tack breach his tight rim.”

Taehyung hesitates to ask as the two begin laughing deliriously, “No but seriously, Yoongi-Hyung. What did you say?”

Yoongi sighs tiredly, “I wondered why he was so sexual. I’ve never heard him like that.”

He clears his throat, trying to get Jungkook and Namjoon’s words out of his head. He replies calmer now that they’ve stopped laughing, “Y-yeah his tiredness comes in stages. After whining is saying sexual things. That’s more rare though. He doesn’t stay up long after whining.”

“Oh... Weird...”

“Yeah. I guess Jungkook and Namjoon-Hyung get sexual too, huh?” Taehyung chuckles nervously in his sleepy, low voice.

The two mentioned humans giggle happily at this. Yoongi sighs yet again, “Don’t take what they said seriously.”

Taehyung hums and is quiet for a bit, letting the exhaustion weigh on him before glancing down at Jimin and saying, “He fell asleep though, Yoongi-Hyung. Right after he made fun of me. So he didn’t… hear any of that.”

Yoongi lets out a quiet groan of relief, “Oh thank god. I would’ve killed myself if he did.”

“Hyung?”

“Hm?”

“I swear to god… if you touch him in any way he doesn’t like… I will be the one to kill you.”

Namjoon snorts unattractively while Jungkook lets out this combination of a knowing hum and an
amused chuckle. The oldest clears his throat, “Noted. Okay. I think it’s past all your bedtimes. Good night everyone.”

“Dream about that ass, Hyung~” Namjoon says as if he’s wishing him a good night as well.

“Don’t make a mess~” Jungkook giggles.

“Go fuck yourselves~” Yoongi mocks their tone before hanging up.

[ Group Call Brain-Hyung , My Wolf's Kookie ]

“Lay off the caffeine, alright Namjoon-Hyung? - sigh - You can’t get an addiction this early in life.”

“Yeah, I’ll get better. - yawn - It’s not like I’m on drugs. Don’t do those by the way. Night.”

[ Calling My Wolf's Kookie ]

“…”

“…”

“I mean… I wouldn’t mind it if you straddled me naked.”

[ Call Ended ]
Chapter 20
Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

By this time, he wants to cry out of complete frustration. Except, he physically can’t cry and he should just give up his pride by asking for help because it really isn’t such a big deal to do so.

Really, anything would make him feel better than sitting here in the middle of his room, alone and naked, pouting at his reflection. It’s been nearly an hour and Jimin has been trying to remember how to transform into his feline self. He’s done it before, so many times, but that was probably three or four years ago and god is he regretting postponing the next time he transforms to when Taehyung is completely independent.

Groaning in anger and disappointment in himself, Jimin scrambles to his feet to get at least some piece of clothing on that doesn’t make him feel worse. His reflection has never been something that’s necessarily made him unhappy, but he knows staring at himself won’t make him feel good anyway. Yanking open his drawer, he grabs the first pair of underwear he touches and pulls them on before sitting back down on the ground with his legs crossed. He stares at his own frown now as he tries to understand why he can’t transform.

Jimin knows exactly how to: remove all his clothes and let it happen. Well, it’s a little more complicated than that. No one is ever fully in control with their transformations until age 11 or 12. He remembers it being like moving his arm. To not think about how it happens and just do. But the problem is, he’s been lying naked on his ground for so long and nothing has happened no matter how many times he tries to bring out his inner cat, so he’s obviously going to think about it more than he has to.

Then again, this started more out of excitement than determination. For a few days now Jimin has been thinking on what he realized on his birthday about having more fun and being less afraid to try new things. The very first thought that came to mind was to finally transform into a cat just for the fun of it. To get back to his roots and feel like a hybrid. Then he realized Halloween is very close and he would also want to do something fun for that night as he goes out with his friends. Jimin quickly came to the decision of going as a cat for the holiday and perhaps collaborating with a friend to make it more creative. So, this attempt to transform was more rushed than calculated this morning and unless he goes to Taehyung for help, he’ll have to figure out what’s wrong with him on his own. He decides to give up for the day.

Sighing, Jimin stands now in front of the full body mirror before him to analyze his cat appendages, wondering if he can remember what he looks like transformed. Naturally, he sees his ears the least because they’re on his head, starting higher than the human ears do and continuing to a few inches above the top of his head, little strands of fur curling out to keep the dust and dirt away. When he sees them now, he wonders if the black furry things change much. They’ll decrease in size, obviously, but does the position change much?

Jimin steps closer and turns sideways to get a better look at his tail. The navy blue briefs have been put on low enough for his tail to come out freely and comfortably, also letting the base become visible as the fur and skin blend smoothly just above his tailbone. The black appendage curls upward in a graceful upside down candy cane shape along his spine to his shoulders where the tip occasionally flicks at the nape of his neck in his slightly disappointed state. Suddenly, he doesn’t dare look at himself any longer because it’ll only make him think about how he can’t change.

He quickly turns around to jump and land face first in his bed, seconds before he hears a knock at
the door. It’s Taehyung, he knows, so he lets out a muffled, “Come in.”

The door opens, “I wanna tell - oh what’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” Jimin turns to face his best friend, who steps inside and slowly sits at the edge of his bed beside Jimin. He is obviously not buying it if the pursed lips and narrow eyes are anything to go by. Jimin groans again and stuffs his face into the mattress, “I can’t transform, Tae…”

A sigh comes from Taehyung, then a hand that rubs at Jimin’s exposed back. He has always had much larger hands and a high body heat, which makes the act soothing and therapeutic to the point where Jimin sighs deeply himself and relaxes into it. The slow, calming sound of Taehyung’s voice starts, “It’s alright, Jiminnie. It’s been a while an--”

“It’s been, like, three years!” Jimin interrupts in a childish whine.

He only goes on, “So it’s obviously going to be hard. Just don’t think about it. Think about the purpose. It’s a new thought, yeah? So give yourself a day or so.”

Jimin shrugs at the advise. He knows all this, but because of how impatient he is to transform he’s too embarrassed to say so. His current inability to become a cat isn’t a big deal, he decides, and calmly turns the attention to Taehyung, “So what’d you want?”

“Oh. Um, I was just gonna let you know Jungkookie’s coming over today.” He explains, “He’s on his way actually.” Jimin smiles widely, which results in a weird face from Taehyung. “What?”

“I’ve been meaning to ask you, Taehyung,” Jimin says with a smirk, pulling himself up to sit next to his friend. They’re shoulder to shoulder, where Jimin can nudge him slightly. “If there’s anything about Jungkook you want to tell me, you can…”

A deep blush and a harsh wave of embarrassment emit from Taehyung. It only makes Jimin smile wider when the other looks at the ground, messing with the hem of Jimin’s blanket. “There’s nothing, Jimin,” he mumbles. “Nothing I wanna tell you and nothing that has to do with Jungkook.”

Jimin hums, nodding in understanding but keeping his sly smile, “Just saying.”

Crossing his arms, Taehyung tries to turn the tables on Jimin, “W-well what about you? Is there anything you wanna tell me about Mr. Don’t-Talk-To-Strangers-Only-I-Can-Pet-You? Don’t think I didn’t notice you reeking of him after visiting his work.”

Jimin gasps dramatically, taken back at the way Taehyung would attack him. So he huffs and looks away. “I have nothing to say,” Jimin tells him. “We just talked and that was it then.”

“Then why were you so nervous?”

“Because we had a weird conversation!”

“About?”

“Nothing, Tae.”

“Oh. I buy that,” he snorts, then turns serious. “Really. Jiminnie, you can tell me anything.”

“Yeah, yeah. I’ll tell about Hyung when you explain that outburst about Jungkook’s scent.”

They stare at each other for a bit, trying to determine who’s being the most ridiculous. There is
obviously something about Jungkook that Taehyung should talk about and there is possibly something about Yoongi Jimin should explore. As for what Taehyung thinks about Jungkook’s scent, Jimin is just going to use that get it in Taehyung’s mind that he won’t be getting away from that night.

“Fine. Fair. Anyway,” Taehyung says at last, breaking the fierce eye contact but not changing the small frown, “it’s for Halloween isn’t it? To be a cat?”

Easily moving with the next topic, Jimin nods, “Yeah, I wanna do something with a friend too. Like be a pair. But I don’t know if that will work. What about you?”

“I was thinking the same thing. That’s why Jungkook’s coming.”

Jimin resists the urge to tease and prod because Taehyung is probably sick of it and just wants to spend time with his friend. So he shrugs it off and pushes Taehyung with a smile, “I think this year will be fun, huh, Tae?”

He giggles just as the doorbell rings then stands up to answer it by saying over his shoulder, “Get some pants on and ask Yoongi-Hyung!”

Jimin becomes flustered at the double meaning of growing a pair and actually putting on pants. He yells back, “Shut up! I’ll just ask the group chat…”

“Jungkookie~”

Jimin pulls on some sweatpants to greet Jungkook quickly before they disappear into the kitchen. He tells them to mute the group chat, as what is going to be discussed does not concern them two, then settles himself on the living room couch in a mess of blankets to text.

You
> hello anyone here???

K C Hobi-Hyung
> im here!!
> hello!

Sweet-Hyung
> are you yelling?
> jimins here? hi

K C Hobi-Hyung
> hyung you’re an awesome friend you know that?

Sweet-Hyung
> kk
> yes Jimin?

You
> halloween is close yeah? what are you wearing??

K C Hobi-Hyung
> a prison outfit, like i escaped!! i have the board with my name too
> jonghyun-hyung will match with me and minho-hyung is gonna be the cop kk
You
> cute!
> how about the others?

K C Hobi-Hyung
> joon is an egg i think. idk how he's going to pull that off though
> jin-hyung is a pig? and taehyung and kook are doing some collab. i hope it goes well

You
> i can't wait to see all of you in your costumes
> jungkook is here now planning with taetae. so far no screaming kkk

K C Hobi-Hyung
> kk that's good

You
> what about yoongi hyung?

Sweet-Hyung
> tell me yours

You
> but i asked you first :( 

Sweet-Hyung
> i asked you second kk

K C Hobi-Hyung
> something tells me yoongi hyung doesn't have anything yet
> go first anyway jiminnie. i wanna know

You
> ok
> i want to be a cat

Sweet-Hyung
> like a cat cat?

You
> yes, like a cat cat

K C Hobi-Hyung
> NICE

You
> thank you!
> but i wanna do more

Sweet-Hyung
> more how?

You
> like a collab?
> do you want to dress up with me hyung?
> only if you want
K C Hobi-Hyung
> yes he does
> do it yoongi-hyung! it'll be so cute

You
> i think so too!

K C Hobi-Hyung
> please???
> ??!!?!?!

Sweet-Hyung
> i’ll dress up with you jimin. i think it will be cute too

You
> thank you!!

K C Hobi-Hyung
> what are you going to be? i have an idea

You
> tell us hoseok-hyung! i didn't think id get this far...

K C Hobi-Hyung
> yoongi-hyung can be a witch and jiminnie can be your familiar! please?

You
> i like it!

Sweet-Hyung
> familiar? aren't witches girls?
> does that make me a warlock?
> or a wizard…?
> what does any of this mean?

You
> ah it just means you need all the same witch stuff
> i don't know the differences either to be honest...

K C Hobi-Hyung
> a witch’s familiar is like a demon in the body of an animal or something
> either way jiminnie can be the little black cat that follows you around!
> it’ll be so cute, don't you think?

You
> yes yes!
> yoongi-hyung let's get together soon, we need to go shopping!

Sweet-Hyung
> yeah it’s cute...
> when do you want to Jimin? this weekend? i don't work on weekends

You
> sure! what time?
So Jimin eagerly waits for the next few days to pass. He hadn’t expected Yoongi of all people to partner up with him for Halloween because of his seemingly disliking for everything. Even as a Senior, Yoongi doesn’t like to go to parties. But then again, Jimin has come to realize Yoongi is more than what meets the eye. He’s sentimental and understanding, and likes to indulge in certain soft things like candies and cats. Jimin finds it endearing.

As Jimin waits for the weekend, he doesn’t try to transform mainly because he’s afraid of not being able to. If that happens, he doesn’t know what he’ll do with himself. There has only been one time he’s heard of a hybrid who had not been able to transform into their animal, and that was because of mental and physical abuse. However, Jimin is not under any of that and has no real reason to be unable other than forgetting.

Something in the back of his mind tells him he is still holding himself back, as if he still wants to wait until his life has completely settled down before becoming something that makes him so vulnerable. The abruptness of wanting to transform probably only brings that part of him out, making him feel entitled to change. But he knows he’s completely safe and has nothing to fear, so that wouldn’t be completely justifiable as a reason.

Except the fear part. After being human for so long, he is still hesitant to go through the physical transformation. It’s going to be painful for his joints, bones, nerves, pretty much everything including his organs to change size and position after not doing so for so long. Jimin thinks it may be like flexibility. If he stops stretching each day for a year, he won’t be able to touch his toes anymore. He’ll have to start right up from the bottom. But he doesn’t want to go through that if starting up again is true. He realizes fear of pain and a little something else must be what is really holding him back.

Taehyung had said he should just focus on the reason why he wants to transform in the first place. The answer is for fun for Halloween, to show himself he doesn't have to wait for anyone, and to feel more comfortable with his body. He takes Taehyung’s advice and doesn’t think about trying anymore for a few days, instead about himself and his motivations.

Saturday morning, Jimin wakes around eight in the morning. The first day of the weekend is supposed to be for sleeping in, and he groans when he realizes Yoongi is picking him up in a little less than an hour. Again, he hadn’t really thought Yoongi would agree to dress up with him, so when the older suggested a time on his own, Jimin made sure to take it in fear he might back out if Jimin talked about it too much.

Groggily, he brings himself out of bed and into the shower with half closed eyes. It’s not necessarily safe since he already can’t see much closer than arm's-length ahead, but he gets around by leaning against walls and feeling for the differences in the shower products. Once clean, Jimin wonders what he should wear. Part of him wants to throw on whatever because he is going to be shopping with Yoongi and doesn’t need to worry about hiding anything. He should just be comfortable.

Another part of Jimin wants to look relatively good when he goes out. His reason being, he’s going to be out with his “owner” and should show how nice hybrids are. Obedient, pretty, what anyone would want. But it’s also kind of the same reason he doesn’t go to school in basketball shorts and a
tank, he wants to look presentable, feel good, and look pretty. But then again, they are going to buy a Halloween costume and a dark building full of fake spider webs and bloody statues isn’t really the place to be looking like a model so he should think about toning it down.

Either way, Jimin comes to the conclusion of wanting to look nice rather than lazy. He pulls on some underwear and rushes to Taehyung’s room for advice. Knocking first, he waits a few seconds before opening the door to see his friend blinking at him from beneath the striped covers, dark ears flicking at the sudden noise.

“Cute or hot?” Jimin asks, with no shame of being almost naked. He’s a hybrid, he’s pretty comfortable in his own skin.

Taehyung doesn’t care about that. His sleepy voice comes muffled through his blanket, “Why?”

“I’m going shopping with Yoongi-Hyung and I wanna look good but maybe not too good because it’s for Halloween.”

The wolf stares at him for a bit - at least Jimin thinks he does. He can only see blurred colors from this distance and he hopes Taehyung hadn’t fallen asleep on him. Then he says, “Cute. Wear those ripped jeans and fluff your hair.” Jimin nods, about to thank him and leave before he notices Taehyung shifts and talks more, “And if you have time p- you know what, let me pick it out.”

Jimin frowns, “Why?”

But as Taehyung walks past him and winks, he knows he won’t have a choice. Taehyung is also probably up to something, but Jimin is too worried about time right now to care. His little bedside clock reads 8:46 by the time Taehyung has finished dressing him up.

Luckily, Jimin and Taehyung had already dyed their hair back to black at home the previous night and this outfit looks pretty alright to him. They both agreed the process of hybrid hair dying was just the same as a human’s and decided to help each other carefully dye their hair. It had taken much longer and costed much more than anticipated but they were effective and safe, not letting anything disturb their ears and covering all parts evenly. The grey wouldn’t have gone well with his outfit, especially with the way it was growing out.

Jimin is pleased with Taehyung’s work and is just about to eat before the other decides to sit him down and have a detailed talk with him about staying close to Yoongi and not making eye contact for too long and texting him whenever they go somewhere Taehyung hadn’t been informed of and calling if he is in danger and everything Jimin is already aware of but nods at to make his best friend feel better.

Before he knows it, a knock is at the front door and Jimin is in Yoongi’s car.

They sit in a relatively comfortable silence for a few minutes, until Jimin realizes it’s Yoongi that is on edge and decides to make conversation. “Where are we going?” he asks, looking out as they pass a particularly packed clothing store.

“Did you eat?” Yoongi replies with his own question instead as if he was only waiting for a time to speak.

Jimin doesn’t mind. He shakes his head, “Tae dressed me up and gave me a fifteen minute monologue about safety.”

He hums softly and switches on his turn signal, “Then we’re going for breakfast. And no you can’t pay.”
Jimin huffs dramatically at the way Yoongi knows him but then says, “Thank you, Yoongi-Hyung.”

“And tell Taehyung you look cute…” Yoongi mumbles so quietly Jimin wonders if he’s even meant to hear it.

“Thank you, hyung.” he mutters anyway.
To be clear, neither of them have really developed feelings! No one is hiding feelings, they're just two friends having some fun... and not so much fun. They're very attached already

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Taehyung’s intentions become clear when a waitress sets a light brown milkshake on their table with two straws already inside, saying it’s on the house. Yoongi thanks her and mutters something to himself about leaving a good tip anyway while Jimin smiles politely, then glances uneasily at the tall glass between him and his friend.

They’re at a retro style diner for Jimin’s breakfast since Yoongi had already ate. He bought a cup of coffee while Jimin received a basic breakfast meal. Things were actually going smoothly, Yoongi ordering for the both of them while Jimin tried to ignore many people’s interested stares and photo-taking. They were in the middle of a conversation when the milkshake came from a blushing waitress that wasn’t even servicing them.

Yoongi tilts his head and touches the glass before pulling back his hand with a hiss. “It’s autumn,” he frowns. “Why would she give us a milkshake?”

As the older brings the drink closer to inspect the thick substance with a suspicious glare, Jimin shrugs and continues to eat disinterestedly. He sees Yoongi take a sip from one of the straws, smacking his dark tainted lips together a few times as if looking for something specific in the taste. Jimin stares at the lips a bit longer than he should have, wondering what shade of red or pink they might be. They look quite like the milkshake.

“It’s not poisoned,” Yoongi states with a proud nod as he pushes the glass to the middle of their table. “Have some, Jiminnie. It’s freezing as fuck, but it’s good.”

Jimin raises his eyebrows but brings the milkshake close. As he takes a drink, he glances around the diner to spot a cluster of pretty waitresses giggling at them.

The drink’s flavor surprises him. He thought, based on the light brown yellow color, it was something like chocolate or caramel. Sweet, fruity strawberry immediately has him shaking his head and pushing it back despite his manners and the people watching.

“What?” Yoongi frowns. “You don’t like it?”

“I thought it was chocolate or something,” Jimin mumbles insecurely without making eye contact.

“It’s pink,” he says matter-of-factly.

Jimin repeats the tone, “It’s brown.”

“...Oh.”
He glances at Yoongi, who’s turned dark and embarrassed. Sighing, Jimin changes the topic and pouts, “They think we’re on a date. That’s what Tae wanted.”

The older’s mood changes to disbelieving as he scoffs and crosses his arms, “Taehyung has nothing to do with this frozen milkshake.”

“Not directly. But he wanted to… force us on a date,” Jimin tells him like it’s just putting two and two together. Yoongi only stares so he explains more, “When I told him I was going shopping with you he said he’ll pick out my clothes. Then he wasted my time by telling me what I already know. Now we’re out eating together and you said… I look nice. I’ve known him long enough to know he’d do this.”

“Do you think this is a date?” Yoongi asks with an eyebrow raised.

Jimin narrows his eyes to at the other like he’s been accused of stealing, “No.”

He then smiles reassuringly and states, “Because it’s not. So what if Taehyung pushed this on us for shits and giggles? So what if I said he successfully made you look cute? We’re going for breakfast, I think you should know you look nice, and that’s it.”

The way the older says this is nonchalant, which makes Jimin believe he doesn’t care if it looks like they’re dating. But Jimin cares. Somehow, he thinks it’s more embarrassing than playing hybrid and owner. As for Taehyung, he thinks it’s immature of the wolf to try to set him up without Jimin noticing, as if Jimin will suddenly realize he’s in love with their friend. He also finds the looks and milkshakes people give uncomfortable with their new meaning. But he tries to ignore the feeling of being watched and just nods at Yoongi’s words, trying to be comforted by them.

Yoongi has always been friendly towards Jimin, so he doesn’t necessarily mind being alone with him. Whatever they do now in the diner will be seen differently though, and he doesn’t want to be around this kind of environment anymore, just wants to have a good time with his friend without other people forcing emotions on them.

Jimin finishes his food quickly so they can leave the diner, neither of them touching the cold milkshake under Yoongi’s excuse of Jimin not liking strawberries.

Soon they’re in a dark Halloween clothing store crowded with people and costumes. Jimin beams at the different styles and accessories, everything ranging from classic vampires and anime characters to hot dogs and sexy school girls. As much as he wants to see every costume, Yoongi makes sure to keep a firm hand on his forearm. He’s not blending in as well as Yoongi. He’s wearing just black and white; a loose black and white striped button up jacket that’s rolled up to elbows over a bright white shirt.

The witch/wizard/warlock section is less crowded with curious teenage eyes, containing different types of cloaks, hats, staffs, wands, boots, brooms, dresses, and outfit sets. Jimin has no idea what the differences between most of these fictional characters are, but the game logos on some items help him know which are more as cosplay and which are Halloween costumes.

Yoongi takes one look around and shrugs with an almost bored expression. But Jimin doesn’t let that faze him, especially when the older gestures to the racks and shelves and says, “Go nuts. Pick something out and I’ll try it on.”

If anything, Jimin has learned to know he’s just overwhelmed and doesn’t want to make any decisions on his own. Jimin giggles gratefully anyway before gathering whatever he thinks will fit Yoongi and their witch idea. Eventually, he has a pile of individual clothing items he urges Yoongi
to try on right then and there in the relatively empty corner. Surprisingly, he agrees and lets Jimin piece outfits together on him.

Jimin doesn’t necessarily want to rid Yoongi of his original outfit, secretly liking the mature style the older has been sporting today. He has on almost the opposite of Jimin; slightly loose black pants that feel like fake leather with a thin belt of the same color - Jimin is wearing much the same bottoms, only tighter -, a black tee tucked into the pants - Jimin’s is only half tucked in to show off his buckle, but enjoys the slimming look of Yoongi’s -, and a fake leather jacket with carefully placed metal studs on folds made for fashion reasons. It seems to have a different color stitched around the arms that Jimin only sees as a weird dark yellow he assumes is just orange.

Begrudgingly, Jimin takes the stylish jacket off to slip another top over Yoongi. They can’t directly try these clothes on but they make it work by layering, holding pants up to his hips, and topping it off with worn out hats. Yoongi’s uninterested look immediately gets wipes off when Jimin pulls a dress over his head as a joke, eventually deciding to pose for each of his outfits, making Jimin laugh with him.

They attract attention, but nothing Jimin’s new mood deems as bad or unwanted. Teenagers and moms peek around the corner every so often to see a teen and his hybrid laughing and pulling different items on the older. People seem too uncomfortable around the two to stick around much longer than a minute to shop themselves. Some stay and ask a question or two along the lines of who, what, when, where, why, and how about a hybrid in a Halloween store, but Jimin allows Yoongi to answer like an owner would and allows people to stare a bit.

Yoongi and Jimin eventually pick out some clothes to actually buy and have the outfit in mind for the event. They pay, well, Yoongi pays again. Jimin insists to because it was his idea to get Yoongi to dress up. However, the Senior says it was his own choice and Jimin should just deal with it. Despite not being able to do anything about it, Jimin still pouts and pulls lightly at Yoongi’s jacket when he takes out his wallet.

As they return to the car, Yoongi turns to Jimin with curiosity and a small smile. “Hey, do you wanna go to my place?”

Jimin easily complies.

Yoongi’s house is empty, quiet, and dark, much the opposite of the last time he was here. Without any distractions, Jimin can take in the house a bit more as Yoongi walks him to his room. It’s cozy and relatively monotone in color. Where pictures of expensive paintings might hang are framed hand-drawn original art and sketches, getting larger and more detailed as they enter the house. Jimin catches a glimpse of a tattooed woman at the end of the hall before being led into Yoongi’s room.

“My parents work on the weekends,” Yoongi explains as he sets the shopping bag down and takes off his jacket. “They probably won’t be here before you leave, sorry.”

Jimin seats himself on the bed, Yoongi on a desk chair. He looks around with a smile. “That’s alright.”

Yoongi nods silently for a second before making conversation and letting a tingle of hesitation into the air. “So… you’re gonna be a cat?”

Jimin tilts his head in confusion, “Yeah. Is that… weird?”

“No, not at all.” He shakes his head to himself. “I’ve just never seen you as one. You said you
wanted to wait."

He sighs calmly and leans on a hand propped on his knee. “I did,” he admits to the older. “But then I realized I actually didn’t know what I was waiting for. So Halloween got closer and I thought, why not?”

“You didn’t go as animals where you were?” Yoongi asks. “What was Halloween like there?”

Jimin shrugs, “Pretty much like here. We were almost always transformed, so we all wanted to be normal. We dressed up as doctors and zombies and all that stuff. One time Tae went as ketchup and I went as mustard.”

Yoongi chuckles at this, “Really? Where did you guys even get the costumes?”

“Well, the whole place is like a small town or a village. Combined with a college?” Jimin tries to explain half-heartedly with hand motions. “There were like, dorm areas in different wards and only three schools for everyone. In a sort of plaza were small shops. You could get clothes and food and home decor. But you couldn’t really buy stuff. It was more like earning it. With a weird currency of grades and attitude. So, there were shops where you could buy costumes.”

“Sounds kinda cool.” Yoongi admits.

“Well, a lot of people compared it to a utopian city kept in the dark of the real dystopian world.” Jimin laughs lowly at the memories of the few superstitious hybrids who didn’t believe anything was real. “But it turns out it’s all pretty much the same inside and out.”

“You would go trick or treat and stuff right?” Yoongi questions. “Like, with little kids?”

He nods. “The younger ones were let out from six to about nine. Older hybrids – older than 13 – had to give out candy. It was part of a training as well, something about life simulation and family. Then everyone else was sent out. We had to avoid the younger wards and mess with young adult hybrids and staff. Anyone that was a human was a staff member, really, so that included doctors, teachers, and the sort of stand in parents.”

Yoongi comments, “Organized. So you never really got too old for Halloween?”

“I didn’t go my last two years,” Jimin points out, eliciting guilt from Yoongi. He only shrugs at the statement, “Just didn’t feel like it when Tae left. Then he wasn’t allowed out that late after the hospital. But it was fine. All that mattered was I knew he was stable.”

A silence comes over the room. The house. Jimin lays back on the other’s bed as he reminisces on the holidays with and without Taehyung. They had a lot of fun together despite being holed up in a seeming paradise. Yoongi, however, stays quiet like he’s afraid he had crossed some line into tender memories about Taehyung’s leaving. The older’s anxiety and discomfort eventually reach Jimin but for some reason, the emotions make Jimin smile. It may be because it shows how considerate he is.

Yoongi seems to take the smile as a relatively good sign, and decides to ask another question. Though Jimin knows he’ll answer whatever the older asks like he’s entitled to, Yoongi treads carefully as if it will make Jimin clam up. “When was the last time you transformed?”

The smile fades because he did touch something sensitive this time, and Yoongi becomes more hesitant.

Jimin breathes deeply. He shouldn’t tell the truth, just lie and say something like last week. That
way, Yoongi won’t know how unprepared he is. Lying won’t give him the chance to back out, allowing Jimin one of the best Halloweens he would ever have despite being transformed or not.

“Years,” he honestly replies.

Jimin shouldn’t lie. He really hasn’t been able to transform, and it scares him to think about what would happen if he still can’t by the time he needs to. That would disappoint everyone along with himself. Unfortunately, Jimin doesn’t even have a backup plan because he’s been ignoring the most possible outcome. By telling this truth, he only apologizes in advance.

Suddenly, the bed dips next to Jimin’s head with a wave of understanding, calmity, and Yoongi washes over him. He slowly opens his eyes without realizing he had closed them, looking up at Yoongi’s softly smiling face leaning over him.

“It’s fine,” is all he says before breaking into a bigger smile. Jimin wants to stare a little longer and hope that the more he does, the clearer his vision will become to see all the smallest details he can’t from arm’s-length away.

But Jimin looks away because now they’re talking about what else Jimin can’t do other than see right. “It’s not,” he whispers. In the corner of his eye, the face of blurred colors seems to frown. “I just can’t. And it’s not fine.”

Yoongi hums deeply, seemingly unaffected by the sudden despair in Jimin’s tone. He makes Jimin lean up and re-adjust until he’s using Yoongi’s thighs as a pillow, his cheek against the pants, looking out at the blank wall. The older waits patiently to continue with a hand on his shoulder.

“It’s…” Jimin starts in a newly broken voice that would be watery if he could cry. “It’s what I am. And if I can’t do it… then what am I?”

Yoongi answers peacefully, “Then you’re just Jimin. Jimin with cat parts and cute outfits.”

“No. I’m... I’m not.”

“Then what are you?” He asks calmly.

Jimin frowns. “A failure that was supposed to be out here the whole time. What use are my ears and tail if I can’t even be the cat I was made to be? I can’t even attract an owner, so I’m not cute. That’s why they sent me here with Tae. They knew I couldn’t sell alone. There was something more than just my eyes.”

“Don’t talk like that…”

He quickly becomes irritated with Yoongi’s nonchalance. Jimin’s ears fall back and his tail curls in at the middle of his back when he raises his voice in the way he knows he shouldn’t to a human. But he’s realizing now what a mistake of a product he is and it’s flooding over him. He presses into the thigh harder and clenches his fist, “No, Yoongi-Hyung, you don’t get it! I’m a hybrid. I don’t live like you. All I do is turn into some cat and become a maid and a toy and that’s it. I can’t get a job or go to college - I just need an owner…”

“I’m sorry, Jiminnie. You’ll get one.” Yoongi’s hand begins to card through his hair softly until his ears are back in a calm position and his tail stretches back to his shoulders.

“Not when I don’t work,” Jimin huffs in a sad attempt at being defiant because he’s gotten considerably calmer from being pet for a minute, but it’s now more defeated than passionate. “I have one objective in life and I can’t even reach it.”
Yoongi sighs now, patient and soothing. “This might not help but,” he says in the low deep voice Jimin rarely hears unless Yoongi gets affectionate, “people these days don’t really care that you can transform. They take it for granted. Don’t appreciate what you can do. I’m sorry for that. They just want what they see. But that’s alright. Because you’re Jimin. Jimin with cat parts and cute outfits.” He hesitates before adding in his own whisper, “And you don’t need to worry about a job. Trust me.”

Jimin stays quiet for a while, wondering if he should believe the older. He said people don’t think twice about a hybrid being able to transform. But Jimin doesn’t want to rely solely on his looks and house skills, the thought makes him uncomfortable even if Yoongi said he looks cute. He didn’t even pick out this outfit and it’s the one people are complimenting. Then Yoongi said to not worry about a job. The statement is vague and unpromising, he doesn’t believe that for a second. After some time, Jimin speaks in a small voice, wondering if he should be pouring his heart out to his friend. “I’m scared…”

But the older only encourages him and now Jimin wonders why he’s never seen this extra soft part of Yoongi before. He likes it. “Of what?” he asks.

“Of everything,” Jimin admits, smoothing his thumb over the fabric on Yoongi’s knee. “Of not being able to transform. Of being able to but doing it wrong or getting hurt or having to retrain myself. Of not getting an owner, staying out here while all you guys live your lives. Of getting one but ending up not being right and being sent back. Or being right for them, just not for me. Having to be kept there with them. For them.”

Yoongi seems to nod along while scratching his scalp soothingly. He offers, “What do you want?”

“I want… a pretty owner.” Jimin imagines it as he speaks, closing his eyes to make it more real. “Maybe a girl. I hear they’re nicer. Maybe a guy. Someone who will let me finish school while staying with Taehyung. Then move us away. We’ll live somewhere small and inexpensive. Like a… little studio apartment. I’ll stay home. I don’t mind staying home, really… And maybe we’ll eventually move in a nice big house. We’ll have… people over and parties even though we’ll be older. We’ll invite you guys and Tae and his owner. And it’ll be nice.”

“Sounds like you want love. Not an owner.”

“Can’t have both I guess…”

“That’s not what I mean.”

“But it’s true,” Jimin sighs, breaking out of his imagination. “Taehyung and I have been sticking to each other because love doesn’t matter once you get an owner. Friends stay. If I found someone, I would have to give them up. If I was bought, it wouldn’t be by choice and I won’t love them.”

Yoongi hesitates again, “You… said you can’t get an owner like this, right? How you are now?”

Jimin pouts, “You’re not helping.”

“I mean,” Yoongi presses, “if you’re so unconfident about getting an owner by someone coming to you, why don’t you go find someone yourself? An owner or a partner. Then it’ll start out as friendship and love and you’ll get to decide what happens next.”

“I’ve tried and failed. Youngbae just thought I was a kid. Other people think I’m a toy. Even if I tried to find someone by my own terms, I’m afraid they’ll lie just to have me.”
Yoongi pets him a bit longer, sympathy, isolation, and guilt coming from him. Jimin doesn’t want to think about what Yoongi is feeling, it confuses him. “Then let’s stop thinking about it and try a little less harder. I’m sorry you have to go through this. Sometimes the answer is right in front of you and you just don’t know it.”

Jimin hums in sleepy agreement, the weight of his own problems making him tired quickly. He begins purring and questions softly, “Can I nap here, Yoongi-Hyung? Then we can eat and I’ll finally leave you alone?”

“Sure.”

“I’m gonna pay this time.”

“Not if I cook before you wake up.”

He yawns, bringing a hand behind his ear to pat at Yoongi’s hand in his hair then curls his tail loosely around the wrist of the hand that Yoongi is leaning on. “You won’t go anywhere.”

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But Jimin is wrong and wakes up to his name being teasingly called from somewhere in the house. He finds Yoongi by following his scent and the scent of fresh food to see the older’s cheeky grin. Jimin laughs, easily accepting he had lost. They eat rather slowly, talking about this and that without bringing up what either had said earlier. Soon after, they’ve decided to watch a movie to prolong the time Jimin must leave. When it ends, they finally head out the door and Jimin is bombarded with questions by Taehyung at home.

Chapter End Notes

I finally seem to have got out of a writing block I had so I hope to finish this up and give you more thrilling stuff soon!
Halloween at the high school is much different than what the hybrids expect. They actually expected there to be nothing going on and the students having to act like it isn’t a holiday. But what they see when they come through the doors are Halloween decorations everywhere and half of the boys in costume. The halls are adorned with many streamers and spider webs in black and what Jimin assumes is orange. It’s festive yet not too overwhelming, like an unfinished haunted house.

Students are wearing whatever costumes they like, dressing up as pirates and cosplay while walking down the halls and talking with their friends. The hybrids don’t understand why but upon asking their own friends, they realize students who pay for a pass or receive perfect grades are allowed to wear their costumes during school. It wasn’t announced in the mornings like the rest of the school news but on flyers around the halls.

The theme for their school would make the hybrids a lot more happy if students left and right wouldn’t keep touching their ears and tails. Jokes are thrown at them about not having a pass or paying for one in ways other than money as if their costumes were being animals. It brings their moods down considerably but they try to enjoy the decorations and outfits around them.

Jimin and Taehyung get through the day relatively easily with their friends beside them to help keep people from being too bothering. Until Jimin is on his way back to class from a trip to the bathroom. He doesn’t usually use the school’s bathroom out of fear of being alone. He and Taehyung go together during lunch if they really need to. They’ve never had any other problems than stares or glances as they do their business.

Considering the extra amount of attention the hybrids have been receiving, Jimin shouldn’t have picked today to go use the restroom during class. But he also really wanted to see the decorations more and Taehyung wasn’t paying too much attention to him so he just went.

On his way back, Jimin spots a particularly shimmering spider on the opposite end of the hall his class is. He approaches it, seeing that it’s a bland shade of blue and wondering what color it really is. The whole school is a weird splattering of black, gross yellows, and the occasional smudge of blue - like everything he sees, from skin to chairs - so he wonders what this is. It’s about the size of his fist and made of some hard material covered in glitter. He smiles and touches it. It’s the
“Breaking a few rules, Jiminnie?” A voice behind him makes him jump, wiping the smile right off his face as he turns to see four casually dressed boys walking toward him with smirks. Of course, he had heard their footsteps, but was too interested in the color of the spider to think anything of them.

He tilts his head with a frown and his ears perked, “I’m sorry?”

The one who spoke earlier does again, “Skipping class for one.” He tuts condescendingly.

“I’m not skipping,” Jimin pouts, wondering what their point is.

“You shouldn’t lie, Jiminnie.”

“I’m not.” He looks at the spider on the wall and insists softly, “I went to the bathroom and wanted to see the decorations.”

“Of course your gay ass would want to see the decorations,” one of the boys laughs, making Jimin shuffle shamefully.

The leader steps closer, “That’s one rule broken. The other is walking around without a costume pass.”

Jimin almost groans at this, he’s heard the statement too many times now. Instead, he huffs and crosses his arms with a glare, “I’m not in a costume and you know that.”

“I don’t,” the boy shrugs innocently as his friends move to surround Jimin. “I’ve seen a whole lot of other kids wearing ears and tails. Just clips in your hair and on your pants.”

Jimin’s ears fall back and his tail curls restlessly against his spine as he talks back even though he knows he shouldn’t, “It’s not a costume!”

The leader just smirks and reaches for Jimin’s ears. He steps back, bringing his own up to swat the boy away but finding someone catching his wrist to stop him. His other hand receives the same resistance, so Jimin shakes his head to keep the hand from his ears. It doesn’t work, fingers run through his hair calmly anyway.

“They seem very real to me,” he jokes, tracing the edges of Jimin’s laid back ears. He shivers in disgust.

“Don’t touch me.” Jimin tries to step away but the grips on his wrist keep him in place. He whines, shaking his head and arms to free himself.

The boy grins, now retreating his hand from Jimin’s ears to his cheek, “Now let's see those eyes of yours, hmm? I’d love to know where you bought them.”

They laugh as Jimin clenches them shut and faces away with a protest, “They’re not fake! Let go of me!”

“That’s no way to talk to us,” the student slyly steps even closer, making Jimin move back only to have a hand push at his back. The leader’s body is mere centimeters from Jimin’s, and it has Jimin feeling uncomfortable and frightened. His dilated eyes shoot open, ears to the sides, tail pointing to the ground when the smirking boy puts a hand on his waist.
“D-don’t touch me,” Jimin tries again, more fear in his voice and aggressive in resisting.

He chuckles deeply, “I just want to see your pretty tail, Jiminnie. It’s not a clip-on is it?” Two hands are now his waist, two at each wrist, and two at his shoulder blades.

Terrified, Jimin shakes his head and moves his tail between his legs, vibrating in fear, “N-no. I don’t want you touching me. G-go away!”

He smiles widely, trailing a hand around his back to his spine, rubbing up and down in a soothing gesture. But Jimin is anything but soothed as he tries to pull his hands to himself and step further back. The boys are surprisingly strong, not letting him get anywhere no matter how hard he resists. It makes his heart rate pick up.

The hand dips lower and lower down his spine, Jimin’s eyes now pleading up at the boy to stop, “Don’t, please, don’t touch me!”

He doesn’t hesitate, reaching under Jimin’s shirt to feel his skin, moving his body even closer as his fingers slowly tap their way down to where Jimin’s tail meets his back. If Jimin could cry, he’d let out a sob at the unwanted contact. If anything he might actually throw up. But he can only repeat his pleas and tug against his hold violently as the leader smirks, now fully pressed against Jimin’s front as he pets the base of his tail and around it, holding him tightly.

Jimin just about yells in his shaken voice, “No! Go away!”

The boy shushes him softly and pulls away to put a hand over Jimin’s mouth, no longer touching his tail. Jimin thrashes more, trying his hardest to break free from the students. “You’re not being very nice to us,” the leader hums. “I think we should go somewhere else before you get us in trouble.”

His eyes widen, words of disagreement silenced by the hand. But it’s all in vain as he’s manhandled to the nearest restroom, finding it empty. When the leader leans in to whisper to one of his friends, the hold on Jimin’s wrist loosens ever so slightly as he’s momentarily distracted.

Jimin reacts quickly, pulling his hardest and freeing himself from the grasp. He tries to run away but they shout loudly and grab at him tighter, yanking him away from the door. Upon freeing at least one hand again and seeing a boy lunge for him, Jimin ends up punching the kid in the face, making the other groan and Jimin freeze.

He stares at the angry faces in complete and total horror, knowing he should never hit a human the way he just did. Slapping Jungkook doesn’t make him feel this bad because Jungkook didn’t think much of it and is a friend who treats him like a human. But Jimin punched this boy, and even though it was completely called for, they don’t look very forgiving. Jimin suddenly wonders if they’re smart enough to tell the authorities on him as a rogue hybrid, which terrifies him. It could ruin his life. If his old teachers could see him now, they would be livid.

Jimin gasps at what he has done, the boys’ anger gradually turning to confusion as Jimin beings to speak in a fearful voice, “I - I didn’t mean it. I’m so sorry. I’m not--!”

The leader scoffs as he unfortunately understands why Jimin is making a big deal about this, a small smile on his face as he eyes Jimin knowingly, “You shouldn’t have hit him, Jimin.”

“I - I know, I d-didn’t mea--”

“I think you did,” he states with a nod to himself. “I don’t think hybrids are allowed to do that, are they, Jimin? You can’t hit us.”
“N-no. I c-can’t,” Jimin stammers, aware he’s apologizing as the victim but completely afraid they’ll ruin his life. “Please, d-don’t tell them.”

The boy steps forward, humming in fake contemplation, “Maybe we won’t. If you apologize to him by doing whatever he asks.” The leader smirks at his friend, who is smiling widely at Jimin

Jimin stares at him, wondering if he’s made the situation worse for himself, if he should run now while they’re not holding him or just say no and see what happens. He doesn’t want to be at this boy’s mercy, doesn’t want to risk getting into something he’ll regret.

But before he can think of what to do, the boy is speaking confidently, smirking at him. “On your knees,” he orders.

Jimin bites his lip, sifting through the mess of events that can turn out depending on what he does. He can’t back out now, because he’s been given a command and ignoring it would put him in bigger trouble than running away. Then the boy’s face is hardening and he yells, “Now!”

Scared and hesitant, Jimin does as he’s told, lowering himself slowly in front of the student he punched with his head down in shame and embarrassment. For a second it’s quiet, leaving Jimin to be washed over with the realization of what he’s doing. In a spur of the moment situation where Jimin was more afraid than sane, he showed weakness and allowed the boys to take control over him.

If he had ran as he was profusely apologizing, he wouldn’t be here. If he hadn’t wanted to look at the decorations, he wouldn’t be here either. If he yelled louder, fought harder, didn’t leave the class in the first place. Nothing has gotten too out of hand, but Jimin is already extremely disappointed in himself to have gotten this far.

A shiver runs down his spine, eyes darting between their legs for a large enough space he can make a quick escape through. As Jimin realizes the boys are packed together too tight, a hand lands between his ears and ruffles the hair there before pulling his head back to look up at the student’s evil smile.

Jimin shakes his head and flinches back at the touch, his heart beating rapidly. Someone grabs at his hair harshly to keep him in place and he lets out a noise of pain that echoes in the empty tiled bathroom, which causes a foot to come in contact with Jimin’s ribs painfully.

Quick footsteps fill the bathroom that make all the boys turn to see someone enter. Jimin can’t see who it is himself from his kneeling place on the ground but knows who it is when the person yells, “Hey! What the fuck are you doing?!”

Jimin flinches at Namjoon’s voice, embarrassed at being in this situation in front of him. The boys surrounding him are frustrated and shout back at Namjoon, telling him to leave and mind his own business, but Jimin doesn’t pay attention as he backs up to the wall with his head down and eyes shut. From what he can hear, they result to violence before leaving Namjoon and Jimin in the bathroom.

The older rushes up to Jimin, asking worriedly, “Are you okay? Did they touch you?”

He whines softly, still very shaken as he looks up at Namjoon’s concerned eyes, “I - I’m fine. I’m not hurt. Thank you.”

Namjoon doesn’t seem very convinced, “Why are you on the ground?”

“I m-made a mistake. But it won’t happen again. I’m fine. Promise, hyung.” Jimin brushes his
pants off as he stands on weak legs. “L-let’s just go.”

Hesitant, Namjoon only nods and takes Jimin back to his class, holding him by the waist the whole way. He convinces Mrs. Shin Jimin wasn’t ditching or getting himself into any trouble while Taehyung fusses over him. The wolf had known something was wrong when Jimin hadn’t come back and heard a distant voice yell, but wasn’t allowed to leave unless he returned because Mrs. Shin made a point of saying it was Jimin’s fault he had to wait. Taehyung and Jungkook texted their friends instead and was able to send Namjoon out to find him.

After being blatantly and thoroughly scented by Taehyung during lunch, Jimin was forced into recapping the situation to his best friend in quiet whispers for privacy. Taehyung wasn’t really mad, only understanding and sympathetic. There were things the other also would have done so he wasn’t too disappointed when he heard Jimin apologized for punching one of the boys.

The event was quickly dismissed when Namjoon decided to not tell the other four what exactly happened, just saying Jimin was being harassed a little in the bathrooms. He appreciated the secrecy and would rather not think about it anymore because it made him feel humiliated and awful.

Thankfully, the hybrids and their friends were able to go through the day eventlessly again, staying right by each others’ sides. Jimin’s despair is completely forgotten as they all make plans for tonight. First, they will go to their respective home to deal with their personal matters such as homework and family time. Then an hour or two before the sun sets they will all regroup at at Jungkook’s house. After hanging out a bit, they will dress up and head out.

When Jimin and Taehyung get home, they are excited for the rest of their day, rambling to each other how different or similar this Halloween will be than the ones those couple of years ago. They finish their homework quickly and Taehyung even suggests a nap to pass time. Before they know it, Yoongi is in their driveway to take the hybrids and Hoseok to their friend’s house.

Jungkook’s home is small and has a modern feel, more than that of Yoongi’s, Jimin notes. Fabric softener, pleasant humidity, and a familiar dog coats the house so Jimin feels like he’s being wrapped in a blanket of hospitality. Taehyung lets out a soft groan when he steps inside and Jimin understands why, Jungkook’s scent is mostly of this house, safe and warm. His best friend loves Jungkook’s scent, so being bathed in the house while also having Jungkook close must be wonderful.

The hybrids meet Jungkook’s loving parents, who are enthusiastic about having so many people over as well as “rare beauties like hybrids.” It’s slightly uncomfortable in a different way, now being treated almost like royalty instead of sex toys. Jungkook gets embarrassed at the treatment and hushes them away from the hybrids. They’ve met Jungkook’s mother, but she admitted to being too concerned for her son’s well-being at the time than to really appreciate the hybrids. She and Mr. Jeon are playful and understanding - except to Yoongi, who greets them like another teenager with a simple “Thanks for having us” before going inside.

After a while, they all get hungry and Jungkook brings them all to his cup ramen stash / collection. He lets them choose whatever they want before preparing the half-hearted meals in bowls instead of the regular cups. They then go back to the living room where the seven discuss their costumes. Seokjin complains how itchy his turns out to be while Namjoon boasts how warm and comfortable his is. Hoseok is pleased with how his fits and says Jonghyun and Minho’s are “adorable.” Jungkook and Taehyung have yet to reveal their combined efforts but Yoongi and Jimin are open, explaining their simple costume easily. Jimin is suddenly reminded of his inability to transform as of yet and gets a wave of anxiety that he’s sure Taehyung feels because the other’s hand goes over
his own casually while Yoongi pats his knee inconspicuously. He feels at more at ease knowing the others are there to encourage and not to push.

Suddenly, Jungkook places his empty bowl on the table with a bit of force and says, “What is a knot?”

Jimin chokes on his spoonful and Taehyung sputters until his face is covered in broth. They cough, wheeze, and clean themselves up quickly to address the human with wide eyes.

“What’s a knot?” Jungkook repeats casually with the others looking just as curious. “Like, with hybrids. A hybrid’s knot or something.”

Taehyung abruptly turns and face plants himself onto the carpeting with a muffled, “I’m not doing this.”

“What?”

Jimin takes a deep breath, rubbing his ears as he looks at the rest of his friends, “Are you all serious?” They nod. “Oh my god…”

“Why?” Hoseok questions innocently. “Is it not something hybrids talk about?”

“No!” Taehyung announces loudly. “We don’t and never will!”

“Why?”

Jimin sighs and stares straight at Jungkook in determination. He says, “Think of it as a boner squared. I’m not going to teach you sex ed so find out the rest on your own.”

The humans become dark in their cheeks, embarrassment rolling off all seven of them. Seokjin speaks hesitantly, “A… boner squared? A super boner?”

“Sure,” Jimin chuckles. “It’s not like you’ll ever get knotted anyway.”

“What--?”

“Just Google it! Oh my god…” Taehyung interrupts hurriedly so they won’t have to give out any more information. He sits back up to face Jungkook with a scandalized expression, “How did you learn that word?”

He shrugs, “Heard it around school. I thought you’d be the best people to ask.”

“Okay, whatever, just don’t go saying that. It’s very sexual,” the wolf huffs, which Jimin nods quickly to. “I’m sure you can get a whole lot of information on some website.”

“Yeah, I’m not going to learn about weird supernatural hybrid dongs from a friend,” Yoongi says, and resumes eating pointedly. “How about this weather, am I right?”

Fortunately, the topic is never brought up again. But Jimin isn’t out of feeling uncomfortable for long before the time comes to change into their costumes. The humans have brought bags with their clothes and after considering the amount of empty rooms in Jungkook’s house, decide to change in the living room together while letting the hybrids have Jungkook’s bedroom and the guest room, Jimin and Taehyung being the only ones who have to completely undress.
Soon, Jimin is alone in the guest room and is now expected to come out in a different body. Nervously, he makes his way to the middle of the bedroom, in front of a mirrored vanity. He looks at himself for a few seconds, the sad look in his eyes telling him he won’t be able to do it and he begins to believe it as anxiety builds in his stomach.

Jimin looks away quickly, pacing the room and breathing deeply to clear his mind first. Then he sets to undressing himself. As he sits on the ground, the negative feeling only worsens and he doesn’t even try to transform, afraid and deciding to fold his clothes as pastime. After a few more seconds of breathing with his eyes closed to settle his nerves, he finally gets to it. He changes his position to one more comfortable for the process and tries intently to become the cat his friends are waiting for.

But it’s all in vain when he realizes he stays human for the entire minute he was concentrating. The sound of squeals fill his ears and he gathers Taehyung had been let out of the room, already transformed and ready to go. It makes Jimin feel worse, unable to try anymore as he feels it’s no use, he’s no use. His friends’ voices start up outside his door, questioning each other if Jimin is ready as well. He frowns, he can hear them perfectly, why aren’t they asking him directly?

Yoongi’s voice starts up, cutting off Hoseok’s concern, “It’s fine, guys. He’s fine.”

“Then why haven’t we heard anything? He’s taking quite a bit longer than Taehyung.”

“Not only is Jimin’s animal like, 10 times smaller than Taehyung’s, he doesn’t do it as often. It’s gonna be harder for him.”

“Well I hope he’s alright…”

“He is. Move away, Hoseok. I’ll talk to him.” Yoongi’s voice doesn’t get any louder when he begins speaking to Jimin directly now, apparently aware he could be heard clearly. “Jimin, can I come in?”

He scrambles to put on his boxers before giving an affirmative. Yoongi enters the room slowly in the costume Jimin picked out for him, eyeing Jimin sitting almost naked on the ground as if it were a normal occurrence. He closes the door and takes a seat next to Jimin, who is pouting softly and fidgeting with the tip of his tail, his ears at attention.

They sit like that for a bit, Jimin getting more comfortable in the silence for him to speak out his own concerns quietly, “I can’t do it, Yoongi-Hyung.”

The older shrugs calmly. He says, “That’s fine. You don’t have to.”

“But I want to.”

“I know you do,” he sighs. “But that’s the problem, Jiminnie, you’re thinking too hard.” Yoongi looks at him in his black clothes and soft skin, making Jimin face the ground at the sheer care in his dark brown eyes. “If you can’t do it and you don’t want to tell everyone else that you can’t, we’ll just say it hurts too much or something. We can dress you up in all black and you’ll be fine, you have all the cat parts anyway.”

Jimin smiles softly, hesitantly pressing his bare side against Yoongi’s clothed one. He becomes comforted from the words and contact. The human continues, “And another thing, just don’t think that you have to do this, Jimin. You’re doing it for yourself if anyone. There was a reason somewhere in you that made you want to do this, and I know it’s not because you didn’t have a costume planned.” Jimin hums, feeling the affection flow right off the older. “Do you wanna try
“Wanna try,” Jimin rubs his cheek on Yoongi’s shoulder, loving the pleased feelings coming off of him, briefly wanting to make him happier before understanding he has to part. “But... stay. Here. Please.”

Yoongi easily complies and a rush of something warm travels to Jimin. The human turns away but remains seated so Jimin can have his privacy as he takes his boxers off with new determination.

Taking a last glance at the other’s back, he moves into a nice position and takes a deep breath. He did have a reason to transform, it wasn’t just proving he was more than a pretty hybrid, it was proving he was someone who could become something else entirely. It was taking that first step in telling himself he can do anything and be anything he wants when he wants because he should believe he doesn’t need anyone else to tell him who to be. He doesn’t have to be afraid to stand up for himself either, he can punch whoever touches him the wrong way.

Jimin focuses a lot gentler than he had earlier, doing what felt right to become the cat he has always been. It wasn’t very hard this time, especially when he had Yoongi’s compassionate scent on him. Before he knows it, his bones are rearranging, his skin is tightening, his head is pounding, his muscles are aching, and he almost lets out a shout of pain from not doing this for so long. He vaguely feels as if he’s about to vomit as well as his organs squirm to change.

Jimin opens his eyes the moment he’s done. He scans the room, realizing it looks almost exactly the same as before, only a whole lot bigger and from a lower point. Upon seeing Yoongi, Jimin lets out a meow for attention, making the older turn and face him with nothing less than pride. Walking towards the human is only a little tricky, he hasn’t had four legs in years. He stumbles and falls, but picks himself up and makes it to Yoongi’s laughing figure.

Jimin meows again, rubbing his body along the leather pants in thanks. Yoongi puts a hand on his head and pets his short black fur from his twitching ears to his arching tail. Jimin purrs at the feeling, closing his eyes, stretching for a bit, then plopping down on his side. Yoongi scratches his body as Jimin stretches long and relaxing.

Yoongi giggles, standing up slowly. “Let’s go show the others,” he says.

Jimin stands himself and follows the older out, rubbing against the doorframe with his tail held high. He’s met with similar reactions to Taehyung, squeals and coos and smiles. They all come close to pet Jimin, who allows it but stays between Yoongi’s legs to not be overwhelmed. He purrs contentedly at each one of their scratches.

Soon, a large wolf comes near with his ears perked and eyes wide, the others laughing at the size difference. The wolf smells exactly like Taehyung all those years before, when Jimin would transform and smell more than he could with his human senses. It’s familiar, and as Jimin comes out to gently touch his nose to Taehyung’s, he feels even more content with himself. Jimin meows, making Taehyung’s mouth pant open excitedly, tail wagging, front to the ground, ready to play. He bats at the larger animal’s muzzle and receives the usual response of gentle snaps that never get close enough to touch him. Everyone coos at the interaction.

Taehyung suddenly barks, loud, deep, and alarming everyone including Jimin. It’s just like Taehyung to get overly excited, so Jimin relaxes and meows long, loud, and annoying in retaliation. The wolf jumps in place, barking once more. It’s too much for Jimin so he shuts him up by jumping up and batting his nose again, meowing loudly before purring against the wolf’s legs as he passes to the door.
Everyone gets the hint and gets ready to leave, Jungkook yelling out to his parents so they know. They’re off into the cold Autumn night laughing and joking about the hybrids in their animal forms. They waited long enough for there still to be lights on doorsteps but the only people out being other teenagers. It’s nice, just walking around together in the night breeze.

Jimin stays near either Yoongi or Taehyung for comfort, Yoongi being his costume partner and Taehyung being his joyful best friend. No one suspects the two animals being hybrids, only thinking they’re professionally trained pets as the two do whatever they’re asked and behave very obediently.

Seokjin easily got over the itch of his costume and made many jokes and puns revolving around pigs for their amusement. Namjoon smiled his dimpled smile and tried to be cute dressed in his Gudetama onesie that he still boasted about being incredibly comfortable. All of them made their best choking sounds when he and Seokjin cuddled up for warmth. Hoseok had wanted to meet with Jonghyun and Minho to have them walk around together, so they all met up early on but ended up giving up the Junior to the other boys. It was alright as long as Hoseok was returned before the six went back to Jungkook’s house.

Jungkook and Taehyung’s collaboration is far better than Yoongi and Jimin’s witch and familiar. Jungkook is a werewolf hunter and Taehyung, his prey. The human is shirtless and wears dirty ripped jeans and combat boots, along with different harnesses strapped tightly all around his body for accessories like play guns, bullets, and blue flowers. Jimin thinks he looked attractive and knows Taehyung does as well. Jungkook would confirm their setup and ask for Taehyung to howl and growl for their audiences, stunning them when the two wrestle believably. Everyone is entranced by the highly trained wolf that’s completely unleashed and uncollared yet remains calm and obedient.

Yoongi’s costume is generally simple, leather pants, a loose black tucked in shirt, and boots. His accessories being a smooth, silk black and purple cape, a classic pointed hat, and countless different types of jewelry. He wears styled necklaces he borrowed from the others, a pair of heavy looped and webbed earrings from a mother, many jeweled rings, and had packed on bracelets from different parents. He had even insisted on buying a small box of makeup to let Jimin put dark eyeshadow on him. It all makes him look very androgynous with his soft features and hard gaze, but Jimin loves it to pieces and is glad Yoongi does too. Jimin is often picked up proudly and pet by the older, showing off the costume in full. At one point, one of Yoongi’s long and thin silver chains is wrapped around his body to give him a bit of flair - and to not lose his small black figure in the night. He enjoys the smiles and many pets he receives.

At the end of all this, when they are spent and dog tired from walking around past when all the lights are out, Jimin and Taehyung go home peaceful. They know what the other is feeling easily: content and happy. Jimin feels different, but in a good way. They both continue to smile through the night.

Yet, there is something they know they both should talk about when they get home and silently give each other a tight hug, now noticing how much they smelled of their Halloween partner but refusing to change clothes or just take a shower before bed. This conversation will have to wait a little longer, there are still other things they’re waiting for.

Chapter End Notes
I'm not just beating jm up for fun, these incidents will eventually build to have a play in his character development, please know this.
Chapter Notes

Bonus chapters will be all texting from Jimin's phone to the group chat with the others. bonus chapters are also low quality chapters that usually don't even have much to do with plot so be wary.

some Warnings:
language
describing sex and sex organs? it's like a bad nature commentary
do you even read these??

[ the sack (7) ]

Jeon Jungkookie
> hey guys
> real talk here

K C Hobi-Hyung
> woah is our jungkookie being serious?

Joon-Hyung
> this must be important :3

Jeon Jungkookie
> really!
> I need everyone here

Sweet-Hyung
> please?

Jeon Jungkookie
> yes, please!

You
> tae and I are here :)

Jin-Hyung
> yeah me too

Jeon Jungkookie
> ok
> this is for the hybrids but im sure everyone has the same question

Puppy Tae
> ??
Jeon Jungkookie
> what is a knot

Puppy Tae
> are u fking serious

You
> kkkk
> dont be mean taetae!!
> theyre just curious~

Puppy Tae
> like hell im talking about this

You
> but didnt we tell you guys to just look it up?
> tae isnt completely unjustified here :T

Jin-Hyung
> hey! you said super dick! im not looking that up!

K C Hobi-Hyung
> yeah thats not something im putting in my history

Joon-Hyung
> I almost did
> not super dick!
> but I almost looked up a knot
> then my parents walked in and I was like ahh not today
> or ever

Sweet-Hyung
> supernatural hybrid dongs are not to be explored

Puppy Tae
> damn right

You
> tae we have to help these clueless humans!

K C Hobi-Hyung
> teach us oh wise hybrids

Jeon Jungkookie
> why is Taehyung so against explaining?

You
> out of me and him
> only he can knot

Jin-Hyung
> what? why? is that bad?

Puppy Tae
> stop talking jimin or I will take your phone away
Jeon Jungkookie
> tae has a super dick?

Joon-Hyung
> no! we need information!
> jimin! are there only certain hybrids who have super dicks?

Puppy Tae
> STOP CALLING IT THAT

Sweet-Hyung
> would you rather us say penis instead?

You
> to namjoon hyung, yes
> to jungkook, yes

Puppy Tae
> to yoongi hyung, call it a knot please and thank you >:|

K C Hobi-Hyung
> what kinds of hybrids?

Jin-Hyung
> why did you describe it as a super dick?
> is it bigger?

You
> only hybrids that are descendants of wolves have knots because wolves have them in the wild
> I said dick squared! because yes it gets bigger ;D

Joon-Hyung
> for science, how much bigger is it?

K C Hobi-Hyung
> ^^^

Sweet-Hyung
> ^^^^^

Jin-Hyung
> im sure it's not too big

Jeon Jungkookie
> yeah wouldn’t we have noticed if Taehyung had this 35 cm dick?

Joon-Hyung
> ok but from my observations taehyung doesnt seem much bigger than average

Sweet-Hyung
> observations?

K C Hobi-Hyung
> WAIT
> jimin said, and I copy and paste here,
> yes it gets bigger ;D

Jeon Jungkook
> oh shit does it grow??

Sweet-Hyung
> supernatural hybrid dong

Jin-Hyung
> oh come on! of course it grows!
> or else we would all have 4 cm dicks since birth

Joon-Hyung
> yeah but jimin wouldn’t have said it’s a super dick unless it grew bigger than average

Sweet-Hyung
> hypothesis: it Extra grows when he’s hard and goes back to normal when he nuts

K C Hobi-Hyung
> I second that

Jeon Jungkookie
> I third it

Jin-Hyung
> ok now why and how

Joon-Hyung
> idk jimin said wolves have knots so it should be for some survival thing

Jin-Hyung
> why would we keep them for hybrids then? they wont need it to survive anymore
> also, why the fuck would a bigger dick when nutting mean survival

Jeon Jungkookie
> wouldn’t we all like to have bigger dicks in general??

K C Hobi-Hyung
> not me!
> I dont think I can get bigger kkk

Sweet-Hyung
> ha ha but jungkook is probably right
> it may be for marketing purposes
> and WHERE IS JIMIN

Puppy Tae
> he was giving you too much information

Jeon Jungkookie
> aww taehyung dont ruin the fun :( 

Joon-Hyung
> ^^^ we’re close I can feel it
Puppy Tae
> FINE
> I’ll give him back so you can continue to bond by talking about dicks

You
> hello!
> I see you're bonding quite well kkk
> one could say you've knotted kkkkk

Puppy Tae
> im tempted to take you away again

Sweet-Hyung
> jiminnie tell me my hypothesis is correct

Joon-Hyung
> ahh yes tell me jimin tell me my hypothesis is correct ahh yeahh

KC Hobi-Hyung
> I spit my drink

Jin-Hyung
> same

You
> this topic is not to be taken lightly joonie-hyung!!!
> but more or less, yoongi-hyung is correct

Sweet-Hyung
> hell yeah! I’m a genius

Jeon Jungkookie
> he said more or less tho
> what’s different?

You
> it grows when he’s /about/ to nut then goes back to normal quite a bit after
> but not when he’s just jerking it
> or when hes getting head
> or anytime other than giving it to someone

Puppy Tae
> oh god jimin why would you say this so easily

You
> again, they're curious

Sweet-Hyung
> this is just getting more confusing
> only when he’s fucking someone will he get a knot??

Joon-Hyung
> yeah um please address things one at a time
> more like undress

K C Hobi-Hyung
> that wasn’t even a good one
> like I know it’s about sex but no

Jeon Jungkookie
> namjoon-hyung said it was used for survival in the wild
> is that right too??

You
> yep!

Jin-Hyung
> what? how??
> do wolves fight by jizzing on each other now?

You
> well when the wolves are doing the dirty it’s just for making babies so mother nature has to make sure he nuts inside to ensure babies

K C Hobi-Hyung
> jimin youre using words like nut but we’re asking this for education

Sweet-Hyung
> im not complaining

Joon-Hyung
> yeah id rather he use doing the dirty than sexual intercourse

You
> ;)

Jin-Hyung
> anyway where does the knot come in

Jeon Jungkookie
> hyung it comes in the vag haven’t you been listening?
> he needs to make babies :/

Jin-Hyung
> that’s not what I meant!!

K C Hobi-Hyung
> kkkk

Jeon Jungkookie
> oh
> ok then jimin continue

You
> so they gotta do it quick bc maybe other wolves are nearby who want some or maybe a lion is gonna pop up or maybe like the leader is gonna show up and break them apart

Sweet-Hyung
> you should narrate national geographic jiminnie

You
> kkk thanks yoongi-hyung

Joon-Hyung
> i’d watch it

Jeon Jungkookie
> keep it in your pants hyungs

K C Hobi-Hyung
> you can go on jimin

You
> the wolf has gotta nut quick bc all this danger so he gets close and it’s essential he gets it in inside so his dong gets big at the base until he cant pull out anymore and pretty much nothing can take them apart and he just nuts knowing his babies are inside all safe and cozy

Joon-Hyung
> woah so it just gets thicker until his dick cant be taken out?

You
> sure

Sweet-Hyung
> that must hurt like a bitch for both of them

You
> if theyre stupid and move a bunch and if the person being knotted isnt loose enough > but even then it’ll hurt to be taken apart T^T

Jin-Hyung
> holy crap how long do they stay like that?

You
> um about 30 min? it’s probs different for everyone :/

K C Hobi-Hyung
> so with hybrids it just happens when theyre fucking someone? does it matter which gender?

You
> his body just has to think it's trying to make babies so it can happen only in the butt or the vag, whoever he’s tapping kk

Jeon Jungkookie
> so Taehyung can do that? I can see why they kept it for hybrids > he a thicc boi

You
> yes! it's why he’s so embarrassed kkk > dog and wolf hybrids are in very high demand because they can knot~ spices up the bedroom I guess

Sweet-Hyung
> how do you know this jimin?

You
> it’s just sex ed :T

Jin-Hyung
> jimin real talk
> have you done the dirty and have you been knotted

Joon-Hyung
> ^^^

K C Hobi-Hyung
> ^^^^^
> bonus question, was it by Taehyung?

You
> I HAVE NOT NO
> NONONO

Jeon Jungkookie
> I had my doubts too but okay okay
> anyway, whoever gets Taehyung will be lucky to have him

Sweet-Hyung
> yeah don’t be ashamed of your supernatural hybrid dong

K C Hobi-Hyung
> whip that dick out with pride Kim!

Jin-Hyung
> knot that man or woman!

Joon-Hyung
> what they said

Puppy Tae
> please stop talking

K C Hobi-Hyung
> lets not forget about jimin’s dick!

Sweet-Hyung
> kitten dick kkkk

Joon-Hyung
> how adorable

You
> GO AWAY
Chapter 24

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

At this point, Jimin couldn’t ask for much more. There were few times when he was this content and happy with his life. Everything is going so smoothly right now he wants it to stay like this despite the bigger things that he keeps in the back of his mind.

It’s his favorite time of year, winter. Mid December to be more accurate. It really shouldn’t be his favorite considering how sensitive he is to the cold, but that’s pretty much the reason why. The cold calls for scarves, mittens, blankets, warm food, and even warmer company. He loves staying indoors with a nice cup of hot chocolate, bundled up by multiple blankets, laughing with his friends about something that happened earlier that day. It’s also a great time to snuggle up in his best friend’s bed when it’s too cold because the wolf is a natural heater.

His friends are another thing that make him happy nowadays. The five humans that had pretty much adopted Jimin and Taehyung treat them like old friends they’ve known for years. They treat them with respect and familiarity, making it easy for the hybrids to get comfortable. Being treated just as any other person is really something to hold onto at this time where they have no one but each other.

The seven hang out regularly, almost every other day after school and most weekends. Like this, they get closer and closer with each other even if they mostly regroup at the hybrids’ house. Over the last couple of months, the humans are slowly introducing Jimin and Taehyung to their families. It’s a bit awkward, considering how parents expect the new friends their sons made to be normal teenagers not expensive, rare, hybrids that shouldn’t be without the supervision of an adult of authority.

But parents and family quickly accept them and the hybrids are enjoying the extra places they can go since they rarely go out in public, especially with this cold weather. Namjoon’s parents even offered the hybrids to stay for Chuseok since they don’t have a family to stay with. It was expected that one family would take them in, so it was accepted gratefully.

Ever since Jimin had transformed into a cat on Halloween, he’s been a lot more confident with everything he does from cracking jokes to winking at the occasional student at school. He feels like he can be a regular teen as well as a seductive hybrid, both of which he’s always been in the first place. Taehyung had noticed it before he had, and the wolf expresses being all for it because it’s more like the Jimin he knew before Seoul. Jimin has just been rolling with it and finds himself comfortable with the way he walks and talks. Like Taehyung had said, it’s really nothing new.

All of this and more make Jimin happy and content, determined to ride this smooth wave until something big happens - hopefully meeting another potential owner.

So today, like every day, Jimin wakes up, and gets himself ready for the day. Getting ready includes showering, dressing, cooking, eating, and leaving. It’s a normal day but Jimin is in a particularly good mood. He plays with bubbles in the shower and hums his favorite tune. He picks out something relatively pretty to wear, knowing the colors are lavender, yellow, and light blue. The breakfast he makes isn’t necessarily the healthiest, but Taehyung isn’t around yet to say anything so he makes banana pancakes with cinnamon toast.
He and Taehyung have always eaten healthily because they’ve always needed to be in the best condition in all areas. It’s become more of a habit now, excessive amounts of sugar upsets their stomachs after years of a different diet. Nothing really seems off about eating vegetables with their eggs each morning. Taehyung doesn’t complain when he sees the plate of more than enough pancakes for the two of them, just thanks Jimin for cooking and eats with him joyfully, sharing dreams.

After storing away the extra cakes, Jimin packs up what he needs for school and waits for their friends to arrive. It never takes long before a car will drive up in front of their house. There isn’t much that determines who will drive them to school, only who is ready at a certain time to be picked up. Yoongi, Hoseok, and Namjoon live around the same area while Seokjin and Jungkook live relatively close. The hybrids are about in the middle, so it’s different every time.

This morning it is Yoongi, accompanied by whoever he happened to pick up beforehand. He’s early, so it may only be Hoseok so far. What isn’t normal for the morning is what Jimin runs into when he steps outside. Well, what Taehyung runs into and almost falls over.

Jimin frowns and eyes a small package at their doorstep in curiosity. Then he picks it up, finding it surprisingly light, and brings it close to read. Unfortunately, he can’t, and has to hand it Taehyung. In the five months they’ve lived here in Seoul, the only package they received was on the second day, which was two boxes of school supplies and two boxes of household items like laundry detergent since pretty much everything to live was already included.

This small box is a mystery, even to Taehyung for the better part of a minute. He turns it sideways and upside down, whining, “God, Jimin, this is the worst font to use for someone who’s dyslexic. And this ink has faded too much. Oh, it’s for you.” Jimin’s brows furrow. “But from who...? What letter is that?”

As curious as Jimin is though, he is reminded of their friends waiting for them in the car. He shrugs and nudges the other’s side, “Just put it inside, we’ll open it later.”

Taehyung continues to mouth out the sender as he goes back inside and Jimin waits for him so they can walk together down their yard. Not five seconds later, Taehyung releases a shout of surprise that admittedly makes Jimin jump. He looks back to see Taehyung smiling and wagging his tail, thrusting the box towards Jimin enthusiastically.

“This - this is it!” He says. “These are your glasses! It’s from the--!”

Jimin’s eyes widen quickly, snatching up the box and running inside, forgetting all about going to school in favor of finding some goddamn scissors. He vaguely hears Taehyung calling for their friends to come inside from his place in the kitchen where he’s using the meat scissors to cut the tape.

With a powerfully beating heart, he manages to part the cardboard. The first items he sees are a handful of envelopes in varying shades of yellow and blue, he briefly suspects they’re all of the rainbow but pushes them aside to see two familiar sleek black frames sitting comfortably in the white packing peanuts. His shaking hands almost drop the pair he picks up first, excitement pulsing through him.

This is it. This is the moment he will see everything as it should and as he once had. This new, yellow world full of bipolar humans and blurry textbooks will become one with his past world of color and constant hope. He’s always separated these two times in his life by what he can see. The first half had consisted of countless hybrids and simpler, colorful times. It included his childhood, his days spent in the sun or curled up at home, and all the lessons he had learned about how to be
the best he can.

This second half is new beginnings and an even newer world where he's learning something different each day. Each seems like a dream he sees in the movies, where he one day he might wake up from this colorless, fantastic world at any moment and find himself waking from a quick nap in the vibrant square back home. These two parts of his life are so different. The bland colors, friendly and unfriendly humans, amusement parks, no one to tell him if he’s living the right or wrong way, versus when he had it all. The culture shock along with his inability to see correctly, has made this whole time feel like a delusion - too good to be true, or too bad to be true.

The only link between this endless dream and his previous life has always and only been sweet, amazing Taehyung. He’s the only connection to what things used to be like. His presence grounds Jimin into realizing that this is real. Jimin has only recently been becoming the person from before, but now, with the glasses he can fully immerse himself into this new world and realize that yes, this is real. He’s not in an endless cycle of yellow blur.

Slowly, Jimin puts the glasses on. The frames fit snugly, a pleasant weight on him like an old friend. He sees the kitchen for the first time. His chest tightens when he gasps, taking in the sudden colors and crisp details around him. It’s like being in an entirely different house as he looks at every colored appliance and bright blue towel - which he had already noticed because Taehyung wanted him to see as much as possible.

Jimin’s breath turns shallow, his ears fall flat, his tail presses right against his spine, and his chest just burns. He slowly looks around at his and Taehyung’s kitchen, admiring every detail and wondering what it had looked like when he was cooking the pancakes this morning. So he opens the refrigerator to see colorful vegetables and fruits right there. His world is pulsing with life.

He releases a breath before slowly making his way out the kitchen, taking his time running his hands across the walls and looking inside every room. His own room is the most surprising, it’s the most familiar place to him in a whole new light. The curtains, bedspread, carpet, even his clothes are a completely different color from what he’s always known. This dream is real! Excited, he now runs out down the hall to take in the entirety of the house - their home. He’s grinning widely and even giggling at how amazing this feels, to finally being able to see as he used to.

Jimin soon enters their living room, where only one person is close enough to the door for him to notice immediately. Yoongi. The older is wearing a confused frown at the arrival of Jimin but whatever he’s about to say is cut off when Jimin rushes up to put his hands on Yoongi’s cheeks, squishing them in delight.

Jimin laughs and smiles in joy, his eyes turning to little slits as looks upon his friend. All of his friends used to be like all too real video game characters. But now, he sees his favorite human coming to life. The soft skin of the boy is a creamy-tan tone with hints of pink in his cheeks. His hair is the same deep black, as well as his eyes, but they stand out more clearly against his skin tone. What Jimin is also amazed at are the cherry red lips that continue to pout as Jimin hold his face. He’s always wondered what those small lips would look like against the older’s skin, what the finer creases looked like when he would furrow his eyebrows. Every clear detail Jimin is able to see at this distance tells him Yoongi is just beautiful.

He eventually calms down but keeps his hold on the older, opting to admire the colors and details of his entire body. Yoongi remains stiff in his hands as he squints at him and questions, “What are you doing?”

Jimin’s silver eyes dart to his mouth, catching glimpses of the red of his tongue as he speaks. He smiles again and runs a soft finger over the skin around Yoongi’s eyes as he squints. “Admiring
how pretty you are,” he tells him.

The pink deepens and spreads across Yoongi’s face, and Jimin feels the embarrassment and flattery coming off him when he weakly tries to move free of Jimin’s strong hold on his face. “Yeah, well, you’re obviously on drugs,” Yoongi states, giving up to glare at him. “You just ran around the house laughing.”

This expression makes Jimin giggle, “Because I can see, Yoongi-Hyung! I got my glasses!”

“I can see that too. Maybe you can put those glasses to use and look at me from a normal perspective. I.E, not at point-blank proximity.”

He shrugs, watching the lips move as he forms each word. Yoongi doesn’t seem too awkward anymore, so he figures pressing his forehead against the older’s wouldn’t be too bad. An unfamiliar object is in the way when he does so, the glasses’ frames squeezing between their faces almost painfully. But Jimin doesn’t care. In this way, he can express his joy and energy to the other while purring contentedly. As expected, Yoongi only sighs, “Now what are you doing?”

“You’re just really pretty, hyung,” Jimin states while looking in his sparkling eyes before smiling and finally retreating to see the rest of the room.

Off to the side are Namjoon, Hoseok, and Taehyung, all of whom are either grinning or smirking. Jimin doesn’t understand why they are wearing those expressions, but doesn’t think much about it when he goes in for a group hug with all three of them. He takes a little less time looking at these friends since the initial shock was given all to Yoongi.

Taehyung hugs him separately, proudly accepting hair ruffles as Jimin looks upon him. The wolf looks exactly as he remembers from five months ago, which tells him that all of this that is happening is the same life from back then. And he gets to live it next to his best friend. Jimin breathes in Taehyung’s scent as he goes in for one last hug, humming quietly as the familiar scent of woods and strawberries wash over him along with their shared happiness.

“You smell more like Jungkook than usual,” Jimin whispers into his chest with a smirk. “We haven’t even seen him since yesterday. You didn’t come home ‘til late too. What did you two do after school?”

Taehyung pushes him away far enough to press their foreheads together in a rough, playful way. He smirks as well and says, “Maybe I’ll tell you when you tell me why you called Yoongi-Hyung pretty so much.”

Jimin laughs now, raising his voice to one more comfortable, “Fair. I’ll hold you to it.”

“I swear, you guys are together…” Hoseok mutters, shaking his head when Jimin turns to take another look at the house.

He only repeats himself, “The more you say that, the more disgusted we get around each other. Now let’s get going. I want to see the city!”

“There’s not much that keeps us from thinking you’re a couple. But I’ll let this slide since you were pretty touchy with Hyung,” Namjoon passes to pat between Jimin’s ears as he heads for the door. Jimin huffs and blushes but follows after him, trying not to pay too much attention to the blush on the Senior’s cheeks as well. “We should take you out at night. Let you see the lights then.”

“Yes! Please, hyung!”
The school day passes quickly and is full of swirling colors. Jimin’s smile stays on his face for hours, eyes bunching up in cute half moons and gracing everyone he sees with brighter sunshine and a warmer day, teachers and students alike. Most boys give him questioning looks as he walks around halls he’s never been through to see every color of the school. They’re mostly wondering why he is suddenly wearing glasses. A few get enough courage to come up and compliment Jimin or ask about the new item.

Either way, Jimin smiles and enjoys the new details of his life from the map on the classroom wall to the color of Ms. Shin’s hair. When Jimin had walks into that particular class, he actually has to do a double take to see if he is really seeing that Ms. Shin’s hair is actually dyed a deep red. All this time he had thought it was some odd dirty blonde with highlights. That color had never suited her and Jimin finds it easier to pay attention to the lecture with a less awkward hair color.

At the end of that class, Jimin is taken aside to talk about his excessive staring along with his new glasses. Blushing, Jimin tells her how he has always been color blind and the glasses allow him to see as they do, that the sudden red hair was a surprise. Polite as always, Jimin says she somehow looks even more beautiful with his glasses. Ms. Shin seems flattered and Jimin gets teased by his friends for making the woman flustered. Whether he likes her or not, Jimin can’t help but be nice to everyone.

School goes by without a hitch, and soon, the hybrids are on their way home in the back of Seokjin’s car. Jungkook immediately asks if Taehyung would like to stay over at his house because his parents recently let him have a T.V in his room, but the wolf takes one look at Jimin’s smirking face and declines in favor of investigating the package. Jimin really doesn’t mind if his best friends hangs out with the human so often, he’s just going to tease the way his eyes light up and cheeks turn red when Jungkook talks to him until Taehyung tells him why; even if he already knows the reason.

They decide to finish their homework before going back into the kitchen to look at the box from this morning. It builds suspense but Jimin happily does the work with a smile because he can read all the directions and efficiently write down his answers. With his glasses, he realizes, they won’t have to use so much paper and electricity each day by having to type and print out his homework. Taehyung is also pleased with the glasses during their homework time. He no longer has to read everything out for Jimin, yet continues to work beside him and ask if he’s understanding the instructions correctly. It’s almost funny how the tables have turned.

Then they go back to dig deeper into the package in the kitchen. As suspected, the envelopes are in all colors of the rainbow. There are about a dozen, each with a different name written on top, but one dark red envelope tells them to open it first. Sitting side by side on the couch with the box on their laps, the hybrids do so with anticipation.

The first envelope opens to reveal a sheet of lined paper filled quite a bit with neat writing. Jimin smiles at the thought of someone handwriting a letter to him and Taehyung before unfolding the sheet to read it.

Dear Park Jimin,

Hello! This is Siyeon, the woman you spoke to on the phone a while ago? I hope you remember me, as you sure have made impact on my life. These months since you called have been hectic and emotional for many us. Speaking of which, forgive me for the long wait. What is this now? Almost three months? I hope you’ve been coping well without your vision aid…

A couple days after you called, I was able to find out about what has become of your and your friend’s rooms. It turned out a large amount of staff have been fighting to keep the rooms as you’ve
left them. They wanted a reminder of you two for as long as possible. I didn’t even have to look for the staff members you mentioned because once I told them why I needed to see your room, they automatically realized you both were able and willing to communicate back here!

As you can see, I - we - were able to retrieve your glasses from your room! The extra pair is for any incidents that may occur before you are due for your next appointment. The real struggle that took months was convincing the higher ups that you and Kim Taehyung were “worthy” of help, as they unfortunately see you as disgraces and insubordinate… They made the deal larger than necessary and put up quite the fight. Their only real argument was of how they were already helping you financially and academically.

It broke all of our hearts to hear the way they sent you two young boys out in the world like that. We fought harder and won! It’s not much, but we were able to get both of you annual eye and doctors appointments as well as keeping your files up for customers to look at even if you’re not here for them to see. We wish we can get you boys more protection out there, but it can’t be done...

Staff you have mentioned during your call along with many others who had the pleasure of working with you and Taehyung have written their own letters to the both of you. I’m not sure, but I think a friend here was able to put in one too. Please read them with care, as everyone has put much thought into them!

I hope you and Kim Taehyung stay safe and healthy! If there is any trouble, we are willing to help as much as we can, just call as you did and I will pick up!

Sincerely,
Choi Siyeon

As Jimin finishes reading the note out loud, he notices Taehyung is already splitting the rest of the vibrantly colored envelopes into two different piles. Jimin feels touched by the letter he just read. This woman he talked to over the phone about three months ago now knows him and his best friend close enough to work to get them a few extra privileges that mean little to nothing for her. Even at the very beginning she had given Jimin a chance by agreeing to try to find his glasses, something she could have easily dismissed as a petty request. He feels a smile grace his lips as he thinks about this kind woman, wishing they can pay her back somehow.

“Here. You get those, I, these. Then we switch. Start. I want to read them all.” Taehyung suddenly states. His words almost jumble in his quick explanation but he’s too excited to see what the people who raised them will say to care. Jimin starts right away beside his friend, who is already reading a page from a neon green sender with wide eyes, tense ears and tail, and a fingernail between his teeth.

After more than half an hour, they’ve finished reading each letter. More than half of the men and women who wrote did so in more than a full sheet of paper front and back. Envelopes were crammed with paper and small knick knacks to remember the others by such as pins and photographs. The words were all about memories and good wishes. They told the hybrids how much they missed them and wanted them to have a nice time on the outside. They said how much they meant to them and everything they couldn’t before Jimin and Taehyung were taken away.

The one friend who was able to write was one of the boys Jimin had spent quite a bit of time with when he wasn’t with Taehyung. He explained how things were going without them, how so far two boys they knew were already taken to their new homes. No hybrid really knew what had happened to Jimin and Taehyung when they left at dawn, thinking they had hidden the fact that someone had wanted the both of them. But once word got out that they were strays, everyone had felt worried about what was to come for them.
Every letter was read slowly with care, the hybrids letting the emotions from each sender seep into them. It’s heartwarming to be in contact with these people after so long. Even if it’s only been five months, the side effect of having their family and home ripped away from them made it feel like years. The staff were really people who made a difference in their lives. At birth, hybrids are separated from their mother to be put through a special procedure. Then they are raised in same-year “birth bunches” by specific staff members. These people are essentially the parental figure to most hybrids, teaching them morals and discipline. Their word strongly influences Jimin and Taehyung, and all of the letters make their chests clench.

Once they’re finished, they sit in silence for a minute or two. Jimin takes a look at Taehyung to see him with glassy eyes and a frown. Feeling pretty similar, he carefully pushes the letters between them aside to scoot close enough for their thighs to touch. Taehyung startles at the sudden movement but relaxes into Jimin’s side, putting all his weight on him.

“These are…” he trails off, messing with an edge of a purple envelope, “nice.”

Jimin smiles, “Yeah.”

“I wanna hang them up. In frames. Or at least, laminate them or something and keep them in a binder. Or a book. Maybe a scrapbook. So we can keep the stuff with them.”

“We can print out pictures from the laptop,” Jimin offers, encouraging his best friend’s scrapbook idea. He wants to keep every piece of this package for as long as possible, and believes a scrapbook can hold these memories. Maybe more than these.

“Yeah… That’d be nice,” Taehyung smiles, leaning his shoulder on Jimin’s to share the joy and peace emitting from him.

Chapter End Notes

These next few updates will be a little wonky, sorry boys... Regardless, I will still be able to respond to your comments and questions!
This bonus chapter will not be standing in as this week’s actual chapter, but it’s as a gift for being patient with me. The new chapter will be up soon - not today, but soon.

I'm spoiling you lately, aren't I? Hehe. Four chapters in just two weeks? I just wish they were properly distributed for you to enjoy better :)

[ the sack (7) ]

**Joon-Hyung**
> I did it!!
> guys I did it!!!

**Sweet-Hyung**
> namjoon you’re going to have to tell us what you did for us to be excited

**Jeon Jungkookie**
> I wanna know what you did

**Joon-Hyung**
> I figured out why taehyung and jimin are so touchy

**Sweet-Hyung**
> wow! What a feat!

**Jeon Jungkookie**
> Yeah namjoon-hyung they’re just close
> taehyung hangs on me all the time
> it'll happen to you soon enough

**Joon-Hyung**
> ....
> no its more than that
> jungkook does he really?
> be honest

**Jeon Jungkookie**
> yeah?
> jealous im the better friend ;) ?

**Sweet-Hyung**
> no jungkook I think he means you're special in a weird hybrid connection way

**Joon-Hyung**
> jungkook pls explain in detail the length of how he “hangs on you all the time”
Jeon Jungkookie
> ew what are you suggesting?!
> we dont do anything!!

Joon-Hyung
> it’s for science I swear this time

Sweet-Hyung
> this time???

Jin-Hyung
> I don’t think you should be having such a private conversation in the gc

Joon-Hyung
> wym?

You
> Tae doesn’t appreciate being talked about so openly

Joon-Hyung
> ah! So Taehyung is here!
> pls tell me what you and jungkook do together

You
> Sometimes I have the same question but
> he says they don’t do anything he wouldn’t with any of the rest of you

Joon-Hyung
> No I’m pretty sure he does

Sweet-Hyung
> cough cough
> taking his scent
> cough cough

Joon-Hyung
> ^^^

Jeon Jungkookie
> not my fault you all smell like shit compared to me

You
> He says that’s the only thing
> I have my doubts though
> I’m onto you Jungkook
> I can smell you all ovew4nn083nd8

Sweet-Hyung
> wtf

Jeon Jungkookie
> should I be scared at that last word?

You
> hi it’s Taehyung and I had to make the kitty shut the fuck up
he’s sulking

Joon-Hyung
> so you guys are sleeping together again I see
> hmm
> it’s not even that cold today…
> HMMM

Jeon Jungkookie
> chillax
> like I said, theyre just close

Sweet-Hyung
> he’s sulking?

You
> yep

Sweet-Hyung
> thats kinda cute

Joon-Hyung
> pflfpplhflklbxpffl
> thats WHAT

K C Hobi-Hyung
> no I agree
> it’s adorable

You
> he’s blushing!!!
> [ attached image ]

Sweet-Hyung
> see

Jeon Jungkookie
> yeah look at the way he covers his face with those small hands

K C Hobi-Hyung
> aww like a cat~

Jeon Jungkookie
> he’s so short

Sweet-Hyung
> will it be weird if I set this as my lockscreen
> wtf
> typo sorry lmao auto correct amirite
> ignore that first text will you? thanks
> anyway
> he does look like a cat

Jin-Hyung
> I really don’t want to ignore that but ok

You
> I say put it as your lockscreen ;)

Sweet-Hyung
> what? put what as my what?
> I have no idea what you are referring to Kim Taehyung

You
> that was jimin :))) now it is i, taehyung

Sweet-Hyung
> .... .... ....

Joon-Hyung
> this is an interesting interaction

You
> [ attached image ]
> “stop taking pictures of me asshole!”

K C Hobi-Hyung
> look how his eyes are wide now but his ears are still up
> he’s not really mad

Jeon Jungkookie
> even his tail is short how cute
> it can’t even reach his shoulders

Sweet-Hyung
> that one is my lockscreen and you cant do anything about it

Jeon Jungkookie
> get some yoongi-hyung!!

Sweet-Hyung
> oh fuck off

You
> [ attached image ]
> the moment right after I told him you have him as your lockscreen

Jeon Jungkookie
> HIS FACE

K C Hobi-Hyung
> He is so confused it’s fucking adorable

Joon-Hyung
> He’s so cute
> he looks so flattered and embarrassed at the same time
> I am going to die from this cuteness

Jin-Hyung
> hello
> it is kim seokjin
> your loving boyfriend who has never received that kind of praise

K C Hobi-Hyung
> wow namjoon I think you really just fucked things up with your boyfriend

Joon-Hyung
> oh ha ha jin is just joking don’t listen to him

Jin-Hyung
> still hurt tho

Joon-Hyung
> I actually tell him how much he means to me every night
> attached image

Jeon Jungkookie
> I did not ask for your sappy midnight texts to your boyfriend
> wasn’t there a point to all this?

Joon-Hyung
> oh yeah.
> so they’re touchy for more reasons than you think

Jeon Jungkookie
> nope im pretty sure it’s just that they’re close

Sweet-Hyung
> shut up and let him text

Jeon Jungkookie
> oh back from the dead are we?
> did jimin kill you with his cuteness too?
> look even his shirt is falling off in the last pic
> isn’t that one your lockscreen?

Sweet-Hyung
> I am disturbed by how closely you are looking at his picture
> also
> shut the fuck up kid

Jeon Jungkookie
> fine fine
> so what is this extra stuff to their touchyness

Joon-Hyung
> so they’re part animal right
> jimin is a cat so he subconsciously acts like one more than he notices
> which explains the straddling and the cuddling and the constant scenting
> even the sudden confidence he’s had since halloween
> cats are notoriously independent but with him it shows as more as confidence
> which is why he so easily got close to yoongi and called him pretty
> with taehyung he has an urge to protect and strengthen his bonds with his friends
so that's why he keeps tabs on us all the time while scenting more obsessively than Jimin. But with Jungkook it seems to be different.

Sweet-Hyung
> I told you you had some weird hybrid bond

Jeon Jungkookie
> we don't even do anything though?

Joon-Hyung
> yes but he takes your scent so there must be more
> I just don't know what

You
> wow you figured out we're hybrids
> that we do animal stuff
> because we're part animal
> woahh
> so smart

K C Hobi-Hyung
> I can't tell who's texting now

You
> it was tae

Sweet-Hyung
> so now it's Jimin?

You
> yeah Taehyung went to shower because you kept pointing out he smells like Jungkook
> he's trying to wash it off
> but it won't come off until a few days no matter what he does

Jeon Jungkookie
> don't make me feel bad

Joon-Hyung
> I think you should feel special his animal side seems to like you
> I have an inkling it's because of your dog

You
> can we stop trying to figure out why we do different things than humans when it's obvious because we're not - get this - entirely human

Sweet-Hyung
> pls send a pic of your pout

Jeon Jungkookie
> now you're just thirsty

Sweet-Hyung
> what? I actually have no idea what that means
> when did this word come out? why do you make me feel so old?
You
> [ attached image ]

Sweet-Hyung
> I was joking to lighten up the mood but thank you
> really

You
> :)

Jeon Jungkookie
> whatever he won’t send it now that tae isn’t there to catch him doing cute cat stuff

Sweet-Hyung
> little do you know…

You
> ;)

Jin-Hyung
> that looks like sexting to me

Sweet-Hyung
> NO WHAT THE FUCK

You
> NO NO NO
> sexting is a big no no for me. I don’t care if you like it, just not with me

Sweet-Hyung
> that is the second time we got someone to think did something naughty together
> go us

Joon-Hyung
> second??

You
> yeah we made it look like we got a little heated in the bathroom once

Sweet-Hyung
> and then I made it look like my hand was rubbing a special place on his lap

You
> that one was hard to pull off :( 

Sweet-Hyung
> spur of the moment
> im still sorry

You
> it was fine
> thank you again :)

Jeon Jungkookie
> I don’t even want to know
“Taehyung. W-we should talk. I think.”

The wolf picks up the hesitance in his voice, making him immediately frown and turn to him. Jimin stands by the bedroom doorway sheepishly, his ears at attention but his tail waving nervously behind him as he looks down at a shirt bundled up in his small hands.

“I mean… if you want to,” he continues. “‘Cause we don’t have to. Really.”

Taehyung’s eyebrows furrow as he sits up straighter in his chair, uneasy about what would make Jimin uncomfortable. He says, “I - talk about what? Whatever it is, I’ll talk about it.”

Jimin nods shortly before waddling his way to the other’s bed, making himself comfortable with the shirt Taehyung now sees is actually his. His confusion grows but he trusts Jimin to tell him what’s happening. A little less nervous, Jimin looks at him as he speaks deliberately.

“You left a shirt in the dryer,” he says.

Taehyung reaches for it, “Oh. Thanks.”

But Jimin pulls the cloth closer to himself, still containing eye contact with an unknown expression. “I didn’t know it was yours.”

“What? I’ve had it for like, two years.”

“It doesn’t smell like you though. That’s... what I want to talk about.” Even more confused, he nods anyway. Jimin turns back to the shirt he’s kneading with his small hands. “It smells like Jungkook, Taehyung. Like this is his and he just gave it to you. Like he’s worn it before. Taehyung... we need to talk about you guys.”

Taehyung remains tense but sighs in compliance. Both of them know this is a touchy subject that neither of them really want to talk about, but they’re best friends and Jimin thinks he deserves to know what’s really going on with Taehyung and the human. He sees and feels the embarrassment on his friend but Taehyung doesn’t actually say anything in response, just stares at him with nervous eyes.

“I’m not - Taehyung I don’t care if he has worn it before. I don’t care if you spend so many days after school with him or talk to him on the phone at night. I just care that you share why,” he tells him softly to do his best not to make this feel like an interrogation. “I’ll tell you whatever you want in return but I want to know why you’re like this. Why you’re taking his scent and - and always hanging out with him separately. It’s... different. That’s it. And I’m curious.”

Taehyung scratches the back of his neck and looks away. “Promise you’ll tell me things too?” He asks this quietly.

“Promise.”

“Well, Jimin. You don’t have to think very hard,” he says lowly, as if he’s having a conversation with himself. “He’s my favorite human. And scent. And he has this weird thing that makes me feel… I don’t know... okay?”
Jimin frowns now, “He makes you feel ‘okay’?”

“Yeah but I mean,” he attempts to explain while poking himself with the dull point of his pen in concentration. He doesn’t make eye contact, just glances at Jimin a few times. “I’ve been thinking about what Namjoon-Hyung said a while ago. About how my wolf needs balance?”

Jimin nods, remembering how the Junior had analyzed Taehyung’s situation when they told the others about their past. He had said the reason Taehyung felt so attached to Jimin was because he keeps him steady and the wolf sees him as a brother. Even Taehyung knows this subconsciously; but Jimin believed it long before the human put it into words. He would always ask questions about his best friend to the staff members, giving him an insight to what was really happening.

Taehyung nods himself before moving on, saying, “I agree with it because I always feel okay around you. When I lose control or something like that. You help me stay alright because you’re… you and you’re also my… best friend.”

His heart swells at the words. Of course, he knew all this - his important part in Taehyung’s life - but hearing it from the boy himself makes pride and adoration swirl inside him. Taehyung has never been one to shy away telling him he cares for him, but when it comes to his own behavior, he doesn’t like to talk about himself. That deep heart-felt stuff makes him awkward and Jimin thinks it’s amusing to watch.

But Jimin decides not to tease the way Taehyung had bared his heart like that and just smiles to himself as the other coughs to break the tension. Taehyung speaks more comfortably, “So, I’ve already told you that before - when Namjoon-Hyung pointed it out….”

Jimin schools his expression to one more casual to not make Taehyung uncomfortable when he offers, “Jungkook makes you feel that way too?”

He nods and purses his lips but doesn’t make eye contact. “I thought about what I said back then, that Jungkook helped me too when I was angry at Hoseok-Hyung. I said you helped and Jungkook helped. Then you said it was because my wolf likes him so it was good that he was there with you. I didn’t think much more about it ‘cause you talked to the staff and you know me really well too. But I also remembered how he made it worse.”

Jimin scoots closer to the edge of the bed, “Yeah I remember that. You said it was what really triggered the episode.”

Taehyung takes another glance back at him before standing only to sit next to Jimin on the unmade bed. “I don’t really understand that part, but I know that’s pretty much what happened.”

Jimin waits patiently before the other goes on again with something soft in his voice as he recounts the time. He says, “I remember getting really mad. Then you came in and stopped it. I told you that. At the time all I saw was Minho-Hyung, and all I felt was you. Then I smelt someone else. It was familiar but I didn’t know who it was at that time. I realized later and told you it was Jungkook. But... now that I think about it, I remember what it was like.”

At this pause, Jimin presses his side to Taehyung’s side for encouragement until he starts again.

“It was… comforting. It smelt like comfort and safety. It wanted me to be calm because… it made me feel taken care of. Then when he touched me with you, I felt even more safe and warm, so I let you guys move me. But then you told me Minho-Hyung’s name and all that happened. I felt Jungkook’s hand but I only got the memories with the scent. It was the opposite from what I felt with Minho-Hyung. It was all smiles and soft while Hyung was fighting and dominance. I wanted
to keep Jungkook around because he made me feel safe. Like you. But it was too much then.”

Jimin’s hand is petting at Taehyung’s hair, nodding and humming to show he’s listening. “So he’s that balance for you,” he comments softly. “That’s good, Tae. You don’t have to understand it. Just go with it if it feels right.”

“But I’m not sure it did,” Taehyung huffs, still thinking hard. “He feels strong and soft at the same time. I wanted to use it - him - for something. But I guess you’re right… It was that that helped when I was mad him.”

“That next day? Tell me about it.”

“Well,” he gets closer to Jimin while also taking the shirt out of his hands into his own. “I was mad. But he wasn’t. Not for the most part. I smelt him.” He brings the shirt up to his nose to breathe it in, letting the dark musk wash over him. “He was relaxed and forgiving and adoring. I wanted to slap the look off his face but at the same time it made me feel like he was controlling the situation and I didn’t have a good enough reason to be that mad. It was like a push a pull, you know? I’d yell and he’d answer calmly. Forgive me like he deserved it. When he got mad I did too ‘cause apparently my wolf is a drama queen.” Taehyung attempts a chuckle at that. “But when he stopped himself and calmed down he still felt so… dominant that I wanted to follow and be okay too.”

“You said that before,” Jimin brings up. “On my birthday. You said he smells dominant.”

“Yeah. And feminine and natural and dark and I just want it on me ‘cause it’s really balanced and warm. He also smells like dogs and that probably helps.” Jimin giggles when Taehyung smells the shirt again, sighing in content. He says quietly, “It was so cliche.”

“What was?”

“I spilled cola on this shirt,” Taehyung smiles at himself, remembering the time. “So he gave me his and offered to wash mine before I left. Then I came home and didn’t wear it again until that day you got your glasses. That’s why I smelled so much like him. It just never came off I guess.”

This time, Jimin laughs out loud. It startles Taehyung but eventually he’s chuckling sheepishly as well with his lip between his teeth. When Jimin calms down, he clasps the other’s shoulder with a smile, “You are so whipped, Tae!”

He groans and hits him like the way he always does when he’s embarrassed but like always, Jimin bounces back with more laughter, hitting him back in amusement rather than embarrassment. Soon enough, they’re wrestling on the bed, going back and forth with how much Taehyung likes the human. Jimin tells him he can see it a mile away while the wolf insists it’s only a little crush that’s he’s been slow to understand. Taehyung ends up in a submissive position with his arms immobile from Jimin’s around him. Jimin is behind him with his legs around the younger’s waist to keep him from escaping. It’s like a weird piggy back while laying down.

Once realizing he can’t move without taking Jimin with him, Taehyung groans again and falls limp to show he’s lost. Jimin giggles but lets him go. They then lay side by side on the bed with the air of joy slowly fading around them.

“Thank you for telling me, TaeTae,” Jimin says quietly, as if speaking too loud will disrupt the comfort between them. “I know it’s confusing…”

Taehyung makes a pleased hum. Then speaks up lowly, “Jimin?”
“Yeah?”

“Will you tell me about Yoongi-Hyung now?”

Jimin sighs a relaxing sigh, “Yeah.” He moves a little to get away from the knot of blankets against his small of his back. “For one, it’s not as extreme as you feel for Jungkook.”

“Jimin~” Taehyung whines before punching him lightly in the arm.

He chuckles, “But it’s true. I don’t feel that much for him. I like being around him - alone or not, and talking to him - alone or not. All that friend stuff.”

“But you think he’s really pretty too?”

“I think you’re pretty. But differently from him, you know?” Jimin sighs. “I don’t like him...”

Taehyung giggles.

“I’m just saying,” Jimin rolls his eyes as he speaks but gives a small smile. “We’ve known them all for what? Four months? I was just teasing you, Taehyung. I don’t exactly think you’re head over heels for Jungkook.”

“Yeah me neither,” he admits easily. It’s not shameful, but content. “I know I like him more than a friend. I know he’s my favorite human. But I don’t want to date him. Yet. I just want to be next to him a whole lot. I want to wait before asking him for something more, it just feels right.”

“I get that a little. Yoongi-Hyung is my favorite human too. I think he’s awesome. I like how he’s always standing up for me and so willing to listen to my problems. He’s also kinda goofy and makes you laugh. It’s nice. But again, I don’t think I like him like you like Jungkook. I... wouldn’t date him.”

The two lay there in a comfortable silence as they take in each other’s words. Jimin is being completely truthful when he says he doesn’t have romantic feelings for the older boy. To him, Yoongi has proved to be a great person that stands out against the rest of their friends - not like the others are any worse, just that Jimin feels... something. Something he won’t allow himself to feel later on.

As for Taehyung’s attraction to the other Sophomore, Jimin had seen the look in his best friend’s eyes and felt the way he would relax around Jungkook. He doesn’t really become flustered around him but Jimin thinks it has something to do with Taehyung not understanding what he feels for the human. Whatever they feel for the humans, they know their best friend will understand and support.

With this realization, Jimin voices out what he’s wondering. “Do you think they feel something for us, though?”

It’s not long before Taehyung answers with just as much curiosity, “Maybe. I mean, I know Jungkook doesn’t mind the way I think of his scent and he’s also asking me to hang out. So I don’t think mine’s exactly one sided.”

“Do you notice anything about Yoongi-Hyung?” Jimin finds himself worrying his lip between his teeth. Taehyung notices it of course, and glances at him with a frown.

“I do.”
“Really?”

“Yeah. He’s always super nice to you and pretty protective. The others tell me he doesn’t really let anyone over to his house or work other than Hoseok-Hyung because they’re childhood friends. But here he is, letting us have a birthday dinner at his house, letting you stay over alone, letting you pop up at his work. It’s the little things you have to look for, I guess, Jiminnie.”

Jimin makes a noncommittal noise. “Maybe we just nudged him to open up more. He’s doing that for all of us, not just me.” He isn’t sure why but a rush of pride flows over him anyway, leaving him warm and smiling at the facts that Yoongi has been treating him like he’s special without him even realizing it. Taehyung sees his reaction and hums approvingly with a closed lipped smile.

“What?” Taehyung asks.

Jimin’s smile fades at this, dropping to a frown. “We’ve never really… met? Not after my birthday.”

For the nth time that hour, Taehyung frowns too, “What? Why? Jungkook’s parents like me being there but I think they think we’re dating.”

“That’s weird but um, I guess our paths just never crossed?” Jimin replies, suddenly all too aware of the lack of time he’s spent with Yoongi’s parents. “But I’ve only met everyone else’s parents at least once too so I don’t think it really makes a difference.”

“You’re closer to him though,” Taehyung points out. “You should get to know them. Put a face to the guy their son is always talking about.”

Jimin’s face heats up and he slaps his friend’s arm harshly. Taehyung only giggles. He groans, “But I guess you’re a little right. We should get to know their parent’s well if we’re so close to their sons. All of them.”

“Yes!” Taehyung suddenly sits up with a box shaped smile. “We’ll make them food. Food is the world’s peace-maker!”

Jimin thinks this over for only a few seconds before smiling as well, “It really is… Let’s do that.”

The two quickly formulate a plan of what to cook and when to see their respective humans, deciding that they shouldn’t do anything formal. The food would act as an offering to show their thanks for the extra steps Yoongi and Jungkook are doing to help the hybrids live comfortably.

Of course, they don’t want any of their other friends to be left out since they are all great companions for their new life. The five humans have taken them under their wing and they are always grateful. Upon asking the others when they should all get together so they can host a small dinner party just for the seven of them, they’re reminded of how close Taehyung’s birthday, Christmas Day, and New Year’s Day is. They all jump to the option of having two large get-togethers, one for Christmas and one for Taehyung’s birthday combined with New Year’s, just as he likes.

Christmas is celebrated among the seven by going to Seokjin’s house for a small event in which all families are invited but only a few can attend, seeing as they are visiting their own families. Regardless of what the others were doing or had already done to celebrate Christmas, the less than ten people at Seokjin’s house enjoy themselves just as well. Apart from Seokjin’s family, Yoongi’s and Hoseok’s are there as well as the hybrids.

A few presents are exchanged, but it’s mostly just from family to family with bottles of wine. The
five friends don’t give each other anything but it doesn’t seem to bother any of them as long as they are together, having a good time with eggnog, pie, and holiday movies. The hybrids don’t think they’ve ever enjoyed the holiday so much. Jimin and Taehyung gave each other presents privately that morning anyway.

The New Year's Day / Taehyung’s Birthday Party is a blast, full of music, food, and laughter. Namjoon’s family hosts a wonderful little party for all of their immediate families to attend. The parents and siblings of Seokjin, Yoongi, Hoseok, and Jungkook come together for a borderline formal evening.

Just like at the Christmas party, they’re all told to wear something nice and bring some kind of food or drink to contribute. The friends tell them that they are an exception to the latter rule, but they bring something anyway. They show up with a simple dessert they made themselves, ignoring all the ‘you really shouldn’t have’s.

Namjoon’s house is by far the largest the hybrids have seen and they wonder just how much his family really makes because all twenty plus people at the party are comfortable while they eat, drink, and mingle.

At both parties, handfuls of parents were particularly excited to see Jimin and Taehyung attend the party with their parents or guardians, then seemed disappointed and sympathetic to learn they had no such people out in Seoul. The hybrids only brush it off and make sure everyone is comfortable. Even if they aren’t the hosts, they still unconsciously tend to the adults and try to help distribute food and drinks until one of their friends force them to just sit and mingle.

Overall, it’s another amazing event in the life of a human, surrounded by friends and their family. Taehyung receives more private birthday wishes and presents on the actual day in the form of Jimin taking him out places much like Taehyung had on his birthday. They go to the park, theater, and window shop at brand clothing stores. Taehyung had easily convinces Jimin to help him make an extravagant pillow fort and watch their favorite shows inside. He loves every bit of it.
After little thinking, Jimin and Taehyung quickly figure out what to cook for their two human friends. It’s not that they don’t put much care to the meal, the opposite actually, it’s that they knew from the start the kind of food they wanted to bring to their friends’ tables. They decided on comfort food, something hot and spicy yet full of flavor, not necessarily the most healthy or formal dish, but just made for enjoyment. The hybrids come together in their cozy kitchen to cook a nice big pot of tteokbokki, and unintentionally spend an hour longer than usual to prepare. It has been quite some time since they had made the dish, last eating a hot bowl a couple weeks into moving to Seoul to feel more at home in the city.

They’re not experts but they’ve made this dish about five times - collectively - and are pleased to say this time it came out the best. Excited and full of pride, they contain the portions and eagerly await Jungkook’s father’s car to pick the two up. They had timed it relatively well, wanting to see the two humans before dinner time so the food can be eaten in its full potential. Jungkook’s father arrives surprisingly fast and doesn’t say much other than a greeting.

Jungkook however, immediately asks what’s in their large cotton carriers. They indulgently packed three servings each and had to keep the strong containers warm so they embarrassingly used a few throw blankets just for the transport. When hearing about the contents, Jungkook’s eyes grow wide and he wonders aloud if they can accept such a gift as a home cooked meal. The father only smiles, doing his best to thank Taehyung and Jimin. They both say it’s no problem and they had just wanted to give back but the Jeons were having none of it, having the last say and inviting both boys to stay the night even if Jimin was being dropped off somewhere else at the moment.

Taehyung had sputtered and Jimin froze, taken aback by the kind but not unusual offer. They had both been invited for countless sleep-overs but had decided to wait a little longer before they accepted, not really knowing why. Even now, they politely pass, not having to think much about it once they arrive at Jimin’s destination. He says a quick farewell to the humans and his best friend before stepping into the tattoo parlor confidently.

Yoongi has recently been working more. He’s been taking full advantage of the winter break their school allowed by working full time when he wasn’t celebrating the holidays with family and friends. Though working full time meant he clocked out earlier than part time after school, today was a Friday night, when he started work two hours earlier and leave two hours later than usual. At this time of day, Jimin knows Yoongi is still working and will be getting off very soon. Jimin doesn’t visit the older boy’s work often, this is only his fourth time, but Yoongi had explained his break when Jimin asked and ended up telling more or less of it all to him over a few days of texting and calling. The hybrids have been so mind-numbingly bored throughout the break that they tried to meet up with their friends as much as possible but Yoongi and Seokjin have been hard to schedule.

Nevertheless, Jimin wears a smile when entering and seeing the now familiar red and black walls of inside the small building. He had visited the shop shortly after receiving his glasses, which had made his initial shock of color in the area lessen now but didn’t stop him from admiring the beautiful drawings and photographs. Unlike the last time, Jimin doesn’t have to stay in the near empty waiting room for instructions. The cashier usually phoned Yoongi to ask if it was alright
that Jimin was visiting again before Yoongi only confirmed so and peeked out of his room so Jimin
can come to him. Tonight, the cashier only glances up at him with little interest and waves his hand
towards the hallway, letting him go to Yoongi by himself.

At this show of trust, Jimin slightly bows his way, then crosses the room without doing much more
than winking at the twenty year old boy who reaches forward to run a hand up his thigh
shamelessly as he passes.

Jimin finds Yoongi much like he always is, bent over a customer’s arm or chest, preparing to
pierce them with their choice of jewelry. He has yet to see a woman in the shop so it’s no surprise
the client is a male in his forties. Jimin doesn’t pay much attention to him, only smiling widely at
Yoongi and saying, “Hello, hyung!”

Yoongi’s head snaps up to see him, a look of shock and on his face before it turns to one of
confusion, the small pout already forming and his eyebrows already lowering. He replies, “Hi,
Jimin.”

Jimin moves to seat himself at the extra chair on the opposite of the staring customer Yoongi is,
settling his warm bundle of food on his lap. Despite his manners, Jimin only pays attention to the
Senior who goes back to work, not the other human. “Yoongi-Hyung, I made you something.”

“No, that’s not it. I have it here,” he says, and holds the package up with both hands. “I made it today with Tae. He brought some to
Jungkookie.”

Yoongi side eyes it quickly and his eyebrows raise, “I don’t need your hand stitched blankets,
Jimin.”

“No, it’s what inside the blankets!”

“What’s inside the blankets?” the man between them asks suddenly. He seems interested and
confused as to what Jimin is doing here in the parlor, so Jimin embraces the attention and turns to
the older man with a smile.

“Thank you for asking, sir,” Jimin says, polite as always. He seems to make the human smile, and
Jimin feels a rush of pride at that. He tells him, “I made food for my favorite Hyung but he doesn’t
seem interested in it. And I made it right out of my own kitchen, just for him.” The man’s
eyebrows raise. “But... I guess I’ll eat it alone tonight.”

“Jimin...” Yoongi starts in a worried tone. He’s most likely about to tell him he was kidding and
appreciates the meal; that he is working and didn’t expect anyone to visit, which means he’s not in
humoring-young-people-mode since he always works with older adults who have no time for
nonsense. Jimin cuts him off quickly.

“Hyung, I’m just teasing you,” he tilts his head much like the customer is. “I know you didn’t
mean it. I also know that working this long without someone to talk to gets you grumpy.”

“It does not,” he grumbles with a pout now.

“You don’t have to say it when I can feel it too,” Jimin huffs, almost sporting his own pout. “I still
think you’re working too much. We’re on break, we want to hang out with you.”
He sighs but doesn’t look at Jimin, “I know… But I don’t have much of a choice.”

Jimin wants to talk about it more but knows when Yoongi gets quiet, it’s about a subject he doesn’t want to expand on. So he just whines and wiggles in his chair, tail flicking restlessly against where it’s curled around his torso.

Yoongi doesn’t take much longer than a few minutes to finish, cleaning up the fresh wounds and filling out the right papers. The man continues to stare in awe at Jimin but doesn’t speak or touch him so Jimin allows it. It is once he’s gone and Yoongi has cleaned up his station when the older pulls Jimin’s wheeled chair across the room to next to his, eliciting a small “Whee!” from him.

Yoongi rolls his eyes but bumps their shoulders together and says almost guiltily, “You know I don’t hate it when you come over, Jimin. I’m only teasing you when I say shit like that.”

“That’s why I keep coming back,” Jimin rolls his eyes as well, mockingly. If Yoongi didn’t like him being there, he either would have voiced it out or kept it in for Jimin to feel the piling emotion on his own. He knows how to read him better now and wouldn’t do anything he knows the older doesn’t like.

Yoongi hums, taking interest in the package now and pulling at one of the navy blue blanket edges softly, “You didn’t have to do this. I’m going to have to make you something in return too, you know. And I’m not very good so…”

Jimin chuckles at the words. Faintly, he thinks he hears a tinkling sound in the quiet room full of only Yoongi’s tired, underused voice. He doesn’t pay much attention to it as Yoongi smiles teasingly about his own bad cooking even if Jimin’s tasted it and knows he’s rather good. “You don’t have to give me anything back because this is me giving back. Me and Taehyung. It’s more than one serving so we really hope you enjoy it with your parents too.”

He raises an eyebrow. “What do you mean you’re giving back?”

Before Jimin can answer however, the only door of the small workroom is opened without warning. Jimin jumps with a small yelp but relaxes when he identifies the man entering as Yoongi’s father and not someone about to take him away.

“Yoongi, how’s your--” Mr. Min stops in his tracks with a confused expression on his face - as they all do, Jimin notes. His eyes quickly flicker from Yoongi’s to Jimin’s, and it makes him a little uncomfortable at the sudden silent gaze. Clearly the man had not known Jimin was also visiting the Senior, and vise-versa.

“What’s he doing here?” The question is casual and gently curious, not judgemental or angry, which is a great relief.

“Jimin made us food, dad,” Yoongi explains as if speaking directly to his father at work was a normal occurrence. Jimin slowly understands where the older had gotten his overall relaxed air from and his almost drowsy way of speaking coming clear when they’re heard talking to one another.

Jimin doesn’t think much before he bows as much as he can in his seated position, nervous in the presence of such an intimidating man. After the day of Jimin’s birthday, Yoongi’s father has never tried to come into contact with Jimin other than the due greeting. It’s always awkward when they’re brought together because of Yoongi, but it’s nothing Jimin thought was worth bringing up to his friend. Since Yoongi never brought up his father’s behavior as unordinary, Jimin has just come to believe he has an irrational fear of the short man with the stern face and hard eyes.
Quietly, Jimin explains himself, “It’s tteokbokki and it’s not much but - it’s just a thank you. For Yoongi-Hyung and his family. Hyung has been very helpful to me and Taehyung since we’ve started school. He’s nice when he needs to be and defensive to our well being and caring in his own way and goes in public with me to keep me safe and--”

“I think that’s enough,” Yoongi cuts him off with an almost embarrassed chuckle, putting one hand up to cover his smiling face and one on Jimin leg to make him feel more at ease after his little rant. It was all true and Jimin just wants the man to know how much his son has done for him and his best friend.

Maybe it’s a trick of the eye or the ear but Jimin swears he sees Yoongi’s father smile proudly and ask if Jimin would like to join them for dinner. Real or not, Jimin finds himself agreeing eagerly and in the next minute he’s in his friend’s car, following the man home, venting out all his nerves about Mr. Min to Yoongi.

The moment the three step inside, they’re met with the wonderful smell of cooking food. It invades all of Jimin’s senses and relaxes his muscles, letting him smile softly and enjoy the moment. The Min’s are rather casual with the fact of Jimin spending dinner with them, which is interesting because Jimin distinctly remembers them saying how Yoongi rarely brings people over. It had always made him feel special during those few hours he spends over at his house.

Mrs. Min had been making dinner for her family when they arrived and easily accepts the extra mouth to feed when she notices Jimin by Yoongi’s side. She gratefully takes the container of food and folds the blankets before putting them near the front door and having him sit at the table while telling Yoongi to set it, which he does without complaint.

As Jimin sits there quietly and Yoongi puts a glimmering white plate in front of him, he notices the older’s slightly nervous expression and uncomfortable air. It makes Jimin frown and subtly ask him what the matter is. Yoongi hadn’t been like this earlier, but maybe Jimin was too excited by the fact of dining with the family to notice. As should be expected, Yoongi gives a vague answer of, “My dad.”

It confuses him but doesn’t dampen his mood, especially when Yoongi and his parents don’t do anything that seem out of the ordinary. Jimin just keeps the statement at the back of his mind and lets himself enjoy being served and not the one serving.

When they all sit down at the table with the food and drinks, Yoongi takes his place at Jimin’s right and his mother and father in front of Jimin. After Jimin expresses his thanks for his meal, the adults begin bringing food to their plates with smiles, Jimin and Yoongi following.

It’s not long before Yoongi’s father speaks up in his deep and low voice full of interest, “Jimin, you say my son has been treating you and your friend well?”

He nods reassuringly, “Of course. He doesn’t let anyone else treat us badly as well.”

“I imagine that’s a problem,” the mother chimes in with slight concern, something Jimin’s never heard from her. “A lone hybrid in the middle of the capital city. You must attract a lot of attention.”

Jumin feels instead of sees Yoongi stiffen beside him, but he doesn’t speak so Jimin ignores it. He says, “Unfortunately. And extremely dangerous to do, as you can imagine. Before we met Yoongi and the others, Taehyung was the only one who could leave the house safely. After hiding his ears and tail, of course. Now we can walk around with our friends safely even with all that attention.”
“That makes me very proud of our son. I see we’ve taught him correctly. What kind of places do you boys venture off to?” Mr. Min asks. “Yoongi just tells us when he’s coming back home, never much disclosure.”

It’s a small jest that Jimin finds himself smiling to, but notices how Yoongi doesn’t even lift his head from his plate. Concern starts to worry its way in him but it would be impolite to ask what was wrong in front of his parents so he doesn’t say anything. However, Jimin is also pretty distracted by how he’s having an actual conversation with Yoongi’s parents. It’s surreal and doesn’t really allow him to notice more than how Yoongi stays silent as he eats.

“We go to your average teenage hangouts. The mall, movies, amusement park. It’s nice since Taehyung and I haven’t gone out before being left on our own.”

“I’m curious about that,” he says. Jimin hears a hint of amusement in his voice but doesn’t see anything more than curiosity on the older man’s face. Though he does see how Yoongi has raised his head to look at his father with an unreadable expression. Again, Jimin can do nothing but ignore it. “Yoongi confirms that you and Taehyung are in the city alone. Hybrids or not, you can’t get an official job at this age. I’m sure you know what question I’m getting at here and don’t mind me asking.”

Jimin smiles shyly at the man’s consideration for his privacy by not asking how they make money directly. He technically has to answer any question he’s asked, no matter what it’s about, but even though Jimin knows he’s in a situation where rules like that don’t really apply he finds himself answering honestly anyway.

“It’s alright, sir. Technically Taehyung and I are still owned by the government, so whatever happens and wherever we are, they are entitled to care for us as they see fit. They’ve always provided food and shelter to hybrids so it would have to carry on to when we’re sent out alone. They give us cards and cash - with limits of course - and we accept it gratefully. They let us go to school as well so that’s a massive bonus.”

By now, everyone at the table has stopped eating, the adults paying close attention to Jimin’s words and Yoongi paying attention to his parents. Jimin just hopes he explained their situation clearly, not wanting to give any false information or leave anything out. If he had - even though he’s probably sure he did - they don’t ask for much clarification.

Mrs. Min questions, “When do they stop supporting you financially?”

“It depends,” Jimin looks off to the side to recollect. “If we’re inside then they care for us in all ways until we get chosen. If we’re outside then they drop the finances when we’re chosen - official papers or not - or when we turn nineteen.”

“I see,” Mr. Min says, intrigued by the rules Jimin is sharing. “Where do you boys see yourself in that system? Where are you now?”

It’s oddly worded, but Jimin picks up on the question in a few seconds. “To be honest, we don’t know. We have at most two more years until one of us is nineteen so until then we’re just focusing on school. It’s hard meeting the right kind of people out here, and it’s even harder to try to find a job. So I guess we’re a bit stuck at moment. We don’t want to think that far.”

The man nods and gives a smile, “I believe you can find the right person before that time has come.”

“Ah, thank you.”
“And speaking of jobs,” he says suddenly, sitting back in his chair and taking a bite of food. “Yoongi here has had one since he was around your age.”

Jimin looks at the boy with interest, who seems like he’s about to break out into a scowl. “Really?”

“Yes. The summer before he started his second year in highschool.”

The parents look proud but Yoongi looks irritated and Jimin guesses it’s his own reaction to being embarrassed by his parents. Jimin continues the conversation anyway, “I don’t know much about out here, but I’m not sure if that’s…” He trails off, not wanting to say ‘legal’ in fear of offending anyone. He wonders briefly if the labor was consented, judging from Yoongi’s reaction to the talk of work so far. He starts over rather unsmoothly, “That’s a young age.”

“It was,” the mother agrees with a shrug. “But Yoongi was stubborn and has wanted a part in our work for a long time. He still does seeing how he hasn’t left yet. It makes us happy.”

Very much confused now, Jimin looks back and forth between the loving eyes of Yoongi’s parents and the boy’s outward scowl at the table. He clears his throat, “What do you mean?”

“The Red Pearl,” the father explains calmly, “is a family business. You’ve probably only seen Yoongi’s cousin at the cash register but there are his aunts and uncles in the other rooms along with his grandfather.” Jimin stares dumbly at Yoongi with this knowledge. It’s a simple fact that makes no real difference, Jimin is just surprised he hadn’t figured it out or been told sooner. “He and his cousin have actually been keeping you away from us when his mother or I are there.”

“That’s not true, dad.” Yoongi speaks for the second time Jimin has been in his house tonight. His voice is edging on exasperated and annoyed. “Jimin just doesn’t visit me often.”

“You’ve never hid away any of your friends, Yoongi,” the man comments with the smallest of frowns at his son. “You must be aware of what happens to not tell me. I figured it out after speaking with one of the customers after a rush.”

Jimin is now more lost than before. It seems as if Yoongi and his father are having an argument of sorts, which Jimin has been taught to stay completely out of in case someone lashes out. But the look on both of their faces don’t appear angry or anything other than passive aggressive with their calm words. Even Mrs. Min seems unaffected, quietly chewing on her food while listening intently to her family. Jimin finds himself doing the same, just waiting for the matter to be solved because it doesn’t seem to be directly about him. Even if an argument is about him, he has no right to make any decisions anyway.

Yoongi doesn’t respond and continues to look to the side, so the man speaks again, “You do know, right?”

“Yeah…” Yoongi sighs rather defeatedly. It’s a bit interesting for Jimin to witness this kind of submission on his friend’s side, seeing how Yoongi is always protesting about this and that, taking control over conversations easily and being something like an activist at their school. Based off the sudden change of mood in the house since he arrived, Jimin would think nothing else could surprise him.

“I also know you heard me talking with your mother,” Mr. Min continues. “You have yet to act on it. Have you told Jimin to stop or continue visiting you?”

Now, Jimin is surprised at the outright sign they they have been discussing more than just business, talking about something personal instead. He pauses and stares worriedly at Yoongi for
an explanation as his mind races to the assumption that Mr. Min doesn’t like him visiting Yoongi at work.

The boy says, “Neither. He comes and goes when he wants. Can we not talk about this, dad? It’s all of this is wrong.”

Despite his son’s words, the man doesn’t seem fazed and now turns to address Jimin, whose eyes are slightly wide from shock and the sudden attention. He feels like whatever he’s about to say is the reason why he had invited Jimin over in the first place. So Jimin relaxes and lets the man ask. “Jimin,” he starts encouragingly, “Do you enjoy your time in our shop?”

Not sure how to act, Jimin nods slightly and speaks honestly, “Of course. I don’t go many places but I like it there. The boy at the register is respectful and charming. Customers don’t get too out of line and if they do Yoongi is there to help. I also really like all the art.” Jimin smiles to himself at this, looking at his plate sheepishly. “It’s all really interesting and pretty. The whole place has a nice atmosphere.”

“Good,” the man smiles, and Jimin feels a rush of pride at pleasing him while being honest. “It’s good to know you feel welcome. I imagine there’s not much for you to do however, how do you keep yourself occupied? Yoongi isn’t always the best of company when he’s concentrating.”

Jimin and Mrs. Min laugh a little at this, knowing just how blunt and quiet the boy can get when he’s in work-mode. Yoongi doesn’t seem to find it very funny but upon glancing at Jimin, he lets a small smile rise.

Jimin says, “Yeah, Yoongi-Hyung can get a little grumpy if he’s into it enough and I disrupt him. But he never does anything other than tell me he needs a little quiet. Most of the time he talks to me in between clients, sometimes when he’s working. It’s fine, I really like watching him work.” Jimin hears Yoongi make a sound like a scoff or a snort and he smiles. “I’m still a little grossed out by the whole ‘metal in skin’ thing, but it’s pretty cool. I watch him work and draw and get supplies if Hyung needs me to. Last time he let me put on some music for a few minutes so that was nice.”

“This is very good to hear, Jimin. I hope you know you can come by the shop at any time. You can even ask Yoongi for a little tour to get you to know a few people there. He won’t mind.”

“Th-thank you, sir,” Jimin says genuinely but with hesitance. This conversation is getting a bit weird, like they’re dancing around an elephant in the room. “But I’m not sure if I’m following you,” he adds softly, hesitant to question the man.

But the adults only chuckle. Mrs. Min finally adds a little to the conversation, “He’s smart, son. You have good friends. He’s respectful and kind. Knows how to treat all kinds of people.”

Yoongi doesn’t make eye contact with anyone when he hums and says quietly, “You know he’s supposed to.”

Jimin feels a little hurt by Yoongi bringing up that he’s acting how a good hybrid should. He likes to forget what he is around his friends; but adults and anyone else constantly remind him he’s different, just a pet trained to be sold. His ears droop to the sides a bit and his tail tightens around his waist as he looks at Yoongi silently, wondering what exactly is going on.

No one else reacts to what Yoongi had said and his father just clasps his hands together to lean on the table, a sure sign that he’s about to ask something important or serious. Jimin feels nervous at this. “Jimin,” the man repeats with a small smirk. He nods silently to show he’s paying attention and a hand finds its way on his leg, a barely there brush of Yoongi’s fingers that he doesn’t know
what means. “I would like to offer you a job at the shop with us. Nothing big, just an assistant to us all. Maybe a day with each person, mostly Yoongi so you can be more comfortable. You will get paid like any other employee for your services. It would just be nice to have someone other than family around, someone to liven up the mood and talk to.”

Jimin stares at him in shock, not trying to find any hidden meanings or sign of joking because the man seems serious, seeing as he made sure Jimin liked the shop and had no problem with Yoongi working quietly. Though, Jimin doesn’t even know what qualities he might have that brought the man to such a sudden offer. He doesn’t do much at the shop other than talk though, so he’s not sure if he is completely qualified for the job. Or any; he has no high school diploma, will never go to college, there’s not even a way of transportation for him.

He’s never had a job or even thought he would need one before he was dropped off in Seoul. A hybrid shouldn’t have to work, just do as their owner tells them, be that cooking or cleaning or standing around looking pretty. That’s as far as a job he’s ever expected to get.

Another thought about this are major people in his life. What would Taehyung think about this? What would a potential owner think? Would either of them have a problem with Jimin bringing in money on his own or not being around as much? An owner might not want him having other priorities than what they give him. Taehyung might not like the fact that he’s working and not meeting people, or think that it’s dangerous for being so out in the open and being seen by so many people so often. Maybe Taehyung’s problem is that he just doesn’t want Jimin working at this age because really, they shouldn’t have to resort to such situations now.

Jimin’s thoughts are everywhere. He doesn’t exactly know what other people want, but he does know a little of what he wants.

This could be a great way to promote himself as a responsible hybrid who can follow orders and earn a paycheck if needed. Even if he doesn’t get chosen by the time they’re nineteen, he would have a way to support himself and Taehyung - hoping they still want him for that long. If Taehyung gets chosen before him, he can still be able to support himself alone. But he still doesn’t think Taehyung would approve of him working for the two of them. He would probably either want his own job or sulk about being alone.

After about an entire minute of comfortable silence, Jimin meets Mr. Min’s eyes with a little anxiety but more determination, “Yeah. I think I’d like that.”

“Great!” Mrs. Min claps once with a proud smile, probably the most emotion Jimin has ever seen on her.

It makes him smile shyly with his eyes scrunched up before Yoongi turns to him with a full hand on his thigh. His eyebrows are furrowed and his lips are drawn tight, waves of uncertainty are coming off him as he looks at Jimin. “Are you sure about that, Jimin? What about being with Taehyung or getting an owner?”

Jimin looks at him with a reassuring smile, eyes disappearing and ears high at Yoongi’s concern for him. “I’m sure. Taehyung has a lot of influence on me and I’ll hear him out, but I won’t let him stop me do what I wanna do. As for owners, I have years to find someone, it’s not at the top of my list. This can actually help me get out there and meet people. And if they don’t like me working, I’ll stop. They have to support me financially either way.”

“What about the working hours?” Yoongi asks. “It’s not easy to work during school. I have flexible hours because it’s a family business and I don’t necessarily need the money. Just the experience.”
Jimin cocks his head to the side, “You work all the time though. Today you said--”

“It’s complicated.”

He nods slowly and answers the question, “I don’t really have much to do with myself anyway. I can work hours with you easily without disrupting much of my daily life. Shopping is Taehyung’s chore. Cooking, we switch. Cleaning is a normal thing. I won’t fall back in school because I’m responsible. I also already know how to deal with money for rent and such. This isn’t a hard decision for me to make.” A small lie, he definitely has to talk with Taehyung about this impulse decision.

Now, Yoongi sighs. He looks down at where his hand is still on his leg and Jimin feels him full of questions and worry. Yoongi doesn’t act on this feeling, just squeezes his leg slightly and looks back into his eyes, “I trust you to know what you’re talking about and how it’ll affect your life. I’m not trying to talk you out of it, Jiminnie, I’m just…”

“I know. Thank you, Yoongi-Hyung,” Jimin smiles widely at the way the older trails off before turning to the proud parents, “And thank you for the offer. I hope we can talk more about this soon.”

Chapter End Notes

yoohooohooooo
Chapter 28

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

warnings for:
sexual harassment/assault
physical assault

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Going back to school over the short winter break is welcome. All the hybrids had been doing to pass time was play video games and laze around until one of their friends had the time to hang out since they surprisingly were only being able to come around for a few hours a day. They all talked over the phone as much as possible but it wasn’t really the same as seeing each other at school or in person. As comfortable and nostalgic as it was to stay in their warm home together, Jimin and Taehyung had quickly grown bored with the little freedom their house provided. This made getting into the swing of school easy, though the break was only less than two weeks.

What isn’t being looked forward to is the school assembly during the first week back. The school had announced the event before the break and Namjoon and Yoongi had been preparing for it before they came back, but the hybrids still don’t suppress their groans when they’re all called to fill the gym. They have good reason for this; large, crowded areas with loud music and screeching microphones are not places hybrids want to be around. Their advanced hearing has them wincing and whining at every bass and voice fluctuation no matter how far from the speakers they are.

They weren’t even halfway through the school year’s first assembly before the hybrids had their heads down and their ears between their hands, trying to ignore the unfamiliar amount of noise and vibration. Animals had to be trained for this type of environment, and even though they were supposed to be ready for any situation, this keeps them right on edge. They had been taken out into the hall by their worried friends so the noise wouldn’t disrupt them too much. Every assembly since, they found themselves in the hall with two friends and the occasional skipping student.

From this distance, the hybrids can still hear what’s happening on the inside quite clearly and it’s just become less of an annoyance and more of something they should stay alert for since they can’t see exactly what’s going on. They’re trying to keep their heart rates steady and talk to their friends calmly but the yelling and music has them more on edge than usual since it’s been quite some time since they were exposed to this.

Hoseok and Minho, the two friends that have been allowed to keep the hybrids company, notice their discomfort and offer to take a trek to somewhere more quiet. No teacher or staff member is watching over them this time, so they agree and find themselves down the hall and outside the building, looking out into the back courtyard.

"I love this time of year,” Taehyung states suddenly, nodding up at the gloomy winter sky.

Jimin smiles, knowing just how true it is. “I do too, Tae. It’s my favorite.”

You can go out more, you know? Freedom.”

Unsurprisingly, Minho agrees with the Junior, making him smile and blush. Taehyung huffs, “Staying inside is how you find the best things to do. You think of games and watch movies and build forts and cook warm food.”

“Warm food...” Jimin chimes in, mouth already watering at the mention of all the wonderful comfort foods Jimin and Taehyung had prepared this winter out of boredom.

“Oh, I can agree with that,” Minho complies, earning a betrayed scoff from Hoseok. “Hot chocolate, fireplaces, the whole warm thing.”

“But winter is cold.” Hoseok points out rather weakly, knowing he already lost his ally.

“That doesn’t mean you can’t make it warm with all the people you love.”

“Gross,” he laughs but blushes and smoothly intertwines his hand with Minho’s.

Unfortunately, the mood takes a quick 180 when they all hear footsteps and someone seethe out a, “‘Sup bitches.”

The hybrids jump, holding on to each other with wide eyes as they look at the group of about half a dozen boys with scowls. It takes the four by surprise and they back up to the wall when the other boys crowded them in. Hoseok and Minho try to stand their ground but eventually need to take a step back.

Jimin recognizes all of them while Taehyung might only remember two. Four of these boys are the ones who harrassed Jimin in the hallway on Halloween and the other two are those who picked a fight much earlier in the year, Minho’s friends. Though now it seems they aren’t friends anymore if the look the boys are giving them all are something to go by.

The boy who Jimin had punched about three months ago stands with the one that had Taehyung against the wall about five months back, Jaeho. They both still seem stuck up about it as they get right up into the hybrids’ space, enough to pull them apart and get them right against the wall. The other offenders focus on the humans, who no doubt are fighting standing their ground more than them.

Jimin whines pitifully, his tail curling around his leg, ears to the sides, eyes wide and everywhere but the boy just inches from his face. It had happened so quickly, Jimin barely registered that a conversation was being held to his right with the humans.

“...for these fuckers!” Yijeong spits, a familiar voice he doesn’t wish to hear again. Jimin can’t see much from the other bodies between them but it looks as if the words are directed to Minho.

“It’s the other way around actually,” Minho responds with a surprisingly even tone and slight anger. “You were the fuckers we left, not them. Like we would stay after you stop respecting us and the hybrids?”

“We stopped respecting you once you started hanging out with this bitch and the animals! I can’t believe you would become such a faggot and fall right into their trap!”

“You’re not making any sense. Just back off and we won’t have to have problems.”

“Problems? We already have problems, Minho. We have some very pissed off people who want to deal with these problems!”
“It’s not worth it, Yijeong. Let’s just--”

“No!” The boy in front of Jimin interrupts now, looking at Jimin but speaking to Minho. “I’m not letting some toy think it’s better than me!”

The boy’s scowl deepens and Jimin’s fear and anger raises mostly because he’s been referred to as an object. But he can’t find the courage to do anything when the boy puts a hand on his chest to keep him in fear. Jaeho smiles beside them and uses more force with Taehyung, putting weight on his chest with his forearms, “Yeah, me neither, pup.”

Taehyung has held himself well so far, as he’s gotten better at reigning in his anger and wolf instincts. The force is something both Jimin and Taehyung have learned to take, but not the words that pull all the wrong strings. Jimin suspects they’re both on the way to actually fighting back if they continue.

“And I’m not letting some slut change you like this, Minho!” Yijeong yells, causing the hybrids to flinch. “Didn’t know you two were such a bitch for pretty boys. You hadn’t even let us have fun with our toys back then, yet you’re playing with your own instead of being a man like us. He’s got you around his finger, Minho. All of them really. Even the hybrids. So let’s see how far you two will go for each other, hm?”

Jemin hears some clothes ruffling before he speaks again. “Let’s see how much you like this pretty boy’s face once we’re done with it.” Taehyung gets shoved. “Even them. How far will you two protect some pets?”

Not even a second later, a punch is thrown. It’s at Hoseok, Jimin gathers from the grunt. “Hyung!” Jimin tries to call out, but it’s drowned in all the other yelling done by Taehyung, Minho, and Hoseok himself. More and more seem to be thrown and Jimin just hopes Hoseok is getting his fair share in. He can’t see and can barely think straight, but knows there must be two on Hoseok.

Jemin struggles, pushes and pulls, but the boy is just as strong as he remembers him to be, not letting his hands move or let him get away from the wall. Taehyung does his best too, but he’s now being forced with two boys to face Jimin, not the fight behind him.

Soon, heavy breathing is all they hear and Jimin is glad one of them is Hoseok’s. “Well he didn’t go down without a fight,” Yijeong chuckles with amusement.

“F-fuck you, asshole,” Hoseok spits tiredly.

Yijeong only laughs.

“Stop it,” Minho growls. “Don’t hit him and let them go!”

“Mm…” He feigns contemplation calmly. “Nah. This kid isn’t fun anymore. And I almost forgot about our toys over there. They’re being so tame, I doubt you haven’t fucked it into them. They were being quite the handful earlier. I heard the cat has some beef with these guys, and we haven’t gotten over the dog snapping at Hyung. Let’s watch them have their fun.”

On cue, the boys against the hybrids smile and push them harder to the wall. Taehyung growls lowly in warning, Jaeho laughs, and Jimin whines again while the boy grips him harder. He feels the boy’s chest against his, breathing on his neck, it makes him want to do something other than take it. But he knows he shouldn’t and can’t bring himself to say anything other than No over and over.

His wrists are bound by one large hand and the other finds his waist, keeping him steady on the
hard bricks on his back. Jimin sobs as best he can without tears, almost not hearing the curses from his human friends, running footsteps leaving them, Yijeong laughing. This leaves two boys to hold back Hoseok, and four to assault the hybrids.

Jimin is yanked from the wall and his back meets someone’s chest. Another pair of hands is on him, another mouth at his neck, another body caging him in, another reason to sob, another reason to do something. He pushes at the boy in front of him with as much force he can but only succeeds in getting closer with the boy behind him. From the smell, he realizes it’s the leader of the group, who Jimin has learned is very touchy. There are hands on his waist, beneath his shirt, on his hips, his arms; mouths at his neck, under his chin, on his nape. It’s a push and pull, the boys kissing and scratching, sucking and biting softly as if they weren’t forcing this on Jimin, who wants to cry. His legs shake as he pushes back, but he knows he’ll be completely powerless if he falls to the ground.

He feels suffocated and used, terrified and disgusted. Shame washes over him when he finds himself doing nothing, almost paralyzed in fear. He had told himself he would fight back next time someone touches him but it turns out to be easier said than done, especially when he’s having a sensory overload. Jimin still pushes harder, pulling his hands away from their grips, shoving off the ones he can, tugging and tugging to get out from between them. But there are too many hands, too little space, and what he’s doing is not enough.

“Goddamnit, Jimin! Hit them!” Taehyung yells.

“I c-can’t!” Jimin pathetically cries back as nails dig into the insides of his wrists, a pressure point that sends jolts of pain all the way up his arms. He takes a glance at his best friend to see how he’s fighting back, seeing the wolf against the wall but pushing and punching any body part that gets near him. He obviously is trying not to get into an all out fight, but he’s doing more than Jimin. He wonders what it’ll take for the boys to snap, what it’ll take for Taehyung to.

A voice below his ear takes him out of his thoughts. The leader breathes hot on him, pausing his biting on Jimin tense neck to speak, “You’re a good boy, aren’t you? Won’t fight back... So easy…”

Jimin shakes his head and vibrates in fear with more thrashing, “N-no, I’m n-not. I - you --”

“Such a pretty boy,” the other mumbles with a smile against his shaking skin. “Such a pretty little toy for us… Bet you’d take us here, kitten. You’re not good for anything else, are you?”

“Such an easy fuck… All for us.”

“HIT HIM, JIMIN!”

“Nothing but a toy, a slut, a good little hybrid. Then why are you’re here, hm, baby? Couldn’t get an owner? So you’re out here like a free buffet for anyone to take. Useless except for your tight little--”

Jimin finally finds the courage and anger to do something about everything he’s hearing and feeling. He shakily leans into the boy in front of him and takes a harsh bite at the his jaw - as every other limb is locked in place and the boy’s head is too close anyway. The bite is more of a chomp, it’s quick, large, and with as much force as possible.

“Fuck!” he yells, hands coming to where Jimin had most likely bruised. A short chuckle is heard from behind Jimin but he isn’t paying attention, instead, using the lack of restraint to punch the kid square in the face with all his anger.
The boy stumbles back, holding his face as the other grabs at Jimin’s arms and tightens his hold. He feels a growl from the teeth at his neck but without two bodies on him, he easily shakes violently and kicks out at the other boy, making a sharp sting come to his skin.

Then he is suddenly slapped in the face, “You bitch!”

Jimin doesn’t think much after realizing what he’s done. He just hears the words, feels the pain, the shoves, and takes only a few seconds to retaliate. In those seconds, he’s pushed against the wall, hit again and pulled by the hair.

His hands are held but he kneels what he can and kicks anything in range. Something is hit, and a rush a pride flows through him with the anger and fear. His adrenaline revs into overdrive now that he’s done some damage and he’s left alone for a moment. He uses it to punch another boy’s face, one’s shoulder; kick a few knees.

Jimin does what he can with other hands on him along with the words that are spit in his face, “You good for nothing slut!”

It’s safe to say a fight has broken out now, though unfair as it may be. Three against six are not good odds but they have determination and a furious Taehyung on their side. The wolf hybrid has somehow lost his shirt - frighteningly - and is taking on three boys at once, hands flying as he growls louder and louder.

Hoseok is only taking on one boy, but seems to have him weak enough to barely stand and goes on to help Jimin with his own two offenders. He isn’t doing particularly well with his still hesitant pushes and punches and it causes him to take more than he gives. Jimin is pretty sure he won’t be able to do anything if it goes on much longer.

But then Taehyung is stepping in, bruised and only slightly bloodied. The wolf pushes him back and takes a swing hard enough to knock the boy out. It frightens yet amazes Jimin how many hits Taehyung is taking yet still going on.

The fight is still uneven. They’re all getting sloppy and desperate, making it all the more dangerous.

Jimin gets someone on the ground and starts punching what he can - mostly hitting the ground - before someone else tackles him and reverses the situation. All in all, he’s getting hit more than he’d like and probably bleeding somewhere odd like his arm. However, Jimin has been in fist fights with hybrids before, and is doing better than he thought against humans.

Even with people pulling on him, Taehyung manages to use the boy’s hair to pull him off Jimin right as a booming voice makes them all freeze.

“EVERYBODY STOP OR YOU’RE EXPELLED!”

Insults have long since gone quiet, but now what they hear besides heavy breathing are gasps and footsteps, people skidding against the dying grass to reach the cluster of tangled limbs they all are. A few boys fall to the ground in exhaustion and if Jimin wasn’t already on his back, he would have too.

“Oh shit oh shit oh fuck Jiminnie shit shit shit Jimin talk to me,” Yoongi’s voice comes to Jimin along with the concern, fear, anger, and Seokjin as the humans kneel beside Jimin and hesitantly touch different parts of his body.

“Jimin, talk to us,” Seokjin says worriedly.
He groans and clenches his eyes when Yoongi touches his sensitive cheek that had been victim to many slappings and punches. Jimin suddenly can’t find the strength to do anything other than lay there now that there’s no danger coming at him and the adrenaline is wearing off. Only one thing is on his mind now and he rasps, “H-hurts.”

“No shit,” Yoongi tries to laugh but it sounds more like a wheeze. “You just got in a fucking fight with twice as many people as you have. Why the hell would you do this? You’re not the type to fight, Jimin. God, where does it hurt most?”

Something warm swells in Jimin’s stomach that he can’t put his finger on as he hears Yoongi fuss over him. He doesn’t fight, much less with humans, and all the emotions that are coming at him because of it have him frowning and clamming up. He feels ashamed, used, scared, worried, confused, and hurt. He grabs at someone’s hands for some kind of stability. Jimin doesn’t want to tell him that it’s actually his neck that hurt the most - it’s sensitive and throbbing and it must look like someone had strangled him -, so he keeps quiet.

“Your hands? Well that’s kinda a surprise. You guys really took a beating. I would think it was somewhere they hit you the most. Where’s that?”

Jimin is just about to say *My heart* when Seokjin interrupts hurriedly, “We’ll look him over later, Yoongi. Right now we gotta get him inside and figure out how they’re getting punished.”

Yoongi nods and sets to lifting Jimin, who doesn’t do much to help. He’s tired and hurting and doesn’t want to think about the consequences even when it wasn’t really their fault. He has the Seniors drag him inside, the both of them looking at him closely and most likely thinking of the worst when in reality Jimin knows he’s only being dramatic by not moving on his own. Suddenly feeling useless, he finds his footing and walks as best he can on shaking legs.

The halls are empty except for the students and two teachers leading the way, so Jimin notes that the assembly is still going on.

They’re all lead into an unfamiliar room under the supervision of only two teachers. One of those teachers is Mr. Ahn while the other is also unfamiliar yet exceedingly terrifying compared to Mr. Ahn. The man is large and made out of both fat and muscle but it shows mostly in his height, making him half head taller than the man next to him. He wears a fitted suit like Mr. Ahn yet no expensive accessories, which makes him all the more mysterious. His face is made of hard lines of age, but keeps his expression calm and only disappointed. Mr. Ahn on the other hand, seems angry, his arms crossed in front of him.

The room the thirteen boys are in is a simple office room with one desk and two chairs. Behind the desk stand the teachers and the hybrids’ other human friends, Namjoon, Yoongi, Seokjin, and Jungkook. Facing them with their hands behind their backs are the hybrids, Hoseok, Minho, and the other six boys. Jimin is forced to stand beside Yijeong, who even now is subtly trying to touch Jimin by brushing their shoulders and thighs.

“So,” Mr. Ahn begins in a demanding tone, “Who’s fault is this?”

“Yijeong."
“"The pussy.""
“"That kid.""
“"The fucking dog."
“"Th--”"

“That’s enough!” the larger teacher speaks, exasperated and annoyed. Jimin flinches more than he
should. “This is obviously something more than a fight. I would think the hybrids were more responsible than this. I’m disappointed.”

Both of the hybrids’ breath hitch at this, at a man of authority saying they did wrong and disappointed him. Not only did they hit humans, they also made human adults angry. The look the older man gives them isn’t what they ever want to see on a man. Their hearts beat quickly when they try to answer.

“It - it wasn’t,” Taehyung starts, anger from before turning to shame. He knows he can’t say it wasn’t their fault because it would put the blame on the humans. “I didn’t mean to, sir.”

“No? Is that why I witnessed you pulling this young man’s hair like a child would?”

His mouth opens and closes without words as he stares at the ground with glassy eyes. So Jimin speaks for him in a whisper, “It’s not like that, sir.”

“Then how was it?”

“He - he was on me, sir!” Jimin almost whines desperately.

“Shee - ‘Cause you were on Minjun!” The boy who Jimin had punched on Halloween says in defense. “You’re not supposed to hit us, cat!” Jimin whines and his ears twitch at the true accusation. It makes Yijeong scoff beside him. “You punched me too before this and didn’t get punished, you fucki--”

“Enough,” the man says, sighing in annoyance. He looks at Jimin tiredly and all he wants to do is make him more at ease. “Jimin, is it true that you initiated violence before this incident?”

He takes a deep breath and answers simply so he won’t give the man trouble, “Y-yes, sir.”

Their friends mumble among themselves about not knowing of this but he tries not to meet any of their eyes.

Jaeho speaks up now, “Yeah and the wolf threatened to punch me earlier too! He held me by the fucking neck and growled like a goddamn animal!”

“Taehyung, is this also true?”

“Yes, sir…”

“I am very disappointed in all of you boys,” the man states while crossing his arms. “If we hadn’t stepped in, someone would have been seriously hurt. Half of you were already on the ground before I broke you up.”

He stares at them all for a long moment, letting the emotions simmer. Jimin feels terrible for being in the wrong and not running away. Instead, he urged them on by participating in the fight. He doesn’t regret that first punch, only the unnecessary ones that followed. On his left, Jimin can feel much the same emotions coming from Taehyung, regret and shame. But Yijeong and the other boys on his right seem smug, confident, even proud. He doesn’t dare raise his head to see anyone’s expressions in fear of it ruining his act of submission.

The pregnant pause is broken by Mr. Ahn, who had yet to speak. His voice is strained as if he doesn’t want to say anything in the first place, “Chul, I would like to speak to the hybrids alone outside. Make sure to get everyone else’s part on the matter.”
The man, Mr. Chul, nods his head as Mr. Ahn gestures for the hybrids to exit the room with him. They do so obligingly and stand by the door in front of Mr. Ahn to wait for him to speak. When he does, it’s in his casual tone, not one full of disappointment or anger.

“I trust you two don’t lie?” They nod silently and he hums. “I also trust you wouldn’t get into situations like these on your own. What was the reason behind all this, boys?” They stay quiet in front of the man, wondering if it is a trick question. “Go on. Explain yourselves. Jimin first.”

He startles, “I - I didn’t mean to hit him that day, sir.”

“No?”

“No, sir.”

“Then what did you mean to do, Jimin?”

“I - I meant to run away.” Jimin’s voice fades into a whisper. The man doesn’t speak so he continues. “It was on Halloween, sir. I w-was coming back from the bathroom when they came to me and - and they held me so one of them could t-touch my… cat parts?” He takes a deep breath. “They took me to the bathroom and I tried to run, but they came at me and I - I hit him on accident. They all were mad but Namjoon-Hyung came in before anything happened. I didn’t mean it, sir.”

“I see…” Mr. Ahn hums thoughtfully. “If you’re telling the truth - which I doubt you aren’t - then it would be self defense from assault.” Jimin nods hurriedly but keeps his head down, hoping to encourage his actions being justified.

“Now Taehyung.” Said hybrid stiffens. “If you are also justified by self defense then I will be able to help you. If not, then you’re both suspended for fighting just like the rest. Explain your incident involving the threats.”

“I - um,” Taehyung swallows, nervous in front of the man of authority. “We were leaving for the end of s-school with Hoseok-Hyung. We were um, pushed t-to the lockers by Yijeong and J-Jaes. They… tried to touch us - did touch Jimin - but I was a… handful and they were worse to me. Minho-Hyung came and told them to stop but Jaeho didn’t so I - g-got him by the neck and said they didn’t have a right to do that. B-but Jiminnie helped calm me and I didn’t really hurt him, sir, I promise.”

“Was this the scuffle Namjoon had told me about months ago?”

“Yes, sir.”

He’s silent a moment. “I should be addressed for these types of incidents, boys. Today’s fight could have been avoided if the others’ grudges were taken care of. But they snowballed and landed you here with bruises.” Jimin almost catches the whine that escapes his throat but whether Mr. Ahn hears it or not is unknown. “I can get you two along with Hoseok off with a period of student counseling and one day of suspension to recover from your wounds. But, if I see any evidence that what you’ve done is not justifiable…” He shakes his head, “I would have to do more than suspend you.”

The hybrids nod in acceptance then bow 90 degrees with their thanks. Mr. Ahn doesn’t wave off their formality but that’s expected from such a man. The three re-enter the room to see their six offenders wearing scowls and frowns. It turned out, Hoseok and Minho were more trustworthy in their side of the story and got off without much punishment. Mr. Ahn speaks to Mr. Chul and gives the promised consequences along with more warnings to the hybrids. They’re just glad both
teachers are more at ease and satisfied now.

As they leave the room and are dismissed for the rest of their classes, Jimin and Taehyung hope to never have to see the teachers again, despite their forgiveness. Their friends, the ones not present for the fight, worry greatly over the three’s wounds and scrapes but they all brush it off and say they are only bruises that will heal quickly.

It’s true, Jimin and Taehyung don’t think much of what the boys had said now because they really try not to believe the words that were just said to provoke them. They know they have this stigma people will always see but that doesn’t mean it’s true or they have to believe it. If anything, they feel like they’ve matured - just a little - from this fight by knowing what their limits are, knowing what to do and what not to do when faced with certain types of people and words. There are bigger things to worry about than what classmates think of them, and that’s what they’d rather be focusing on.

Chapter End Notes

oof, a filler... (?) if you have any questions feel free to look at the comments. My updates are getting a bit shaky but I'm doing my best to help you all understand the story and reply to your comments!

Thanks for staying with me so far. My estimate is that there will be 38 chapters total, so please anticipate the ending!
Chapter 29

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

Chapter Notes

ack! im sorry for all these repostings if youre getting them! ao3 doesnt like this formatting T0T sorry if the text gets wonky!

[ In-coming Call From Sweet-Hyung ]

“Hello?”

“Hey, Jiminnie, I gotta ask you a quick question. Do you have a minute?”

“I should ask you that. Aren’t you at work?”

“Well, yeah, but that’s what I mean to talk about. You free today?”

“Huh? Yeah, I am. Is that the question?”

“Uh, no.”

“Are you okay, Yoongi-Hyung? You sound… anxious.”

“No, I’m… I’m between clients so I don’t have much time.”

“You’re making this sound really important. What’s the matter?”

“My dad came in here and asked if you were free for talking about the offer. I mean, you already said yes but you still need to talk, you know?”

“Of course.”

“So you can talk?”

“T-today?”

“You said you were free? My dad’s been on the edge of his seat for having you here. He wants to tell everyone.”

“Yeah - but - Yoongi-Hyung, I haven’t talked to Tae about it…”

“No? Why not? It’s been quite a while.”

“I’ve been… scared. He really has a big influence on what I do. Not in a bad way! I just really care about him and what he wants too. What’s good for the both of us.”

“I get it, Jiminnie. But I’m sure Taehyung feels the same. He wouldn’t stop you from doing what you want. You haven’t talked so you don’t know what he’ll say.”
“Yeah… I--”

“No personal calls during work, Yoongi.’
It’s not personal.
‘Are you talking to that hybrid?’
It’s work-related, fuck off.
‘Be quick or I’m telling your dad, Yoongi.’
That’s not a threat, hyung. I’ll be off in a minute.
”

“Um… bad time?”

“A little. I got a customer.”

“Oh! I’ll text you later then.”

“No, Jimin. Talk to Taehyung. I know he’s there ‘cause you got all quiet when you were talking about him. Talk to him then call me. My dad wants to meet up and we’ll discuss that. Yeah?”

“Yes, hyung. I’ll talk to Tae then call you.”

“Good. This means a lot to him. Gotta go. Bye, Jimin.”

[ Call Ended ]

He sighs. Heavily. This isn’t a big deal. He’ll just go up to his best friend and tell him about the offer. Taehyung will either say yes or no and he’ll have to figure out what to do with that information. If he wants to go against his own wishes or the most important person’s in his life. It’s not a big deal.

He groans now out of mental and physical pain. Then shakily gets up from where he had been trying to nap and rest his muscles to find his friend. Taehyung is in the house, and he spots him coming out of the kitchen with a bowl of hot ramen and Jungkook following in suit. They look up at him with smiles.

“Hi, Jiminnie,” Taehyung greets warmly, as if they both weren’t covered in bruises. “We thought you fell asleep so we didn’t make you any. Do you want some?”

Jimin shakes his head, “No, thank you. I have to talk to you though.”

His eyebrows furrow, and so do Jungkook’s. “Oh. Do you need me alone or?”

He thinks about this for a moment, glancing at their human friend to see if he will cause any trouble. The opposite might happen actually, it’s better to have another opinion. Jimin shakes his head, “Bring him. Let’s sit somewhere.”

The three end up on the living room couch in front of a paused movie. It looks like a stop-motion horror of something he can’t recognize. Jimin only frowns at the odd and rather creepy pause screen and turns his attention to the two boys blowing on the ramen in their laps. Taehyung gives him an easy smile, urging him to start.

“So, Taehyung,” Jimin begins. “You know that I love you, right?”

Taehyung nods nonchalantly, “And I love you.”
“And that everything I do is taking you into consideration too, right?”

“Of course, Jiminnie.” Taehyung frowns, seeming to notice his hesitancy in his air. He starts to shift. “We live together. We have to.”

“You guys are pretty much married,” Jungkook adds casually through a mouthful of noodles. “It’s necessary you do.”

Jimin nods, “Right. Taehyung, you’re the most important person in my life, so whatever you say is gonna have a really big affect on my decisions.”

“I guess, yeah.” Taehyung tilts his head in confusion and worry. He speaks softly, “What are saying?”

Jimin sighs, nodding to himself as if he were breaking up with a partner - not like he’s done that before, he just imagines it feels like this. “I’ve been… Yoongi-Hyung’s father offered me a job at their family business. The Red Pearl. And… and I accepted. But I didn’t tell you so I haven’t gotten back to him to talk about details.” He bites his lip, “I want your honest opinion on this, Taehyung.”

Both boys are staring at him with bewilderment, completely taken by surprise at his statement. Jungkook swallows hard and looks between the hybrids quickly while Taehyung watches Jimin like he’s waiting for more.

Then he closes his mouth and shakes his head, the smallest of smiles present. “A - a job,” Taehyung mutters to himself. “You were offered a job.” It’s not a question but Jimin nods anyway as they meet eyes. “That’s - that’s big for us, Jimin. This changes a whole lot.”

“Yeah. And I want to know what you think. I - um, thought about it myself for a while but I still want your opinion. It means a lot.”

“Well, okay,” Taehyung says softly as he puts his bowl of ramen on the coffee table. He faces Jimin again with a reassuring smile. “I say do it.”

Jimin’s eyes go wide, disbelieving, “R-really? Just like that? No questions? Y-you should think about this, Tae. I did for like a wee--”

Taehyung giggles in a way that calms him - if only slightly. “I trust you, Jimin. I know you would think about every little thing, so if you accepted, it means you trust yourself too.”

“I’ve been terrified you were gonna say no.”

“Why? This a great opportunity!” Taehyung laughs and claps his hands a little. Joy and pride emit from Taehyung that make Jimin begin to smile too. “You can meet so many new people and get over your shyness and you’d have Yoongi-Hyung there so you won’t be in danger and - and I know you like his art, so that’s a plus. It’s awesome!”

Jimin nods encouragingly and blushes at how worked up he was about his friend’s answer. It’s heartwarming to know Taehyung is on board with this but he can’t help but overthink Taehyung’s own sudden opinion. “Wh-what about you? What about us?”

“About me?” Taehyung questions with a tilt of his head.

“I won’t be around as much. You’ll be alone for hours and hours. I even thought you wouldn’t like me making money when we shouldn’t have to. Or that you would feel useless, or something. I
don’t want to leave you alone like this, Tae.”

Taehyung brings their similarly bruised hands together and looks at him with sincerity. “I trust you, Jimin. I see you every second of every day and I don’t hate it but I know we should learn to live without each other. I heard it’s how healthy relationships work. Yes, I’ll be a little sad you’re out working, but I have hobbies and friends and you’ll always come back.”

Jimin nods along, soaking in every emotion and word of his best friend as if they were wedding vows. Taehyung continues, “Making money is a good thing, Jimin. If - if - we have to resort to supporting ourselves then we already have a head start. I might feel a little bad if it’s only you holding us together, but I doubt we won’t have owners by then. This job isn’t needed, but if you like it and you get a little extra cash along with experience, then it’s good.”

“But what about...” Jimin asks slowly, insecurely, “What if I get picked before you and you have to get by alone?”

Taehyung stops him right away. “That won’t happen. Also, that’s a whole other conversation about what happens when we get owners. We’ll cross that bridge when we get to it. We’ll always be together, Jimin,” he says softly. “Even with owners. They’ll be... friends or something so we can see each other.”

Jimin nods again, hyping himself up for accepting the offer, “Yeah. Yeah, okay, good. I’ll do it.”

They grin at each other before hugging tightly, Jimin rubbing his sensitive cheek against his best friend in the process to show his appreciation. They then part and smile a little longer. Jungkook breaks the silence, “You guys just like, got married. Again. You should kiss or something to seal it.”

Taehyung turns to slap at the human in the shoulder while Jimin makes a face and shivers, “That’s super gross. It’s like kissing you. Ugh, don’t make me think about it.”

Jungkook only laughs and tries to save his bowl from sloshing over and making a mess. When Taehyung gives him a break, Jungkook looks at Jimin with a proud smile, “Anyway, Jimin, I also think it’s a good thing. The job, I mean. How did Hyung’s dad ask you though? Just up and asked,” Jungkook deepens his voice considerably and makes a tight, ugly face, “‘Hey, ya wanna work for me?’”

Taehyung hits him again, yet with laughter. Jimin shakes his head as he answers, “No, he offered me dinner with their family. He asked a bunch of questions first about how I like the parlor. I think to make sure I was comfortable there.”

“That’s good,” Taehyung comments happily. “What did he say after?”

Jimin shrugs, “It was a while ago. But I remember he said it would be nice to have someone other than family around. Something about someone to liven up the mood and talk to.”

Jungkook’s eyebrows raise suspiciously. “Really? Did he say anything else weird?”

“Kind of,” Jimin gently taps his pink cheek in thought. “Yoongi-Hyung and his dad had a little argument. Something about what happens when I go there. He even asked Yoongi-Hyung if he told me to stop going or to keep going because of it. They didn’t sound too concerned so I didn’t pay attention.”

“Did they talk about you getting attention as a hybrid?”
“Of course. It was just normal conversation though.”

“Was it before the argument?”

“What? Jungkook, what’re you talking about?”

Jungkook breaks out in a nervous smile and a sharp chuckle like he knows something they should have too. “He wants you to attract attention, Jimin,” he tells them. “To the parlor. When you visit Yoongi-Hyung, there are a bunch of people who see you and probably tell their friends. Waves of customers probably come after. That might be what their argument was about, Yoongi-Hyung using you for that or not, whether or not he told you to stay to go.”

Jimin’s face falls in disappointment at the thought that hadn’t even crossed his mind because he automatically hoped to trust Yoongi. What the human is saying is suddenly making the previous conversation make sense. “Do you think…?”

“No,” Jungkook immediately shakes his head. “Hyung is super considerate, so he wouldn’t use you. And I don’t think his dad would either. He’s nice too if you get to know him.”

“Are you positive?” Taehyung asks Jungkook seriously. “Are you absolutely sure Yoongi-Hyung isn’t using Jimin?”

“Yoongi-Hyung, yes. One hundred percent sure he isn’t using you. His dad,” Jungkook pulls a pitiful face, “seventy percent. He didn’t ask for you to stand in the front right?”

Jimin shakes his head, eager to put out contradictions. “He said he wants me to be like an assistant to the other workers there. Mostly Yoongi-Hyung.”

“Then that’s good,” Jungkook lights up considerably. He tells them, “It sounds like he wants you as like a housekeeper - type employee. He said he wants someone to liven up the mood and talk to right? It’s like being bought as a hybrid but being paid for it.” He stops himself and back tracks, noticing Jimin’s wide eyes. “Kind of! You’d be an employee he cares about enough to let you stay with Yoongi-Hyung as much as you want.”

Jimin slumps and doesn’t feel any less conflicted. Of course he trusts his friend, but does he completely trust his father? Jungkook has known Yoongi longer and in turn, his father, yet has less trust than Jimin does in the man. Mr. Min has just always been mysterious and quiet, which doesn’t amount to being untrustworthy. But now Jimin is hearing this? Despite what Jungkook says to reassure him, he still has doubts about the man now.

“Look, Jimin,” Jungkook sighs, seeing his expression, “if it really feels off, just call Yoongi-Hyung and talk about it. I think you should still take the job though anyway, it’s a good deal.”

Jimin purses his lips, a little dismayed. Taehyung pats his shoulder with a small smile of encouragement. “Trust Jungkookie. He knows them better than us. Now, go call him.”

“Okay… Thank you though, Tae, Kook,” Jimin smiles tightly and leaves the two boys to watch their creepy movie and eat their lukewarm ramen.

Once in the safety of his room, Jimin slowly types in Yoongi’s number one digit at a time to give him some time to think about what to say. But he doesn’t have much, and before he knows it, his phone is already ringing.

[ Calling Sweet-Hyung ]
“Hey, just, like, one second. Lemme put you on speaker.” Yoongi’s voice comes through Jimin’s own speaker after only a few rings.

“Is this a bad time?” Jimin asks.

“No, I promise.”

“... Are you working on someone right now?” Jimin wonders aloud, knowing Yoongi would need both hands if he was working.

“... Yes.”

He groans at the way Yoongi had picked up the call so quickly despite being at work. “Yoongi-Hyung, just call me back, okay?”

“No,” he says sternly as if he was going to press the button immediately. Jimin wouldn't have done it without permission. He whines and Yoongi huffs. “It doesn’t matter. Have you talked to Taehyung about the offer?”

“Yeah,” he confirms. “And Jungkookie ‘cause he’s here too.”

“That’s good, the more the merrier. And what did Taehyung say?”

“He said I should do it.”

“That’s great! Did he have any issues or concerns? I can clear them up before you and my dad talk to make things easier.”

“Actually, Yoongi-Hyung,” Jimin bites his lip. “It was Jungkookie who brought up a concern.”

“Jungkook?”

“Yes... Tae and I were really happy we agreed on the same thing, that I should take the job. But we were talking about the wrong things apparently because Jungkookie... um, he asked more and brought to our attention that... wouldn’t you... just be...?” He trails off shamefully.

“Jimin? What are you asking?”

“You’ll be honest with me, right?”

“Of course. What is it?”

“You’re not...” His voice quiets down to just above a whisper in shame of accusing such a thing. “You’re not using me, are you? For... attention?”

“Shit, Jimin, of course not. I would never do that to you, you know that... Right? Don’t you trust me?”

“I do, hyung,” he quickly agrees, “I’m just not so sure about your father...”

Yoongi sighs defeatedly, “Yeah, I see where you’re coming from.” Jimin makes a startled noise. “It’s okay! I swear, that’s not why he wants you.”

“Are you sure?”

“Um, yeah. I’m a little sure.”
“Yoongi-Hyung!” Jimin whines.

“I just mean that it was the first thing he thought of.” Another pitiful whine. “My dad, he’s very on-the-fence when it comes to hybrids. Yes, the first thing he thought of when he found out you brought in customers was to use you - but he talked to my mom about it and they decided it wasn’t the best decision.”

“Then what am I to him?”

“I’m actually not sure. Hold on, lemme send him off.” Jimin waits rather impatiently as Yoongi finishes up with his customer. Then the older sighs and his voice comes out much clearer than before. “So, I don’t know what my dad sees you as, but I know it’s not bad. We really have been trying to get more employees for a while now but my younger family members don’t want to take over. My parents decided on hiring you as an assistant instead.”

“Two birds with one stone, huh?”

“It’s not bad, Jiminnie.” Yoongi urges.

“But when he asked me at dinner, you were scared for me. You said it wasn’t right and didn’t want me to do it,” he points out.

“Then I had a talk with them about it. I didn’t believe they would give you so much freedom or would make sure you were happy. I made sure he wasn’t lying just to get you to accept.”

A pause, “Was he?”

“No, Jimin. He really meant it all. You’ll help the employees with whatever they ask but you’ll have more freedom. You could walk around, play music on the speakers, make conversations. You won’t be under one person.”

“Jungkookie said I would be like a housekeeper,” Jimin mumbles. “He said it would be like getting bought but being paid for it. It sounds like he’s right. Your dad wants a sort of pet, someone to make the mood and talk to.”

Yoongi speaks tiredly, “It’s not like that, Jimin.”

“No?” He tries to be defiant but it comes out more pathetic. “Then how is it?”

“He—” Yoongi huffs, “I already said he’s on the fence with hybrids. He said he read they’re adaptable and blend in well with the family they’re put into. It’s a family business so he wants someone who’ll be happy to work with us. So... I guess yeah, two birds with one stone. He wanted a house-cat to make it more lively and an assistant. I thought you would get that and be fine with it...”

“Because I’m made for it? Yoongi-Hyung, I trust you but I wish you would have been more specific about this part,” he pleads. “I feel used already.”

“I know, fuck, I know. I didn’t think about it,” Yoongi admits, “You were so happy to do it and it seemed to help you a lot so I thought you would just think if it as slack.”

A frown, “You’re making it worse.”

“I - shit, Jimin, I’m sorry. I didn’t know you’d be so upset. What can I do to make it less like... we’re using you?”
“Maybe not say it like that?” Jimin laughs dryly, then sighs to himself. “But… nothing. I want the job, I would be more comfortable like this. I want to be useful as an assistant and I want to be free like a house-cat - as much as I hate that. I want to be bought, so I like this. It was just… a lot when I heard about being used for attention.”

“I promise, Jimin. I wouldn’t let that happen. They’ll treat you like an employee, not a pet.”

Jimin hums, pleased they were able to sort this out. Resolving issues with Yoongi or just talking to him about things important to himself make him warm and lazy. He purrs in fulfillment and it makes Yoongi laugh. “I trust you, Yoongi-Hyung.”

“Thank you.” There’s a smile in his voice and a tinkling when he speaks that makes Jimin even more pleased. “I can pick you up right now and bring you here to talk to my dad if that’s okay with you?”

“Right now?”

“Yes. I can be there in about fifteen minutes.”

Jimin’s eyes widen and he looks down at himself, seeing very clearly that he isn’t in the best condition to meet for an interview. “Yoongi-Hyung… I don’t really look good today, though.”

There’s a pause. “Oh. If you want to change, I can give you more time. But this isn’t an actual interview, you already have the job.”

“I know,” Jimin brushes a hand up his arm softly as he speaks quietly, “but I’m talking about my marks.”

Patches of different shades of yellow and brown litter his arms and in many sizes along with scrapes from falling to the ground. Marks spread up his wrists, around his torso, along his neck, and end faintly on his face. There are even injuries on his knees where he’d fallen and a bruise on his cheek from being slapped and punched. Most of them actually look like he’d gotten them from a fight, but others remind Jimin of what else had happened. Dark rings surround each wrist from being held so tightly, finger shaped bruises still grab at his waist, and small bites and hickies cover almost half of his neck.

Taehyung looked just as bad but received all of his injuries from the fight, he and Jimin concluded when they assessed each other at home. The boys who had initiated the violence had been expelled for sexual harassment and abuse among other things while the hybrids were suspended from school the next day, a Friday. It was explained more of as a day to relax and recover over and they’re forever grateful.

During this time, Jimin and Taehyung slept and bathed together, nursing each other’s wounds and making sure they were healing okay. They had been in fights before when they were younger and more wild so they know how to address their injuries. Jungkook came over this Saturday to see how they were holding up since he hadn’t seen them after what had happened. The other humans haven’t been able to visit the hybrids since the fight either, so it’s understandable when Yoongi forgets the event that seems more unreal each day.

“Oh,” the older says again. “I - um, I haven’t seen you since the fight, and bruises don’t really show that early.” Jimin hums. “How… are they? Your injuries?”

“Hurting.”

“Bad? Where does it hurt the most?”
He thinks on this with a deep breath, letting himself feel all the little aches and pains. The pain isn’t as bad as it was Friday, and he hopes it will all disappear very soon. Everything still aches, even the bruises don’t like to be touched, but there are some parts on him that are more sensitive than others. “My cheek,” he says, “and my neck.”

“Your neck?”

“...Yes.”

“I don’t understand. I think I saw those marks but I don’t know how they got there.”

“They… um, are very mouthy,” Jimin tells him quietly. “If you know what I mean?”

“O-oh, Jiminnie,” Yoongi says, full of regret, knowing exactly what he means. “I’m so sorry.” Jimin stays silent. “You don’t have to come over today, Jiminnie. We’ll do it another day if you don’t want anyone to see any of it.”

“Thank you, hyung. But…”

“But...?”

“I’m... I’m not getting the job because of how I look right?” Jimin asks hesitantly. Maybe if he goes to the interview while he’s still marked up, he can prove a point that he’s there for more reasons than his face. It’s a stretch to think of it like that, even for the amount of comfort he has in his own skin. “And you had just said that this isn’t an actual interview and I already have the job.”

“That’s right,” Yoongi says almost proudly, and Jimin imagines the smile he can hear. “Your personality outshines any bruise they could have left on you. You can still talk to my father, but I only hope you don’t hurt yourself moving so much.”

Now, it’s Jimin’s turn to stutter. The compliment Yoongi gave him is sudden, and it fills his heart with warmth and courage instantly. He blushes and plays with his fingers, “I - uh, thank you, Yoongi-Hyung… I really - um - really needed that.”

“No problem.” A silence. “I’ll be there in fifteen?”

“Yes… And please come quickly before I change my mind.”

“Of course.”

[ Call Ended ]
Jimin and Yoongi enter the Red Pearl side by side. Despite Yoongi doing his best to assure him that his marks won’t be a problem, Jimin still feels uncomfortable in his own skin when stepping up to the parlor. He tries to make himself feel better by plastering himself to the human’s side and pulling on the ends of his sweater to hide his wrists. This makes him feel relaxed for the entirety of the walk from the parking lot to the door because the moment they actually enter the building, Yoongi stops in his tracks and has Jimin bumping into him.

Three men and one woman stand in the waiting room, facing the entrance with varying expressions of interest and surprise. As Jimin glances around the room in his own surprise, he quickly realizes they are all staring at him. His silver eyes widen and he purses his lips, his grasp tightening on Yoongi’s arm, his ears falling back, and his tail curling in. The closest man to them takes a step forward with a smirk, but it has Jimin releasing a started noise and hiding himself behind his tense friend.

The man doesn’t stop walking, just stalks right up to the pair and finally tears his gleeful eyes off Jimin to speak to Yoongi. “We heard you were bringing the pretty cat,” he drawls. “I thought it was a rumor but I guess you really do put all of the customers’ needs into consideration.”

Yoongi doesn’t hesitate to huff and scowl at the man who is easily a whole head taller than the both of them. “He’s not here for you and he definitely isn’t here for anyone else,” he sneers, then looks to the rest of the audience behind him, “So if none of you want to get kicked out or a broken nose, then I suggest you leave him alone.”

Half of them laugh heartily, the other half smile devilishly. It doesn’t seem to put Yoongi off, he continues to radiate defense and keep his posture steady. He doesn’t falter when the man grins and leans down to Yoongi’s level.

“You can’t hurt a fly, boy,” he says. “And you obviously brought the cat over for a reason, of course it’s here for something.” He winks at Jimin from over Yoongi’s shoulder, eyes flicking down to his neck covered with bruises. It makes him shiver and press closer his friend. He’s getting better with ignoring words and looks such as these, so it doesn’t bother him as much as it used to now that he’s got more confidence and Yoongi in front of him.

“He’s got a name,” Yoongi spits, ignoring the advances. There’s even a faint chiming in the way he talks that Jimin doesn’t think is especially fitting to his words. “Maybe if you weren’t such an asshole he’d let you know it. Go sit back down.”

The man frowns, getting impatient with Yoongi ignoring how he doesn’t stand a chance against the rest of them. “We haven’t done anything to him, we just wanted to see the pretty cat. I don’t see the problem here.”

“You don’t have to touch him to scare him. Go. Away.”

He ignores the rising tone and turns his attention to Jimin, “Why are you here, pretty boy? Are you here for us? Or for this twink?”

Yoongi stiffens but doesn’t say anything, letting Jimin answer as he pleases. He takes a moment to find his voice, and says as clearly as he can, “I’m not here for you. And I’m not here for Yoongi-
Hyung. I’m here to talk to Mr. Min.”

“Really? About what?”

“About a job here,” he tells the man who smirks. Jimin realizes it wasn’t the best thing to say but continues on. “Th-that’s it! I want a regular job and Mr. Min promises to keep me safe and that people will be nice. I want to work here but… all of you… are scaring me.”

A fake pout is on the man’s lips and he stands straight, “Are we now? And what can we do to make you feel better?”

“Um,” Jimin looks around from behind Yoongi, unsure if this is a trick question. He answers honestly anyway, “It would be nice if you let us through. And maybe when I’m done talking with Mr. Min, he can tell you what you want to know about me being here.”

The man’s grin comes back and he looks back to the rest of the gathered adults in some sort of silent conversation. When he faces Yoongi again, he chuckles and says, “Alright then. We’ll let you talk to him.” Jimin visibly relaxes. “But we’ll wait for you to be done. We want to have a talk with him too.”

Without much more than a nod, Yoongi pulls Jimin through the crowd quickly. They make it to the end of the hall without a fuss but Yoongi remains frowning at the farthest door Jimin assumes to be his father's office.

Yoongi looks Jimin over and sighs heavily, hands coming up to fix the hybrid’s hair and straighten his clothes. He’s careful to not touch his sore neck while his fingers are tugging the collar of Jimin’s sweater up and down trying to find the best position. Jimin smiles gratefully at him, “Thank you for standing up for me, Yoongi-Hyung.”

He huffs, “No problem. My cousin was obviously no help.”

“It’s okay, I always have you.”

“He should’ve done something anyway. If you’re gonna be with us, he’s gotta get his shit together and keep you safe too. That includes making sure no one comes around just to look at you.”

“Hopefully, your dad will talk some sense into all of them right?” Jimin points out. “He can tell them to be nice to me and they should listen to him.” He knows that’s not how it works, but Jimin can’t help but wish it will be true.

“Hopefully,” Yoongi repeats. Then he sighs again and runs a hand through his hair. “It doesn’t matter now. I’ll be working while you talk to him. Then make sure to tell him about those assholes waiting. If anything, go to the bathroom. It locks from the inside and my dad has the only key.”

Jimin smiles again. He swears he hears the soft tinkling noise during their conversations today as well, but can’t put his finger on it when he’s so distracted. “Thank you.”

Yoongi nods, then knocks on the door until they hear an affirmative to enter. Yoongi doesn’t come in the room with Jimin, just exchanges a few words with his father and leaves Jimin with a small pat on his head.

The encounter isn’t as uncomfortable as Jimin had thought. He’s offered a seat behind the father’s desk and is spoken to formally. They begin a professional discussion about the specifics of what Jimin wants to do, what he’s allowed to, and the dates and times he has available. The formal conversation is what puts Jimin most at ease since he has been trained to speak relatively well and
is able to smile, relax, and answer informative questions as best he can.

Mr. Min himself also seems content. He calmly asks questions and makes occasional comments on what Jimin tells him. His eyes had only gone to Jimin’s exposed neck once, but if he thought anything of it, Jimin can’t tell. He can’t smell or feel anything other than general curiosity coming from the man. The marks make Jimin feel like he’s being rude, showing up to a professional conversation with hickies out in the open - even if the bruises aren’t created from a passionate event. It makes him feel safer to know Mr. Min won’t take advantage of him and is respecting his space.

As they near the end of their conversation, final details being addressed, Jimin finds himself content with the result. He won’t actually begin working until the end of the month, nor will he be visiting unless he comes when the shop is closed to learn the shop better. This is to let the rumors fade as much as possible, let the shop get back into its normal swing, and to not push Jimin right into the deep end.

They also decide on Jimin only working during Yoongi’s shift. On week days, he will alternate between spending shifts with the human or not working. This starts him off small and lets customers get used to his presence. If the shop doesn’t have any trouble, he will end up working all the same shifts as Yoongi. The senior doesn’t work on the weekends but as time passes, he will also eventually be able to decide whether or not he wants to take a shift without Yoongi.

His job will entail everything Mr. Min had first told him. He will start by assisting Yoongi in his workroom and cleaning and organizing empty ones. The time spent without supervision from Yoongi or another family member will be little to none for his safety and comfort. As time goes by, he will be able to alternate more freely between assisting the family members and cleaning areas with more people in them. He will eventually be able to assist and do as he pleases, even make suggestions on decorations. The shop is small and doesn’t need many people to run, but Mr. Min had explained that their other family members will be retiring and Yoongi’s cousin is going off the college soon so they need more workers as well.

Just as they finish exchanging contact information, Jimin remembers the encounter he and Yoongi had. He stops Mr. Min from standing with a small, “Wait, sir, I have one more thing to tell you.”

He raises an eyebrow but lets him continue. Jimin bites his lip for the first time in the past hour, “Um, Yoongi-Hyung and I had a small incident with the customers outside just before coming in.”

“What happened?” the man asks, concerned.

“We came in and there were about four or so customers standing in the waiting room for us,” Jimin tells him nervously. “They said some things about why I was there and that they were waiting for Yoongi-Hyung to come back with me to see if the rumors were true.”

“Did they give you any more trouble?”

“Not really. I asked to let us through but he said they will wait for me to be done.”

“Why?”

“So they could talk to you,” Jimin tells him. He glances up to see a scowl on the round face, which is rather frightening. “A-about what my purpose here is.”

“I see,” the man says. He leans back in his chair, “They must be irritated by having to wait so long, don’t you think?”
Jimin’s eyes widen at the realization. If they were serious about waiting, the ones that did would be out there for the better part of an hour, probably wondering if Jimin was lying to them but waiting him out anyway. “I - yes, they might be.”

He furrows his brow and nods to himself slowly. Before Jimin can ask what he plans to do, the man stands up determinedly and tells him, “You better find yourself to the bathroom then. Did Yoongi tell you about it?”

“Y-yes, sir,” Jimin squeaks out before standing on shaky legs as well, afraid of what that means.

Mr. Min crosses to the door casually, “Don’t you worry. I don’t expect anything to happen, I just don’t want to be wrong.” Jimin nods, understanding nothing is already out of control and he’s only being asked to stay in the bathroom as a precautionary measure. “Stay behind me, and I’ll knock on the door once they’ve all left.”

“Yes, sir.”

Jimin stays as close to the man as possible without touching him as they walk down the hallway. Even at this distance, he can smell the tension coming from the waiting area at the end, and it has his ears and tail assuming their defensive positions much like before. The moment he’s close enough, Jimin slips into the half open bathroom door as quickly as he can, pushing the door shut and fumbling with the lock.

“Jimin?”

He jumps at the sound, turning around to see someone familiar bent over the sink. “Hoseok-Hyung,” he sighs out, breathing in the comforting scent of his friend.

The human only stares at him in confusion, pausing his movements to look him over. Jimin does the same and immediately notices dark under eyes, bruises, and most importantly, wet red tissues clumped in the sink.

Time seems to stop and Jimin’s heart has never dropped further. His eyes widen, ears straighten, tail stiffens, and his breath catches as he thinks of the absolute worst coming to his friend. He rushes to the boy’s side to cup his face with shaking, hesitant hands.

“H-hyung, wh-what? What happened?” he asks, concern taking over every cell in his body and panic starting to settle when the human doesn’t answer right away.

Hoseok’s eyes widen as well and he stutters, both of them looking down at the now pink sink. “Oh sh-shit - it’s not like that.”

“L-like wha--?”

“Cooking!” Hoseok yells quickly, almost as afraid as Jimin. “I - I was cooking and had an accident.” Jimin only stares silently at the fading splotches of blood on his hands. “I’m fine. See?” He puts his arm under the running water, showing how the blood washes off cleanly, no open wounds from anywhere Jimin can see.

Jimin’s eyebrows furrow and he frowns in confusion at the act, then at Hoseok, who is straining to smile. The panic fades but worry continues to grow. “What happened?” he asks again quietly.

“I was cooking and I wasn’t paying attention,” he explains while rinsing off both hands carefully. The blood keeps reappearing but Jimin can’t find the source, so he hesitantly takes the hands in his own to inspect them. “I don’t have anything at home to clean or cover the wounds well enough so
we used tissue and came here. Yoongi-Hyung has a lot of things to help.”

Hoseok’s long fingers curl ever so slightly, enough to bring attention to the clean cuts along the last knuckles of his left hand, close to his nails. If Hoseok was cooking, it looks like he was cutting something with his right hand and holding it with his left, then distractedly ran the tool across his curled fingers just short of anything serious. Once Jimin sees the wounds, his face twists up in pain as if he was the one to get hurt. He looks around the bathroom to find nearby cabinets open, the needed supplies messily gathered on the single toilet lid.

Jimin’s expression then turns determined as he rinses the hand under the water again before putting the supplies on the ground and telling Hoseok to sit on the lid instead. The human doesn’t protest, just slumps on the toilet and lets Jimin kneel on the floor while dabbing at the wounds with rubbing alcohol.

“Tell me more?” Jimin asks softly. He wonders if Hoseok would need stitches, but decides that he’s probably over thinking.

“My mother and I were cooking together. I was cutting some vegetables and I guess I wasn’t paying attention,” he sighs, his other hand coming to rub at his face. “My mom almost had a heart attack but it’s actually not bad.”

Jimin notices the raised temperature of the human and solemn air around him but doesn’t comment on it now. “Why did you come here? Not go to the store?”

“It would’ve taken too long to buy something, go back, and open it. This place has always been mine and Yoongi’s second home, so my parents know this was faster and they would take care of me better.”

“You don’t have anything at home for this?”

“No, but i—it’s not like that. We’ve only got medicine for colds and bandages for minor cuts.”

Jimin looks up at him softly, fingers brushing over tender knuckles, “Nothing for the injuries from the fight?”

His expression doesn’t change from painful, something Jimin has never witnessed. “Soap and water is fine, Jimin, don’t worry. And ice for the bruises.”

Jimin whines in disbelief and sits fully on the tile, expression crumbling, “Hoseokie-Hyung…”

“I’m healing well, I promise.”

He shakes his head and goes back to slowly wrapping the wounds. “TaeTae went and bought this really nice ointment for us,” he says. “We’ll help you with it.”

“You don’t have to, Jiminnie,” Hoseok tells him, eyes barely pleading. His expression is pained and tired, and Jimin can smell the despair underneath it all. The internal stress is nothing like he’s known to associate with his friend. It spikes a deep need inside Jimin to help him feel better.

He’s silent for only a bit, analyzing his face and finding nothing he likes. “What else is wrong, hyung?” he whispers. Hoseok purses his lips and doesn't answer. “Please tell me…”

“You shouldn’t be so close to me,” is what Hoseok says, pushing Jimin’s cheek off his leg weakly. “I’ve got a bad cold and I don’t want—”
“I’ve got a really high immune system, Hoseok-Hyung,” Jimin cuts him off. It seems like an excuse, but Jimin can tell Hoseok is actually ill. There’s just something else. “I won’t get sick.”

“You might.”

“I won’t because I’ll take care of you myself and make sure you don’t get any worse.”

“What? No, Jimin, I won’t let you do that,” Hoseok tells him sternly, sitting up straighter against the toilet.

He doesn’t listen and only crawls closer, determined, “You will. Tae and I are really good at taking care of people, hyung... You understand that, right?” Hoseok makes an upset expression but nods. “Then let us do what we do.”

There is a few seconds of silent pleading between them before Hoseok sighs heavily and tries to muster up a smile, “Okay.”

Jimin smiles as well with a nod. Then he lays his head down on Hoseok’s lap and encourages the human to pet him, purring loudly when he does.

The passing minutes aren’t quiet as they listen to the rising voices of Yoongi’s father and other men outside the bathroom. It hadn’t been this loud in the beginning and Jimin had thought it would all go over smoothly, but now he’s thinking otherwise. He barely tenses when heavy footsteps fall in the hallway. He trusts the door will remain locked and his friends will protect him.

Jimin forcibly doesn’t listen and trains all his attention to the sound of Hoseok breathing. The human speaks up quietly, “Yoongi-Hyung told me you’re going to work here.” Jimin hums in affirmation, the extra vibrations tickling his throat. “I thought it was a good idea before I came here and heard all the guys talking about you... I hope this doesn’t get bad.”

“I trust Yoongi-Hyung,” Jimin tells him. “And I trust his father enough. I trust they will keep me safe. People aren’t all too bad.”

Hoseok only nods and pets him until things quiet down. Jimin doesn’t know how long it’s been since he locked them in the bathroom, nor how long it’s been since he heard anything other than calm footsteps in the hallway. He assumes it’s been at least an hour and a half since he’s seen Yoongi. It’s not like he minds much that he’s been in the bathroom long after the last hostile person left, he’s just wondering what’s happening.

Eventually, a soft knock comes to the door followed by a familiar voice saying, “Jimin? You can come out now.”

When he opens the door, he’s met with Yoongi’s surprised face. Hoseok is shuffling behind Jimin sheepishly as the hybrids jumps right into pleading to the Yoongi, “Hoseokie-Hyung is hurt and sick and he doesn’t have the best supplies at his house to get better. Will you please let me take him home to take care of him?”

Despite overwhelming him, Yoongi manages to shrug casually and say, “Sure, you can take care of him. As long as he knows you’re just going to pamper him for hours.”

Hoseok snorts and Jimin smiles thankfully, giving a tight hug to Yoongi before latching himself onto the Junior and guiding him far too carefully outside.
Yoongi had apparently not known Hoseok was in the shop. While Jimin was talking with Mr. Min, Yoongi was busy dealing with the people in the waiting room who were actually customers. He had also told the group that they were only allowed to wait if they were getting a piercing or tattoo, which prompted a few arguments but also new customers and annoying loiters.

When his father came out to talk to the group, he had Yoongi stay in his workroom as well. Mr. Min waited a long while before letting Yoongi out, then telling him to get Jimin. Hoseok had entered the shop while Yoongi was working with the last customer, so he only spoke to the cashier and made his way to the bathroom.

Jimin had seen the way Yoongi looked at Hoseok, the same way an older brother looks at the younger. Even as Yoongi drives them to the hybrids’ home and tells the story, he’s constantly looking over at Hoseok in the passenger-seat, who gives him small grimaces that are supposed to be reassuring smiles despite the coughing fits he keeps getting into. Both Yoongi and Jimin are concerned and worried for him, and Jimin only hopes to get home soon so they can take care of him.

You
> is jungkookie still there?

Puppy Tae
> nope he left half an hour ago. why?
> u coming back home?

You
> yeah hoseokie-hyung came to yoongi-hyungs work with an injury and he’s pretty sick too T-T

Puppy Tae
> oh no
> ure bringing him right? we need to take care of him

You
> yes, yoongi-hyung is driving us now!
> be prepared!

Puppy Tae
> of course, i’ll get out medicine and start up some soup
> our hyung T_T

You
> thank you taetae T-T we’ll be home soon

As Jimin unlocks their front door, Hoseok is kept behind by Yoongi. They have a quiet conversation that involves lots of frowning and a creased brow on Yoongi’s end and a pleading and guilty look on Hoseok’s. Jimin can only sigh and hesitantly call out to him to get him inside. Hoseok gives him a nod before Yoongi stands on his toes and kisses the top of his head quickly. He leaves without anything else, Jimin and Hoseok staring after him in surprise at the display of
When Jimin and Hoseok step into the living room, they’re met with Taehyung barreling himself toward them. He grabs at Hoseok’s cheeks with nothing but concern on his face.

“Hyung! Oh, you’re really sick, you shouldn’t even be out of bed. Where did you hurt yourself? Jimin said you got hurt. Show me - wait not now. Did you eat? I have soup on the sto--”

“Taehyung, I’m--”

“No, you’re not, I can smell it,” he interrupts before Hoseok can even try to deny his state. He looks into his eyes sternly, “You’re going to stay here until I deem you fit to leave.”

Jimin giggles at Hoseok’s wide eyes squished between Taehyung’s hands, “That sounds like a threat.”

“It is.”

He pulls Taehyung away from Hoseok and says, “Give him some space, Tae. Let’s let him sit down.”

Reluctantly, Taehyung backs off. Hoseok gives them his best smile on the way to their couch where Taehyung had spread out many blankets and pillows. He sits in the middle, “Thank you, guys. For offering to take care of me.”

“It’s no problem, hyung,” Jimin tells him, settling himself on his right.

“Yeah, we care about you,” Taehyung says from the left, a large grin on his face.

Hoseok nods and pats each of their heads gratefully, which they preen from. He retracts himself to cough into his elbow before sighing and putting out his left hand for them to see. “I was cooking and accidently cut myself,” he tells Taehyung. “It’s not bad, see?”

The wolf hybrid slowly brings the hand towards himself, gently running his fingers over the bandages. Hoseok lets him without showing any discomfort, a small smile on his face.

Taehyung asks, “Jimin did this didn’t he?” Hoseok nods. Jimin thinks he did a good job wrapping the injury. Hoseok had been right, the cuts are not too bad, but nothing will stop him from fussing too much about them. Each finger is snugly bandaged individually so Hoseok can still move them if he need to, even though it must be painful if he does. “He’s good at wrapping injuries. He used to do mine. I was on a lot of meds so I got kinda woozy and I hurt myself too much.”

“Does that still happen?” Hoseok tentatively asks.

“Nope, I’m all good,” Taehyung smiles sweetly. He sets the injured hand on Hoseok’s lap. “But now we’re gonna give you medicine. Are you allergic to anything?”

He shakes his head and that’s all Taehyung needs to get them. “The soup should be ready. Jimin will get it for you.”

Jimin does as he’s told and brings the bowl of hot food over along with a glass of ice water. Colds are best treated with liquids and rest, and he wants Hoseok to get better as quick as possible. He hands Hoseok the water while Taehyung hands him a couple pills and a tiny cup of syrup. Silently, Hoseok swallows down the medicine and drinks half the glass of water. As he goes into another coughing fit, Jimin replaces the water with the soup and presses the glass against Hoseok’s
forehead, eliciting a satisfied groan from him.

The hybrids smile as Hoseok leans into the cool touch of where Jimin presses. His fever makes his temperature rise while also making him feel cold, so once Jimin sets the glass on the coffee table, Taehyung wraps a duvet over Hoseok’s shoulders. Hoseok hums contently and they tell him to eat up while one of them starts up a movie.

Jimin and Taehyung then get their own blankets and cuddle Hoseok’s sides. About halfway through the movie, the human had already finished his soup and is reaching for each of the hybrids’ hands. They proudly accept the holds and keep them tight for the remainder of the movie.

“Hyung, you can’t fall asleep now,” Taehyung whines quietly to Hoseok, who has relaxed tenfold since Jimin first saw him and is slowly dozing off as the credits roll on their screen. “We still have to take care of you.”

A small, tired, but genuine smile graces Hoseok’s lips as he chuckles disbelievingly. He says, “You two already did so much. I’m feeling a lot better.”

“We’re glad, Hoseokie-Hyung,” Jimin tells him with his own soft smile. “But we need to care for your bruises before you sleep. Will you let us do that?”

“Sure,” Hoseok says with a roll of his eyes, letting them detach their hands to prepare.

The human shyly reaches for Jimin’s again once he’s taken off his shirt like instructed to, and Jimin can’t help but accept the offer of affection. It’s odd for Hoseok to hold their hands, always shaking off the playful action when the others held him, but it was always with a smile so Jimin thinks he’s just a little reserved. This is Hoseok initiating the act, so he basks in the feeling of friendly touches.

Taehyung returns with the ointment Jimin had mentioned to Hoseok earlier. It smells like citrus and spring, which is actually the main reason they decided to go for the more expensive brand. Average ointments would have done the job just as well but then Taehyung found something that smelled wonderful so they had to get it.

The hybrids take turns rubbing the medicine on Hoseok’s back and torso where the skin faded to a steady yellow. He’s healing steadily for just using ice, so they praise him on taking care of himself as well. They also let Hoseok treat their bruises because he wants to give back, which lands them all shirtless and oily. It would have been odd or uncomfortable if it had not been for the fact that they were all rather tired and hurting in some way.

They had not fully thought through the fact that now they can’t lay down comfortably and nap like this. Hoseok laughs in a raspy but sweet kind of way when he comments on it.

“We’re sorry,” Taehyung pouts half-heartedly. He wants so hard to make Hoseok feel better, but in the end, he failed to let him rest properly. “We should have done this first so it could dry enough to not be gross.”

“It’s okay,” Hoseok reassures them. “We’ll just wait a little longer.”

They nod. Jimin looks down at his small hand clasped in Hoseok’s larger one, then at the similar sizes of Taehyung’s and the human’s held together loosely to not hurt Hoseok’s knuckles. The act really is odd, but he isn’t complaining. He even witnessed Yoongi showing an unusual act of affection, which just means they’re all not used to one of their brightest friends so down.

“What made Yoongi-Hyung so worried, hyung?” Jimin asks after a few silent moments. He’s
curious to know what would cause Yoongi to do such an out of the box thing.

Hoseok shrugs with a little guilt. “He didn’t like how I didn’t tell anyone I was hurt or that I even got sick,” he says. “I really was going to tell you all later, but Hyung didn’t believe that.”

Jimin nods, knowing well how Yoongi questions everything he’s given. This could be from the others saying they’re not cold to the school saying they just don’t have the budget for a specific suggestion. They all like to tease him about how concerned or doubtful he gets over things so small, but Jimin doesn’t fully understand why. If he were to tease him, it would be for kissing Hoseok earlier.

“Why did he kiss you?” Jimin asks, startling Taehyung with the information. “I’ve never seen him do that to anyone.”

At this, Hoseok laughs. It’s more of a giggle as he shakes his head. “There’s a lot of things you’ve seen him do that he usually wouldn’t.”

“What do you mean?”

“Ever since we uh, for lack of a better word, got you two, he’s been weirdly protective of all of us,” Hoseok tells them. “We all always cared for each other but you guys… make us want to care for you. You bring out the soft inside of us. So when Yoongi-Hyung noticed something else was wrong, I guess that’s his way of opening up to care for me.”

Taehyung grins, “That’s really cute.”

“I think so too,” Hoseok agrees with a smile just as wide. “I’m going to tease him about it later.”

Jimin purrs in enjoyment, resting his cheek on Hoseok’s shoulder where there aren’t any bruises. He wants to analyze this more, the fact that the humans open up more because of them, but Hoseok is still sick and hurting and is his main priority.

“You make us want to care for you too,” Jimin says.

“Thank you,” Hoseok replies while moving to pet each of their heads with his uninjured hand. Jimin purrs in to the touch, but notices the faint internal tension return that had been so overwhelming when they met in the bathroom. Taehyung must have caught it too because he whines quietly and shuffles closer. Hoseok looks at him softly and sighs. “Do you guys mind um, napping with me? It’s fine if you don’t want to, I don’t want to get you sick.”

They raise their eyebrows at the offer. It’s enticing and heartwarming to think of being able to fall asleep beside their friends, so Taehyung immediately says, “Yeah, no, we’d do that. We won’t get sick.”

Hoseok snorts a little but says, “Thank you.”

It’s not long before they’re in a comfortable position. Hoseok lays on his side along the middle of the couch while Jimin backpacks him from behind and Taehyung holds him at his front, both of them with their head beneath the human’s chin. Much to the hybrids’ content, Hoseok relaxes easily between them. Jimin purrs against his skin and Taehyung hums proudly at the thought of making him feel better.

They lay like that for a while, breathing softly and holding each other close under a thin blanket they’ve pulled over themselves. None of them are asleep, but they’re not too far from embracing it. This intimacy and close proximity to someone they care for is what the hybrids crave, not unlike a
deep set instinct. It’s one of the reasons they cuddle each other so often, for the warmth, comfort, and just presence of someone who they care for and cares for them.

Jimin doesn’t know how much time has passed but he’s been drifting in and out of sleep long before he hears Hoseok speak up so quietly he might have missed it if he had been dreaming.

“I’ve been so stressed these past few days,” he whispers. Jimin remains silent, sensing there is more to be said. “With school, home, and my relationships.”

For encouragement, Jimin ever so softly tightens his hold on Hoseok, just enough for him to know he’s listening. It seems to do as intended because he sighs and says, “I just don’t know if what I’m doing is right. Right for my future… or just morally.”

Jimin opens his eyes to watch the sunlight fade from beyond their baby blue curtains, turning the beige walls an odd color he can’t give a name to.

“My parents know I’m gay. They’re alright with me having a boyfriend the way they’re alright with my sister having one. They’re even alright with me having two boyfriends. I know what college I’m going to and what I have to do to get there but - that just makes all the harder.”

His heart begins to quicken, a sign this is something that’s been plaguing his mind too harshly. The hybrids press up against the boy to give as much comfort as they can. “Namjoon and I are going to the same college as my noona, but I’m going to have to work harder. They do everything so well but I don’t think I can pass like them without sacrificing so much more than they did.”

He pauses again, this time to collect his thoughts as Jimin and Taehyung caress his tangled hair and tense muscles.

“I’ve got to take all these placement tests and exams already. I need to get a job and learn how to be more independent. But so far, all I’m achieving is spending less time with my friends. And even less time with my boyfriends, who are no doubt going through the same things as me - if not worse. I shouldn’t burden anyone so much.”

He breathes deeply and forces himself to relax after his rant. Taking a few moments to think more clearly after unloading so much stress. His voice is softer now, lighter.

“I’m not asking you two to help with tests and exams. Nor am I asking you to help me learn how to live on my own. I - I can do that myself… All this is just making me question my priorities. Is - Is two boyfriends too much? Am I being greedy by wanting all these things so quickly? Jonghyun-Hyung and Minho-Hyung both notice I’m more distant from them… I don’t know if I’m overreacting.”

Taehyung hums, a noise to let Hoseok know he understands. Jimin closes his eyes again and focuses on the now calm breathing of the human. It breaks their own hearts to see him so upset over something he thinks of as so small. The least they can do is offer physical support.

Hoseok speaks once more, “I would think you guys would be the best to talk to about this. What um, what do you think? About having both of them even when we’re all going through this.”

Jimin shifts slightly. He didn’t expect the only thing Hoseok wanted out of them through the whole speech was relationship advice, but it seems everything else was just overflowing stress that had been bottled up and needed to be gotten out. Now, the only thing on Hoseok’s mind is his relationship with his boyfriends and Jimin will do his best to give him clarity with at least that.

“Well, what do you feel for each other?”
“I like them,” he says immediately. “I want them and they want me. And at the same time, they like each other. That’s… that’s how it works, right?”

Jimin nods slowly against his shoulder blades, “Yes. As long as you communicate and know what page everyone is on, then you’re not doing anything wrong. You’re not greedy, Hoseokie-Hyung. You’re just in love.”

Hoseok chuckles at that and shyly nods along with him. Then asks, “How… should I fix this? No, how would you deal with all of this? I’m not good at dealing with stress.”

“You should talk to your parents first,” Taehyung tells him quietly, deep voice vibrating the three of them. “I’m sure they just want the best for you and all that but you gotta tell them that you might explode, you know? As for your boyfriends, I say feel free to talk to them about your stress, they get you. They’re probably just as stressed but that means you can help each other.”

“Yeah… I think I’ll try that.” He sighs, a content, fulfilled sigh like a weight has come off his shoulders, however big or small. Jimin purrs the way he always does when a conflict is taken care of, a person happy once again. He takes it upon himself to press his face directly into Hoseok’s neck to smell the peace coming from him to make sure it’s real. The human chuckles but doesn’t push him away. “Thanks for everything, guys. Things aren’t going so well, but you make it better.”

They’re silent again for a while, but with a different mood this time. It’s not gloomy, but pleasant despite the sun setting quickly. Neither of them are surprised when Taehyung huffs soft and playful, asking, “Hyung, what did you mean that we’d be the best to ask about this? You know we don’t go to college and we don’t really get jobs.”

Embarrassment trickles into Hoseok’s scent and Jimin’s curiosity peaks. “It - It’s not because of that… Both of you like two people, and I would think it’s normal for hybrids to do that based on what they’re put through,” he explains, albeit hesitantly as if they would be offended.

They aren’t offended, only confused by most of that information. He had said they liked two people, but Jimin doesn’t understand what ‘like’ would mean or who he’s referring to. He enjoys the company of all of his friends. But Hoseok had also said it might be normal for hybrids to like multiple people. Jimin gets that, hybrids are constantly placed into intimate relationships with more than one person. If Hoseok is referring to polyamorous relations, then he will agree on that part because it seems more common and accepted in the hybrid community than the human one.

Taehyung seems to be about on the same thought when he looks up at the human from his chest with a confused frown, brown ears lopsided, “You mean because we usually have more than one owner?”

He shrugs shyly, “Yeah. Just that multiple people involved is common, right?”

“Yeah,” Taehyung nods, then places his head back on his chest. “But me and Jimin don’t like multiple people like that.”

The human’s eyes widen in surprise, turning around to face Jimin, who looks up at him with a curious expression. “Really?” Hoseok asks him. “Am I reading things completely wrong?”

He lays on his back now to quickly look between each of the hybrids. The couch isn’t big enough for three people like this, so the hybrids stack half of themselves on Hoseok’s chest.

Jimin tilts his head, a pout forming, “How are you reading things?”

Hoseok looks genuinely confused, much like Jimin does at the moment. He tells them, “I thought
you, Jimin, like Yoongi-Hyung, and Taehyung likes Jungkook, but you’re both in some kind of relationship too. Isn’t that also a way that can work?”

It’s Jimin’s turn to have wide eyes, which Taehyung has told him is a little creepy, but Hoseok’s attention is on Taehyung, who giggles at the information. Amusement rolls off him in giddy waves, “Hyung, I like Jimin, but not the same as Jungkookie.”

“Not… the same?”

“I like Jimin as a friend,” Taehyung tells him, “but also like a brother sometimes. How I feel for Jungkook is closer to what you’re thinking.”

“Huh,” Hoseok says, laying back to process this. Jimin feels shocked and confused, even more so when he adds, “Seokjin-Hyung, Namjoon, and I thought you guys were together. Or at least in an odd sort of hybrid-friend-benefit way.”

Automatically, Jimin shakes his head. “No. No, we aren’t together in any way.”

Taehyung laughs now, almost tumbling off the couch in the process. Hoseok continues to look between the contrast of their features, Taehyung finding joy in the accusation, Jimin finding discomfort. The human seems to notice it and quickly says, “I’m sorry! I didn’t mean to assume but - it - kinda looks like it without enough context.”

Jimin purses his lips and sighs, falling back down against his chest. “I understand, hyung,” is all he says. He does. He’s reminded time and time again how comfortable the two are, but it isn’t until now that they’ve had someone be so sure of thinking they are together. It has never really mattered much to either of them, so he shrugs it off.

“Are you sure?” He asks.

Taehyung answers once he’s calmed down, “Yeah, we get it a lot.”

Hoseok hums but reaches to pet at Jimin’s ears like an apology. He seems to think over his next few words like they might upset him more. Jimin purrs to show he’s alright. “So,” he starts, “that means you have separate relationships then?”

Jimin shakes his head again, softer this time. He looks up at Hoseok with patient shining eyes, “I don’t have a relationship with anyone the way Taehyung does with Jungkook.” Hoseok frowns, confused. He must genuinely think Jimin and Yoongi like each other. Jimin is unsure what to do with the information, but smiles lightly at it anyway, and says, “I like Yoongi-Hyung kind of like the way I like you. But more. He’s my favorite, but not in a picking favorites way. Taehyung and Jungkook are dancing around their feelings, but I guess mine are just… slow.”

Hoseok doesn’t seem to understand all of it, but nods nonetheless. He doesn’t question anything so Jimin shrugs and makes himself comfortable. He hears Taehyung lean up to stage whisper to the human, “He’s just in denial.”

Jimin slaps him on the side, which makes a loud sound resonate through the previously silent house along with Taehyung’s shout of surprise, not pain. He giggles at the sound, taking pride in his success. Hoseok smiles as well, so Jimin lets himself forget the confusion of his feelings and enjoy the company of his friends.
The constant ringing of multiple phones is what eventually draws them awake - even if for two seconds.

Jimin hears it, and his ears twitch violently at the onslaught of sensations. Bodies shift, people groan, limbs push, and everything is warm. But in a good way. A platonic way. He whines at the disruption of his deep sleep and shoves his face into the nearest crevice to escape, which seems to be a cozy spot between the couch and someone’s body.

The noise does not stop, even for a second. Just as the ringtone ends, it starts up again or another phone goes off. It’s making Jimin annoyed, so he whines louder and raises his head up from his soft, warm, little cave to assess the situation.

Hoseok, Taehyung, and himself, have somehow managed to crowd themselves into the hybrids’ couch. They’re a tangled mess of arms, legs, blankets, and halo-ed hair. Taehyung’s ears are flopped in different directions as he sleeps soundly on Hoseok’s chest. Hoseok’s hair has been rubbing against the material of the arm rest the whole time, making it frizzy with static. Jimin must look worse if he had been stuck between bodies and the back of the couch.

He can’t bring himself to care what he looks like or why they’re tangled or why they’re even shirtless, only about what’s waking him when he had been so peacefully sleeping with his friends. Everything was warm and soft and quiet and all he wants to do is drift back into his dreams.

But he can’t, so Jimin scans the room blearily for a source of the noise, which at the moment is a cute little tone he recognizes as his own. On the far end of the coffee table, he sees three dark objects sit, one innocently blaring his jingle. He attempts to reach for it but fails as his short arms only manage to grab at the empty space just behind Taehyung.

Huffing, he taps at Taehyung’s face to wake him like he usually would, and is met with a groan and a twitch of ears. Jimin doesn’t stop, just pats at his cheeks again and pulls at his hair until the other opens his eyes. He’s cute. Jimin smiles sweetly when Taehyung glares at him, then whispers quietly, “Will you answer the phone, O’ Long Arms?”

Taehyung grunts out a noise like a scoff and a chuckle before he pulls an arm out from between Hoseok and Jimin and reaches behind him blindly to grab at something. Jimin is able to navigate him to the ringing phone, which Taehyung immediately hands to him despite Jimin having asked Taehyung to answer it.

Jimin only hums when the other shifts back to fall asleep against Hoseok, not bothering to say anything when he shoves his arm back between the warm bodies and blankets. He decides to scoot down to lay comfortably on Hoseok’s stomach before paying attention to anything else.
The phone has stopped ringing for all of three seconds, enough for Jimin to see dozens of text messages and half as many missed calls across his screen. A call comes from a phone on the table as another comes from his own. Taehyung pulls his hair when Jimin takes too long to stop the noises.

He answers the phone and presses it to his ear not on Hoseok’s stomach just before a loud voice yells through it.

“Oh my fucking god, finally,” it says. Jimin recognizes the voice as Namjoon’s while he turns the volume down. “He picked up, ma’am, you can stop ringing Hoseok. Jimin? You’re on speaker with me and Yoongi-Hyung and Hoseok’s parents, okay?”

Jimin vaguely notices the other ringing stop or the sigh from Taehyung as he tries to make sense of Namjoon’s very rushed, flat-toned words. All he can mutter is, “Huh? Hyung are you mad at me?”

“What? A little, yeah.”

He doesn’t know what’s going on or why so many phones were ringing, but he can hear the frustration in Namjoon’s sudden voice that makes chills run down his spine despite all the blankets around him. His already raspy voice cracks as he whispers, “W-why? What - what did I do? Hyung I just w-woke up and - and--”

“Woah, hey, Jimin, calm down,” Namjoon says quickly.

“But--”

“You’re fine. I’m not mad. Just - just talk to us, okay?” he asks as if talking to a frightened animal.

Jimin still doesn’t understand what’s happening but he nods and curls closer into the bodies beside him. “Okay.”

A different but familiar voice speaks up, “Jimin? Can you tell me where Hoseok is?”

He glances up at said boy, seeing him sleeping soundly as if nothing had disturbed them. He says, “Yes, he’s right here.”

“Thank god. Put him on.” It’s a statement - not a question - coming from Mr. Jung, who is probably concerned about his son. Jimin knows he should do as he’s told, but he’s tired and Hoseok looks like a little sleeping prince despite his heated skin and sour scent due to his cold.

He must have taken too long to answer because Yoongi’s voice comes on harshly, “Jimin, please hand the phone to him.”

“But he’s sleeping and he’s sick and I want him to sleep,” Jimin whispers to him. “We promised to take care of him, remember, Yoongi-Hyung? He’s so soft.”

There’s a quiet, “What the fuck,” then a huff of annoyance before Yoongi speaks again, calmer, “You did your job if he’s rested. Now let him talk to his parents.”

Jimin only makes a sound like a whine mixed with a meow that effectively shows his displeasure at the suggestion of waking up his friend after such a draining day. He deserves to rest longer.

He can hear someone grumbling rather angrily but Namjoon says sternly, “Jimin, listen to me, is Taehyung there?”
“Yes, Namjoon-Hyung.”

“Will you put him on?”

“No, hyung.”

A groan, but not from Namjoon. Jimin is so confused. “Why not?”

“He’s sleeping, hyung.”

“I’m guessing that’s why you’re whispering then.”

“Yes, hyung.”

“Jimin,” Yoongi says sharply. It makes Jimin flinch. “Do you know what time it is?”

“No, Yoongi-Hyung,” he whimpers out, suddenly afraid of making more than one human upset with him. What is happening?

“It’s almost midnight and Hoseok hasn’t been home or texted home since noon. The last person to see him was me, and he was cleaning up blood,” he states firmly. “We’ve been texting and calling since ten, Jimin. Understand that we didn’t come over because we did you a favor of not scaring the shit out of you by knocking on your door so late. Do us a favor and just wake Hoseok up.”

Thorougly guilty and scared, Jimin takes a few seconds to breathe into the silence and calm himself. He shakily gets out a, “Y-yes, Hyung,” before turning to do as he asked - demanded.

Jimin slowly climbs up the couch with his phone pressed to his naked chest as quiet arguing comes from it. He cards his free hand through Hoseok’s oily hair fondly. He raises his voice slightly as he says, “Hoseokie-Hyung. Hoseokie-Hyung, you have to wake up. People are worried about you.”

Both Hoseok and Taehyung shift awake, Hoseok mumbling, “What?”

Jimin smiles down at him, “Your parents want to talk to you. Here.”

As he offers his phone to the human, Hoseok quickly waves him off while wiggling away from the hybrids to be violently thrown into his first coughing fit since he was given medicine. Taehyung rubs at his chest and waits until Hoseok has caught his breath before he slides off the couch, presumably to get more water and medicine.

Hoseok continues to mumble about getting bad germs on Jimin’s phone and pushing it away but Jimin only grins and bats his hands off to hold the phone to his ear by himself. Hoseok finally smiles back and takes it into his own hands.

“Hello?” Hoseok asks into the receiver.

Jimin pushes himself upright and guides Hoseok to do the same as Taehyung returns with medicine. The voices on the other end are quick and loud, and has Hoseok frowning as he explains himself, no doubt in some kind of trouble. Taehyung raises an eyebrow at Jimin in question, who moves beside him to catch him up.

They both feel guilty and worried about what seemed to have happened. Is this really their fault? Is Hoseok in trouble with his parents because of them? Jimin asks himself these questions and knows Taehyung is as well. He tries not listen in on their conversation because he knows he’s right. If he had made sure Hoseok contacted his parents before they fell asleep, this wouldn’t have happened.
If he had made sure to ask if it was alright with his parents for Hoseok to come over, it wouldn’t have happened. Jimin pouts with his tail curled tight and his ears flat, feeling embarrassed and scared.

Eventually, Hoseok sighs and says a farewell, then hands the phone to Jimin telling him Yoongi wants to talk.

Hesitantly, Jimin accepts. “Yes?” he says quietly, bottom lip pulled between his teeth.

“Hey, I wanted to say sorry for talking you like that,” Yoongi sighs. “We were all worried about him and it’s not your fault for wanting him to get better.”

“You don’t need to apologize. I shouldn’t have kept him for so long,” Jimin tells him.

“That’s not--”

“Yoongi-Hyung, I mean it. It’s our fault his parents are upset. And you and Namjoon-Hyung were too. Hoseokie-Hyung is having a hard time right now and we made it worse.” Even as Jimin says this he can see Hoseok shaking his head at him, pleading with his eyes that he’s wrong. But Jimin can see the defeat in his expression that he’s at least a bit right.

Yoongi sighs, then Namjoon speaks, “Jimin, it’s not your fault. We should have just spoken to you and trusted that you can take care of him. I’m sorry for talking to you so harshly, but I’m sure you can understand why we did.” Jimin whines. “Hoseok's parents are going to pick him up around eight tomorrow - or, today. Then we’re all gonna meet up and talk for lunch. We’ll pick you up.”

“Yes, hyung,” Jimin accepts.

Namjoon sighs, “Good night, Jimin. Tell Taehyung and Hoseok good night for us, will you?”

“I will, hyung,” he assures. He waits for Namjoon to hang up before pulling the phone from his ear and setting it on the coffee table.

Hoseok leans against the couch and lets Taehyung rest his head against his shoulder, both of them staring blankly off somewhere in the darkness. Jimin climbs to the other side of Hoseok to press along his arm for comfort. He looks up at him and asks shamefully, “What’s wrong? Did we get you into trouble? We’re sorry, hyung…”

Hoseok smiles softly at him, “No, you didn’t. You shouldn’t blame anything on yourselves.”

“Then tell us why you’re sad?”

He sighs, and explains quietly, “Yoongi-Hyung told them he dropped me off. He does that because he knows I forget. But my parents thought I had him lie so I could get out of studying or something. They called while we were asleep but since we didn’t answer, they called Namjoon and Yoongi-Hyung over. They convinced them I didn’t lie but they were still worried.

“I finished my responsibilities before I hurt myself but I have an important exam soon so everyone is really on edge. They asked about why I was taken here and Hyung and Joon said some BS about hybrids sensing how bad stress, colds, and injuries are and how to care for humans and all that stereotypical stuff.” He chuckles dryly. “They let me off because they think you can work some magic or something. Now, they’re not upset at me for anything but not answering my phone.”

Jimin continues to pout and Taehyung says softly, “Oh, Hyung… We’re sorry…”
“You don’t have anything to be sorry for,” Hoseok pets them between the ears with his uninjured hand. “I’m sorry for worrying you. I’m also very thankful for you taking care of me and for our friends being there to talk to my parents.” The hybrids stare at him for a few seconds. “I mean it, thank you. I’m really not in any trouble.”

They accept it. Jimin purrs and nuzzles his side softly while Taehyung brings them all back down to lay on the couch properly. Hoseok had taken the medicine and smiles again at the way they crowd up to him with blankets. Jimin’s just glad they did what they could to help, and it really worked out as best it could.

As promised, Hoseok’s parents arrive to pick him up at 8 am sharp. The hybrids don’t let him go easy, they had set an alarm for 7 that morning and pretty much shoved him into their bathroom to shower as they cooked breakfast. They had him take a dose of medicine with his food, and packed up enough to take home with him.

When there is a knock on their door, Taehyung sheepishly opens it to greet the parents of their friend for roughly the fifth time. Fortunately, they aren’t angry - at least outwardly - and just look tired. Polite as ever, the hybrid invites the humans in despite the heated conversation on the phone earlier.

Mr. and Mrs. Jung accept the offer and sit in their dining room while Taehyung fetches water like they’ve been taught to. Jimin is in the middle of rewrapping Hoseok’s bandages when they join them in the dining room. The tension is suffocating. Jimin is suddenly aware that as a hybrid, these humans expect him to be some type of magic nurse that can sense illness. He’s never heard of a hybrid being associated with such a characteristic but Jimin decides to go with it if it stops them from thinking Hoseok is out trying to get into some trouble that will ruin his future.

Mrs. Jung looks at Jimin fondly as he tightly wraps Hoseok’s fingers and when Jimin glances at her, they share a smile. Jimin finishes up quickly. Only once Hoseok is at the door with a care package is when the parents thank the hybrids for taking care of their son. Jimin and Taehyung accept it, bow, smile, and do everything they’re supposed to as they leave.

When Namjoon had said they’re all going to meet for lunch, he really had meant all of them. Seven, instead of five gathered at a small bakery one of them picked out. It’s bright, cozy, smells wonderful, and they even have the high tables where Jimin can enjoy dangling his feet from his tall chair like everyone else. As nice as the get together is, Jimin isn’t sure why it’s been called. At least he doesn’t have to pay.

Namjoon sits at an end of the table, seemingly only a little put off but obviously trying not to show it. Seokjin sits beside him, talking to anyone who will listen about the best dishes the bakery serves - Jimin realizes he works here. Hoseok is on the end, looking much healthier and happier than he had the day before. On the opposite side of the table are Jungkook, Taehyung, Jimin, and Yoongi. The humans flank each end at the hybrids’ request.

There’s a moderate amount of customers for a Sunday lunch, Seokjin tells them. He says it’s safe and that most of the people who come by are elders or college students, all respectful regulars. The food is on Seokjin, as he gets a discount for being an employee, so Jimin and Taehyung are encouraged to indulge and get something apart from water as a drink - they share a coffee.

The gathering isn’t much different from what they usually do. They have small conversations
within their group: Jungkook and Namjoon admiring the lighting, Hoseok and Yoongi discussing newest fashion trends, and Jimin, Taehyung, and Seokjin arguing over the most efficient ways to hold mugs.

It isn't until they really quiet down that Namjoon shyly speaks up, eyes glancing to each of his friends as he does, “So, um, guys, how’s uh, how’s your yesterday been?”

“Our yesterday?” Jungkook questions.

Namjoon shrugs as nonchalant as he can, “Yeah. How’d you sleep and all that. Good dreams? Wake up a lot?”

“Just ask the question, Namjoon,” Hoseok tells him from across the table. His rare harsh tone startles the others as he glares at his friend.

Seokjin and Jungkook look between the two with confusion. “What happened yesterday?” Seokjin asks, looking around the table.

All eyes avert his except for Jungkook’s. The youngest asks slowly, “Did you all have a fight? Is that why Hoseok-Hyung’s hand is bandaged?”

Hoseok immediately shakes his head to clear the negative assumption, “No, no I was cooking yesterday and just had an accident.”

Namjoon nods with Jungkook. He fiddles with his cup much like Jimin is doing with his rings. He says, “That’s what I kinda wanted to say today.”

“Cooking safety?” Jungkook asks.

“Communication,” Namjoon rolls his eyes. “There’s a lot going on right now that not all of us are aware of. It kind of got out of hand last night. So I wanted Hoseok to talk about it to everyone.”

Namjoon nods with Jungkook. He fiddles with his cup much like Jimin is doing with his rings. He says, “That’s what I kinda wanted to say today.”

“Communication,” Namjoon rolls his eyes. “There’s a lot going on right now that not all of us are aware of. It kind of got out of hand last night. So I wanted Hoseok to talk about it to everyone.”

All eyes land on the boy, whose eyes widen at the attention but stays calm. He sighs like he doesn’t want to share but Jimin gives him his best comforting expression and the rest do as well.

They’re silent as Hoseok tells the table with a steady voice about what got him so distracted while cooking. Then he explains his meeting with Jimin, who took him home and how the hybrids made sure he was alright. This prompts several coos from their friends to Jimin and Taehyung. Hoseok even tells them about the phone call in the middle of the night. He paraphrases to fit the most important details with what what he’s comfortable sharing.

When he’s done, Jimin and Taehyung smile proudly at the way their friend opened up. Jimin realizes Hoseok had been right when he said the hybrids bring out their soft side. Without them, he might have just gone without telling his friends he has a conflict on the inside. Jimin knows dealing with so much stress alone can really hurt someone in the long run, and it’s always better to have a safe atmosphere to be able to let out some built up problems. Hoseok seems so much lighter now that he’s expressed his worries and his friends are showing that they’ll be there for him and he smiles a large heart shaped smile in response.

With the air full of open, pleasant feelings, Jimin decides now is the best time to share what he witnessed the day before. He bites at his lip and gently calls for the group’s attention. “I saw the cutest thing yesterday,” Jimin says shyly to start.

“My ass?” Taehyung offers, earning a punch to the arm and a table of laughter.
Jimin rolls his eyes before playfully sing-singing, “Yoongi-Hyung kissed Hoseokie-Hyung!”

Now this prompts a real reaction. The table sputters and chokes, eyes wide and disbelieving as if they’d heard wrong. They all look at each other for a brief second before loudly shooting questions left and right. Hoseok only laughs with Jimin, who swings his feet happily and presses right up against Yoongi’s side. Yoongi turns a wonderful shade red Jimin would have missed if he hadn’t been wearing his blessed glasses. The older is embarrassed but Jimin can tell he isn’t uncomfortable, especially when he looks at Jimin incredulously and says, “That was supposed to be private.”

Hoseok scoffs, “It was in the middle of their driveway.”

“So it’s true?!” Seokjin wonders aloud. Hoseok nods in affirmation while wearing large smile as Yoongi attempts to pout through his own.

Jungkook pipes up, “Hyung! Where was it? Can you even reach his mouth?”

Yoongi shoots him a look empty of any threat, “Hey! I am not that short.” He looks pointedly away. “It was on his hair.”

“But you still had to go on your toes,” Hoseok adds. Yet another round of laughter erupts, even coming from Yoongi. “Ah, Hyung, you’ve been so soft to us lately.”

The table agrees, nodding their heads as if Hoseok had commented on the play of a sports team. Yoongi blushed and tries to deny it but the teasing smiles turn fond and he accepts his fate, “I don’t see any of you complaining.”

They scoff, embarrassed by being called out for enjoying Yoongi doting on them all. Jimin and Taehyung giggle at their interaction.

“Yeah, hyung, you even got that job for Jimin,” Jungkook says casually. “That’s unusually nice of you.”

Apparently, not everyone had known about the offer Yoongi’s family gave Jimin because Namjoon and Seokjin look between Yoongi and Jimin with expressions of complete surprise. Jimin laughs shyly, pulling on the ends of his sweater. He explains, “Yes. Yoongi-Hyung and his father have hired me as a sort of assistant. I’d mostly be around Hyung in the beginning, so I’ll be comfortable.”

“That’s amazing, Jimin,” Seokjin tells him, a genuine smile on his face. The rest agree.

Taehyung pets his hair and says, “It’s a good way to meet people too. When do you start?”

Jimin slides his arm around Yoongi’s elbow as he purrs up at the older. He’s been so grateful for the offer and even more so that he feels safe with the other people working there. It’s such a blessing to Jimin to have the opportunity to work, and with his friend. “At the beginning of next month,” Jimin tells them, rubbing his mostly healed cheek on Yoongi’s shoulder. The older only seems to be embarrassed by all the attention so Jimin can’t find a reason to not mutter a heartfelt, “Thank you,” into his ear. It has him tensing in surprise and blushing darker than before. Jimin can only admire the sight and giggle with his friends.

“Speaking of the shop,” Seokjin speaks up, looking at Yoongi with something unique in his eye. “How’s your tongue, Yoongi? Get any numbers with it?”

Yoongi snorts but Jimin and Taehyung eye him curiously. “What? Is that a sex thing?” Taehyung
asks their friends, which make them laugh. He goes on, eyes narrowing at Yoongi, “Hyung are you hav-- oh.”

Jimin’s breath catches in his throat when Yoongi sticks out his tongue to reveal a shiny metal piercing in the middle of it. He stares in awe as he shows the underside as well, a smaller ball just underneath the larger. Yoongi gently taps the metal against his teeth, a familiar tinkling sound emitting before the tongue is hidden by his lips.

The others are talking with Taehyung about when it happened and they ask Yoongi how much it hurt and if he got a discount for it, but Jimin isn’t really paying attention. He hasn’t moved from his place on the older’s arm, his grey eyes following intently where the beautiful piercing had disappeared. As Yoongi speaks, Jimin finds himself trying to catch little glimpses of the shiny metal on his soft tongue.

He pouts when Yoongi pauses, purses his lips, and becomes flustered. Jimin realizes he and the rest of their friends have their attention on him.

“So do you like it, Jiminnie?” Namjoon asks, voice edging on mischievous. Jimin recognizes the smiles each of his friends wear, much like the ones they gave him when Jimin had received his glasses and was fascinated by the colors on Yoongi’s face.

Jimin hardly pays attention to it, nor to the smugness coming from Taehyung beside him. He only nods his head and glances back and forth between Yoongi’s narrowed eyes and his closed mouth. “I do. I’ve been hearing it for a while but I never knew what it was,” Jimin tells them honestly.

Yoongi frowns and tilts his head, the soft sound of clinking returning. Jimin’s cat ears flicker and he smiles widely at the noise, “Yes! I heard it! It’s like little fairy bells. It’s pretty like one too.”

Hoseok bursts into amused snorts and the rest look like they can’t hold back their laughter. Jimin huffs and peels himself away from Yoongi’s side, not noticing how close they were as Jimin tried to see more clearly - he still hasn’t. The older looks beyond flustered, unsure what to do with the attention or the information. It’s a look Jimin hasn’t seen a lot, but can’t say it isn’t cute.

Yoongi shakes out of his trance and awkwardly scratches between Jimin’s ears. He mumbles, “Thank you.” Jimin purrs and gives him an eye smile, which makes Yoongi even more red, retract his hand, and look away.

“I don’t understand,” Jimin pouts, crossing his arms. “I just like it.”

Taehyung laughs. He dramatically shakes his head and brings him close with an arm around his shoulders. He whispers rather sensually in Jimin’s sensitive ears, “You should kiss him. See how it feels on your tongue.”

Jimin yelps and pushes Taehyung away as fast as he can. Taehyung only laughs and laughs along with their friends. The humans must think Taehyung explained how sexual liking the piercing is, or told him how Yoongi might see the interaction. Or they could just be enjoying the reaction from him.

Now, Jimin can figure out all these things by himself. Yoongi must be so flustered because of how close he was and how personal he took Jimin’s liking of his piercing. Among other things, Jimin realizes, but he can’t put his finger on it. He’s embarrassed himself for thinking the piercing is so pretty shining against his pink tongue, for speaking about it so easily.

He thinks about Taehyung’s words and glances at Yoongi, who is quite pointedly facing the other
way. He feels the anxiety and hesitation flowing off the human in waves and suddenly feels guilty for making him uncomfortable. Especially when he finds himself agreeing with Taehyung. He would like to feel the piercing himself; and he just might be in denial.
Jimin is experimenting. The good kind of experimenting that happens within. Since the 24 hours where Jimin was taking care of his hyung and realized his other hyung had something that made him tingle with fascination, Jimin has decided to explore what he has and what he wants.

He enjoyed laying down and having a nap next to his human friend, much the opposite than what he thought would happen. Being so physically close to someone other than Taehyung for such a long time is a bit of a sensitive area for Jimin. This is because he had grown up with only Taehyung as his supporter and thought that if Taehyung can turn against him, then no one would want to be around him. The thought of sleeping beside their human friends used to make him uncomfortable, thinking he wasn’t worthy of being so close or thinking he would make them uncomfortable by being a hybrid - something pretty much made for sex.

Now, Jimin is excited at the thought of laying with them. He realized how much he craves the attention from those he cares for and how satisfying it was to feel safe beside a human. Hoseok didn’t seem to mind much either, only complaining because he didn’t want to spread the germs. It’s relieving. Jimin asks Taehyung about how he thought that night was and finds he is on the same page. They decide to offer having a sleepover with anyone else who is interested when the time seems right.

Jimin is experimenting in this way with how much contact he’s comfortable with with their friends. Taehyung has never had a problem with draping himself over one of the humans or placing their hand on his head to be pet, but Jimin has been too insecure to do anything more than hug at their arms and crowd their sides. It’s mostly because he thinks he’ll annoy them or make them uncomfortable, but it’s also because he doesn’t think he’s allowed to be so close to a human that isn’t his owner or he’ll come off as needy. Jimin tells Taehyung this, and is told he shouldn’t be afraid of just having friends that care for him.

Jimin takes this in and tests his own boundaries. He lays his head on Jungkook’s shoulder in class, plays with Seokjin’s hands while they’re all watching a movie, and falls asleep on Namjoon’s lap as he plays video games with the others. It’s surprising how much he enjoys it, purring when they barely blink an eye when he scents their palms on his cheek. The amount of attention he’s getting and could have been getting all this time is overwhelming, but Jimin just smiles and smiles.

It’s a while before he finds his limit. They’re in school, loitering around the empty halls during lunch. It was a few days before it started snowing that they stayed inside during lunch for warmth. Seokjin and Yoongi found an empty corner one day during their high school years and quickly claimed it when it became too cold to secure their ownership of the picnic table. There’s minimal foot traffic from perpendicular hall at the end of theirs.

They’ve scattered themselves out a bit: Seokjin, Namjoon, and Taehyung and chatting quietly together; Jungkook, Hoseok, and Yoongi watching a video. Jimin however, is trying to take a nap. He’s curled up on Taehyung’s front, knees beside his hips, arms around his waist, face in his neck.

It isn’t the best of choices, as Taehyung uses his hands a lot when he speaks and he’s loud in Jimin’s ears. Jimin doesn’t really know of a better way to nap since he can’t sleep long on someone’s shoulder and it’s quite cold without a body beside him. Eventually, Taehyung sighs and asks, “Jimin, just lay down. This isn’t gonna work long enough.”
Jimin whines and shakes his head. He says, “It’s cold, Tae. Gotta be by someone.”

“Then lay on someone.”

“I am.”

“You know what I mean,” Taehyung huffs playfully.

He glances at the relatively empty hall around them before shoving his face back into Taehyung’s neck. “Ground’s cold and hard. I can’t just have a pillow.”

Seokjin laughs at him fondly. He says, “Then use another person. We won’t let you lay on the floor.”

Jimin peaks out to see the oldest scooting next to Taehyung. He pats his lap as an invitation and smiles. Jimin smiles back. He swiftly drops his chest on Seokjin’s lap and his hips on Taehyung’s, wiggling slightly to get more comfortable. This works. They resume their conversation as Seokjin scratches his neck and Taehyung fiddles with his tail to busy his hands. Jimin falls asleep easily, comfortable with being displayed so openly now that his injuries have all healed.

Someone jostles him awake just a couple minutes before the end of lunch, just in time to compose himself and just in time to hear rude comments from the hall. Jimin isn’t surprised to see the group of boys standing by a class halfway down the hall, nor is he surprised to hear them talking about something sexual. Jimin only twitches his ears and frowns.

His mind is a bit fuzzy from sleep, but he manages to catch the word slut in the same breath as his own name. Despite how quiet they think they are being, Jimin unconsciously hears the rest of their conversation. The boys talk about how inappropriate Jimin is by using more than one of his human friends for his own pleasure, even if it’s just to rest. It makes Jimin uncomfortable. Had he been more awake when he made the decision, he would have thought the same thing, as he does even now.

He finds himself learning that his limit is being intimate with multiple friends in public. Hybrids are supposed to be loyal to their one owner even if that doesn’t always apply to the bedroom. Jimin understands this all too well, as the thought is constantly brought to his mind when he’s out and about. The idea of being with someone other than a potential owner still makes him hesitate to show attention to his friends under the eyes of other, watchful humans. It doesn’t seem especially moral, and makes him feel ashamed.

After he tests his limit once more by leaning on Namjoon while scratching Jungkook’s hair at the library and finding himself shrinking away when people stare at him, Jimin accepts that he’s just not ready to show himself so freely in public.

This, however, doesn’t mean he isn’t comfortable behind closed doors. Jimin practically jumps at the opportunity to hang out at Yoongi’s house with a few of their friends for a movie marathon.

Gleefully, Jimin, Taehyung, Seokjin, and Namjoon enter Yoongi’s home like they’ve done so countless times. Which is not true for the hybrids, who can safely say it’s been less than ten, maybe six times that they’ve been over. Unlike almost every other time they’ve visited, Yoongi’s parents are already home. Jimin realizes that he always comes over during the weekend, days he knows they work, instead of a free Friday like now.

They all say their greetings and are met with silent, pleasant head tilts of acknowledgement that Jimin has found small smiles in. When the adults set their eyes on Yoongi closing the door behind
them, they stand and woodenly ask if they can talk. The Senior agrees easily and ushers his friends to his room.

Jimin unabashedly claims what he can of the bed and makes himself comfortable. Namjoon takes a chair as Seokjin and Taehyung slot themselves onto the empty areas on the bed - Jimin doesn’t take up much space. Conversation comes easy enough, finding interest in the weather and the plants Yoongi keeps by his window.

“He calls them succulents,” Seokjin supplies.

“No, he calls them by their names,” Namjoon says.

Taehyung laughs, “They have names?”

“I’m not sure what they are, but I know their genders. This one is a boy,” he points to a little potted plant to the left of the bunch on the windowsill, “these two are girls,” he gestures down the line, “and this one is new. I think I heard him call it Baby Boy.”

They quietly chuckle at the information, glancing at the door to make sure Yoongi won’t catch them. Jimin offers, “We should name them.”

“But they already have names,” Taehyung frowns. “We just don’t know what they are.”

“Then let’s choose one that we like. I choose the small red one on the right,” he declares.

“The Baby Boy?” Seokjin snickers, shooting him a teasing smile.

“It’s cute, hyung! Choose your own.”

Jimin is stubborn with keeping his favorite succulent as the smallest one. It’s just bloomed and has the most red to it’s ‘petals’ compared to the rest of its green little body. Jimin doesn't care what its name is, but he decides to name it after himself.

His friends are finding themselves in the other plants and giving them their own names as well. Taehyung is boasting about how much bigger his claimed succulent is when Yoongi finally enters his room. He listens for only a few seconds to say,

“Stop talking about my children. They’re mine.”

They laugh at his reaction, Jimin finding the most amusement in the way Yoongi strides over to the windowsill with a pout to fix the plants’ position as if they had moved them. It takes a glare to Namjoon to completely stop them from laughing.

Seokjin eventually asks, “What was the hold up, Yoongi?”

He shrugs, going across the room to open a closet full of clothes, “Jimin’s first day of work is coming up. He’s about the same size as me, so we’re gonna have him try my extras instead of shopping first.”

Jimin leans up curiously and tilts his head at Yoongi’s back, “Extras? Of your uniform? I don’t think I’ll look good in them though.”

“You’ll be fine,” Yoongi calls back. A few bundles of cloth hit Jimin’s face, black button up shirts. “Try those, I’ll look for pants.”

Seokjin and Taehyung each take a shirt in their hands to inspect them. They hold them up to their
own broader, longer torsos, then to Jimin’s, smiling. “They just might fit. Try it, Jiminnie,” Taehyung says.

Jimin grabs a shirt hesitantly, wondering if he’ll suit the black color scheme of the shop. The shirt seems his size but the style is foreign. He’s never worn a button-up, much less one that wasn’t his own. Despite this, he takes his striped red shirt off to try the shirt his friend is offering him.

“Woah, Jimin, what the fuck.”

He squints and looks up from the fabric in his hands. The buttons were misplaced, some coming together at the ends, others open in the middle as Jimin tries to find a way to open the shirt completely. Namjoon and Seokjin stare at him in shock, Taehyung seems smug, and Yoongi has not shown himself from rummaging through his dresser yet.

“Y-you can’t just throw your clothes off anywhere, Jimin!” Namjoon stresses, throwing his shirt back at him.

Jimin frowns. He’s finally able to slide through the arm sleeves and work on buttoning it up correctly. “What do you mean? It’s only you guys. And Taehyung’s seen me naked more times than he’s seen himself.”

“We haven’t - oh that actually suits you,” Seokjin says. His previous shock changes to an impressed look. Jimin grins proudly at the praise and holds his arms out for the humans to eye him. The black of the shirt goes perfectly with the black of his hair and fur. Even as his ears flop about and his tail curls over his shoulder, it brings attention to his shining eyes and tan skin. It all blends together in a way that has his friends complimenting how he looks and has him smiling at the attention.

Yoongi doesn’t do anything but purse his lips and nod. It’s an affirmative, Jimin knows, and isn’t surprised when he then throws another article of clothing at him.

The pair of pants Yoongi hands him are not jeans like the ones the older wears for work, but the sleek skinny fake leather ones. Jimin has a pair of these for himself, and he’d rather wear his own instead of his friend’s if Yoongi doesn’t have extra jeans. He tells Yoongi this while standing from the bed to hand him the pants and other extra shirt. As expected, Yoongi only rolls his eyes and takes the shirt back.

“At least try them on, I also have another pair.”

He resumes digging through his dresser. Jimin eyes the pants as Namjoon reaches to feel the material of the button up, complimenting it. He’s got nothing to lose, so Jimin takes his ripped dark blue pants off to try them. Taehyung pulls on a sleeve of the shirt curiously as well, silently asking with his eyes for Jimin to take it off. He frowns but begins to unbutton it anyways, thinking he and Namjoon like the fabric or something.

Yoongi speaks again, “I have light blue but no extra dark ones. And you can’t wear ripped jeans, so those should have to do if you don’t want to buy anything.” He finally turns, only for Jimin to watch him freeze and clamp his mouth shut.

Jimin stands there, in the middle of Yoongi’s bedroom, in only his briefs - the best undergarment for tighter clothing, as his boxers tend to fold and scrunch uncomfortably. Surprisingly, he isn’t as uneasy about the situation as he would think he should be, especially now that is golden skin is clear of any blemishes. He is, however, a least a little shameful.
“Um,” he says sheepishly. Yoongi’s pants hang limply from his hand, his shirt is with Namjoon, and Yoongi himself is a concoction of embarrassment and shock, triangle eyes wide. It’s interesting how different his reaction is compared to almost four months ago on Halloween when he helped Jimin transform for the first time in years. He had been rather casual and relaxed then, but is now flustered and only slightly red. The look of confusion and something intense staring into Jimin’s eyes is what makes his tail curl and his ears fall to the sides. “Um…”

It only takes that repetition to snap Yoongi out of his daze. His eyes flicker to his tail around his waist before going back to Jimin’s uneasy silver irises. He’s afraid he’s overstepped some boundary now. But Yoongi quickly shuffles to stand straight and uses a tight voice, “You probably shouldn’t be like that in the middle of winter.”

“Y-yeah, I’m sorry,” Jimin stutters. He glances at Taehyung and sees his best friend and Seokjin smiling wolfishly. He frowns and looks away to actually get into Yoongi’s offered pants.

“I just don’t want you to complain about being cold in my house,” Yoongi insists, and Jimin can feel the honesty.

“Of course, hyu--”

“Yoongi? Will you come talk for a few moments?” Mrs. Min’s voice cuts through Jimin’s own and any tension in the air, her confident tone contrasting their nerves.

Yoongi turns away to yell back an affirmative. He gives Jimin an unreadable look before opening his door just enough for his body to slip through.

The moment he’s gone, Jimin pouts and hits Taehyung at the back of his head. “Look at what you’ve done. He’s uncomfortable,” he whines.

Taehyung chuckles in an odd, mischievous way, but allows Jimin to steady himself by leaning on his shoulder. “I’m completely innocent. Namjoon-Hyung wanted to see the shirt and I gave it to him.”

“It’s a very nice shirt,” Namjoon says. “I’m surprised he’s never worn it before. I’m also surprised by how shocked he was. He’s seen you like this right?”

“Yeah…” Jimin grunts and only manages to fit the pants up to mid-thigh. He pouts harder, giving up and working them back down again. “He doesn’t look this small, I should’ve fit.”

“It’s because you have a good ass,” Seokjin supplies. Jimin glares at him, pout still on, to show he doesn’t appreciate the sentiment. The older scoffs and shrugs, “I’m just saying. Yoongi’s got an ass, but no one has one like yours.”

“It’s a compliment, Jiminnie,” Namjoon says. “At least you have an ass.”

“So I have a fat ass though…?” Jimin looks down curiously at his thighs and hips. They’re larger than Yoongi’s no doubt, but that’s because they’re made more of hard muscle than anything. Jimin likes to keep lean because if he didn’t he’d gain weight pretty quickly - he knows. He also looks good this way. Yoongi just seems to have a naturally smaller figure, and probably wouldn’t get as big as Jimin if he worked out. Despite how much he appreciates him now, Jimin would like to see how buff he could get anyway.

Lost in thought, Jimin suddenly feels a hand on the curve of his hips. It’s not uncomfortable when Taehyung gently pats at the slope of his spine, the back of his thighs, and the side of his hips before nodding proudly, “You don’t have a fat ass. You have a nice ass. A bubble butt. I have a
good ass, but not a bubble butt. Be proud.”

The humans laugh when Jimin flicks his nose with the tip of his tail, making Taehyung stunned and sneeze loudly. Jimin chuckles as well, but he gives his thanks to his friends for bringing his spirits up. He easily slides back on his own clothes before he hears Yoongi call for him, hesitantly. At the confused looks of his friends, he shrugs just as confused and makes his way out.

The first thing Jimin notices is the anxiety and hesitance in the air coming from all three members of the family. Yoongi’s parents don’t look any different or put off, but Jimin knows the smell of anxiety well. Yoongi has a furrowed brow and pursed lips, his fingers are fidgeting with the phone in his hands and his eyes keep darting between his parents and Jimin.

Jemin immediately frowns and goes right up to his friend first. “What’s wrong? Did I make you upset? I-I’m sorry for that. Tae--”

“No, Jimin, I’m not upset about that,” Yoongi says. His voice is calm and that genuinely doesn’t seem to be the problem, as he relaxes more at the change of subject. Jimin looks at the adults, who have now begun to shift nervously as well. He watches Yoongi expectantly, worried. “Jimin we have a serious - not serious, but actual - question to ask you.”

His eyes widen but he isn’t especially surprised. Many people want to know about him and his life, so he nods and says, “Okay. You know you can ask.” The family shifts uncomfortably, all eyes leaving Jimin as Yoongi scratches his neck. “Is it - um, inappropriate?” Jimin wonders aloud. He would rather talk about something like that in private.

“No! I mean - kind of. It depends on your answer,” Yoongi immediately says. His eyes are wide and the nerves increase. It puts Jimin on edge but he knows they’re just hesitant to ask about hybrids. He tries to make them more at easy by relaxing his ears and taking Yoongi’s free hand into his own to massage.

Yoongi relaxes but doesn’t make eye contact. “How do… what do you think about a… collar?”

This, Jimin is surprised by. His eyes shoot up to see the family taking glances at him, trying to see his reaction without being rude. His reaction is wide eyes, a stuttered heart, and a tense posture. He would have never thought Yoongi would ask him this. It takes a while before he can catch his breath, or even find words to reply with. He retracts his hands stiffly, which Yoongi seems to take as a bad sign.

“I mean like, hybrids in general. I don’t know if it’s offensive or inappropriate or just not normal. But we were just wondering. About things. You don’t have to answer.”

His eyes are scared when he looks up at Jimin, and he feels bad for making him so afraid of asking a question. Jimin scratches his neck and steps back a bit for more space for himself.

He clears his throat before speaking. “Well, um… Collars are… like a show of commitment. They’re obviously to show possession and ownership as well and are used in more ways. But at the same time, it’s like an engagement ring? Or a promise ring?” He shrugs, unsure how to explain it. The family watches and listens intently anyway.

“It has a lot of meaning to it. Some hybrids don’t like what they stand for but have to have one anyway. Some like the thought of it as a sign of being loved and wear it proudly. And some humans just don’t care about any of that and do what they want with a collar. It’s got a different meaning to everyone, you know?”
Yoongi and his parents have relaxed considerably. As Jimin fiddles with his rings without looking at the humans when speaking, he notices them share some kind of look. Jimin only hopes he answered the question well enough for them to understand.

“And what do you think about them, Jiminnie?” Yoongi asks, voice steady but expression insecure.

Suddenly, Jimin realizes what this means. Yoongi and his family want to give him a collar. Shock must be evident on his face as he weakly answers honestly, “I - I like them…”

“Do you - what do you think about getting one from us?”

Frankly, Jimin doesn’t know. He wants to be owned. He wants to be someone’s special person. A collar to him, means he’s someone cared for and someone who is taken pride in having. A promise that he’s loved. He’d show it off all day.

But getting one from someone neither his lover nor owner, means something else. These people have done so much for him and make him feel loved and cared for nonetheless. Even if he doesn’t know Yoongi’s parents well, he knows they mean the best. Yoongi himself is coming to be a someone Jimin can’t live without.

He doesn’t really know what he wants though, so he asks, “Well… what do you think of giving me one?”

Yoongi seems eager to answer in his parents’ stead. He bites his lip nervously before saying, “It’s like a gift while also keeping you safe. I know it means something to hybrids so we’d think it’s be a nice gift. But it does show ownership so maybe it can keep bad people away too.”

Jemin pulls at his sleeves anxiously as he listens. He understands what they mean to give him. A special gift. That seems to be just about it. Jimin doesn’t want something with such a heavy meaning either, he decides. A collar is almost sacred to him. But he wants the thought that comes with being offered one.

He’s quiet for a minute, thinking what can be the best option for them. He wants the gift, wants the feeling of safety and appreciation. But he doesn’t want something so extravagant to come from a friend.

His silence puts the family on edge but he eventually looks up at them with a decision. “I’ll let you buy me a gift,” he says shyly. “But I want something smaller.”

Mr. and Mrs. Min quickly nod in agreement. “Anything,” the woman tells him.

Jemin turns to Yoongi, “Can I have just a choker? A real nice one? I-It’s not a collar, but it’s kind of like one. I think it won’t be too much of a deal a-and I’ll love it just the same. Can that be my gift?”

Yoongi shares a silent conversation with his parents. Then he looks at Jimin with ease and a relieved smile, which prompts a sweet smile from Jimin as well. The whole room loses tension. “Yeah. We’ll get you one you’ll love.”
You
> [ attached image ]
> how do I look ^^

Youngbae-Ssi~
> ah
> Stunning as ever, sunshine
> Who are you going to see looking like that? They must be special.

You
> Thank you~
> i’m not meeting anyone :( 
> This is my outfit for my job I’、“m starting soon

Youngbae-Ssi~
> Yes, I remember you telling me about it
> How soon are you starting?

You
> This week! I’ll be having my first shift on Wednesday
> i’ve been training all weekend for this!

Youngbae-Ssi~
> I’m proud of you!
> The Red Pearl, right? I think I’ve been there...

You
> thank you~
> yes, have you really been there?

Youngbae-Ssi~
> It looked like you’ve described. A family business? I got most of my piercings there.

You
> Yes that’s it! i’m allowed to work even if i’m not family

Youngbae-Ssi~
> That’s very nice of them! Do they treat you well darling?

You
> yes of course ^^ I’m safe and they give me gifts :)

Youngbae-Ssi~
> What kinds of gifts?
You
> just last week they offered me a collar, but I asked for a choker instead. They gave me a pretty one!

Youngbae-Ssi~
> Why would you turn down a collar? Would you turn one down from me?

You
> I did it because I want my collar from my owner, so I’m afraid I will turn yours down as well.  
> unless you’d let me be yours :)

Youngbae-Ssi~
> Sweetheart, I told you this already. Neither of us are in a position to come together like that. I’m sorry, Jiminnie.

You
> I know~ But you make me happy either way!

Youngbae-Ssi~
> It’s the least I can do.

You
> yes, it is :)

Youngbae-Ssi~
> Now won’t you let me see you in your gift? You can’t tease me like that, honey

You
> [ attached image ]
> kk is it nice?

Youngbae-Ssi~
> Beautiful
> I’m glad you have someone to give you something so nice. You’re very pretty in it!

You
> thank you Youngbae-ssi!!
> speaking of, don’t you have someone special as well? How is she?

Youngbae-Ssi~
> ah she’s the best woman I could ask for. I really think I love her!

You
> kk don’t hesitate to tell her! I’m sure she loves you just the same

Youngbae-Ssi~
> Is the student becoming the teacher now? I’m honored be given such advice.

You
> I’m serious!

Youngbae-Ssi~
> And so am I!
> You’re learning so well. Thank you
> I have to go, darling. Work is calling
You
> [ attached image ]
> work hard! I can’t wait to see you on t.v again :D

[ the sack (7) ]

Puppy Tae
> okay but who is being blessed by all the selcas Jimin is taking
> I demand to know who he is sending them to

Sweet-Hyung
> oh? I would like to know too

Jeon Jungkookie
> sharing is caring, hyungs. hand over the goods

Jin-Hyung
> i’m not getting anything. I guess i know where I stand with him now :^(

Joon-Hyung
> wish I got them :

K C Hobi-Hyung
> damn it’s not me either

Jeon Jungkookie
> Jiminnie! who is getting them??

Puppy Tae
> we need answers!

You
> kkk :D

Jin-Hyung
> wow okay

You
> do you all remember the man I met on my birthday?

K C Hobi-Hyung
> oh yeah! and you got his number!

Joon-Hyung
> good man.
> i still don’t fully understand why he wouldn’t buy you

Sweet-Hyung
> are you still talking to him, jimin? i don’t know if that’s safe. you haven’t met again, have you?

You
> no, yoongi-hyung, we havent met, don’t worry. he’s very nice and he appreciates me!

Puppy Tae
> we appreciate you!!! >:[
You
> i know i know <3
> im just saying he does too and that he isnt a bad guy :)

Jeon Jungkookie
> im happy for you, Jiminnie!

Jin-Hyung
> same here!

Sweet-Hyung
> we all are. But what kinds of pictures were you sending him?

K C Hobi-Hyung
> oh??

You
> kkk let me send one

Joon-Hyung
> oh?!

Puppy Tae
> kkkkk

You
> [ attached image ]
> [ attached image ]
> my work outfit fits well!

Joon-Hyung
> it really does
> I think it looks better on you than on yoongi-hyung

Jeon Jungkookie
> i second that, your shoes look good with those pants
> yoongi-hyung should get some like that and he should give me his boots :^)

Jin-Hyung
> you said one? these are two! thank you!

K C Hobi-Hyung
> i’m not complaining, you look nice Jiminnie!
> knock them dead at the shop!

You
> thank you everyone! i sent youngbae-ssi these photos of my outfit

Sweet-Hyung
> what did he say?
> i think you look nice by the way
> and no i won’t give up my boots jungkook

Jeon Jungkookie
> darn
Puppy Tae
> tell us what he said Jiminnie! im curious too ^^

You
> ah he said i look stunning and pretty
> kkk he’s nice
> he calls me sunshine and darling <3

Jin-Hyung
> oh shit. that’s charming!

Joon-Hyung
> very nice! why won’t he have you??

You
> His job is very demanding, so he doesn’t have a lot of time to take care of me. he also says i’m too young.
> I understand that though so i’m not upset!

K C Hobi-Hyung
> so he likes you??
> will he wait until you’re older?

You
> he does, but he won’t wait. he’s encouraging me to find someone for myself. and he also has a girlfriend
> shh ( to be fiancee ) kkk

Joon-Hyung
> are you happy with this?

You
> yes, i’m happy!
> he texts me when he can and he’s there when i have questions or just want to talk. He’s very nice!

Puppy Tae
> if he gets the honor of being sent those selcas AND he calls you those names??
> a true gentleman in my book!
> i support this!

K C Hobi-Hyung
> same here
> you really found a good one, make sure to keep him!

Puppy Tae
> wish someone would call me pretty and stunning :/
> Thank you, Jungkook

**Jeon Jungkook**
> ???
> anytime?

**Jin-Hyung**
> as amazingly oblivious as jungkook is,
> back to jimin’s man.,
> he has a fiancee you say?

**Joon-Hyung**
> yeah if he has time to develop a fiancee, shouldn’t he have time for you?

**You**
> you misunderstand! she’s an actress, model, and singer. min hyorin? or jung eunran
> they’re both successful and shes older by 2 years, so they’re looking for someone to settle down with for marriage.

**Joon-Hyung**
> oh, i see!
> so it just isn’t the right time in their lives for you.
> i think if you had met in a year or two, they both would have bought you!

**You**
> yes~
> youngbae-ssi tells me that but since it’s too far away, he encourages me to find someone else

**Sweet-Hyung**
> he’s a good man
> have you found someone?

**You**
> no... i’m enjoying my life with you all now :3

**Jin-hyung**
> aww thank you jiminnie

**You**
> ![attached image]

**K C Hobi-Hyung**
> Thank you!!!

**Joon-Hyung**
> you look very nice!! thank you!!!

**Sweet-Hyung**
> im glad my clothes fit you so well, you look good

**Puppy Tae**
> kkkkk

**Jeon Jungkookie**
> i think you’re both pretty
a lil bonus because I've been late on these updates these past few weeks :( School is being mean so I haven't been able to finish the last few chapters. If you've been reading these, you might know there are around 38 or so chapters and we're quickly approaching that mark!!

I'm sorry but there might be a little hiatus for the end. key word, little.

In the meantime, please stream epiphany.
Chapter 35

Chapter by jhopeinfiresme

The first day of work for Jimin is actually not as terrifying as he thought it would be. The Min family had been introducing Jimin to the ropes for a few weeks now. They showed him where everything is, how everything works, and what the end of the day looks like each day of the week. Jimin had also visited the parlor while Yoongi worked, so he knows a little about how the day will progress. By the time he must start his first shift with Yoongi, he’s ready.

Jimin rides with Yoongi after school to the shop after all of their friends wish Jimin good luck and Taehyung scents him for good vibes. Taehyung has always been Jimin’s main priority, so when they realized Jimin won’t be around to do their homework together, he insisted the wolf go home with Jungkook just until he gets used being alone. Neither boy complained so it really is a weight off Jimin’s shoulders knowing his best friend isn’t upset and lonely.

When Jimin and Yoongi enter the parlor, it’s as dead as when Jimin was taken around after hours. They must change into their uniforms, bring the shop to life, get all supplies ready, and wait for Yoongi’s cousin Wooshik to arrive before they open to the public. Yoongi explains that they don’t usually open so late. However, for Jimin, they don’t want there to already be customers around on his first shift.

Much like when Jimin visits, he stays in Yoongi’s office. As the hours pass, he brings Yoongi supplies, cleans his tools, learns the names of every item he comes in contact with, and talks with anyone willing to maintain a conversation. There are a total of four employees. Wooshik at the front, Jimin, Yoongi, and Yoongi’s aunt and father. The other employees make sure the only customers Yoongi and Jimin are to work with are those that fit the unthreatening type. They don’t get many customers mostly because they were filtered down as much as possible, so those that do come by are nice enough to start up simple conversations with Jimin.

By the end of the shift, Jimin is in a relatively good mood. It’s a combination of the buzz of meeting so many unfamiliar humans and the new experience he just went through. He feels proud and cheerful. Jimin blatantly asks Yoongi if he did a good job and positively preens at the praise the other family members tentatively give him. Mr. Min shows a rare large smile, his sister nods at him fondly, and Wooshik pats him on the back with a small smile. He bows and grins and purrs all the way home.

When he sees Taehyung that evening, they embrace for a solid three minutes at the door. Taehyung was brought back home just a few hours before and spent the time alone only slightly freaking out. He admits to being afraid of Jimin getting hurt or overwhelmed but found out cooking a congratulatory dinner was a good distraction. Over the meal, Jimin recounts his day to his just as excited best friend. Taehyung sits beside Jimin as he does his homework and tells about his day. At the end of it all, Jimin wordlessly slips in to Taehyung’s room just five minutes after he went to bed, and cuddles him all night.

The following weeks are much the same, except the parlor is already open and the boys must change into their uniforms in the school bathroom. One of the things Jimin has come to love the most about working at the Red Pearl is the people.

Yoongi’s family members unsurprisingly share the quality of being rather unaffected by the fact of Jimin being a hybrid. They do steal glances at his ears and tail but he notices it’s more out of adoration, their fond expressions making Jimin encourage them to pet him. Yoongi tells him
they’re all just trying to make Jimin at ease by not pointing out his differences, but Jimin pouts and makes it his mission to have all the employees comfortable with treating him like he actually wants. He wants pets and praise and coos and just good positive attention.

Though the original plan had been to keep Jimin by Yoongi’s side as long as possible to keep him safe and comfortable, Jimin broke out of that constraint himself just four shifts in. The other employees are wonderful to chat with and he gets to hear all sorts of stories from Mrs. Min’s time in college to Wooshik’s terrible roommate. He enjoys Yoongi’s company, but slips in and out different rooms to make sure everyone else is content as well. At the end of the day however, he always goes back to his Senior friend with the small smiles.

The customers are also not as bad as he thought, though there are some who can be. Jimin loves the attention and stories he gets from the employees, but enjoys the shy way most customers look at him. The majority take hesitant glances at him or try not to stare. Whenever Jimin catches their eyes, they turn away quickly with shame. He thinks it’s sweet and tries to get these customers to chat with him as well, though never letting them touch without permission.

There are also some customers who are more confident in his presence. These people look at him more blatantly and are the ones who try to start the conversation with him. Flirting is a constant as well as wandering hands but Jimin does his best to be assertive on his own though he can leave whenever he likes. People like them do make his work a little more interesting but sometimes he comes across customers who are more insistent to get close to him. Sometimes, he will be in a room and the customer nearby will smirk at him, which is is usually when he makes his way out. When Jimin is in the middle of a task and can’t leave at a time like this, he makes a point to ignore any advances he’s uncomfortable with.

Jimin is a people person, and all in all, he loves his new job.

It’s roughly a month since he began working at the Red Pearl when Jimin gets a text from his best friend. He’s in the middle of sweeping the break room, a place Jimin comes to when he wants a little peace. The other employees usually don’t leave their work rooms so the break room is where Jimin goes when he needs to get away from all the humans.

He leans the broom against a chair before taking out his phone to see the message that makes him smile.

[ little studio apartment (2) ]

Puppy Tae
> jiminnie! do you know what day it is??

You
> oh? what day is it?

Puppy Tae
> it’s your one month anniversary!!
> we should totally do something as a celebration!

You
> an anniversary for having a job? kk what kind of celebration does that call for?

Puppy Tae
> a sleepover of course! a sleepover with all our wonderful humans who helped us get to where we are now :)
You
> kkkkk sounds fun :D I’m in!
> Have you asked any of the others yet?

Puppy Tae
> awesome!!
> I haven’t but maybe you should ask yoongi-hyung in person since you’re already there kk ;)

You
> fine...
> Try to find a human’s house to sleep over at. I don’t think their parents would like them spending a night without adults u_u

Puppy Tae
> On it!! I won’t let you down, my love ;*

Grinning, Jimin puts his phone away. He returns to sweeping the tile, thinking of what Taehyung had said. The wolf texting him during work isn’t rare, but isn’t a regular occurrence. He knows Jimin is busy but they both also know how much their friendship means to each other. Occasionally, Taehyung will let Jimin know if he’s going to the store or will send a photo of him and a friend with some ridiculous filter on. Jimin always smiles and replies when he can, glad Taehyung isn’t upset over being left alone.

This idea of having one large sleepover with the seven of them is a great way to get them all together again. Jimin sees their friends at school and often around their home on the weekends, but isn’t satisfied with the amount of casual time they spend together, as they usually talk about work at school. The hybrids have already spoken to each other about spending the night over at a friend’s house, and this seems like just the right excuse to do so.

With high spirits, Jimin finishes with the floor and goes to brew some fresh coffee. Today is especially busy at the parlor and so was the last time he was there. Jimin isn’t entirely sure why it’s so, but his hearing allows him to grasp that multiple tattoo and piercing businesses around the city are being closed down. When he had first heard it, Jimin muttered his findings to Yoongi, who only brushed him off saying the Red Pearl will stay standing. Jimin believes him because he felt that Yoongi was being confident and honest, so he doesn’t worry.

Despite the nonchalance of Yoongi and his mother, the other employees are all still on edge. All of those who work come each day and sit around anxiously, sometimes having to make calls. Jimin really doesn’t know what’s the matter if Yoongi is so confident, but knows he can help by caring for them silently.

He brings out a few mugs he had washed, enough for the humans he knows will be staying past when the shop closes in half an hour. As the coffee brews, Jimin gathers some ingredients they might want to use. He cleans up the kitchen area while swaying himself to the music softly playing on the speakers. Jimin has gotten Wooshik into a classical phase and the shop seems to lower in tension when such soothing music plays. Mr. Min had even given Jimin an approving nod the first time he heard the music change.

Jimin pours the coffee into each mug, then prepares the white kitten cup with cream and sugar just the way Yoongi likes it. He’s never told Jimin how to flavor his coffee, but Jimin has watched and learned to use for a time like this. He places everything on a large tray he’s surprised is available, and makes his way around the shop. Yoongi gives him the biggest grin when he sees Jimin made him coffee, and he preens in response. The other employees and members of the Min family look on Jimin with gratitude. They hesitantly pat at his head and Wooshik even lets him hang gently
over his shoulder as they all dress their drinks. Jimin purrs at each time someone scratches his ears or rubs his back in thanks. It still seems as if they’re trying not to treat him like a hybrid so he does his best to encourage behaviors he enjoys.

When Jimin is done tending to the shop’s needs for the day, he visits Yoongi again. The older boy is alone, bent over his work desk with his cheek on the surface and a hand scribbling on a paper. Even as the door closes audibly, he doesn’t stir from his position. Undisturbed in his good mood, Jimin makes his way to his usual rolling chair and slides himself beside Yoongi, who finally glances up at him. Jimin smiles, ears straightening at the attention. “Hello, hyung.”

He blinks, then flips over the paper he is drawing on to use the back side. “Hi, Jiminnie,” he says, voice muffled on the table full of pages.

Jimin giggles, causing Yoongi to glance at him again with an eyebrow raise. His tail smooths along his back and barely taps at his neck calmly as Jimin asks, “How did you like your coffee?”

“It’s was very tasty, thank you.” Yoongi smiles back softly, which Jimin thinks is highly adorable with the way his cheeks are smushed on the table.

“So you finished it in the time it took for me to give out the rest?” Jimin asks, surprised. He hums and scribbles faster. “Rough day.”

Jimin whines softly to show his sympathy before joining Yoongi in laying his head on the table as well, ears flopping on the table and bending in the air even as his glasses push on the surface uncomfortably. It startles the older, his hand pausing for just a few seconds, then resuming again. Jimin doesn’t know what he’s drawing, but allows the silence to spread for longer than he anticipated. As he purrs watching Yoongi’s expression of concentration and basks in his peaceful air, he catches Yoongi’s eyes as well as he looks up silently every once in a while. It comes to Jimin, suddenly, that the older is drawing him. His face flushes and his silver eyes go wide but he doesn’t move away, and Yoongi doesn’t stop drawing even if his air becomes embarrassed and his brow becomes furrowed.

Eventually, Jimin remembers why he went to the older and sighs. He says bluntly, “Hyung, would you like to have a sleepover with the six of us tonight?”

An eyebrow raises but Yoongi doesn’t seem especially put off. “Sure.” He agrees easily. “I didn’t think you and Taehyung would be comfortable with that though.”

“Don’t worry, we are. We thought of the idea together.”

Yoongi smiles at him, “Alright. Who’s place?”

Jimin takes a quick look at his phone, the text messages in their group chat show responses much like Yoongi’s. “Namjoon-Hyung’s,” he replies.

Yoongi takes Jimin to the hybrids’ house once the shop officially closes. There, Jimin and Taehyung hug for entire minutes in the living room before grabbing their bag to fill up for the event. They share a large duffle bag that they often used before coming to Seoul when the two brought laundry from one of their rooms to the other. It’s a soft tan and white that reminds them of a cow. Both of their names are even stitched into the straps as a gift from one of their teachers.

Jimin and Yoongi also take the time to change out of their work clothes. As comfortable as he is in
the fitting clothes, Jimin doesn’t want to accidentally dirty his clothes too much. Yoongi then drives them to his own house where he can also grab some of his belongings. The whole ordeal only takes an hour and before they know it, they’re being greeted by Namjoon’s enthusiastic family.

When their bags are taken care of in a guest room, Namjoon walks them to the living room. The hybrids have been to Namjoon’s house before, but that had been during a holiday with many people around. In a casual setting like this, the house seems bigger than he thought with people. It’s comfortable and modern, chic and stylish like the owners. Jimin compliments the house and Namjoon blushes.

“Just don’t think anything is extra fragile or expensive,” he says in response. “This house has gone through eighteen years of me. It can take a night of the seven of us.”

In the spacious living room is Hoseok, laying on the white carpet on his back. The T.V is on but it doesn’t seem to be being used while the human’s attention is on his phone. When the others enter however, his gaze shifts to them and he breaks out into a wide smile they all can’t help but mirror.

“Hey, guys! Make yourselves comfortable,” he says as if the house were his own. A smirk then immediately tugs at his lips before any of them can sit down. “Oh~ Jiminnie, is that the collar Yoongi-Hyung’s family got you?”

The hybrids choke at the accusation, looking at each other with shock. Hoseok and Namjoon laugh when Taehyung’s eyes comically flicker down to Jimin’s neck. Jimin’s hand comes up to feel that he had, in fact, forgotten to remove the item when changing out of his work clothes.

“It-It’s not a collar,” he mumbles while he settles down next to a chuckling Namjoon on the ground.

Taehyung seats himself on Hoseok’s stomach to watch him struggle, “Collars are from owners. Apologize.” Despite the blunt words, the wolf’s eyes are playful and he grins as his fingers go to tickle the older.

Hoseok screams and laughs harder and eventually relents, but Jimin doesn’t pay too much attention to the boys making a fuss. He leans against Namjoon and makes to take the choker off. He enjoys wearing the accessory and basks in it’s message of safety and company so he often keeps it on longer after he changes from his work clothes.

The choker is made of a soft yet strong material he can’t put a name to. The base color is white, with glimmering threads of gold and silver intertwined beautifully all along the length. In the center is a pale blue ribbon bow also embroidered in, the tails of the bow woven between the gold and silver as if the static image were flowing freely through the threads. The choker itself is long enough to fit snugly around his neck, and has a width of about an inch to see the embroidered designs. It sits a little warm and heavy in his hands from wearing it for so long, but the chain to fasten the item together is cool on his fingers. He smiles softly when Namjoon bumps his shoulder and says, “You don’t have to take it off, he was only joking. It’s very pretty.”

Yoongi grunts tiredly from the couch behind them. “Of course it is.”

Jimin giggles gratefully and Namjoon smacks the older’s leg for being arrogant. He then turns back to Jimin and offers to put it back on for him instead of him not wearing it. When the valuable item is secured, Jimin purrs in thanks and promptly leans his head on the human’s head again. He feels the pleasant emotions coming from all around as Jimin watches Taehyung and Hoseok become a mess of limbs in front of them and listens to Namjoon ramble on about the show that was
playing to a half asleep but still literate Yoongi.

When the others make it to the house, they decide to play video games. Jimin and Taehyung are especially good at video games because of the sheer about of free time they always seem to have. It makes them proud to be able to win over the humans in such a way, but they eventually have to let the others win and the hybrids resolve to betting on their friends on the side lines.

The event is no different from the other times they’ve gotten together. They watch movies, play games, make jokes, just like normal same-age friends. Jimin and Taehyung bask in the good vibes radiating from all their friends and let themselves stretch out on the soft carpet, nuzzle a few humans’ throats, and make sure they get all the pettings and scratches they deserve. Over the months of the two initiating so much contact between their friends, the humans don’t seem to mind and cooperate happily. Hoseok points out it’s made them more open to being expressive around each other. The mutual acceptance of physical contact actually encourages the hybrids to straight up wrestle the humans to have more fun.

Taehyung wins over every human, even Jungkook, who is the only one who makes a conscious effort to work out. The younger blames it on Taehyung’s supernatural powers but then Namjoon wins against Jungkook and he has to admit to losing fair and square. The ultimate loser is Yoongi, who declares it’s because of his pacifist nature and definitely not because he’s smaller than the rest of them. Seokjin wins against Yoongi, Hoseok, and Jungkook, yet mysteriously loses to Namjoon in a close match. Much to everyone’s surprise, Jimin easily takes down Namjoon and then Seokjin for good measure, with gentle kiss to each of their foreheads.

When Jimin and Taehyung wrestle each other for the champion name, Jimin makes sure to throw in some well timed and perfectly quiet phrases to make sure he doesn’t lose against the wolf again. The match ends with Taehyung flustered beneath Jimin as his cat tail sways proudly. He presses a long kiss to Taehyung’s pulse as their very enthusiastic crowd roots for Jimin.

It’s long after dinner is ordered in and finished that the boys finally settle down to sleep. Despite Namjoon’s house being so large, they don’t split into multiple rooms. Instead, Namjoon takes them to the large guest room where they rearrange the furniture to create as much floor space as possible for the seven of them to make one large bed on the carpeted ground.

The hybrids are all for the idea of sleeping so closely with their friends mostly because it satisfies the animal part inside them that craves to be beside those they care for. So when they all find their places on the ground together, Jimin and Taehyung make sure to claim a human or two as their own to get the most out of the arrangement. On the far left are Namjoon and Seokjin unsurprisingly so they can cuddle each other rather adorably. Beside Seokjin is Taehyung, though the wolf crowds himself close to Jungkook on his other side. The younger must be suffocatingly hot with two hybrids on each side but he doesn’t say anything about it, just hums and pats at their hands. Jimin holds on to one of Jungkook’s arms while laying his head on Hoseok beside him. This leaves Yoongi at the far right, with one arm flopped over Hoseok’s stomach as he faces the other way.

It’s amazingly comfortable. At least for Jimin and Taehyung, who thrive off the contact. Jimin is pretty sure he started purring sometime while the others were talking and didn’t stop even as he fell asleep. Taehyung isn’t especially aware of how harsh his grip on Jungkook became or how close they are but not one of them complains throughout the night.

Jimin only wakes up once that night. It’s by an unfamiliar touch but a very familiar noise. Before he can even open his eyes, Jimin registers a low growl, quick but soft hits to his shoulder, and Jungkook’s harsh whispers. Jimin whines and flicks his tail at the hand touching him but blearily
looks back from Hoseok’s chest to see what the matter is.


Sure enough, Taehyung is growling. It’s a soft, low noise that kind of sounds like a dog aggressively purring. Each growl only lasts as long as his exhales and he’s still sleeping pliantly on Jungkook’s shoulder, but the noise is drawing the others awake. Jimin’s heard this kind of growl before so he’s not alarmed. It’s the kind he makes as a warning like if Jimin teases him too much about something he enjoys.

Jungkook pulls on Jimin’s shirt when he sits up to assess Taehyung’s problem. The room is dark but the moonlight from the uncovered window is just enough for humans to see and almost perfect for Jimin to look around. Seokjin shifts from behind Taehyung with mild concern.

“What’s he doing?”

Jungkook pulls on Jimin’s shirt even harder from his place on the ground, “He’s fucking growling, Jimin, what--”

“Where’s Yoongi-Hyung?” Jimin interrupts, which causes a distressed noise from the younger.

“I’m right here,” Yoongi’s voice comes from the other side of the room. His frozen shadow stands near the door as if he was about to leave.

“Oh.” Jimin blinks and looks back at his best friend peacefully sleeping on a highly panicked boy. He sounds threatening but it’s generally harmless. “Oh.”

“What’s wrong, Jimin? Did I--?” Jungkook starts but stops himself.

Jimin reaches over to card his fingers through both of their hairs. It makes Jungkook annoyed but effectively quiets down Taehyung. “He’s fine. He’s still sleeping but his subconscious is acting out.”

“W-why?”

“It’s realizing someone is leaving the uh, group. So it’s a warning growl to alert anyone around that it might mean something’s wrong. But Tae doesn’t actually care. It happens sometimes when I’m sleeping with him.”

“How do we stop it?” Seokjin asks, replacing Jimin’s hand with his own. It keeps the growl to a minimum.

“Just kind of… smother him with a scent and he should be good after Yoongi-Hyung leaves.” They nod, and on cue, the second oldest makes to open the door. Jimin speaks before he can go, “Wait, where are you going?”

“Bathroom,” he mumbles.

“Take me too! I don’t know this house well.” Jimin stands to leave and Taehyung suddenly growls louder the farther he gets. Jungkook makes a startled noise but quickly places his hand over Taehyung’s mouth and that seems to stop it.

As Jimin and Yoongi make their way down the hall, Jimin holds on to the human’s arm for stability after waking up so suddenly. He tries to connect the amount of doors he knows are around
Yoongi scoffs and turns a corner. “No, Jiminnie. We’re already here.” He detaches himself to step into the doorway and turn on the bathroom light. “Do you wanna go first or will I?”

Jimin squeezes his eyes shut from the sudden light and pouts hard. His ears remain lopsided as his tail wraps around his waist, creating an adorable tired look. “Hoseokie-Hyung would’ve carried me and put me right on the toilet.”

There’s a silence and an almost immediate change in the air Jimin doesn’t expect. It’s suddenly anxious. Jimin forces his eyes to open and his pupils to adjust so he can see what the matter is. Yoongi’s got his head down and warm light illuminates his soft skin but also his uncertain expression.

“Would you like to go first, Jimin?” Yoongi asks again, but with a different, quieter tone he can’t place. The soft tinkling sound of Yoongi’s tongue piercing tapping his teeth drifts between them for a silent moment.

Jimin frowns, his shoulders slumping at the change in tone. “No,” he answers honestly.

“Okay.” He shuts the door slowly, leaving Jimin in the dark and feeling somehow much colder than before.

It doesn’t take long before the door opens and light spills into the hallway again. Jimin turns to Yoongi, his pupils narrowing to look at the light directly. His face seems determined yet his air is hesitant as he levels his gaze with the hybrid. His small mouth opens in a soft ‘o’ shape to say something but Jimin beats him to it.

“Did I upset you, Yoongi-Hyung?” Jimin asks in a gentle voice as to cross any unknown lines. He vaguely remembers Namjoon telling them how soft Yoongi is in the mornings, and Jimin guesses the Senior is a little sensitive now for him get such an odd reaction like that repeated question after his light teasing.

Yoongi’s expression changes to one somewhat confused, then relieved. He suddenly sighs with a puff of air and a slightly forced smile. “No, Jiminnie,” he says as he ruffles his hair before moving out of the doorway.

This is yet another example of the older acting different. From kissing Hoseok’s forehead and getting flustered over seemingly random actions Jimin does, to drawing the hybrid and offering to let him use the bathroom first. He’s become increasingly gentle and sentimental, most noticeably with Jimin. Jimin isn’t oblivious to many things and it’s hard not to see the change in Yoongi’s behavior, especially when his friends encourage it. They nudge Yoongi teasingly and laugh when Jimin notices Yoongi’s flustered expressions. He doesn’t exactly know when this change happened but he does know it is himself that this change is centered around. The rational part of his mind tells him Yoongi’s interested in him all of a sudden. The other part tells him that’s impossible.

Without thinking, Jimin grabs Yoongi’s hand before he can get too far away. The older freezes, but doesn’t look away from the dark hall. Jimin stays silent for only a moment, before pouting and speaking quietly, “I want to talk to you, hyung.”

Yoongi doesn’t make a move to show he heard other than his shoulders reflexively tensing. Jimin intertwines their fingers and has learned that he needs to be more assertive when speaking with humans. So he takes a deep breath before speaking again, yet more anxiously. “I need to talk to
you… We should talk.”

Yoongi’s head lowers again slowly with a gentle sigh and though Jimin cannot see his face, he can tell he’s conflicted. “I know,” he says in a defeated tone that makes Jimin’s tail shiver. “I want to talk to you too, trust me. But this isn’t the time nor the place.”

“Then when?” Jimin asks. He wasn’t expecting Yoongi to want to say something to him in return. He was only searching for answers about the older’s change in behavior towards him, but if Yoongi also wants to talk then either they are on the same page or something is wrong. “I want to–”

“Tomorrow.” Yoongi states into the darkness with a firm squeeze to Jimin’s hand before he loosens their grip.

It feels as if Yoongi will leave him then so Jimin quickly glances around the hall to find a clock near the door that reads roughly two in the morning. “It’s already tomorrow, hyung. You - Have I -? You’ve been ac--”

Suddenly, Yoongi turns to him with a scowl on his face and his eyebrows furrowed. “This isn’t the time, Jimin,” he repeats sternly. Jimin’s eyes widen at the tone, his ears flattening at the expression on such a soft face. He tries to keep their hands together when the older carefully takes his away.

Yoongi sighs, all his tension seeming to make his shoulders heavier and just seeing it has Jimin’s heart ache. Yoongi says, “I don’t want us to do this here. We’ll talk later. Go and do your business, then go back to bed.”

The air is suffocating in Jimin’s silence. Yoongi’s emotions are a whirlwind of uneasy feelings. He’s guilty and anxious, stressed and hostile, and most importantly, scared. Yet his words only show how stressed he is, pushing Jimin away like their conversation already has an important set date that can’t be moved. It makes Jimin hurt and suddenly so lonely. He doesn’t want to talk later, he wants to resolve this now when he’s got the chance like every other time they discuss a problem. He wants answers because he knows now this is something important he just can't wait for later for. But he also knows Yoongi is upset and decides not to press any more.

That doesn’t stop his tail from falling and his mouth from pouting hard as he bluntly says, “Yes, Yoongi-Hyung,” before closing himself in the bathroom.

He takes his time in the the spacious bathroom mostly out of spite. Jimin can still smell Yoongi outside the door and tries to see if he can wait him out or get him to talk by passing time petting his tail. Neither happens and Jimin must stop sulking and open the door after just fifteen minutes. Unsurprisingly, Yoongi is near. His head whips up to try to meet Jimin’s grey eyes but he won’t look back at him.

“I - I didn’t mean it like that, Jimin.” Yoongi shifts closer, fingers fidgeting. His tone is incredibly soft and apologetic, almost pleading. “You know that… Right?”

Ji

Jimin doesn’t move from his spot at the doorframe but replies quietly as he knows he should. “Yes, I know. I wanted to make you feel guilty. I’m sorry. And I’m sorry I pushed, hyung.”

He sighs. “Don’t apologize. I’m sorry for pushing you away. I just… don’t think talking here about personal things is very appropriate.”

“I understand.” Jimin nods, then glances up only to see Yoongi’s guilt again and tries to reassure him. “I do, hyung. And I’ll respect that.”
Yoongi doesn’t seem to believe the way Jimin relents so easily but he nods in return anyway and gestures for them to start down the hall. When the lights turn off and Jimin realizes can’t see a thing, much less find his way back, Yoongi understands. He reaches out and carefully slots their hands together again properly in a way that’s much like an apology, and guides them back to the guest room.

Jimin feels the guilt flow from the older beside him and feels guilty himself for making him so distressed. He stops Yoongi from pushing open the door by tugging on their clasped hands. Yoongi looks back to him slowly with curiosity in his dark eyes but Jimin must take a big breath before meeting them.

“I know you don’t want to talk here,” he manages to whisper to the human. “But I... want you to know you don’t always have to talk to me for me to know what you mean.”

“What are you saying?” Yoongi whispers back so quietly Jimin’s sure he wouldn’t have understood it over the blood rushing in his ears if Yoongi hadn’t stepped closer.

He places a nervous hand on Yoongi’s chest as his heart beats rapidly beneath. “I can feel you. Remember? The strong emotions. It’s an animal thing. You don’t always have to say what you mean because I can feel it too.”

Yoongi is quiet for a moment, his eyes wide. “Can you… feel anything now?” The other’s emotions are overcome with insecurity and fright.

Jimin tries to smile soothingly as he takes his hand away. “I can tell you’re hiding something. You don’t have to show me anything you don’t want to. I can’t read minds.”

The human purses his lips and nods, relief overcoming him. He opens the door and let’s Jimin enter first. They find the rest of their friends huddled together with Taehyung in the center. The wolf and Jungkook are in the same position they were left in, Taehyung on his arm and his head on the younger’s shoulder. Behind Taehyung is Seokjin, and Namjoon, all in one spooning train. On Jungkook’s other arm is Hoseok, who is in the same position as Taehyung.

Yoongi snorts when they see the five of them. “Gay,” he mutters.

Jimin smiles, flickers his ears, and takes his spot down behind Hoseok. He does his best to spoon him as well but he’s so much smaller than the human he can only backpack. Hoseok hums and moves back for Jimin to hold him better, the both of them sighing when they get comfortable.

Behind Jimin, Yoongi stays quiet. Jimin can feels his hesitation, loneliness, and insecurity. He wants to hold on to the older too in some way to soothe him but wonders if it might make him uncomfortable after Yoongi told him this wasn’t the place for being personal.

It’s not long after the two got back from the bathroom that Jimin begins to feel even more guilty in the night’s silence. He recounts the events from just twenty minutes ago and decides he’s being unreasonable. If Yoongi doesn’t want to talk, he won’t, but Jimin can still comfort the human from feeling upset.

Yoongi has been tossing and turning restlessly and hasn’t seemed to have fallen asleep since they laid down, so Jimin is anxious when he uncurls himself from Hoseok. He turns to his other side to find Yoongi on his back, quietly following something on the ceiling. He seems to notice Jimin move but doesn’t do anything other than turn his head the other way, maybe out of respect. It makes Jimin frown to see Yoongi unable to sleep, more so because of himself.
Without much thought, he scoots just a little closer, just enough to tip his forehead on the human’s shoulder and curl a gentle hand around his arm for comfort. Yoongi tenses and his emotions mix wildly again. This is the exact opposite of what he was aiming for. Feeling like he made the situation worse, Jimin retracts his hand silently and picks his head up to move away. He knows when he’s unwanted, and understands people don’t always want to have be in contact with others.

However, before Jimin can do more than rise slightly, a hand stops him on his chest. With surprised grey eyes, Jimin glances up to see Yoongi facing him with pursed lips yet pleading eyes. It’s clear he’s asking Jimin to stay but he’s too afraid to tell him aloud. Jimin smiles gratefully at the action to keep him there. He hadn’t read the situation completely wrong, but he’s glad to be wanted now.

He gets much closer this time, putting an arm over the older’s torso and a knee over Yoongi’s leg. He makes to get as comfortable at his side as possible so they both can sleep well until morning. Just as he’s begun to purr and is about to place his head on his shoulder, Yoongi’s hand stops him yet again. This time, there fingers at his chin, tilting his head upwards. Jimin follows.

He tilts his head back as far as Yoongi guides, right until their eyes meet. Now, these eyes are full of determination much like earlier. His brows are furrowed and his small mouth is set just barely open. This is the expression of Yoongi about to say something that’s been plaguing his mind. Jimin cocks his head and watches his mouth intently, wondering what he’s going to say and if he will be able to take a glimpse of his piercing even in the dark.

Embarrassment travels from Yoongi, embarrassment and lots of nervousness. Jimin flicks his grey eyes up to the human’s in question. The brown eyes are closed now and Yoongi’s fingers are still steady under Jimin’s chin. He takes a deep breath, sighing out in a way that all the tension seems to drift away. But for Jimin, the opposite happens.

As Yoongi sighs, his emotions flow out and around them like waves. The air is thick and swirling with affection, adoration, and hope. Jimin feels overcome with joy and relief, nervousness and love. Pleasant emotions surround his heart and squeeze at it until Jimin is close to tears.

His mouth opens as if to say something but nothing comes out as he chokes on the air full of endearment. The care and devotion Yoongi feels grows and grows for Jimin to bask in beside him. The fondness is so loud and clear yet they still seem to lay in a dark, silent room.

When Yoongi opens his eyes, what felt like hours had been seconds. What felt like he had been suffocated in adoration is replaced with a sudden wave of embarrassment and vulnerability. Yoongi’s eyes flicker to everywhere but Jimin’s face. There are only faint traces of the emotions from before that remain as he retracts his fingers from Jimin’s chin.

Jimin sits up straighter to level his face above Yoongi’s. His jaw has yet to close and his eyes have yet to leave Yoongi’s frantic ones. He wonders if what he felt was real, if those emotions meant what he thought they did. He’s never felt someone express their emotions so plainly, so openly, for him to feel so overcome as he just was. The only way he knows it had actually happened is the mix of the air now, Yoongi becoming flustered yet proud. It shows on his face too in a deep blush over his cheeks and down his neck Jimin can see even without his glasses and through the dark.

When uncertainty creeps in, Jimin finally allows himself to grin. He releases a breath he never knew he was holding and barely manages to contain his squeal of joy. The way Yoongi feels for him had been hinted at, yet in the end, never really needed words to be expressed. Jimin should have expected Yoongi’s odd behavior to be connected to the fact he feels this way, but it never made sense until now.
Jimin’s shining eyes end up closing from how much he’s smiling, and he feels the affection drift into the air once again. It makes him have to bite back a giggle of pure happiness. He drops down to Yoongi’s chest in a flustered mess, hiding his surely red face in the shirt and causing Yoongi to gasp. He feels so flattered and gleeful, even embarrassed Yoongi feels this way about him. Jimin feels a little relieved too, that the cause of his friend’s sudden hesitance and nervousness around him is not because of something he should be worried about. This, he can reciprocate.

Yoongi wraps his arms around Jimin’s back and pulls him closer, nudging their knees to tangle them, and silently encouraging Jimin to hold him as well. They slot themselves together seamlessly thanks to their similar heights, then Yoongi pulls a lone blanket over them to keep them comfortable. Jimin’s mouth is beside Yoongi’s neck and he feels the older’s soft puffs of air against his ears, making them flicker occasionally but not in a way that makes him want to leave.

“I’m guessing I did it right?” Yoongi whispers into the darkness.

Jimin smiles wider than he should from a simple question. “Yes, it makes me so happy. Thank you for showing me.”

“You’re welcome, Jiminnie. I… I really like you,” he mumbles nervously.

Jimin breaths in Yoongi’s scent, tugs him closer, and purrs in hope and pure happiness. He says, “I really like you too, hyung.”
If someone had asked Jimin half a year ago where he hoped to be in life by now, he would have definitely said in the arms of a rich boy or girl who cherished him. If someone had then told that Jimin would be in the arms of a middle-class boy he was not officially bonded to, he would have definitely laughed and said that's not him. Because half a year ago, Jimin was afraid. He was afraid of abandonment and broken bridges. He was afraid of traitors and those who sought to use him.

Jimin believes he had not been born alone. By the time he was able to open his shining little eyes at just a few weeks old, he was already accustomed to the soft cries of surrounding newborns and the first thing he had seen was another living being. Since he was born, he never left those newborns, who were all hybrids that were born in the same 5 or so months. He met Taehyung when the younger was big enough to start playing with the others his age, and since then, they've never grown apart.

Jimin loved his friends to his very core. He went to school with them, learned how to shift with them, learned how to live with them. Though, it wasn't long before people started noticing Taehyung's animal side wasn't like the others', and everyone already knew Jimin's eyes were like spotlights peeking out of his smiling cheeks. The two were slowly pushed just outside the social circle, just enough for them to know they were different and carefully tread around.

It didn't matter much to either of them, because they had each other and the loving parental human figures. As they got older, hybrids didn't fear them as much and began to build gentle friendships with Jimin and Taehyung. Friends were warmly welcomed because they were nice and always fun. But as they got even older, they started noticing their friends and acquaintances being moved to different wards, different corporations, different cities. Jimin watched one friend leave each year, one wonderful friend with so many memories leave every year without fail. He was told they were being reclassified or finally chosen for a new home, but the only real consolation he had was his sweet, loyal Taehyung. Until he didn't.

When Taehyung started drifting away and everyone including the staff began to fear him, it broke Jimin down in little pieces for a year. Hybrids were afraid Taehyung had gone rabid, and associated Jimin with him though they hadn't spoken in months. He lost the greater portion of his same age friends to relocation, and his best friend to people who wanted nothing more than an obedient dog. All Jimin had left was a few hybrids with loose friendships and human staff with business relations.

Every storm has a rainbow and Jimin's storm with Taehyung just about broke him. He hated to fight with his best friend and was fully convinced he would never see his other half again after he clearly showed he had been shaped into someone else entirely. Then, after all that time and after all that hurt, Taehyung called for Jimin and he answered. They got the brightest rainbow they could wish for, each other.

The next year was a blur to Jimin. Though their neighbors and friends were leaving at increasing rates, it didn't matter so much anymore because they were together, having fun and being kids. There were few hybrids who decided they would be something more than friends with each other, but it was strongly discouraged. They would always develop feelings then cry when their partner
was chosen to love someone else. Jimin envied their bravery to love whoever they wanted, but always pitied them as he watched the couple fall apart swiftly.

Every hybrid yearned for someone to care for and someone to care for them. That’s why Jimin and Taehyung, like everyone else, decided to just have friends. Friends were always welcome because they aren't permanent and don’t involve many standards. Jimin cared for Taehyung, Taehyung cared for Jimin. They ate together, cried together, played together, lived their life together. Yes, their friendship was still unconventional and ended up being much deeper than others, but it all seemed alright because they knew in the back of their minds, neither of them would be picked and they won't have to part again.

After having to go through friends like they were on a conveyor belt out the city, after having to fight his only family until they both cried with physical and emotional bruises, Jimin was tired and scared and just wanted his best friend. The feeling, unsurprisingly, was mutual. So they’ve stayed together.

If someone told Jimin half a year ago he would have a job, live without supervision, officially stray, and in a unofficial relationship with a middle-class boy, he would laugh much harder and say that’s absolutely not him. Because the Jimin half a year ago was more than just afraid of losing his friends and family, he was afraid of himself.

Jimin has always done his best to perform at the highest of his capabilities. He knows every rule hybrids must follow by heart, passed every manners class with flying colors, and has the best self-control in his entire age group. He knows this, he knows that, he knows how to walk and talk, he even knows he’s been perfectly house broken. But he doesn't mind because it gives him a purpose and something to do.

Without these boundaries and guidelines, what would Jimin have done with himself? He had been taught that these rules are to keep him safe and adequate to be chosen. Do well in school, people want smart hybrids. Do as you’re told, obedience is favored. Don't look them in the eye, you're not theirs. Walk slower, you're not the one setting the pace. Don't fall in love, you'll eventually get separated. Jimin can study hard and follow the rules like a good boy. He can be the very best hybrid anyone would want and be happy. They told him the objective was to attract an owner and be good for them by putting these rules to use. So if he can't get an owner or follow the guidelines, then what is he for? He’s failed.

Jimin was afraid that by falling in love, spending his time with friends, focusing on schoolwork, and integrating himself into the working city-life, he would fail in his overall objective. He shouldn't put pleasure before business, that would violate the rules, then he would fail. Even after leaving his home and begin his new life in the big city, he was afraid that if he starts to get too comfortable, he might ruin his future and all that he's worked for. He’s been trained to be the perfect house cat, he wants to be the perfect house cat. But he couldn’t do that thinking he could taint himself and those around him by getting too comfortable.

Now if someone, say, a certain sweet and loyal wolf, asked Jimin what he thought about all these rules now that he’s broken so many of them, he would laugh and say he was lied to. He was told there's nothing more for him to do than be a perfect companion.

After seventeen years, Jimin has finally seen that there's more to life than getting a good owner, or getting one in general. Logically, he knows that if he wants to live safely and comfortably, he would need to be officially bought. It’s just the way things are. Well, it’s not how everything is. Jimin has learned he would rather enjoy the largely platonic - and recently romantic - comfort of his friends. He wants to stay after school with friends, have sleepovers, watch movies in theaters,
go to arcades, meet new people in public, and actually get a job. He wants to live his own life without an owner.

Without really noticing it himself, Jimin's already been breaking quite a few of those rules and boundaries. He isn't actively looking for an owner because frankly, he doesn't care anymore. He isn't supposed to care about school and work more than the needs of humans, but he does so because he loves to. The sleepover Taehyung and Jimin decided on having turned out to be the last link chaining Jimin to his old, text-book self of half a year ago.

The hybrids are pretty much surrendering themselves to their friends and the more comfortable life with this event. They're leaving their home, their own roof, for one of their friend's. They shared a meal lazily prepared, shared touches entirely platonic, and shared a night with five friendly humans. All of this happened without much explicit permission - besides the go-ahead from a few parents. Jimin should feel like he's breaking the rules of some invisible monogamous relationship or the rules of a proper hybrid merely hosting the party. The more he thinks about it now though, the more Jimin realizes he really doesn't care anymore.

Taehyung, however, hasn't cared much at all to begin with. He doesn't stress about finding a suitable owner, shows his affection to anyone he wants openly, and sure as heck does his best to disregard strict - "stupid" - hybrid rules. Which is also why he is currently, confidently, splayed out on the ground, tangled in limbs and blankets.

The blankets belong to Namjoon, but the extra limbs definitely belong to Jungkook. The two are tightly wound together by arms around waists and heads. Their legs are intertwined in the middle but stick out of the blanket, which snugly wraps them up together like a present. His tail, long lost and possibly bent oddly in the mess. Taehyung's mouth is only slightly open and his ears twitch occasionally in time with the little puffs of breath Jungkook leaves on his neck.

Jimin smiles at this, amused. The side Jungkook is breathing on is where Taehyung's scent gland is located and he's positive Taehyung will be smelling like the human for days without fail. Jimin thinks it's cute Taehyung didn't warn him because it shows he doesn't mind how close they are.

Hoseok somehow moved from between Jimin and Jungkook to between Namjoon and Seokjin. He lays with his arms above his head and wrapped in a perfect blanket burrito. Seokjin has his head resting on Hoseok's arm like a pillow as he hugs a real one to his chest. Namjoon spreads his arm and leg across the both of them in a way Jimin thinks must be uncomfortable but he laughs at it anyway.

He bites his lip and makes to get up, planning to take a picture and begin his day. Maybe he can ask to use the kitchen before his friends wake up. As he sits up, an arm snags around his waist, tensing slightly before relaxing in a subtle attempt to keep him back. Jimin looks at the arm and smiles again. Throughout the night, Yoongi had kept an arm around Jimin but made sure to give him some extra space. Jimin wasn't very enthusiastic about extra space and quietly leaned his head against the human’s chest. When he woke up, Jimin looked up to Yoongi soundly sleeping and wondered if the others were too.

Now his attention is back to the human beside him. Jimin turns back and sees Yoongi's eyes barely open, a small frown on his tired face. When they meet eyes, he quickly averts his attention and blushes. Jimin suppresses a giggle but does reach to run his hands through Yoongi’s hair because he's so cute.

Yoongi sighs and closes his eyes. “Where're you ‘oing?”

Jimin taps the boy's earrings softly. He speaks quietly to match his tone, “I wanna make breakfast
for you guys.”

“You don' have to do that, ‘iminnie…”

“I want to, hyung,” he says, because he really does want to cook this morning. It will make him warm to see their smiles and let him feel like he's giving back.

Yoongi shakes his head though and makes a disapproving sound. “No, you don’t,” he counters. He puts a little more strength into the arm holding Jimin back to try bring him down. When Jimin only grins and continues to pet his hair, Yoongi huffs, upset. “God, you’re no joke,” he opens his eyes and moves to lay on his back, “You really are stronger than all of us.”

Jimin tilts his head, silver eyes shining at the compliment. He says, “Maybe you're just weaker than us.”

Yoongi’s own triangle eyes soften. They seem to wander over Jimin's face. A long moment passes where Yoongi just sits there smiling gently at him before he finally mumbles, “Yeah... Maybe I am…”

Jimin's heart jumps from the simple words, making him blush heavily and turn away. He doesn't reply but can tell Yoongi is amused. Despite getting suddenly flustered, Jimin is grateful Yoongi said that. It verifies the emotions he felt coming from Yoongi, showing him how much he adores Jimin.

A rustling sound comes from where the others lay, peaking Jimin’s attention. He quickly looks over and sees Jungkook rolled over on his back to allow Taehyung to stretch. “Jimin,” the hybrid says tiredly.

Jimin curiously frowns as Yoongi turns to the hybrid too, “Yes, Tae?”

He stretches once more with a yawn. “You're gay.”

Jungkook snorts at the weak jab, amused even half asleep. He yawns as well and rolls over to eye Jimin and Yoongi with a tired smirk as if he already knew what he would see. Jimin only furrows his eyebrows for a moment, unsure where Taehyung is going with this sudden joke. The other isn't one to make many gay jokes and this was said like a statement. Then what about it? It isn't until Jimin feels a tingle of embarrassment coming from Yoongi and sees the spark in Taehyung's eyes that he understands.

Jimin looks down to Yoongi, who meets him like a deer in headlights. A simple smile graces Jimin's face and he carefully brings a hand to trace over the smooth surface of Yoongi's cheek bone, just a gentle touch. He watches the skin turn dark in a tell tale sign of a blush as Yoongi stares frozen back at him. His hand trails off the end of Yoongi's cheek for the human to turn his head and have Jimin's hand perfectly cup the round of his face.

Yoongi still faces away from the others when Jimin grins wide to say, “Yeah. I am.”

At this, Taehyung lets out a wolf-whistle and Jungkook rolls over laughing as if the two hadn't been cuddling a minute before. Jimin chuckles anyway and taps Yoongi's nose fondly as the noise draws their other friends awake.

The newly awakened three quickly understand the situation and give them six approving thumbs up. Yoongi snorts, rolls his eyes, and says he needs to use the bathroom. They all tease him on his way out because they know he’s just flustered. The humans don't tease Jimin as harshly. Namjoon is glad his house is able to encourage so much love, Seokjin is very excited to see the two of them
grow together, Hoseok is relieved to see Yoongi pick someone right this time, and Jungkook just wants to tease them for being embarrassed.

The seven make breakfast together, all laughs and messes. Then they eat joyfully while watching a movie. It’s at this time, when Jimin is slotted between Taehyung and Hoseok, that Taehyung finally whispers to Jimin how happy he is.

Taehyung gently presses his forehead against Jimin's hair. “You picked really well, Jiminnie,” he says. Jimin shudders at the compliment. He got to pick his partner, a thing he never thought he would be able to do. Not only that, Jimin believes he chose someone who would make him happy and treat him respectfully. “But if he hurts you, I’ll still kill him.”

Jimin does his best to suppress his laughter as he pushes Taehyung playfully. It still brings a few glances their way for interrupting the movie. He quickly quiets himself down and cuddles close to his best friend, purring as he nudges his forehead to Taehyung’s cheek in thanks.

In this position, Jimin is suddenly overwhelmed with Jungkook's soil-like scent that completely masks Taehyung’s own. Neither have said anything about the fact that Jungkook pretty much marked Taehyung - other than Taehyung’s nervous shrug when Jimin eyed him. The human didn't do it intentionally so they're not too concerned about what it could mean for their relationship. That doesn’t stop Jimin from whispering, “And you know I’ll do the same for you.”

He leans forward to press a gentle kiss to Taehyung's neck. It’s not directly on his scent gland: far enough away Jimin still cringes from the human’s smell yet close enough to let him transfer his own scent. He does it again after Taehyung's initial surprise turns to a calm sigh. Unashamedly, Jimin continues to press his scent on his friend in a blatantly possessive gesture.

It doesn't take Jimin long to scent his friend to his liking. He aims to replace most of Jungkook’s scent with his own and Taehyung allows it by tilting his head to give Jimin better access. However, it is long enough to attract the attention of their friends who - surprisingly - are also in the room. Most of them watch with scandalized expressions, and others looks rather unamused. Taehyung only laughs heartily, and while the action isn't necessarily the most intimate thing for them, Jimin still curls up in embarrassment. He groans, now shamefully, under their watch.

“Oh, I didn't know we were Netflix and chilling,” Seokjin states from the front before promptly grabbing Namjoon’s neck and pulling him in for a harsh kiss.

Namjoon and Hoseok both make loud noises of surprise, Namjoon flailing a bit before being let go. He quickly crosses his arms and turns the other way, blushing, to face Jimin and Taehyung with a frown as if they brought this on him. As Jimin’s eyes widen from the scene, Taehyung smirks and nudges him suggestively.

Jimin curls in even more as he scrambles for an explanation, “I didn't - I wasn't - didn't mean it like that! I was just kis-” He catches the wide eyes and flustered faces of Jungkook and Yoongi. “It’s just a hybrid thing, guys.”

Seokjin raises an eyebrow and chuckles, clearly enjoying the show. “Okay,” he says slowly before turning back to the screen. “Nothing to see here, boys.” A loud, exaggerated cough, “Yoongi!” A harsh clearing of his throat, “Kook!” And one more cough for good measure. “Sorry, must be allergies.” He mumbles something to himself about ‘being thirsty’ but makes no move to get up.

Thankfully, everyone turns away at Seokjin's coughing fit, leaving the air thick with embarrassment. Taehyung and Seokjin seem very much amused though, making Jimin roll his eyes
and punch Taehyung in the leg. They eventually calm down and Jimin relaxes between his friends, joyfully breathing in their scents and enjoying their warmth. He really thinks he chose well.

Jimin doesn't know if he's being too obvious or if other students are too concerned about it but the blatant looks and glances he now gets from the students definitely have something to do with Yoongi and Jimin becoming a couple. He's fairly sure they're just jealous though.

The two of them are not showing off by any means. Well, that's a lie on Jimin's part. He still gets the usual quick glances and admiring gazes in the halls or while working with classmates. They've turned less into curious eyes and more into longing gazes. Jimin doesn’t mind much anymore. He thinks they're cute and blushes with the boy whenever he accidentally catches their eyes.

When he's beside Yoongi and notices a lingering stare, he takes it upon himself to wrap an arm around the human. He doesn't especially think about it, just knows that it makes him feel more confident. It gives him a little thrill to show off being taken, to show others that he’s also taken someone else they would want. Once he slides a hand into Yoongi's hoodie pocket, the onlookers’ eyes grow wide, shift between the couple, then quickly turn away. Jimin's seen some look uncomfortable, some defeated, and some just surprised. It never fails to make Jimin grin when he sees their faces, especially Yoongi's.

Yoongi’s usual responses to Jimin's subtle acts of possession include an eye roll, a smirk, or a simple soft smile. He likes to run his hand through Jimin's hair as well, scratching the nape of his neck or at the bases of his ears just long enough for him to close his eyes in satisfaction. Those are reserved more for when the two are with their friends or relaxing. He’s much more subtle when they're in public.

Yoongi's not a particularly touchy person in general in public, so he allows Jimin to take the lead with that. He does, however, be sure to give a tender squeeze in response to being held. Jimin is a big fan of Yoongi's small blush when he rolls eyes after Jimin blatantly rubs his cheek on the older's shoulder. No doubt he also notices the lingering gazes of their fellow classmates and teachers, but Yoongi makes no indication of being upset by them. If anything, he either challenges them or would get flustered over them. Some times, Jimin would witness Yoongi pointedly meeting eyes with another person as if patiently waiting for their comment.

Other times, Jimin would notice Yoongi stumble over his words and get red. He may scratch his neck and have his eyes dart between things with seemingly no connection. He could mumble syllables as he gently brushes off Jimin’s arm, keeping a distance with his smaller hands. Jimin doesn't really understand this. He had first thought he crossed a line, but after asking about it, now grasps Yoongi is just overwhelmed in some way. Jimin only nods and respects when he doesn't want to be touched. In turn, Yoongi respects Jimin the same way.

Some of Jimin's favorite moments is when he's at the Red Pearl parlor. The shop itself is one of the few standing official tattoo and piercing parlors open in the area. There had been a scare of debates over whether certain practices should require a doctor's degree, which resulted in the closing of too many parlors. Some continued their art more underground, but the Red Pearl was not one of those. Fortunately, Mrs. Min had actually gone to college and gotten the desired degree before deciding to open a shop with her husband.

The closing of these parlors created a new wave of customers for the Red Pearl, which was an unfortunate fortune. The Red Pearl is where Jimin gets to meet so many new people; young and
old, all of different backgrounds. He hears stories about customers’ lives from when they were just children or about what had brought them to the little shop. Jimin loves asking about a client’s day, loves learning about how big the world is.

Customers themselves seem enthusiastic about getting to share their stories with him, or just to talk to him in general. Jimin’s learned he’s rare to see outside of commercials directed towards the rich, and understands people often just want to say they’ve met a hybrid. Either way, Jimin does what he wants. He makes conversation when he’s in the mood, pushes away unwanted attention, and does his job of assisting the employees.

Jimin likes to say he's played an important role in the Red Pearl’s development. Since he's been hired, Jimin has encouraged the family members to add a few new playlists to the sound system, invest in colored curtains for the small windows, and even choose new artwork to hang on the walls. Not to mention, his presence alone attracts customers. They all would be lying if someone said they were upset about the various adorable graffiti kittens that appear on the side of the building.

Yoongi makes sure to let Jimin know how grateful everyone at the shop is to have him around. The other Min family members have gotten more open with him but Yoongi says they'll always be hesitant to talk about him like he’s someone in their service. Jimin can't do much other than enjoy their jokes and company, trying his best to encourage them to pet him and give him the blunt-worded praises they're afraid to say.

It always seems to bring Yoongi a lot of amusement when Jimin tries to ask for attention from the staff members. Jimin himself finds it hard work to get his desired response when he wants one, especially when he wants one from a family member that isn't Yoongi. Yoongi always gives Jimin the easiest praises.

This time, Jimin feels like he deserves a heartfelt praise with a warm smile and a pat on the head. He’s worked hard today and hasn’t made a single mistake for more than a week - the last time being forgetting to gather all the dirty mugs at the end of the day. He also has not heard a single utterance of those two words he craves for at least a month - apart from Yoongi saying them as he wishes.

“...and I mopped the breakroom after,” Jimin says, grey eyes shining up at the older woman, “because that way it could dry cleaner once everyone's gotten what they wanted.”

Mrs. Min nods, the smallest lines of a fond smile appearing near her eyes. Jimin's heart races as he tells her of the chores he completed that day. She continues to sort small metal rings into little clear bags when she says, “That's a rather effective thing to do, Jimin. I'm sure the break room is spotless.”

Jimin nods proudly with a wide grin. He scoots forward in his seat a little to watch the woman closer. Her latex gloves and the quiet music overhead make it seem like work hours haven't stopped as she patiently and methodically places two rings into their own bag. Jimin asked if he could help but Mrs. Min was quick to remind him his shift had long ended. She allowed him to watch beside her however, in case he would need to do it himself.

“I organized those files like you told me to,” Jimin adds after some silence. Yoongi's mother smiles softly, prompting him to continue. “I highlighted what Wooshik-Hyung said to then put them in order by date. I uh, didn't know who to give them to so Yoongi-Hyung took them and said he put them on a desk.”

“Yes, I think I remember seeing those files on my desk, just like I asked,” Mrs. Min responds in a
gentle tone, a slight nod to her head in acknowledgement.

Jimin chews on his lip, the tip of his tail twitches from where it’s wrapped around his waist and his ears stand at attention. He’s been telling her of all his usual daily chores he completed since he sat down and despite the smiles and nods, he hasn't gotten the specific praise he wants.

Of course, Mrs. Min has been thanking Jimin for doing his duties and looking him in the eye when she says she appreciates the tasks being done so well, but she's avoiding giving compliments directed toward Jimin himself. He’s told her of all the regular chores he must always do during his shifts as well as a few extra measures he's taken but he really just wants to impress her to feel satisfied. It's been too long since he’s been given a proper compliment for his work from her.

“I even did my homework in the breakroom during my break,” Jimin says. He really did, and he's proud of himself for being so productive as finals near.

“Your break?” Mrs. Min questions, and Jimin remembers he doesn't usually get traditional breaks because his shifts are so scattered. She raises an eyebrow slightly at him and he rushes to explain.

“Yes, Mr. Min let me have a half hour because I was - I did a - I um, finished my tasks.” Jimin says this rather lamely, refraining from outright saying what he wants. He doesn't want to give her the idea, he wants her to say it because she means it.

A barely muffled chuckle comes from behind them. Jimin’s ears perk up when they turn to see Yoongi and his father in the doorway, watching them almost silently. Mr. Min raises interested an eyebrow but doesn't say anything. Yoongi, however, still has a hand covering his mouth after letting out that laugh.

Yoongi smiles as he leans against the door frame. “Jimin.”

“Yeah?” Jimin replies easily, tilting his head curiously.

“I, for one, think you've done a very g--”

“Hyung!” He interrupts quickly, “You can't! I have to earn it…”

Yoongi only lets out another quiet chuckle. There's a twinkle in his eye from being so amused but Jimin panics slightly. His eyes dart from Yoongi to his mother, who seems surprised, almost upset, about what she heard. She furrows her brow and narrows in on Jimin.

“What?” she asks. “There is nothing you must earn, Jimin.” Mrs. Min frowns and moves toward him. Jimin presses his hands together slightly in shame under her gaze. “If you need something, you may simply ask. We're here for you, don't think everything we have to give you must be earned. You're not under our service.”

Jimin knows the Min family has never fully felt comfortable with the fact of hiring a hybrid into their workforce. Paying him for services, as Yoongi had clarified. Jimin realizes what he said implies that he wants some sort of reward from the family that can only be earned, which is not untrue. But the seriousness of Mrs. Min's words reminding him that he is not their hybrid makes him feel off.

He feels embarrassed for trying to receive a praise the way he did. He could just ask if he did well. There's also a bit of shame in him now, because even though the family does their best to make sure he feels equal, Jimin still wants to be treated like a hybrid.

Jimin averts his eyes from the woman, ears flickering and cheeks burning at her statement. He
appreciates it, but now he’s been called out. Mrs. Min startles when she sees the change in his posture but can't say anything before Yoongi carefully walks up beside them, reading the posture.

“Don't worry, mom,” Yoongi assures her softly. “That's not what he means. He’s trying to get you to say something because he's never heard it from you before.”

This just makes Mrs. Min look worried. Yoongi kneels down in front of Jimin to put a gentle hand under his chin. Jimin's gaze is guided up to meet Yoongi sweet smile with ashamed eyes. The older lowers his voice as if it were just the two of them when he speaks.

“You want to be told you've done a good job, right?” Yoongi asks, and Jimin’s grey eyes flick down again in reply. “Hey, that's alright. We think you've done an amazing job helping us and the shop.” Jimin looks at him in relief now, knowing it's true but hoping he would say more. Yoongi seems to understand what he wants and tries to continue. “Jimin, you're - you've done so much. Done a good job. You're - wonderful. You’re…”

“A good boy,” Yoongi's mother finishes softly

Jimin looks at her, breath caught in his throat at the words. Yoongi smiles a little and nods to show those are the words he means to say. Mrs. Min maintains a calm expression but Jimin knows there's a tenderness behind her eyes.

“R-really?” Jimin manages to say through a tight throat. “Am I - do you - mean it…?”

“Of course, Jiminnie,” she says quietly. She replaces Yoongi's hands with her own latex covered ones, cupping Jimin's cheeks to bring them closer. Jimin notices a shine to her eyes despite her careful movements. He feels his heart squeeze. “You're the best boy... Our good boy.”

Jimin’s lip quivers and he has to bite it to keep from embarrassing himself. He's never heard such heartfelt words come from the woman. She praises him when he completes a task and pats his head on occasion but this means so much more to them. It verifies that she loves and appreciates everything he's done and sees him as more than just an employee.

If Jimin could cry properly, he would be well past that by now. But all he can do is watch the fondest smile grace the older woman's face and lean in to hug her. She takes it in stride and makes sure to hold him close, letting him bury his face into her neck.

“Thank you, th-thank you so much,” Jimin says as best he can. His ears fall back and his tail uncurls itself from his waist when he feels a hand run through his hair. Yoongi's mother pets him softly as he shakes in her hold, Jimin feeling overcome with emotion.

She sniffs in a way that lets on that she’s also teared up. So Jimin backs up slightly to see that there are indeed tears falling slowly down her cheeks. He moves wipe them but she quickly bats his hand away with a chuckle before wiping them herself.

Mrs. Min looks away and smiles wider now. She reaches out to take Yoongi in by the shoulder. Jimin notices he and his father have shining eyes as well but have stayed quiet to let the two have their moment. Yoongi’s mother pulls them both close to her. Jimin removes himself from the chair to kneel on the ground, wrapping his arms around Mrs. Min and burying his face in her clothes.

She strokes Yoongi's face while petting Jimin's hair and says, “My boys…”

Jimin looks at the family and thinks this is really where he wants to be.
The relationship Jimin has with Yoongi has quite obviously changed, with many thanks to himself first and foremost. He finally allowed himself freedom from his own boundaries and the rules of being a proper hybrid, and in turn, allowed himself to fall into fondness for a lovely human boy who treats him very well.

The changing of Jimin's relationship with Yoongi's family was something Jimin didn't anticipate. Of course, Jimin greatly appreciates the Mins letting him work at their business and does his best to show his thanks by doing well. Without the offer, it would have taken much longer to find himself. The environment of the shop has always been welcoming, each family member treats Jimin warmly. They make him feel like he's part of the family.

Jemin's newly formed relationship with Yoongi strangely seems to only strengthen the hybrid's bond with the human's family. They both notice more smiles and nods in their direction from family members. Wookshik likes to roll his eyes at any interaction between them and Yoongi's family can give almost obnoxious knowing gazes or wiggling eyebrows. Despite that, it's clear everyone's affection for Jimin has grown, letting him know he's more than a coworker. On top of this, Yoongi's parents are more pleasant than ever. After he was sure everyone knew about his and Yoongi's relationship, Jimin realized he has never felt so much hospitality from Mr. and Mrs. Min than he has after that. His heart grows warm each time he's invited to dinner, gets more scratches behind the ears, and notices the wide smiles when he enters a room.

The endless stream of positive reinforcement from his friends and those around him have given Jimin the confidence to transform more often. He first started off at home under the patient guidance of Taehyung. They talk through the whole process extensively together for each other's safety and to make sure they are both remembering their training correctly. It would be hypocritical of Jimin to not allow Taehyung to transform like he does, so he had to get over his irrational fear of something happening to him eventually.

Soon, Jimin began to transform around their friends. He and Taehyung felt free to invite their friends over and change forms as they pleased to get more cuddles or pets. The humans were surprised at first but quickly came to love being able to coddle their soft friends. It was a tremendous weight off the hybrids' shoulders realizing they could trust their friends in this form. Jimin and Taehyung found more reason to trust them and the humans were more than happy to keep them safe in their arms.

Jemin took a step forward for himself and decided to transform at the Red Pearl parlor. At first, he only allowed Yoongi to hold him. He would curl up in Yoongi's arms or over his shoulder, letting the boy carry him around the shop proudly to show him off to family members.

In cat form, Jimin quickly realized he was regarded as threatening and was walked around with more hesitance. He easily grew confident around the customers knowing this but will always make sure to be beside a staff member as he walks around rooms to sniff anything of interest.

His favorite thing to do is sit tall and proud at the front desk with Wooshik, carefully watching customers enter and exit, place appointments, and sit uncomfortably under his gaze in the waiting area. He especially enjoys showing off his sharp teeth and claws by stretching with a long yawn, doing so in a way that displays his pretty black coat and bright silver eyes. On bad days, Jimin can pace in a small circle, hissing and swiping at unwanted touches. Yoongi tells him that can get to be “actually kinda really terrifying.” On good days, Jimin can jump around on shelves, testing how high he can climb before getting scared and calling for help. At the end of the day though, he will always let Yoongi come by and scoop him up without a scratch, keeping him for himself.
“... then he said he wouldn't go.”

“Really? Why?”

“Because he was in love. But he didn't really know that. He just knew he found a reason to stay.”

“That's sweet… Did they live happily ever after?”

“Of course! After saving the planet from aliens first.”

Jimin laughs, pushing himself closer to the vibrating chest as the other speaks. “Did they really?” he asks.

“Yeah! He ended up sacrificing himself to save those he loves, but they did it.”

“You said they lived!”

“Well, yeah, but it wasn't really explained. They just showed up and everything was alright.”

He laughs again at how ridiculously vague his best friend's descriptions can be. “Was it a good movie at least?”

“Yep! We gotta watch it together,” Taehyung says excitedly. “I think it’s out to rent now, so we could get it this weekend.”

Jimin nods, “Alright. Even though you just spoiled the whole movie.”

“You asked!” Taehyung groans, rolling his eyes.

He tightens his grip around Jimin shoulders so they stay together when Taehyung shifts to face the other side. The bed creaks as they move, unaccustomed to the weight of two people. It's usually Jimin who crawls into Taehyung’s bed, which is already worn from the wolf's constant moving throughout the night. This time, Taehyung had woken up at some point before the break of dawn for the sole reason of going right back to sleep in Jimin's bed.

Jimin didn't mind when he felt the bed dip and a rush of cold air hit during the night, and still doesn't mind when he rolls around the mattress talking about everything and anything with his best friend. He sighs in relief when Taehyung changes position, then groans. “We gotta get up, Tae...”

“No we don't,” Taehyung quickly replies. He shakes his head while pulling the blanket up higher.

“We gotta go to school...”

“Nope. We really don't this time,” he counters, “Namjoon-Hyung and Yoongi-Hyung will just tell us anything we really need to know.”

It's one of the last days of the school year. After gruelling finals and the wondrous satisfaction of placing as the tops in their class, Jimin and Taehyung technically don't have to go to the next few days of school. Namjoon and Yoongi told them that these days were usually for quick make-ups, last minute assemblies, and students helping the teachers clean their rooms. Since the hybrids had already passed their exams and don't attend assemblies anyways, Namjoon and Yoongi told them they wouldn't be in any trouble if they didn't come at all.

“It's - well - we should support them, anyway,” Jimin says. It's a little difficult to think of reasons to leave when he could lay in bed all day. “Jungkookie and Hoseok-Hyung are going.”
“And Seokjin-Hyung isn't going because he didn't have to. We don't have to, we're not going.”

Jimin grabs the blankets and pulls them over his head, grumbling half heartedly about Taehyung always being right. “Didn't even wanna go…”

“I knew it.” Taehyung smiles proudly, tail wagging a little at being able to stay home. Jimin grumbles some more about his tail opening the blankets but Taehyung ignores it. “We can watch our show and make lunch for the others. They'll be out early right? That's how we can support them.”

Arms wrap loosely around Taehyung’s middle and a muffled, “Later,” comes from the blankets. Taehyung can't agree more. He purposely pulls at the fabric until it exposes half of Jimin's body and he has the majority for himself. This only encourages Jimin to slide himself onto the other side of the bed and nestle in the blankets there, where the two fall asleep once again.

It's only a few hours later that the hybrids wake up again. The sun is shining through Jimin's navy blue curtains warmingly, coating the room with a barely there glow. Jimin stretches with a yawn and makes for his phone. The time reads 9 in the morning above texts from the group chat. Curious and tired, he checks them.

[ the sack (7) ]

Jeon Jungkookie
> wait, Jimin and Taehyung really didn't need to come?
> AND Jin-Hyung???
> do EYE need to be here?????

Joon-Hyung
> Yes, kook, you need to be here. the assembly is about electing a new president and choosing colleges. They don't really need to know that

Jeon Jungkookie
> but hyung, you're president. It's yoongi-hyung that's leaving

Joon-Hyung
> Yoongi-Hyung was president last year, I was elected, he became vice
> Don't you remember this?

Jeon Jungkookie
> oh yeah, I remember how dumb that system was
> Hyung should stay president, everyone likes him

Joon-Hyung
> aww thank you kookie!

Jeon Jungkookie
> Why isn’t Jin-Hyung here? doesn't he need to find a college?

K C Hobi-Hyung
> Seniors find their colleges and universities during their last semester, if they haven't applied by now, sux to be them
> The assembly is to help us before then

Jeon Jungkookie
> Us, Juniors like yourself, gotcha. I'm going home
Jimin looks over the texts with a smile, glad to wake up to some of his friend’s silliness. He tries to ignore the seriousness of the conversation. Yoongi and Seokjin are graduating high school and have already applied for colleges and universities.

Taehyung stirs beside him and begins to stretch. His floppy ears twitch as he opens his eyes. “Who is it?” He asks.

“Your Jungkookie,” Jimin says with a smirk. He hands the phone to Taehyung for him to read for himself as the wolf snorts. There’s a blush to his cheeks with a mixed wave of embarrassment and pride Jimin doesn't miss though. “He's cute.”

Taehyung nods, his lip between his teeth. “He is.”

“So what's the deal?”

“He's upset he's 17 and still in highschool.” Taehyung supplies. “Says he's looking for a job or more classes to show he's responsible.”

Jimin laughs and takes his phone away to get the other’s full attention. “That's not what I mean, Tae. I mean what's the scoop? With you two.”

A rush of nerves come from Taehyung, just a neutral jittering from the topic. He blushes and quickly tries to look anywhere but Jimin's smirking face. To ease him a bit, Jimin schools it into an encouraging smile, but not without rolling his eyes at how dramatic he is. The last time they had this talk Taehyung was squirming with anxiety, now he's wearing his own playful smile to show he's not uncomfortable. “There's not much else from what you can see,” he says.

Jimin raises an eyebrow, mildly surprised but not wanting to scare his friend. “Oh?”

“Yeah, we do those things you see in private as well. Nothing more really.” He sighs when he says this and Jimin can't tell if it's a happy or sad one.

“Tell me what you do together,” Jimin encourages, a curious tilt to his head. “If you want to, of course.”

Taehyung snorts but tells him anyway. “Aside from playing games together, we like to hug and hold hands. He pets me, lets me lean on him, lets me pet him and scent him. We can be really close to each other without feeling awkward. That's how we could sleep with each other.”

Jimin nods, slowly. He doesn't really get it. “That's what we do together?”

His mouth opens to answer but nothing is said for a moment. Taehyung thinks, then says, “No. Well, yes. But it's different.”

“Oh. We both know you like him, is that what it is?”

At this, Taehyung nods confidently. “I don't feel like that with you. I can look at you and lay here with you but it won't feel like my heart’s melting from how lucky I am to have you here.”
Jimin hits his arm playfully, “That's rude.”

“I know, but it's true!” Taehyung laughs and pushes away Jimin's hands from messing with his ears. He sighs, relieved. “I like him. He likes me, I can tell. He also told me. And we--”

“He told you!?” Jimin exclaims, unable to hide his excitement. When did this happen?

“Kind of? He got all red and nervous one day and said he's really glad we met each other, how he hopes we can stay together for a long time. I felt it. And I…” Taehyung trails off. He turns away, trying to hide how red his own face is. “I got nervous a little too and said I hoped so too. I took his hand and scented it and he kinda just brightened and that was that.”

By this time, Jimin is grinning from ear to ear. He's filled with joy from being able to hear this. Taehyung looks at him and promptly shoves Jimin's shoulder. “What are you smiling about!”

“You're together!” Jimin unashamedly squeals. “I'm super sure you two unofficially became official right then. It's not weird between you?”

Taehyung covers his entire head with the blankets, embarrassment rolling off him. “No, we're not weird. We went on as usual. It was less weird after that.” He opens the blanket to be heard better. “I guess we are an unofficial couple now… We do couple stuff and we both know we only do those things with each other. As long as we know we're on the same page, then I'm fine not making anything more about it.”

Jimin grins and runs his fingers through Taehyung's messy brown hair, careful not to disrupt his ears now. “You're happy.”

“I'm happy…”

They make breakfast together. Not like the old times, but much better. Their shared kitchen is known well by the both of them and they move around each other effortlessly while doing tasks. Breakfast this morning consists of mainly leftovers. They heat up some rice, cook in some vegetables, and add an egg or two to call it breakfast food.

Like usual, they sit at the dining table and share their dreams, anything of interest, or simply comfortable silence as they eat. When they're done, Taehyung takes on the dishes and Jimin cleans the kitchen from the day before. It's nice to have down time together. School days are always busy, Jimin often works when he's out of school, and most free time is spent with their human friends as well. The hybrids are always together but not always interacting one on one. This helps when they're a little mad at one another, but not when they just want to talk.

The two make themselves comfortable on their couch, ignoring the extra duvets in turn for cuddling together. It's a little hot from the season changing and their unnatural body heat but they make it work. Jimin flicks on the T.V and starts up their favorite show. They've been watching this series for a few months now since finishing their other shows. Every new one they start seems like the best, so they're all favorites.

After a few episodes, Jimin decides to check the time. He startles at how late it's become. It's already lunchtime and the hybrids were planning on cooking for the humans after school. They pause the show to check their phones.

The group messages indicate school has just ended and the ones attending are, indeed, looking for the seven of them eat to lunch together. Jimin and Taehyung try to tell them they can start up lunch
even if it won't be done by the time they arrive but once Seokjin gets into the chat, he stubbornly declines. They negotiate a bit and allow Seokjin to pick up fast food after he picks up Jungkook and Hoseok from school. Namjoon explains he and Yoongi will be staying just a little longer but Yoongi left his coupons with Hoseok for their convenience.

When seeing this, Taehyung snorts. He nudges Jimin playfully. “Your Yoongi's kinda cute too, you know. He coupons.”

Jumin rolls his eyes, ignoring his friend's proding. “Occasionally,” he says.

Yoongi does like to collect coupons, especially for fast food chains. He doesn't really explain why other than saying that coupons make things cheaper. It's a little odd he keeps a handful on him in his wallet but Jimin doesn’t question it. The seven of them have probably saved thousands thanks to Yoongi’s pocket stash, maybe more when Yoongi knows where he's going.

It takes a moment for Jimin to realize Taehyung hasn't stopped watching him. An unreadable expression is on his face now as Jimin rereads the text messages thinking about the older human. Startled and a little concerned, Jimin turns to Taehyung with a questioning noise.

The wolf makes to shrug nonchalantly but it comes off like a grimace. “Should I question the elephant in the room?” He asks.

This throws Jimin off. If only a little. He's not oblivious to many things and understands what Taehyung means, even if he doesn’t believe it's a very concerning elephant. Taehyung knows Jimin and Yoongi are very attached to each other and knows no one is addressing the fact that Yoongi is no longer going to be at their high school. Jimin knows this. It makes him squirm a little under Taehyung's eyes.

Jumin must take too long to answer because Taehyung does the grimace again but with little more sadness. “Yoongi-Hyung...” he says. “Is leaving. For college. Like humans do. Right? He tells us he wants to--”


Taehyung doesn't say anything, creating silence for a while. He knows Jimin is possessive over those he cares for and is trying to let Jimin lead the conversation. His hesitation, worry, and general sadness can be felt clearly from their distance. Jimin himself hadn't been too concerned about the topic a few seconds ago but his best friend's worry is making him have doubts.

Jumin bites his lip and glances up at Taehyung. He says, steadily, “I talked - I asked Yoongi-Hyung about it. I was afraid he was gonna leave for like, five years, or however long those things take to get.”

“But?” Taehyung encourages, hopeful.

“He said he won't.”

“For you?”

“No,” he states. Jimin was clear to Yoongi that he should not hold himself back because of Jimin. As much as it had hurt to suggest, Jimin did his best to encourage the older to find the best school for his career. “I told him not to do it for me.”

“Then what?”
Jimin licks his lips, a little joyful to share that Yoongi was staying close because he wanted to. “The main reason is because he still wants to help out at the Red Pearl. But also he says he wants to stay close to the people he likes. So he’s only applying for schools that won't be too hard for him to drive back and forth.”

As he listens, Taehyung's worry slowly fades into joy as well. He grins and takes Jimin's hands into his own. “That's great, Jiminnie! Is he going to live on campus or stay home for a bit?”

“That's the fun part,” Jimin tells him. He smiles, ears, tail, and hopes high. “They haven't been 100 percent sure yet but Yoongi-Hyung and Seokjin-Hyung are thinking of getting an apartment together! They don't know if they’re getting into the same school but they want their place to be a middle ground between their home and school.”

Taehyung practically vibrates beside Jimin actually vibrating. They share hope and happiness at the thought of their friends wanting to stay closeby. “That's so cool!” Taehyung says excitedly again, “We all can see them more often than if they really went away and your and Namjoon-Hyung's relationships aren't in jeopardy.”

Jimin laughs, “Yeah, it's really that cool!” He tries to calm down a bit. “But we can't get our hopes up too much! It's still under debate.”

“Of course.” Taehyung nods as serious as he can, but ends up grinning anyway. “But you're happy too.”

“Yeah…!”

The slowly setting sun gives a brief orange glow to the walls of the living room. When the curtains are parted just right and the lights inside are all dimmed or off, the soft sunlight of dusk will brush over as much of the room as possible. The phenomena will happen for only about a few minutes at around the same time each evening. Jimin hasn't been around long enough to really experience the change in the light's position or time of occurrence over the year, but he's been here long enough to notice how beautiful the sun shines on the walls every now and then.

Jimin's favorite thing to watch as the sun hits during this time is Yoongi. The older boy - young man now - is often positioned like he is now: leaned back against the old couch with his eyes gently closed as he just relaxes with the atmosphere. He isn't asleep, Jimin can tell, only resting silently. If Yoongi isn't resting, he's on the carpeted floor, pouring himself over textbooks and worksheets on the cheap coffee table.

Whatever the occasion, Jimin makes sure to have his glasses fit on snug to watch the light hit Yoongi's face. His skin is unfairly clear under life's circumstances and even looks to be glowing under the light. The sunlight is orange leaning on the redder side because of the curtains but looks like the softest shade of peach against Yoongi's skin. His cheeks acquire a slight blush as if they were rosey; his nose is a bit cuter and more prone to being tapped affectionately; his hair has a healthy shine, encouraging fingers to run through; and his earrings twinkle under the light like stars unless his eyes are open to outshine them.

Despite where Yoongi is, Jimin is usually stretched out along the small couch. The both of them are short so they're the only ones who get to lay across it comfortably. Jimin loves to take naps on the couch as if it were his own, the floral-smelling brown thing beckoning him to use up all the pillows and create a napping nest.
On days like these, Yoongi gets the honor of being Jimin's pillow. His blanket covered lap quickly became Jimin's favorite place to tuck himself in. From this spot, Jimin is able to see Yoongi at an often unflattering angle when he looks up. He lives for those moments; especially when the older makes an ugly face on purpose.

Jimin can also see about half of the small apartment. He can see the hallway, living room / dining room, front door, and part of the kitchen all from about knee height. Nearly every surface; chair, table, shelf alike; is covered in stacks of paper, books, or simply groceries. Seokjin and Yoongi eventually did decide on getting an apartment together before starting college. They tell him it's fairly inexpensive with the two of them and a total steal with two bathrooms as well.

Jimin doesn't really know about things like that still, but is grateful they tolerate him staying over more than the others. He's “less likely to topple something over.” Namjoon was absolutely crushed when he was voted more destructive than the part-cat but eventually came to peace with that truth.

Though Jimin has already laid on this couch more hours than he can count, he still manages to see something new stuffed into a corner somewhere every now and then. This time, he spots a half empty glass of a what smells faintly of alcohol next to a pile of folded laundry.

Curious, Jimin glares at it for a moment before closing his eyes and breathing in. He clears his mind in attempt to focus his senses better. Jimin puts all of his attention into smelling the air, trying to pinpoint what's in the drink. It's not too potent, but Jimin's able to get a clear whiff without much problem. Unfortunately, he has no idea what different alcohols smell like and has achieved nothing.

Only slightly upset, Jimin huffs and turns his attention somewhere else now that the sunlight has left everything greyer. It’s officially dusk, he thinks.

There's a slight pressure at his neck that mildly surprises him. Jimin turns from where he was watching the blank television to lock eyes with the young man above him. Yoongi, now done with his “resting,” looks down at Jimin with fond, sleepy, half open eyes. He's not even looking at Jimin’s own shining eyes, he realizes, but at his neck where his fingers stroke lightly.

It's been well over a year since the Min family gifted Jimin the embroidered choker, and he seems to wear it even more diligently as time goes by. Jimin used to only wear it during work as part of his outfit. It gave him a sense of belonging to the shop as well as security. Then, he would wear it publicly - outside of forgetting to take it off. If he was going to a restaurant with his friends, he would most definitely take a moment to put it on before leaving. He knew it made him feel more comfortable, despite his friends’ wiggling eyebrows. As even more time went on, Jimin began to wear it around the house. It's only off just a few days a week now.

“Why do you wear this so much?” Yoongi mutters. His voice is just as tired as his eyes. Jimin supposes he should leave soon to give him some rest, but he'll get to that later.

When Jimin shrugs in reply, he does so to hide nervous shifting. Yoongi chuckles, fully aware of this body language that means he's embarrassed. Amusement and pride trickle off him.

“You really wear it a lot,” Yoongi continues casually. “I’m worried it’s getting worn down, don’t you think?”

Quickly, Jimin shakes his head. “It's not, I swear.” It's true. Because he handles it so often, Jimin does his best to wash it regularly by hand, dry it properly, and make sure the threads stay as strong as possible. It used to be white with bright ribbons of gold and blue, but the increased use has inevitably left it off-white with dulled ribbons and the occasional loose thread. Jimin reaches a
hand up as if to inspect it himself. “I take good care of it, really,” he says.

Yoongi ticks his head and pouts the way he does when he thinks differently, but there's a tilt to his lips. “I don't know,” he says, a tinkling sound emitting from his tilted mouth. “We might have to do without it.”

At this, Jimin's eyebrows furrow, confused. He sits up to narrow his eyes at the older seriously. “No, I like it.” Jimin does his best to sound stern. The devil himself can't take the choker away from him and unless he gets another exactly like it, he won't even let Yoongi convince him to stop wearing it.

Yoongi only laughs as if he heard a good joke instead of Jimin's serious rejection. He follows Jimin's eyes as he sits up beside him, clearly unaffected by the tone. With a smile, Yoongi reaches out for Jimin's hands to hold. Jimin lets him.

“Are you sure?” Yoongi asks, tilting his head to inspect Jimin's neck. “Maybe we should…”

Bewildered, Jimin stays silent. His eyes narrow and he keeps his eyebrows furrowed as the older inspects his neck.

Yoongi taps his piercing against his teeth thoughtfully and wonders aloud, “Maybe something of a stronger material would do… Leather-like maybe. With your name this time?” Jimin doesn't reply for a different reason now. Yoongi continues while brushing his fingers along to worn threads. “Something that can be readjusted easily…? Of course it can be customized, but I would rather buy it and present it to you formally.” He pauses to look at Jimin, a satisfied quirk on his lips. “You know?”

It takes approximately 4 seconds for Jimin's lips to fall open, a shuddering gasp leave them, then for him to lean in and give Yoongi a bruising kiss. He gives the older a succession of short, powerful kisses on his mouth and cheeks while Yoongi smiles through it all. When Jimin stops to take few shaky breaths and look at Yoongi like he was just given the moon, Yoongi makes sure to nod affirmatively before pressing his own kiss to Jimin's lips. It's not as bruising, but just as passionate.

They continue to kiss intimately and joyfully together, sharing emotions in ways Jimin doesn’t want to stop. Jimin's glasses make getting too close a little uncomfortable but neither of them mind some restriction. Yoongi's tongue piercing is always louder to Jimin this way but really, he couldn't care less. Eventually, their eagerness calms down enough for them to part and take more than a few breaths. They stay close for these moments though, just breathing together happily.

Once his heart settles down to a gentle flutter, Jimin, now sitting in Yoongi's lap as opposed to laying in it, finally opens his eyes to see Yoongi already watching him affectionately. Jimin grins, flustered, in response. It makes Yoongi embarrassed himself, and he looks away with a blush. Jimin feels his happiness though and lands a quick kiss on the older's nose to have him turn even more red.

Yoongi scoffs like he's never surprised Jimin doing the same action before. Jimin chuckles, then settles himself back down against the couch. His legs are stretched over Yoongi’s in a familiar way that has the older casually smoothing out the wrinkles in his pants. He looks up at Yoongi with a wide, satisfied grin that is gladly reciprocated. The way Jimin’s silver eyes almost disappear when he does so has been described as “crescent moons” by a certain wolf before and he's been exceptionally proud since then.

“Are you really getting me one?” Jimin asks after a bit. This seems a little unbelievable. “A
Yoongi’s smile falters just slightly. He says, “Yeah. I mean, if you’d want one…”

Jimin snorts and rolls his eyes. “Of course I do! I didn't kiss you for nothing.”

“Right.” This has Yoongi getting flustered all over again, pink painting his neck and cheeks beautifully. “I just mean because last time we walked about it, it seemed like you did want one.”

“Oh.” He bites his lip nervously as he does remember that day. “Do you remember what I said then?”

Yoongi’s mouth parts a little. He seems confused, as if this is a trick question. When he sees Jimin's downcast eyes and fidgeting hands, he realizes it's not. Jimin remembers the event well, even if it had been more than a year ago. At the time, he meant what he said - which was not much on his behalf - but believes he had been a different person then. He knows some of his views have changed on what it means to be a hybrid.

Yoongi clears his throat before speaking slowly - he doesn't do hesitant. “Well, we asked you first what collars mean to hybrids. You said it's different for everyone but they do show commitment and well, possession.”

Jimin nods along to encourage him. His face heats up a bit, more embarrassed about a collar than heavily kissing a boy just a moment ago. “And some hybrids see it as a sign of being loved and wear it proudly,” he adds quietly.

“You said you liked them… But not what you thought of them.” Jimin nods once again but it's definitely not enough for a response. Yoongi shifts close, “What do you think of this one, Jiminnie? Things have changed now.”

“Well um,” Jimin begins rather eloquently. He fidgets with his rings until the older gently holds his hands still. It's not so much much nervousness as it is embarrassment of expressing his true feelings that's overcoming Jimin. He reminds himself Yoongi just wants to understand a part of his world and takes a breath to finally say things out loud.

“A lot of things have changed,” he says. “Back then I just had you as a wonderful friend with wonderful parents. This choker was just a gift to keep me protected and show me I'm appreciated. A collar to me was sacred. I didn't want to get one until after someone had bought me.”

Yoongi jerks a bit uncomfortably. Despite his careful expression, Jimin can tell he's on edge. He quickly continues in case be gave Yoongi the wrong idea. “But things changed! I - um - fell for you. Your entire family too. I think that's why I love wearing this so often,” he touches the embroidered choker, “because your family gave it to me when I started working with you.”

They share a smile now. Jimin remembers the pride and confidence he first wore with the gift, thinking the feeling hasn't really gone away when he puts it on. “I love it and I can tell you like it,” Jimin adds. There have been countless times when Jimin would wear the choker in public and it would seem his eyes teleported down to his neck as well. He constantly catches the human gazing at the gift thoughtfully. What he's thinking exactly is beyond Jimin. Yoongi snorts at his words but averts his eyes for a moment.

Jimin tightens his hold on the older's hands now, embarrassed to speak out his inner feelings. He gets an encouraging squeeze in response. “A collar, now, would be a symbol of being loved. I know I am but this would show the world and I would wear it everywhere. I’d be proud of having
someone to care for and someone who cares for me. It’s a promise.” He looks at Yoongi's own shining eyes to say, “I am yours and your family's. And you are mine.”

Yoongi doesn't say anything. It’s clear, however, how overcome he is with emotion. His brown eyes sparkle with unshed tears as he listens to Jimin intently. His hold tightens around Jimin's hands, shaking slightly as he nods when Jimin is done speaking. He keeps nodding even when Jimin blushes and smiles at the response.

“I think so too,” he finally says, voice stable but faint. Jimin grins wider and squirms happily. “I really do, Jimin. I want you to be ours because we're already yours. I want to be selfish and give you something that let's the world know you're loved.”

Jimin’s fall back as he laughs joyfully. His tail stands straight and he even begins to purr. The feeling going through him is similar to when he had learned of Yoongi's feelings for the first time. There is so much meaning in being offered a collar. He's loved, protected, and cared for. It’s a promise that he will never have to worry about who he can trust or what his purpose is. When Yoongi grabs at Jimin’s shirt and pulls him down onto the old couch with a gentle kiss, Jimin easily complies.

If the Jimin of two years ago knew he would be in the arms of a regular college student with a collar coming sooner than ownership, he wouldn't have believed it. He was scared that he would be hurt by going against the teachings of his childhood. He was told the endgame was to be bought with enough money one could likely buy a thousand diamonds instead, and the only way to be worth a thousand diamonds is to stand tall, look pretty, and behave.

But somehow, when Jimin thinks about all that he has, that doesn't seem to be true. He owns a house with a wonderful companion who’s never left his side, is going to graduate high school as a top in his class, has a job he can be himself at, has five human friends who are happy and healthy, and is in a loving relationship with someone who promises to care for him as long as possible.

Jimin is no longer plagued by the looming thoughts of being a stray or inadequate, but is rather content with the way things have turned out. Despite all other judgment, he thinks he's worth a thousand diamonds. This is where he wants to be.

Chapter End Notes

It's done!! I could say a million things about why this is late... but I won't!

I sincerely want to thank everyone for being so supportive as I uploaded. I finally understand how encouraging comments are when writing; I urge you all to spread your love on the other fics you read! Writing this was purely self indulgent, as you probably know... so I hope you enjoyed the ending as much as I did!

Love you all! Thank you for reading!

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